

Socialist Challenge

STOP PRESS!

AS WE go to press, it has been announced that the Polish workers' union, Solidarity, has called a general strike in Warsaw for Wednesday. The strike is against the detention of printer Jan Norozniak, seized in a raid on the union headquarters.

The strike comes at the same time as the Soviet Union has warned Polish railway workers against their strike action. The conflict between the workers and the bureaucracy is escalating; the danger of a



Russian invasion is growing. Next week Socialist Challenge reports in full on Poland's new crisis.

As unemployment soars to 2,162,874

THATCHER'S

MESSAGE

TO THE

JOBLESS



But Gardner's show the way to beat the dole — see p3

KICK OUT THE TORIES

CENTRAL AMERICA'S young revolutions are reaching a crunch point. In Nicaragua the Sandinista government faces a showdown with the bosses after suppressing the first serious military uprising against it. In El Salvador, amid growing rumours of a coup from the right, a new and all-embracing opposition movement has been formed.

Evidence of the attempt to co-ordinate a military overthrow of the Nicaraguan government began to emerge after the death of an important businessman, Jorge Salazar, in a shoot-out with security forces. Salazar was shot dead as a gun-running operation was discovered by police.

Two other important leaders of

Revolution in Central America reaches high point after Reagan victory

COSEP, the employers' organisation in Nicaragua, have been subsequently arrested and accused of attacking state security. Both developments occurred after COSEP representatives had walked out of the governing Council of State claiming political persecution.

Skirmishes with right-wing forces have been going on in the northern regions of the country. Nicaraguan capitalists have gained confidence after

Reagan's electoral victory and statements from his advisers that they would cut off aid to the Sandinista government and resume aid to the reactionary governments of El Salvador and Guatemala.

The US-backed government in El Salvador is now receiving so-called 'non-lethal' aid from the White House, but has carried forward a programme of mass killings against the workers and

peasants. A recent military drive into the liberated zones was repelled by the fierce resistance of the forces organised by the Faribundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) who now unite all the groups fighting against the junta.

The growing weakness of the military junta's position has provoked a spate of terrorist outrages carried out by the extreme right with backing from the police and army. Rumours of a coup continue to persist and have been confirmed by members of the junta themselves, who are using it to justify the need for direct intervention by US forces.

All of these developments point to the need for the British labour movement to add its voice to the growing support for the revolutions of Central America and the Caribbean.

Howe's mini-budget

Squeezing the poor until they bleed

By Pat Kane

IT WAS 'Black Monday' for millions of working people throughout Britain.

Chancellor Howe's mini-budget shows the desperation of the Tories as the economic crisis bites.

Almost everyone will suffer through this budget: pensioners, the unemployed, the sick and infirm all lose through cuts in welfare benefits.

If you are lucky enough to have a job the Tories will be charging you an average of £1.25 a week extra through national insurance contributions.

Flourish

With many local authorities planning huge rate rises of 30-40 per cent to pay for government cuts, the Tories are robbing working people to pay for the effects of the bosses' economic crisis.

Howe's policies will immediately increase unemployment. His measures will not save a single one of the thousands of redundancies to be announced this week.

He has cut £750m million from the nationalised industries, which will cause thousands more

redundancies in steel, mining, and the railway.

Howe announced in parliament on Monday that has was sticking to the new six per cent pay policy for the public sector.

This would give the average local government worker earning £81 a week before deductions a rise of only £4 a week. Increased rates, national insurance, and cuts in other benefits will leave them 11p a week worse off.

The small minority of wealthy people who own and control the banks and industry gain from Tory budgets. Last year they made £3.5bn from interest and bank charges paid by the public sector. Bank profits are reaching all-time records.

While the National Health Service collapses, private medical centres for the rich flourish.

In Margaret Thatcher's Tory Britain the rulers get richer and working people pay the bill.

Unite

Anger is mounting against the policies needed to maintain this crazy system. As the anger grows, the Tories look after their friends.

There will be no 6 per cent pay policy for the police, the military, or the judges. The Tories have already given the police three pay rises in 18 months,



amounting now to a gigantic 75 per cent wage hike.

The Tories back bench was shocked to hear Howe only increase defence spending by £200m — not the £500m demanded by the generals.

The labour movement is beginning to fight back. The Tories know this, too. They see the victory at Gardner's — a victory that shatters the myth that it is impossible to fight the dole queue.

The Fire Brigades Union is challenging the six per cent. The TUC/Labour Party liaison committee has called for a week of action against unemployment in the new year. Ford workers have rejected management's derisory nine per cent pay offer.

The anger of working people has to be organised and aimed at the Tory government to change its policies, but after 18 months

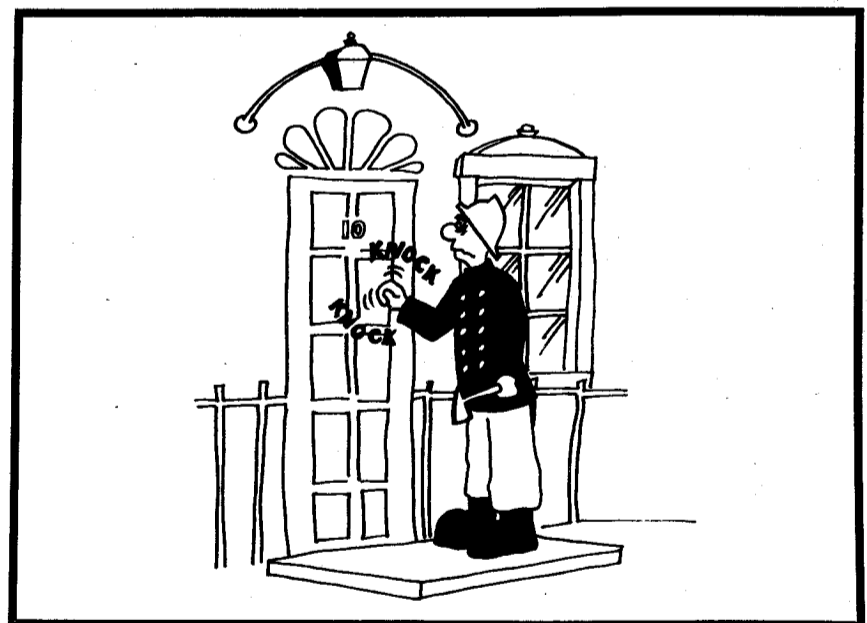
of Tory rule it should be clear to everyone that Thatcher will never implement policies that defend working people.

The 29 November demonstration in Liverpool against unemployment will show that joint action between the trade unions and the Labour Party can mobilise tens of thousands of people against the Tories.

There is a special Labour Party conference in January, and it is now urgent that the TUC is recalled to plan action against the government.

Unity has always been the strength of the labour movement, and it is needed now. We need to unite action against the Tories, and that means preparing for an effective general strike to sweep the Tories from office and return a Labour government.

THATCHER surrounded by friends. The police had a 75 per cent index-linked, pay rise from Thatcher's government.



Firefighters prepare to fight the Tories

THE emergency conference of the Fire Brigades Union decided last week on a policy of one-day strikes throughout the country to achieve their 18.8 per cent pay demand.

The FBU is the first victim of the government's new six per cent pay policy.

Union leaders will meet the employers — representatives of local authorities — one more time to see if

they will honour the agreement reached after the last FBU strike. Under this the firefighters are entitled to an 18.8 per cent pay rise.

The Tories are also preparing for action to enforce their pay policy. They are mobilising military personnel to break the strike action. Special training is now being given to over 10,000 soldiers, and alternative fire services are being prepared.

During the last FBU strike, in the winter of 1977-78, the army was assisted by members of the National Association of Fire Officers, who directed

operations. The association is due to meet this week, and is expected to join the FBU in opposing the Tory pay limit.

The TUC has backed the dispute, and one immediate result has been the decision of the GLC Staffs Association in London not to cooperate with troops who use their communications network.

Once again, the firefighters will be in the forefront of the fight against pay restraint. They will be looking for support from all sections of the labour movement.

Ford try a Leyland

By Mick Drake

FORD management have taken a leaf out of Michael Edwardes' book in their response to their workers' 1980 wage claim.

They have dismissed the claim — for increases of £15-17.50 a week across grades, and shorter hours — as 'totally unrealistic'.

Instead the company is making a cash-only offer of 7.5 per cent. They claim that conceding the full claim would 'put at risk the future of Ford Britain'. This after record profits of £386m in 1979.

We face a simple choice: to give in and be belted on jobs, speed-up, demarcation, and 'discipline' in 1981, or to take a stand.

Ford workers smashed the Labour government's 5 per cent norm in 1978 and can beat the company's plans today with a clear rejection of the offer by the national union leaders, mass meetings in the plants, and all-out strike action for the full claim now.

THE TORY mini-budget has condemned millions of pensioners to another winter of hardship. As prices and inflation rocket, the Tories had decided to rob the old in order to maintain the profits of the rich.

Chancellor Howe has axed the guaranteed inflation-proof pension introduced by the Heath government in 1971.

The decision will mean that single pensioners will lose 81p a week, amounting to £42.12 a year. A married couple will lose £1.31 a week — £68.12 a year.

Not everyone suffers from Tory cuts.

Sir Robert Mark, ex-Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police has had a rise in his pension of £67, bringing it to £478 a week. Sir John Hunt, former secretary to the Cabinet, had a weekly rise in his pension of £48, taking it up to £342 a week. And there was a £38 rise for Sir William Pile, former chief of the Inland Revenue, who now banks £268 a week in his retirement.

The upper class knows how to look after its own elderly, and the working class movement has to do the same.

It was the trade unions and Labour Party which fought for the welfare state. The best way to support the pensioners is to kick out Thatcher's government.



Organising for victory

ONE key to the success at Gardner's is revealed by Tom Macafee: 'What brought such support for militant action was communication'.

Every fortnight prior to the strike there was a stewards' meeting in work time, immediately followed by sectional meetings.

Mike Smethurst, a Gardner's apprentice, explains: 'If a steward doesn't go back to the workforce and they see him or her once every 12 months, they'll tell the stewards to piss off when they call for action.'

'That organisation at Gardner's was what management wanted to break.'

During the seven-week dispute the stewards set up committees for everything: delegations for picketing, entertainments, running the canteen, and more besides.

'Instead of just sitting around we tried to involve people as much as we could,' Mike recounts.

Several hundred of the 2,400-strong workforce were actively involved, although the dispute could have been stronger with an elected strike committee.

For Gardner's workers there is one problem they won't face back at work, and that's a shortage of candidates for the shop steward elections.

Hawker hunts more redundancies

From Leicester IMG

TASS and APEX members at Hawker Siddeley's brush and switchgear plant in Loughborough were told by management on 13 November that the company requires 30 compulsory redundancies.

The white-collar workers are considering strike action to oppose these redundancies.

TASS and APEX members at the plant supported the Gardner's sit-in by collecting money.

The AUEW's engineering section has been collecting names of volunteers for early retirement and voluntary redundancies. Although the Loughborough district committee of the AUEW sent two donations to Gardner's, it has not publicised the occupation locally.

Because the plant makes parts for Hawker Siddeley's Harrier jump jets and Centurian tanks, a supply shortage would be highly embarrassing to the government.



GARDNERS

'WE FOUGHT AND WE WON'

By Pete Clifford

AFTER seven weeks of occupation against redundancies, workers at the Gardner's diesel engine factory in Eccles, Manchester, have won.

This is how convenor Tom Macafee puts it: 'We took them to the cleaners. Someone had to show the Tories that they can't get away with it.'

Gardner's now stands as a model for the whole trade union movement. In answer to the millions who are on the dole, or facing short-time it shows the way forward.

The climbdown from management came at the end of last week when it dropped its demand for an immediate 590 redundancies, and said that from April next year a voluntary redundancy scheme would operate.

If this does not achieve 590 redundancies by September 1981, management will review the position.

'We've proved that you can beat a multi-national,' says millers shop steward Kevin Coen. 'They turned from a position of picking off 590 for redundancy, including the convenor, to no enforced redundancies.'

'They intended to smash the unions, to make more money. We've proved the unions were stronger than they thought.'

Example

The badges worn by Gardner's workers declared 'Enough is enough', a slogan that has inspired thousands of labour movement organisations throughout the country to lend their support.

From a trickle of money in the first few weeks, cash from levies raised in engineering districts and factories then started to pour in.

More than that, dockers in Liverpool and workers in other industries were preparing to boycott all Hawker Siddeley products.

Involvement was also increasing within the dispute, with up to 500 workers coming into the occupied factory each morning. Many were involved in the delegations despatched nationwide to raise support.

AND WE WON'

The management's project was simple: to break the back of the most strongly organised factory in Manchester. Union organisation at Gardner's had not previously been divided by accepting redundancies.

The 590 redundancies were announced in response to a 20 per cent wage claim. Management said that orders were down and a crisis faced the company.

Yet the evidence flew back in their face. For 1980, Hawker Siddeley profits will be an estimated £120m. Orders for diesel engines are up in various parts of the world.

So when management had to climb down last week it admitted that it wanted many more engines.

The bosses tried everything to break the unions, from placing the militants on the redundancy list, to going over the head of the strike leadership, and holding secret talks with full-time union officials.

They even called in the Bishop of Middleton and the Electoral Reform Society to try a Michael Edwardes-style ballot about a ballot — all over the head of the unions.

Kevin Coen explains: 'The Tories had got it across that the bosses could have a field day. Employers are using the recession to take a hammer to the unions, and nine times out of ten they are getting away with it.'

'Now people have got to say: What about Gardner's. We're going back victorious, full of confidence. We won't be messed about again. I hope others will



Photo: Kevin Coen

Photo: Kevin Coen

follow our example. We had people saying before that you can't fight. We've proved it — you can!

Gardner's workers are going back stronger than ever before. Mick Smethurst, one of the apprentices involved in the strike, says: 'We've won one battle. Now we have to win the war. I would advise other places to organise for someone from Gardner's to tell them how we did it, and why — to give them some incentive.'

The message from Gardner's workers to Thatcher and her friends is simply put by Kevin Coen: 'We want other workers to say we're not going to be made redundant, we're going to follow Gardner's example.'

The £ and p of solidarity

THE delegation and fundraising committees at Gardner's were the centre of activity in the occupation. They sent groups of Gardner's workers all over the country to raise support.

Tens of thousands of pounds were collected. Levies were being organised in five districts of the Engineering Union — the main union involved in the dispute — and in many factories.

When the victory came, the oc-

cupation had just received a cheque for £1,000 from Upper Clyde Shipbuilders and a pledge of £5,000 from a power station in London.

Much of this financial support was fought for by the Gardner's workers themselves. They found tremendous enthusiasm at union branches and shop steward committees around Britain.

Kevin Coen says: 'We won this strike without a lot of help from the AUEW head office. They even messed us about with our £9 a week strike pay. It was one thing

getting the dispute made official, and another getting the bloody money out of them.'

Gardner's workers were lucky. Their union organisation was good and the company had orders in.

Kevin Coen again: 'The majority of the working class, if they could see the union leaders supporting their struggles, it would be different. The union officials have to show a lead from the top. We could have done a lot more if Labour Party leaders had come behind us.'

'We need national instructions for action' - Welsh steelworkers

By Celia Pugh

MINERS and steel workers joined other trade unionists in a lobby of the TUC nationalised industries committee in Cardiff on 17 November.

The 150 lobbyists — including delegates from the South Wales NUM lodges and the miners' executive, the Llanwern and Port Talbot steel action groups, Cardiff Trades Council and many political organisations — demanded that the TUC should lead national industrial action on jobs.

They also called for a special TUC conference to prepare plans for this action.

Carl Timbrell, an Electricians' Union member of the Port Talbot action group explained: 'It's unprintable what I could say about this nationalised industries committee.'

Power

'During the steel dispute they did all in their power to block strike action for jobs. We've got to pressure them to call for national strike action. It's about time someone stood up and did something about getting this government out.'

Vincent Court, from the South Wales NUM executive, backed this up:

'I don't agree with the civil disobedience nonsense coming from the Wales TUC. Our movement has its traditions. If we want to start a fight it has to mean strike action.'

An open letter from the organisers of the lobby, the Llanwern steel action group, spelt out these demands. So did a letter from Plaid Cymru which argued that 'workers in factories should be encouraged to occupy their workplaces'.

Lobby

The nationalised industries committee finally agreed to meet a delegation from the lobby. Moss Evans chairperson of the committee, said:

'In the past, many national decisions have not been followed through by the TUC. We can discuss whether the problem lay with the leadership or the membership.'

'But we can now say categorically, where there is action on jobs, the TUC leadership will be behind you. We will give you maximum support.'

At a later press conference, Evans reiterated this position: 'Appeals to the government to change its mind are falling on stony ground. If you cannot persuade people through logic and persuasion, then we must do so through industrial action.'

But then came the rub — 'This industrial action will not be initiated nationally, but from below,' Evans added.

Members

Speaking on behalf of the lobby delegation, Tommy Lyons, Electricians' Union branch secretary from Port Talbot replied: 'It seems that you are saying that if the members don't act then you will do nothing.'

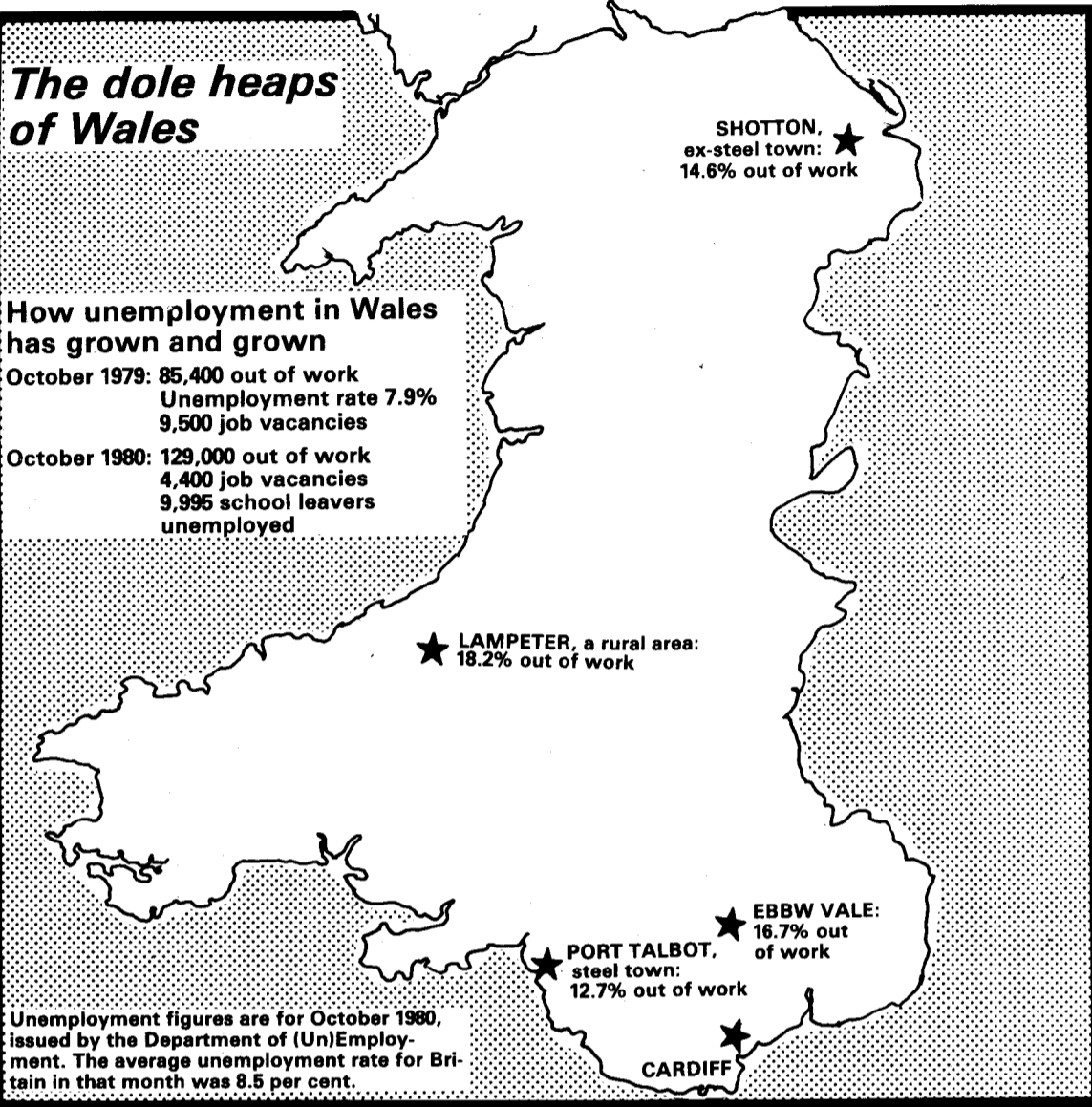
The dole heaps of Wales

How unemployment in Wales has grown and grown

October 1979: 85,400 out of work
Unemployment rate 7.9%
9,500 job vacancies

October 1980: 129,000 out of work
4,400 job vacancies
9,995 school leavers unemployed

Unemployment figures are for October 1980, issued by the Department of (Un)Employment. The average unemployment rate for Britain in that month was 8.5 per cent.



'The difficulties we face inside the plants are created because no positive lead has come from the TUC. We need national instructions for action. A national conference, backed by regional conferences is needed to prepare the ground for strike action.'

A subsequent meeting of lobbyists considered the outcome of the delegation meeting with the TUC committee. Ray Davies, chairperson of the Llanwern action group, remarked: 'We are in a stronger position after today.'

'We have achieved something through our lobby. We can now go back to

our plants and say that any action we take will get the backing of the TUC. We couldn't say that at the beginning of the year.'

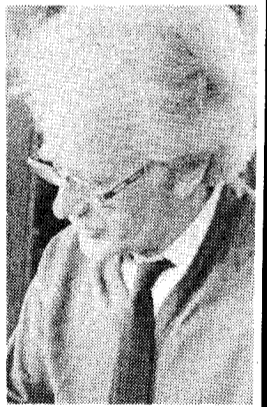
The Port Talbot action group and NUM representatives agreed with this, but referring to Moss Evans' statement that 'If the members decide they don't want action then today's decision will be meaningless', Carl Timbrell added:

'We must now turn to the steel unions' leaders and make sure that they take a lead for industrial action against redundancies.'

TOMMY LYONS, Electricians' Union branch secretary, Port Talbot steel plant:

'We know the steel and coal industries won't last another three years of Thatcher. Our target has to be to get rid of the Tory government.'

'Even if the TUC choose a different target and try to change the Tories' minds, they will still need industrial action. Nothing else will have an effect.'



John Sturrock (Report)

RON SAINT, South Wales NUM executive:

'The miners of South Wales have had enough. We will strike against pit closures. The Tories are attacking us on every front — pay, cuts, closures, social security benefits, the lot.'

'We have to take them on. If the ball has to start rolling somewhere, we'll start it in South Wales, but then the TUC must take a lead and make it national.'

ISTC Conference: More Closures or a national Fightback

Patrick Sikorski

THERE were a lot of empty seats at the annual conference of the steel union, the ISTC, held at

Congress House last Saturday.

They should have been filled by delegates representing the 50,000 steelworkers who have lost their jobs this year.

The response from general secretary Bill Sirs to those delegates who attacked the executive for not organising a national fightback and who wanted national industrial action in the event of any further closures and job loss, was that 'when they say the EC has been dodging its responsibilities it makes me puke'.

Sirs wasn't half so sick as most of the delegates at the end of what was more a rally than a conference.

Even in a normal year an ISTC conference cannot make decisions that are binding on the executive but after the steel strike Sirs and the executive had wanted to cancel the week-long delegate conference.

Only a storm of protest from the branches forced the executive to hold a one-day conference that lasted just 4½ hours and had no resolutions placed before it.

Undaunted, delegates from the floor argued for a fighting alternative to save the 25,000 jobs which are still threatened as a result of the European Common Market Steel Agreement — the D'Avignon Plan — and BSC's Corporate Plan due for publication on 12 December.

Ray Davis, an ISTC branch secretary from Llanwern and a supporter of the Llanwern Steel Action Group, called for an 'end to isolationism and a national fightback now'.



GM Cookson (Socialist Challenge)

RAY DAVIES, ISTC Llanwern steel action group:

'Demonstrations are magic but the Tories have a majority in parliament. Action there has no impact.'

'The main defence of the working class is action by trade unions. The dockers showed that with their national strike threat. We want this sort of action from the TUC.'

Unity moves between Welsh miners and steelworkers

'THE rumoured closure of a steel plant in South Wales would be devastating for Welsh pits,' said a miners' leader last week.

This was the message given by Don Hayward, South Wales NUM administrative officer, to representatives of the Llanwern steel action group.

Earlier this year, the British Steel Corporation stopped the use of Welsh coking coal at the Port Talbot steel plant. A cut of almost a third in Welsh coking coal production followed.

These are the harsh facts behind the unity now building up between steelworkers and miners in Wales. The joint lobby of the TUC held this month was just a start. Talks are underway about more joint meetings, demonstrations, and newsletters.

Miners and steelworkers are both campaigning for national industrial action against pit and steel closures.

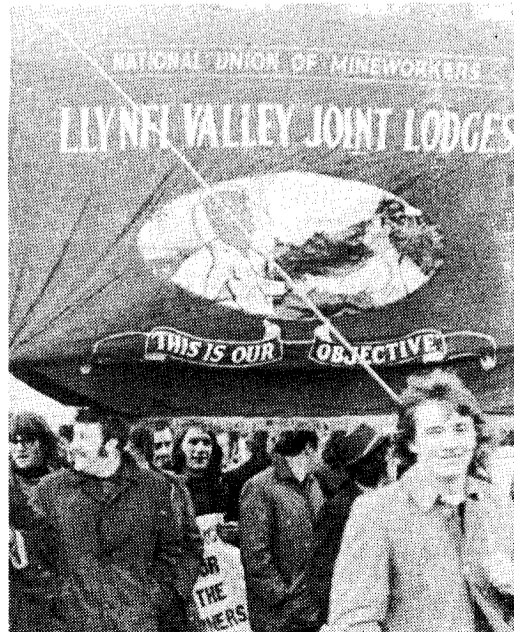
Ten Welsh pits are threatened with closure in the next 12 months, with a job loss of 7,600. The South Wales NUM executive has a clear mandate from miners for strike action as soon as these threats are carried out.

Yorkshire NUM executive is campaigning for the same response from its members if the eight Yorkshire pits are axed.

Arthur Scargill, Yorkshire NUM president, estimates that 25,000 pit jobs could disappear in Britain in the next two and a half years as 50 pits are shut.

Waterworkers in Wales are planning strike action for a 35-hour week and against Tory wage restraint. Firefighters and civil servants are joining their English and Scottish sisters and brothers in strike action to break the 6 per cent pay norm.

Despite setbacks earlier this year, Welsh workers are rebuilding their confidence to take on the Tories with united industrial action.

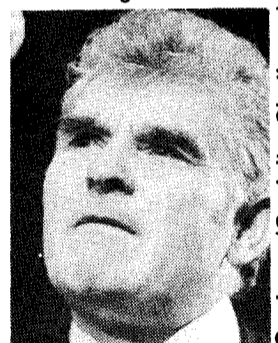


WELSH miners on the march — alongside steelworkers, they want national industrial action against closures

The dockers had shown the way, he said. When 178 were threatened with redundancy in Liverpool they had replied with a national strike call.

'We can't hide behind the skirts of the TUC or look to parliament or the EEC,' Ray added. 'This union has to fight. This EC having been put into office must take on the responsibilities of leadership and authorise national industrial action against any further job loss.'

Delegates from Scotland, Corby and Workington spoke in favour of this approach, and 77 delegates, including three executive members and two full-time officials signed a Llanwern Steel Action Group national steelworkers petition calling for 'the executive committee of the steel unions to take necessary steps to call for a national strike', 'to lay plans for this industrial action, and to organise a campaign throughout the plants to win support from the membership.'



BILL SIRS — not as sick as some

GM Cookson (Socialist Challenge)

The great benefits robbery

By Alison Cooper

DEMONSTRATIONS were held last Monday all over the country to protest against massive cuts in social security payments introduced the same day.

These cuts are the result of two recent Acts of parliament which also threaten the jobs of social security staff. One million, eight

hundred and five thousand claimants will be worse off, and, through delaying the date of the annual increase in benefits by two weeks, £125m will be cut from the social security budget.

Other measures include cutting payments to strikers, and only increasing unemployment, sickness, and, invalidity benefit by 11.5 per cent instead of 16.5 per cent, the estimated rate of inflation.

The demonstrators included unemployed, retired, sick and disabled claimants and members of the two civil service unions. This represents a significant strengthening in unity between claimants and civil service workers.



Sheffield Labour Party votes to sell houses

By Rab Bird, AUEW

ON the advice of the district Labour Party in Sheffield, the city council has decided to sell council houses. Support for this proposal at the district meeting, which was attended by 130 delegates, was overwhelming.

What decided the meeting was the announcement from officials of district 28 of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions, which represents 50,000 local workers, that there was no support on the shopfloor to fight the sales at this time.

There is significant pressure for a fight on jobs, services, and housing in

Sheffield. But the ruling Labour group has preferred to listen to the district Labour Party than get out into the factories and find out the real mood on the shopfloor.

Sector

When the Gardner's workers visited Sheffield they received massive support from every sector of the labour movement. They raised thousands of pounds in shopfloor collections, and won the support of all the main engineering factories.

For many, the Gardner's occupation represented the front-line in the fight against redundancies. With Heseltine's auction of council homes, and his ban on building new houses, the effects of the cuts are becoming increasingly obvious.

A small but significant step in linking activists in the Labour Party and on the shopfloor in Sheffield are the new Labour Party factory branches. These have been set up in three of the largest engineering works in the city.

Plans are under way to establish a branch for council workers, and another for the local hospitals.

These branches can be far more than simply discussion groups or recruiting grounds. One of the first jobs is to ensure that they are represented on local general committees and the district party to bring workplaces issues into the heart of the party.

Defeat

The factory branches will need to play a vital role in bringing the fight against the Tories on cuts, jobs, and missiles directly into the workplace. At the end of the day, it will be shopfloor power that will defeat the Tories.

5,000 march for Eileen Crosbie

By Roger Tanner

FIVE thousand teachers from all over England and Wales demonstrated in Nottingham last week to demand the reinstatement of Eileen Crosbie.

Eileen was sacked in January for refusing to teach a nursery class with more than the recommended number of pupils.

The demonstration, called by the executive of the National Union of Teachers, showed the strength of feeling on the issue and for the union to take a militant stand against education cutbacks.

The executive has organised a ballot of all Nottinghamshire teachers to allow extensive strike action in the new year.

Members of the union's executive committee did not convince their members that they were totally committed to such action. Motions to the executive are needed from all areas demanding that they support the Notts campaign.

Lambeth steering committee

Planning action against the cuts

By Vanessa Wiseman
President, Lambeth Trades Council

DELEGATES from all over the country came to the first meeting of the steering committee elected by the Lambeth anti-cuts conference earlier this month.

They decided on a plan of activity to follow on from the success of the conference.

The 6 per cent wage limit was seen as yet another attack on local government services. With strict cash limits being imposed by the Tories, there are even fewer options open to workers and councillors who want to maintain services and jobs.

Michael Heseltine has now postponed the date for the announcement of the new rate support grant, which determines the levels of local government subsidy from Westminster.

to argue that the rest of the movement should adopt the same fighting policies as the Lambeth conference.

The Liverpool demonstration this Saturday will be an ideal opportunity to win support for the Lambeth positions. The steering committee has agreed to produce a leaflet to publicise the policies needed to fight cuts. We hope to be able to produce an anti-cuts newsletter.

Stand

Action against the cuts has to have the support of both labour councillors and local and national trades unionists.

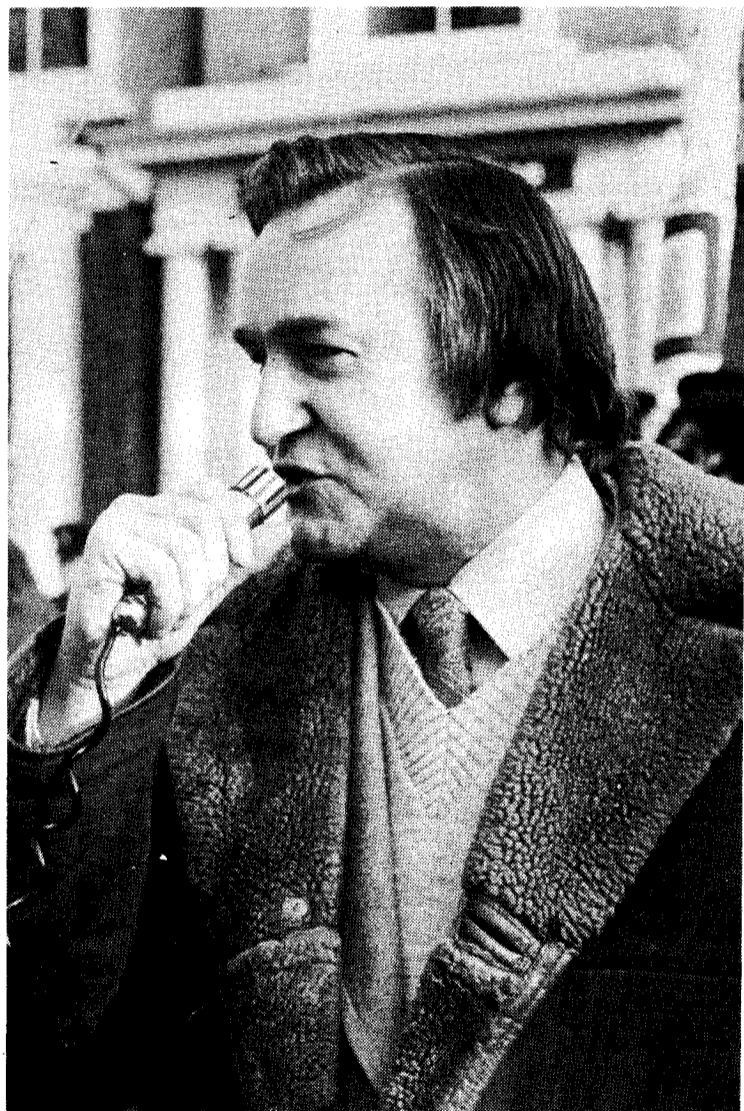
Lambeth manual unions have taken a firm stand. They are planning two weeks of strike action aimed against the Tories. They hope that this will coincide with any fight against the new 6 per cent pay policy, especially if the Fire Brigades Union is on strike.

Ted Knight, along with other Labour council leaders has to maintain a determined stand against cuts. Lambeth is at the forefront of the anti-cuts fight, and the steering committee wants to make sure that Ted Knight is not left to stand alone.

The date set for the recall conference is 17 January. We want it to be a working conference, to plan solidarity action against the Tories and with any section of the public sector fighting back.

Unlike the last conference, this one will be open to delegates from local Labour Party wards, industrial unions, and shop stewards committees. We want it to be the broadest conference possible, to make sure that the Tory plans for the public sector are stopped once and for all.

Credentials are available from: Local Government in Crisis, Steering Committee, Room 103, Lambeth Town Hall, Brixton Hill, London SW2 1RW.



TED KNIGHT

Photo: Ted Storrer

Rush

It was due to be announced on 4 December, but is now delayed until some time in January. It gives local authorities even less time to plan action against cuts, and right-wing councils will use this as an excuse to make cuts. The delay will force councils to rush the preparation of their budgets, and in the rush cuts will be made.

The postponement ironically coincides with the special Labour Party local government conference called for 6 December by the party executive in order to divert support from the Lambeth conference.

The Tories will be watching to see if the 'official' cuts conference decides to organise any fightback. The Lambeth steering committee will be sending Ted Knight, leader of Lambeth Labour council

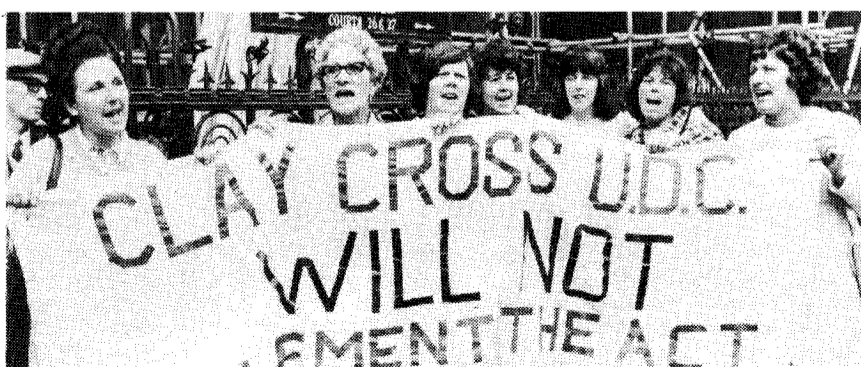
Policies to fight the cuts

ON 1 November, hundreds of delegates from all over the country attended the one-day conference called by Lambeth Labour Party and trade unions to plan action against Tory cuts in local government.

After a wide-ranging discussion, the conference voted on resolutions and amendments. The following are extracts from the policy statement adopted by the conference.

The statement outlines the action needed from both trade unionists and Labour councillors to save jobs and services:

'Specifically, Labour councils and councillors should undertake...



Clay Cross fought last Tory government alone - the same mustn't happen to Lambeth.

- *no cuts in jobs or services - no redundancies;
- *to maintain services, with no running down of direct labour;
- *no rent rises or supplementary rate increases this financial year... or... to compensate for government cuts;
- *no sales of council

- houses or land, with Lambeth and all other councils reversing their decisions to sell houses;
- *to work with local anti-cuts committees and community groups to build up local support among residents;
- *to introduce a 35-hour week for all employees...

'A campaign against the cuts can best be effectively launched in the first instance by local councils taking an uncompromising stand against government policies, with the support of trade unionists in the public and private sectors taking action to defend jobs and services...

Photo: Peter Harrap (Report)

'Where Labour councillors carry out cuts, their Labour parties should fight for their replacement by those who are not prepared to make cuts...'

The conference voted that: 'Trade unionists should consider...

- *refusing to co-operate with new government legislation, for example the sale of council houses, and to take strike action against victimisation...
- *refusing to co-operate with management whenever cuts are involved...
- *taking industrial action if redundancies are threatened. This could include withdrawal of co-operation, union meetings in working hours, lightning walk-outs, strikes and occupations of premises...
- *no crossing of picket lines...
- *no cover for vacancies and a campaign against voluntary redundancies and 'natural wastage'... stopp-

ing overtime and fight for a shorter working week...

*Non co-operation with the introduction of new technology...

*refusal to deal with increased charges...

In order to implement these policies, the conference voted to 'establish a steering committee to organise a systematic campaign to win support for action against Tory attacks on local government; to exchange and disseminate information on the action being taken in different labour movement organisations, especially details of those councils, trade unions and Labour parties willing to make the commitments called for by this conference.

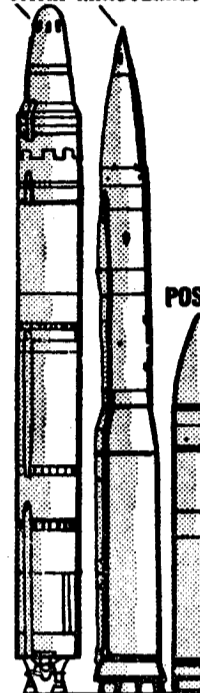
'This steering committee should be mandated to call a further conference to organise action in support of councils or councillors penalised by the Tories.'

The full statement is available from: Local government in crisis - steering committee, Room 103, Lambeth Town Hall, Brixton Hill, London SW2 1RW.

Arms race - US the odds on favourite

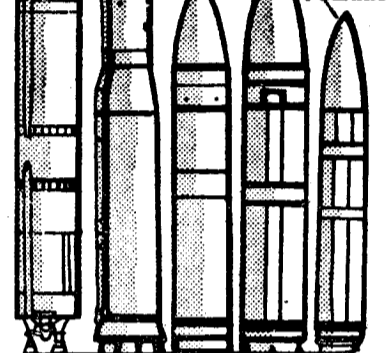


MISSILES:



CRUISE MISSILES:
The new mobile nuclear missile deployed throughout the Eastern Bloc

POSEIDON TRIDENT POLARIS



SINCE the end of the Second World War, capitalist politicians and their media have continually warned of the buildup of Soviet military might.

They have painted a frightening picture of a peace-loving, democratic West, striving to keep up with, or stay just ahead of the Soviet nuclear menace.

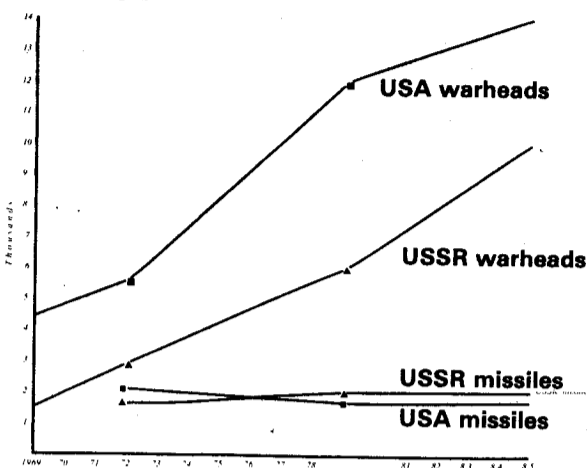
This idea of a neck-and-neck race is ludicrous, and you won't find any sane bookie laying a price against the USA.

Ever since the first atomic bombs wiped out the populations of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Russians have trailed well behind the Western powers in nuclear capacity.

The nuclear 'race' started on the 6 August 1945, at Hiroshima, when the US dramatically announced to the world that it had perfected an atomic bomb and was fully prepared to use it.

In 1946, a year after the two bombs had been dropped, the Soviet Union had neither atomic weapons nor missiles. The Red Army had nothing more advanced

Military balance: missiles and warheads



Same number of missiles - but not of warheads.

than 'tactical' and 'conventional' weapons and it took the Soviet Union until 1949 to perfect its own atomic bomb.

Soon the USSR was behind again as the Americans exploded the hydrogen bomb.

In 1960 the US produced the nuclear-powered Polaris submarine, which was equipped with missiles with a range of 1200 nautical miles. It took the Soviet Union until 1980 to catch up in this

particular area.

In 1968 the USA introduced the Multiple Re-entry Vehicle (MRV), a device which increases the number of targets a single missile can hit. It took the Soviets two years to catch up with that one.

In the same year the USSR did sneak the lead in developing anti-ballistic missile missiles and deployed 64 of them around Moscow to defend the capital. Within a fairly short time the

ABMs had been rejected as militarily ineffective.

In 1970 the USA turned out the MIRV, a multiple warhead that enables one missile to hit three to 10 individually selected targets as far apart as 100 miles.

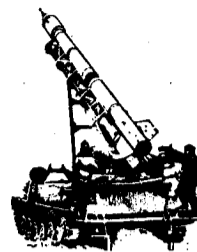
At the latest count the USA leads the arms race with a total of 8,870 warheads to Russia's 3,810. When you add in the British and French stocks of nuclear weapons the lead stretches even further.

Now the Cruise missile is arriving on the scene with an accuracy down to 30 metres, capable of flying under radar and therefore able to strike without warning.

It is also relatively cheap. The 200 missiles being developed by Boeing are expected to cost less than \$750,000 each, which is a lot less than a modern battle tank.

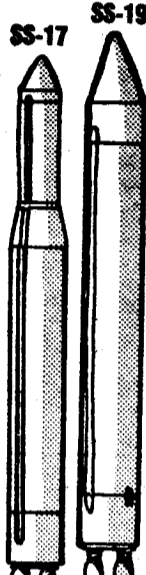
The plan is to arm between 80 to 130 B52G planes with 20 long-range missiles each by the mid-'80s. This will increase the total killing power of the US strategic nuclear forces by a factor of more than 100 over the 1979 figure.

By then the so-called nuclear arms race will have turned into a procession.



SS-20 The new mobile nuclear missile deployed throughout the Eastern Bloc

MISSILES



Democracy and the bomb

MARGARET Thatcher and company, along with Bill Rodgers and his friends, say we need nuclear weapons to defend our democratic way of life. Yet the 'Mother of Parliaments' did not have a single discussion on nuclear weapons from 1964 to 1980.

Not that nothing was happening in those years; frantic nuclear stockpiling was taking place, and Britain itself was steadily increasing its military expenditure.

The last Labour government actually boosted its military commitment in real terms by three per cent in response to a request from NATO.

In 1973, Tory premier Edward Heath personally authorised the 'Chevaline' programme. This involved modernising the nuclear warheads on Britain's Polaris missiles. When Heath was swept out of office in 1974, Labour inherited the programme.

Later Callaghan, Healey, Owen, and Mulley got together and agreed to sanc-

ON THIS page BOB PENNINGTON shows how the ruling class defends democracy with the aid of nuclear weapons, and how draconian laws will permit them to shoot, out of hand, those undemocratic people who object to being fried to death.



Defence Secretary Francis Pym in the cockpit of a Tornado fighter

He also looks at the 'Arms Race' and insists that all the evidence shows that the USA has led that 'contest' from pillar to post. As Pennington says, no sane bookie would quote you odds against the US winning.

No comment

'HYSTERICAL exchanges between several local councillors reduced our first Nuclear Home Defence committee to a shambles,' said Mr Bob Tufton, a veteran of two world wars.

'I told the meeting that it was our job to explode the myth that the country would be destroyed in a nuclear holocaust. My calculations reveal that at least 3 per cent of the population of West Suffolk would survive.'

'The trouble started when Miss Fritch said that no provision had been made for chemical toilets. She reckoned we would need about 8000 chemical toilets to carry on in the normal way. This produced some jeering from the defeatist element on the committee, one of whom asked what we would do when 100,000 contaminated Londoners poured into our village. I said that this figure was most unreliable considering PFR - Probable Fatality Rate - but if they came they would be shot.'

'Bob Tufton is a lunatic,' said Mr George Williams a Labour councillor. 'What we need is a one-day survival seminar. But we could not debate anything because all the plans are secret.'

● From the 'Sussex Express' 18 April 1980. Quoted by Christopher Logue in 'Private Eye'.

13,000 Hiroshimas

THE Home Office planners say that a nuclear attack on Britain today would involve nuclear weapons equivalent to about 13,000 bombs of the type dropped on Hiroshima.

That bomb killed at least 200,000 people. Women had still birthing thousands of people were driven mad.

There were at least 6,500 A-Bomb orphans.

tion Chevaline at a cost of one thousand million pounds. This was a decision in defiance of official Labour policy so no one told the Cabinet, the House of Commons, the Labour Party executive, or the British people.

The money spent was hidden from public view by civil servants performing their patriotic duty - in other circles they call it fiddling the books.

Parliament had no more say on the question of Cruise missiles. The decision to locate this weapon in Britain was taken at a NATO meeting in Brussels on 12 December 1979. On 24 January 1980 a hapless House of Commons was informed of NATO's pre-Xmas gift, and, for the first time, of the Chevaline programme.

My old Sunday school teacher used to insist that 'God works in strange and mysterious ways'. So, presumably, does parliamentary democracy; its defence involves undemocratic measures including the suppression of facts.

As the Tory Euro-MP, Mr

It looks bad

'I THINK what we have to tell them will scare the pants off them.... What we are asking councillors to envisage is so appalling that they will have difficulty accepting it.'

— Bernard Brook-Parttridge, chairperson of the Greater London Council's public services committee, November 1978.

James Scott-Hopkins explains, you can not tell people what a nuclear war involves otherwise there would be 'unwarranted panic'.

Lord Belstead, who is boss of civil defence affairs at the Home Office feels that defending peoples' democratic right to survive a nuclear holocaust has to take second place to saving money. He rejects the idea of a national shelter system because it would cost 'billions and billions and billions of pounds'.

Instead he favours spend-

Your new diet

ROBIN Mead, vice chairperson of Civil Aid, told a press conference in February 1978: '...after a nuclear attack people would have to take what they could get. If you saw a frog running about you would have to wash it down to get rid of radioactive dust, cook it and eat it.'

ing an extra £18m to provide deep shelters for central and regional government. Everybody else has to whitewash their windows, wrap jackets around their heads and make sure the gas and electricity is turned off - measures recommended in the Home Office pamphlet *Protect and Survive*.

The state has made - in secret - careful preparations to look after democracy in the event of a nuclear war. It is concerned about trouble-makers who might have some objection to being burnt to a

cinder.

Clearly you cannot have these people causing trouble during a 'long warning' period. So the state has given itself the power to take over all news services.

In the last 48 to 24 hours of the 'warning period', the government will pass power over to local commissioners, granting them dictatorial authority, including the right to execute people.

The regional authorities will operate through the police and military to make sure that the local population does its democratic duty. If the need arises, they will resort to weapons.

These measures are designed to make sure that people can't take action against the threat of a nuclear war, or, if a war does take place, that the few survivors will be unable to vent their wrath on Thatcher and co, when they emerge from their deep shelters.

Of course the people who will run the news services, and the commissioners who will hand out the death sentences, will not be elected. These last-

ditch defenders of democracy will be upper class thugs, appointed by the ruling class and responsible to the ruling class alone.

The only choice we will have - if we allow them to have their way - will be to be blown to smithereens in a nuclear war or, if we survive that, to be shot by some state-appointed killer for protesting too hard about our fate.

Socialists and Poland

I HAVE turned to Socialist Challenge because the International Marxist Group seems to have a more rational outlook than either the Socialist Workers Party or the Communist Party, especially on international affairs.

But I am not clear on your attitude to Poland. Socialists must support free trade unions, at least in capitalist countries, but what are the Polish strikers demanding? Apparently higher wages and more food in the shops. But how will higher wages put more food in the shops?

Obviously it is necessary to reorganise agriculture on socialist lines, but nobody demands that.

To make matters worse, it appears that Polish workers are demanding religious education in schools; that children should be brought up to believe in the father-ruled family, as ordained by an almighty male god.

The Polish Pope has made his position clear: no divorce, no contraception, no abortion. The Catholic Church, like Islam, is an international menace, in spite of the active participation of individual priests in revolutionary activity.

These same people, on the achievement of their revolutionary objective, would send women back into the home to be dominated by men.

The long-expected Russian invaders of Poland have still (at the time of writing) got 'snow on their boots'. I think that whether or not they invade depends on how far the Soviet Union believes the 'free world' has got its fingers into the Polish pie.

The USSR cannot afford to have the enemy on its very frontiers. Today it is, as in the '30s, in danger of simultaneous attack from both east and west.

Is the Soviet Union a progressive or a reactionary world force? The SWP does not answer this question, and neither does the CP. Can the IMG answer it?

Yours for socialist unity

KATHLEEN JONES,
Shrewsbury

Building a popular women's movement

I AM accused by Esther Saraga of being 'wholly negative about the activities of the women's liberation movement', with the exception of Women's Aid and the National Abortion Campaign (letters, 6 Nov).

My article was not directed towards the women's liberation movement as a whole. It was an attempt to raise some questions about the success of the socialist feminist current.

I think Esther's response is too defensive; Women Against Racism and Fascism was important in encouraging women to fight racism, particularly during the Grunwick strike, but I would maintain that it had a sectarian attitude towards the Anti Nazi League and this contributed towards its demise.

Likewise on Ireland the work that the women's movement is involved in around Armagh Jail has

Jazz: the music of democracy

J BELL's nit-picking (Letters, 13 Nov) over Skip Lazlo's interview with percussionist Max Roach is reminiscent of something that has bedevilled the British music press for years. What it boils down to, essentially, is a continual white whine: 'the niggers ain't playing it (or saying it) the way they used to'.

Far from being 'incoherent rubbish', Roach's brief statements are welcome and overdue in the left press which, incidentally, generally reflects this country's media conspiracy to ignore the process of African-American art music.

But more importantly, few musicians have devoted so much of their life to political change. Roach has been continually at the

forefront of black struggle, and to castigate him as a 'loonie' because he uses the word democracy in a way your correspondent fails to recognise, does great disservice to an individual whose radical stance is a matter of record.

True, Lazlo's rather inaccurate grasp of some aspects of the music's history obscured some of Roach's comments, but lack of space probably accounted for his failure to put in context what the drummer said concerning Billie Holiday's 'Lady in Satin'.

For the record, although this album was cut when the singer was a shadow of her former self, it is regarded by musicians and listeners alike as one of her classic recordings. As a reflection of the

way America destroys its most talented individuals it is deeply — painfully — moving, yet it is the music's capacity to convey the personal history of the artist which, as Roach also points out, sets it apart.

'Jazz' (for want of a better word) is indeed 'the music of democracy', providing an opportunity for interaction and development not found in symphonic music. It is the perfect antidote to conformity, too.

Roach was not implying that the music he helped to shape was a backdrop for the American Dream. Rather he made it clear that the music exists *despite* the repression surrounding those who create it.

VAL WILMER, London SW12



Max Roach in action

been vital in highlighting brutality in Ireland, but some women have dismissed the significance of building a movement for troop withdrawal here in Britain.

The issue of *Scarlet Woman* about Ireland that Esther referred to did not have one article explaining why troop withdrawal was something British women could fight for now.

Socialist feminism has to avoid falling into the trap set for so many British socialists of concentrating on 'consciousness raising' within the movement as an alternative to building a popular movement for

women's liberation.

Feminists have had the greatest impact when they have united in action on key aspects of women's oppression; abortion and battered women were simply given as two examples of this. A failure to understand this could mean that socialist feminists turn their backs on the problems of building a popular movement — very vital in the present economic climate — and instead adopt an insular approach. This was my point in writing the article.

VALERIE COULTAS,
Birmingham

Adwest dispute — urgent appeal

MANY readers of this paper will have followed the events of the Adwest dispute in Reading, where 60 workers were sacked for defending a worker victimised during a struggle for a decent wage rise and greater democratic rights in the factory.

Our sacked convenor, Danny Broderick, was arrested on 2 July for standing alone in the gateway during a mass picket. At the mass picket on 14 July, 26 more people were arrested for defending the right to picket.

Unfortunately, in the face of overwhelming odds, we have not been able to achieve our demands. But our work is not over. We urgently need money for bills arising out of our campaign and for costs incurred in fighting the court cases.

We ask all our supporters to help us out once again. If you can make a donation, please write to: D Broderick, 46 Berkeley Ave, Reading, Berks. All donations will be acknowledged.

The equal responsibility cop-out on the bomb

CONSIDERABLE confusion has arisen in the discussion of Soviet nuclear weapons.

Of course, as socialists we are for the complete abandonment of nuclear weapons; we are totally opposed to nuclear war. We agree with John Strauther (letters, 20 Nov) that there are no 'workers' bombs', and we insist, as Brian Grogan does in his 9 October 'Arguments for Socialism' piece, that 'the vast defence spending of the USSR is totally unjustified.'

But having said all this we must face the real world. The US ruling class is leading a major Western re-armament drive, involving a new round of particularly horrendous nuclear weaponry, tied as it is to notions of 'first strike capability' and 'limited nuclear war'.

Together with the \$25bn Rapid Deployment Force, and the massive military exercises in the Gulf and the Caribbean, this constitutes imperialism's response to a tremendous rise in the struggles against poverty and oppression over the last several years.

The Soviet weapons are not defensive, in the sense that they, like any other nuclear weapons can blow millions to pieces. It is a matter of fact, however, that the USSR has armed in response to the initiatives taken by the West.

We do not believe that by entering this insane race the Soviet bureaucrats have the interests of the world revolution at heart. Far from it. Their arms serve the purposes of nuclear diplomacy, seeking always to find a peaceful division of the world with capitalism — a starting point completely at odds with those fighting to overthrow poverty and oppression!

But despite our opposition to the politics of the Kremlin, it is obvious that the main danger to world revolution comes from imperialism. And it is US imperialism that leads the current war drive. Equal responsibility arguments, therefore,

rest on a false premise and are a cop-out from the actual class struggles being waged across the globe.

So far, some say, we have agreement. But why shouldn't we demand that the USSR disarm their existing nuclear weapons as a spur to mobilisation against such weapons in the West? Because the Soviet nuclear bomb does have a deterrent effect.

We can debate the precise boundaries of such deterrence, but given that imperialism has launched two mighty invasions so far this century, designed to overthrow the gains of the Russian October 1917 revolution, and has already used nuclear devices twice in pursuit of its goal, it would be the height of folly to demand Russian disarmament before the West.

It is US-led imperialism that stalks the gory road to war.

PAUL SMITH, London

What's Left

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

HARINGEY Troops Out Movement. Public meeting on hunger strike. Supported by local Labour Party. Video on H Block. Speakers include: TOM, Sinn Fein, Irish Republican Socialist Party, plus others. Tue 2 Dec at 8pm. Brabant Road Community Centre, Brabant Rd, Wood Green, London N22.

IRISH Republican Socialist Party. Demonstration in support of the hunger strikers in Long Kesh. Assemble at the Crown, Cricklewood, 1.30pm Sat 29 Nov. March to Kilburn Sq.

EDINBURGH 'Victory to the Blanketmen! Political Status Now!' Public Meeting Wed 3 Dec 7.30pm. Trades Council Club, Picardy Place. Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! and Sinn Fein speakers. TOM and others invited.

SPARTACIST Meeting. Smash Britain's torture camps! No liberal schemes — Troops out of Ireland Now! What strategy for socialist revolution in Ireland? Speaker: David Strachan (SL/B Central Committee) 7.30pm Thur 4 Dec. St Clements Bldg, Room S175, London School of Economics. For further information ring 01-278 2232.

VICTORY to the Blanketmen! Political Status Now! Revolutionary Communist Group Public Meeting. Tues 2 Dec 7.30pm, The Club Room, Clapham Pool, Clapham Manor St, London SW4. Tube — Clapham North. Adm 25p.

THE SOCIALIST Bookfair moves into its fourth year on Fri 28 Nov 12.30-6.30pm, and Sat 29 Nov 11am to 5pm. Camden Town Hall, Euston Rd, London.

VICTORY to the Blanketmen! Political Status Now! Public meeting of Liverpool Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! 28 Nov 7.30pm, Stanley House, Upper Parliament St.

Labour Movement Conference on Abortion and Positive Legislation

The fight for positive legislation and against restrictive Bills needs the backing of all sections of the labour movement.

Please show your support by sending a delegate to the conference planning meetings, by sponsoring the conference, by sending out information and by sending a donation to conference funds.

More information from SAC, 374 Grays Inn Rd, London WC1

Workers Socialist League 6th Anniversary Rally

Speakers from Socialist Press and Trotskyist International Liaison Committee

Plus new film on H Block Hunger Strike and 'Courage of the People' (film on Workers' Struggles in Bolivia)

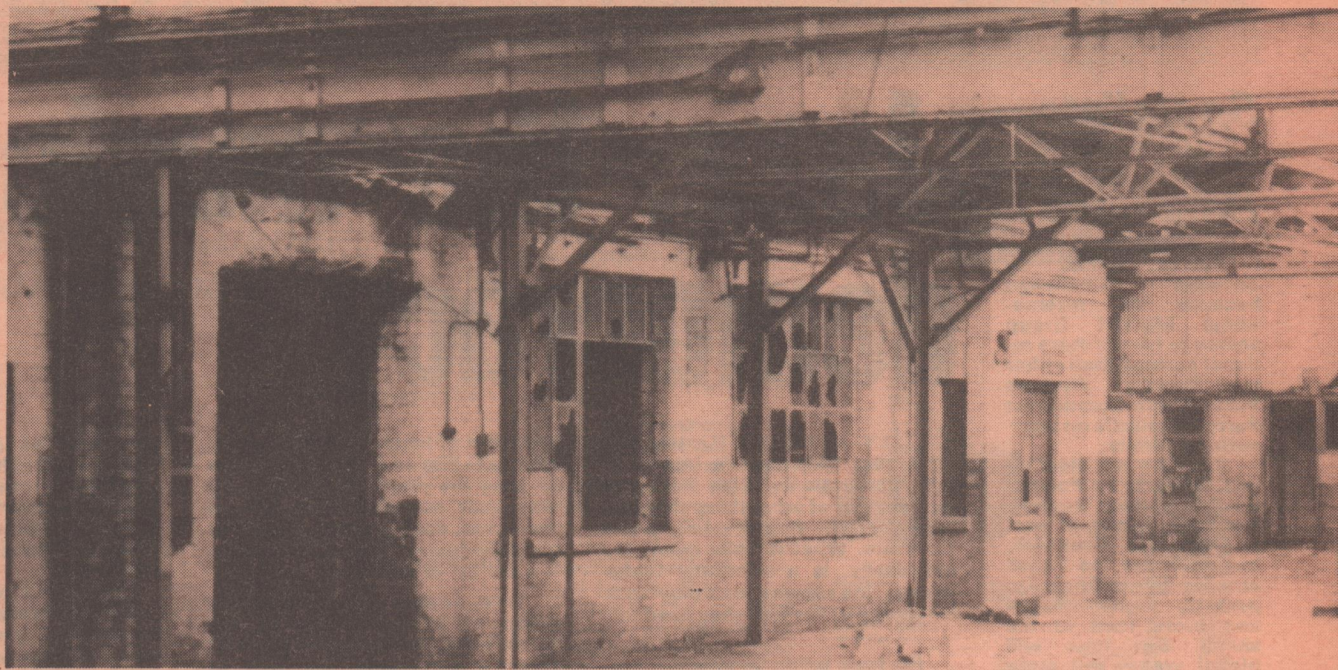
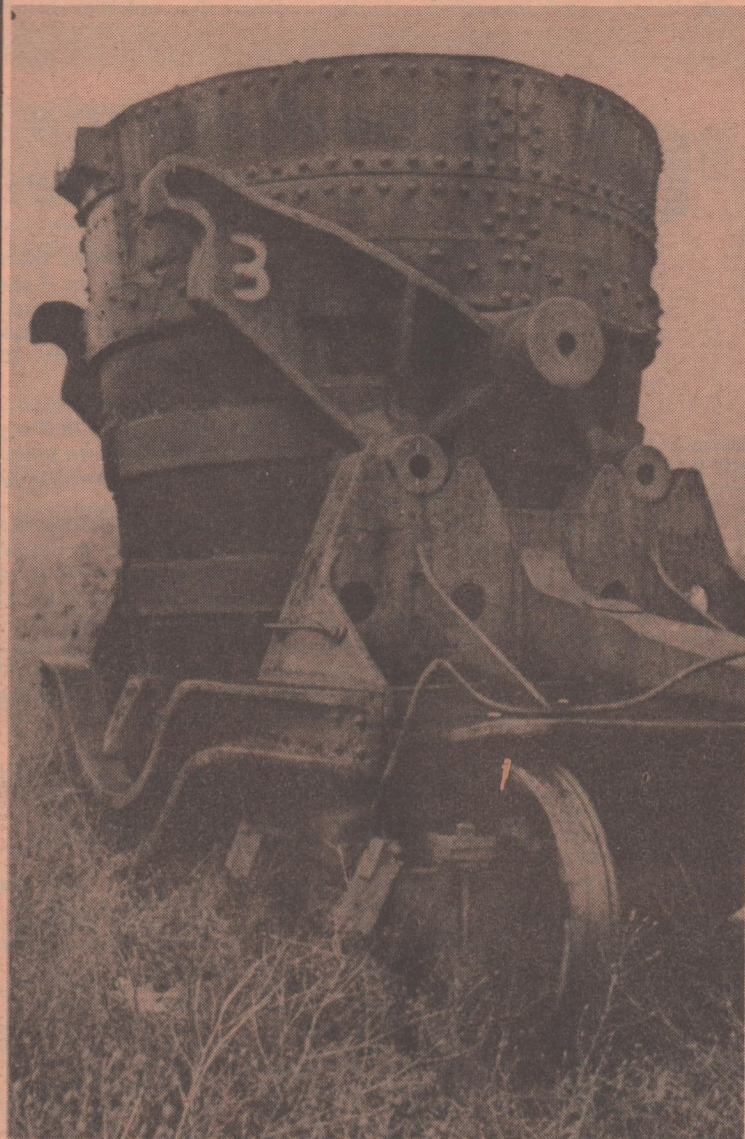
2.30pm Saturday 6 December

New Ambassadors Hotel, Upper Woburn Place, London WC1 (Opp. Euston Station)

Tickets £1.50 on the door

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.



This week, the papers have been full of the latest round of government cuts — another £3,500m off next year's government spending.

But this has created an immense problem for Thatcher because Minister of Defence Francis Pym refuses to allow the defence budget to be substantially cut.

Half of the proposed cuts will be in housing, education, and transport; the rest will be clawed back from working people in the form of increases in tax and national insurance. So much for the Tories' pledge to 'restore the real incentive to earn'.

They claim that these cuts are necessary. They claim that workers are pricing themselves out of a job, and that 'we' are living beyond our means. They claim that Britain can no longer afford high wages and good social services.

But the real question is whether Britain, or rather the British working class, can afford Thatcher and the capitalist system that she ruthlessly defends.

The priorities of the madhouse

In 1979 government spending totalled £114bn. Of that, nine and a half per cent, £11bn, went on arms. This proportion is planned to rise rapidly. Table One shows how arms spending is planned to rise in relation to other areas of government spending.

Among Tory commitments on arms spending is £7bn on the Trident missile. For the price of one Trident submarine — and there are to be six or seven — it would be possible to build 100 hospitals, 200 new schools or 50,000 new homes. Such projects are desperately needed and would guarantee long-term employment for thousands.

If we look at proposed government spending, the picture that emerges is of the Tories' commitment to class war against the working class.

They want to halve expenditure on employment and industry and housing and to completely abolish any subsidy to the nationalised industries.

By 1984, while defence

spending will jump over 13 per cent, the growing number on the dole will have to share with the poor and the sick an increase of just 3.8 per cent. It is worth remembering that social security benefits increased by 33 per cent over the last four years, and even then failed to keep pace with inflation.

The Tories plan to cut spending on housing by nearly 50 per cent. Spending on education, which at the present time

people. Anything concerned with the protection of the capitalist system will be protected.

Sacrifices at the Tory altar

The projections for government spending reveal more than a proposed attack on working class welfare services. While Thatcher plans to defend the capitalist system, individual

tional recession on the resources of British industry are dramatic. Increased competition for unstable markets forces industry to attempt to cut costs. Areas of production which may be essential from the point of human need are destroyed because their profitability has gone. Thousands are thrown on the dole.

This has two effects on firms attempting to stay afloat. First, fixed assets — buildings, machinery, and so on — are liquidated or closed in an attempt to get cash in hand. Second, they attempt to buy time by vast borrowing from the banks. These loans are used to prop up sagging profits, and re-equip in the face of mounting competition.

At the same time each firm has to minimise its wages' bill and the number of its workers — if the workers fight back there is more financial trouble. Borrowing from the banks and the liquidation of fixed assets is a 'live now, pay later' strategy. It is based on the belief that working class demands can be defeated and capitalism streamlined and stabilised.

But borrowing has immense repercussions both for the individual firm and the economy as a whole. The mountain of credit increases the money supply and fuels inflation, and the huge amounts that have to be paid in interest to the banks prevent individual firms from making a real recovery in profits. It is a vicious circle from which only the banks gain.

In 1978, private industry owed the banks £2,531m. By the first half of 1980 it was £5,154m. At this rate of expansion (which is unlikely given the recession), the figure would be over 12bn by 1982 — or 6½ per cent of the gross national product.

Because of huge interest payments, the profits of the banks are soaring, while those of industry are stagnating. In 1978, the profits of the big four banks — Barclays, Lloyds, the Midland, and the National Westminster — totalled £1,093m.

By 1979 this had increased to £1,563m. In the same period, profits in the private sector went down from £17,290m to £17,040m.

By and large, despite redundancies, the indebtedness of industry to the banks is not being unloaded on to the workers — it is eating into profit levels. No wonder the CBI has harsh words to say about Thatcher.

The domination of the banks is also graphically shown by the disastrous financial position of local authorities. With Heseltine slashing government subsidies, local councils are being crippled by interest repayments. Of the total local authority expenditure of £20.5bn last year, 17 per cent — £3.5bn — went on interest repayments. Heseltine will not cut that!

Finally, it is worth looking at the wealth being destroyed through the insanity of unemployment. According to John Harrison and Andrew Glynn, in their book *The British Economic Disaster*, the total cost of idle machinery and jobless workers in Britain is £42½bn per year — a staggering 25 per cent of the gross national product.

Unemployment is the greatest indictment of capitalism in Britain today. The resources that it destroys are essential to build a free and prosperous socialist society.

SOCIALIST BRITAIN

TO

PAUL SMITH

Spending on arms compared with social services			
Annual expenditure	£ million		£ million
Defence budget 1980-81	10,785	Hospital and community health services	8,389
of which		Child benefits	2,970
Pay & pensions for armed forces	3,017	Medical research	40
Defence research & development	1,479	Services for disabled	76
Upkeep of Polaris submarines	165	Welfare foods	33
Fighting vehicles	101		
Cost of individual items £m		£m	
One nuclear hunter-killer submarine	140	56 advanced passenger trains	140
One guided missile destroyer	85	3 hospitals each with 1,000 beds	76
One Tornado aircraft	10	833 houses	10
	£		£
One Milan anti-tank missile	7,000	One kidney machine	6,000
One 155mm illuminating ammunition shell	450	Schoolbooks for 100 children for one year	423

is substantially higher than on defence, will be cut by over ten per cent and will fall considerably behind defence.

The conclusion from any analysis of Tory plans is not just that they are planning cuts, but that they are quite consciously cutting those areas of spending which deal with the life and welfare of working

capitalists are going to have to pay a price as well.

As their anger at the CBI conference revealed, they are caught between the effects of the recession, government policy, and the demands of their workforce, who in many sectors are fighting back against wage cuts and job loss. The effects of the interna-

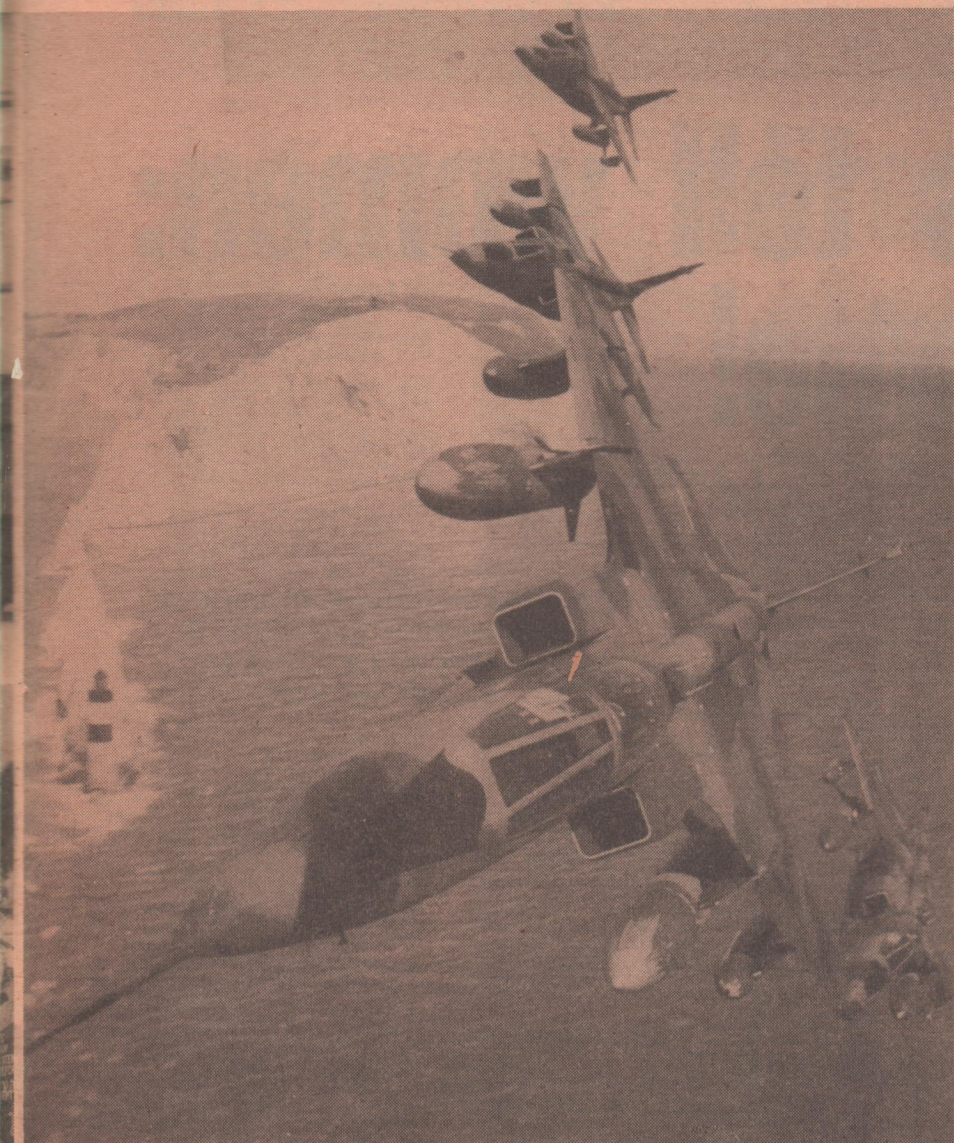
Public expenditure

Defence
Law and order, and protection
Social security
National Health Service
Industry, energy, trade, and
Education
Personal social services <i>b</i>
Housing
Government lending to national

a mainly fire brigades *b* welfare
Source: Cmnd 7841. No allowance

On the basis of the figures quoted here it is easy to calculate the extent of resources wasted by capitalism. A vast potential exists for building of socialism. As we have seen, unemployment costs £42½bn per year, used for weaponry another £8bn. It has been estimated that the cost of keeping and servicing the wealth of the top 5 per cent of our society comes to a further £8bn.

Even if we leave aside the crazy costs of built-in obsolescence and the nume-



TAIN - ANSWER THE CRISIS

It examines the background to the present economic crisis

programmes £ million at 1979 survey prices

	(1) 1979-80 estimated expenditure £m	(2) 1980-81 programme £m	(3) % change on 1979-80	(4) 1983-84 programme £m	(5) % change on 1979-80
services a	7,700	8,000	+ 3.5	8,750	+ 13.3
	2,450	2,550	+ 3.4	2,700	+ 10.2
	18,900	19,350	+ 2.5	19,600	+ 3.8
ment	7,300	7,550	+ 2.9	7,750	+ 10.6
	2,950	3,000	+ 0.8	1,750	- 59.3
	8,950	8,550	- 4.5	8,000	- 10.5
	1,400	1,300	- 6.6	1,350	- 1.4
lised industries	5,350	4,700	- 12.5	2,800	- 48.1
	1,900	700	- 63.4	- 550	- over 100

services for the elderly, children, mentally handicapped etc mainly run by local authorities.
is made for shortfall, estimated at £1,000 million for all services in 1980-81.

other wastes of capitalism we arrive at a figure for waste of £59½bn. It is difficult to see how we can afford not to be socialists.

The problem is, how do we get to socialism from where we are now?

The first step is to challenge the priorities of the Tories in their defence of the capitalist system. The most glaring example of the twisted logic of capitalism is its massive rearmament programme at a time of rapidly growing unemployment. We demand that this

logic is reversed: **JOBS NOT BOMBS.**

Besides the fact that we abhor the West's nuclear power politics, and oppose rearmament which will be used to defend the interests of multinationals across the world, we fight for a programme of useful public works.

We need more hospitals, more homes and more schools. We need battered wives' refuges, nurseries, large scale facilities for preventive medicine. And we need thousands of building workers,

engineers, trained medical staff, and transport workers to work for such a programme.

Workers must not accept responsibility for the crisis of capitalism — it is not of their making. In the face of capitalism's attempt to make us pay for the crisis, we must stand for the right to work, the right to decent living standards, and the right to free and extensive welfare facilities.

The adoption of a 35-hour week without loss of pay would create an estimated 10 per cent

more jobs and end unemployment completely. The implementation of this proposal — which was passed at this year's TUC — would smash straight into already declining profits, and will require the mobilisation of the whole worker's movement. The fight for this one simple demand will lead to a head-on conflict between capital and labour.

Our movement needs a charter for jobs to spell out the crucial steps in the battle against unemployment, including a women's right to work and the nationalisation of all companies creating unemployment.

Gardner's successful occupation gives a vital lead in the battle. Occupations go together with the demand for takeovers — a central part of a strategy to fight the ravages of unemployment. The lessons of Gardner's need to be learnt and acted on throughout the labour movement.

At the moment the defence of living standards centres around the battle against the 6 per cent pay norm. Full support for the firefighters is the first step along the road to win the demand which guarantees the protection of workers' living standards — an automatic increase in pay for every rise in the cost of living.

Equally, an inflation-proof programme of social expenditure would protect our hospitals and schools from the ravages of inflation and cuts.

The struggle to implement the 35-hour week and to build the movement to smash the 6 per cent requires the active participation of the whole of the workers' movement. Clearly the desire for a fight on jobs and wages is growing, but such a mood is not reflected in the leadership of the movement.

We demand the re-call of the TUC to lead the battle on these two fronts.

The sort of struggle we need to defeat this decrepit but savage social system will lead us directly to the doors of the Tory government; Thatcher and co are organising and implementing the programme of the capitalist class. All social advances, all progress on any substantial issue will end up confronting the Tory road block.

At the same time, precisely because the stakes are so high and the crisis so deep, only the full strength of the workers' movement will register final victory against the Tories. That is why we must prepare for a general strike to bring down the government.

Where we got the facts

THE figures used in this article are mainly drawn from: the 1980 edition of 'National Income and Expenditure' produced by the Central Statistics Office; 'Financial Statistics', CSO 1980; and the 1980 Labour Research Department Fact Service, Pages 45-168.

The two tables appeared in the May and August 1980 editions of the journal *Labour Research*. Additional material came from the Glynn and Harrison book *The British Economic Disaster*.

This movement, to prepare for a showdown between the classes, will go hand in hand with the struggle for genuine socialist policies. The platform of the Labour left contains much that we can agree on. We can fight together in opposition to Cruise and Trident, and against any form of incomes policy.

But ultimately their strategy depends on the idea that capitalism can be reformed. No where is this more clearly illustrated than around their support for import controls.

Besides the obvious inference that it is 'foreigners' who are in some way to blame for the crisis of capitalism — an idea which feeds racism in the

worker's movement — import controls don't work. First they raise prices; without competition, British firms would be free to expand profits through increased prices, which would lower workers' living standards.

Secondly, British exports would certainly face retaliation. Even the temporary import surcharge introduced by the Wilson government, which reduced imports by £100m a year, was dropped for exactly this reason after two years. Given the scale of import controls demanded by the Labour left, in the context of the worse international economic crisis since the '30s, it is doubtful whether such controls would last for two weeks without a massive and brutal retaliation.

Thirdly, the idea that workers in Britain have anything to gain by an alliance with their bosses, in a common battle against foreign goods, completely disarms them in the face of the absolutely inevitable confrontation that will take place with those same bosses on all the questions of basic rights.

What is the alternative?

We need a labour movement plan for the takeover of the economy from the capitalists who have done so much to wreck the standards of life and welfare of the workers of Britain. Such a plan would start from the demand to open all the books: let us see the financial wheeling and dealing, the hidden wealth and speculation.

Such a plan must end up with the absolutely necessary conclusion of nationalisation of the banks, finance houses, and all the commanding heights of the economy, under workers' control, and implies an all-out assault on the power and authority of capitalism.

It would be the programme of a genuine workers' government leading the class on which it was based, and from which it drew its strength, in a battle for a socialist Britain.

Tories tell women: Go home!

By Judith Arkwright

'IF the Good Lord had intended us to have equal rights and to go out to work and behave equally, he really wouldn't have created man and woman.'

Thank you, Patrick Jenkin, Tory minister for social services. He does at least let us know where we stand.

The economic crisis coupled with the Tories' policies spell disaster for women in this country.

In 1975 women constituted 17.9 per cent of the registered unemployed, while this year the figure is 30.7 per cent.

Home

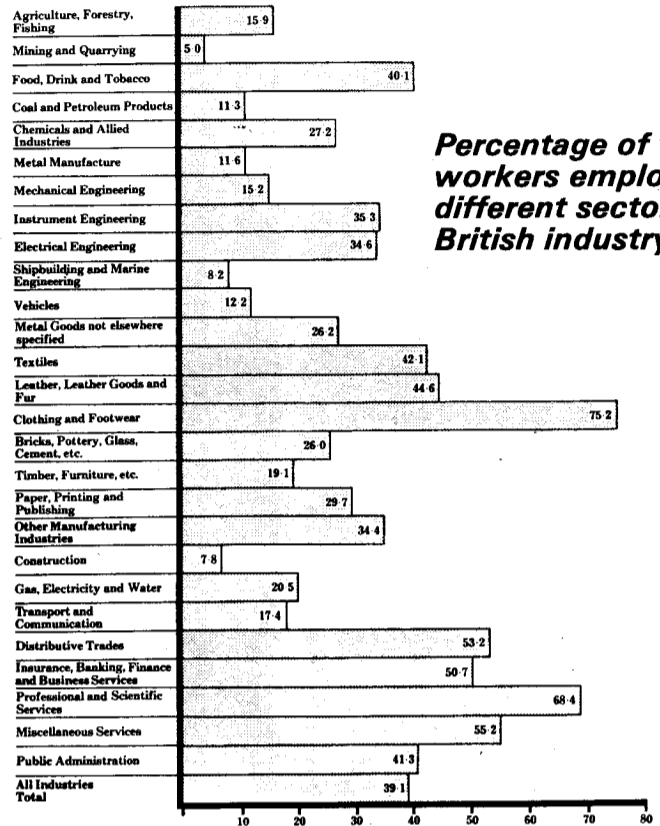
Lord Spens, another Tory, is asking married women to give up their jobs to make room for men who are on the dole.

The Tories are hoping that with the massive cuts in public spending, women will go back into the home so that they can look after children who have been deprived of nursery places, old people who have no home help or meals-on-wheels, and sick people who can't get a hospital bed.

This axing of the welfare state is glossed with idyllic pictures of women in the home performing their 'natural' role.

Inequality for men and women is built into this society.

The table shows that women are concentrated in



Percentage of women workers employed in different sectors of British industry

the sectors which are worst hit, the worst organised, and the worst paid. The annual report of the Equal Opportunities Commission pinpoints job segregation between men and women as the major reason for the extra unemployment which women suffer.

Other causes are new technology, where it is often men who obtain any new jobs created. Forty per cent of women workers are part-

time, and lack the legal rights of full-time workers. They can be thrown out of jobs at will.

Tory policies make this even worse. Cuts in the already limited nursery facilities effectively deny women with young children the right to work. Meanwhile the changes to the Employment Act mean that women cannot expect to get their jobs back if they leave to have a child.

Ever since the Second World War government policies have led to women being pushed in and out of the labour force according to the needs of the economy.

This has to be stopped once and for all. The women of this country and their co-trades unionists have to stand up and fight these divisive policies by demanding that women have the right to a job, too.

whole. It is a divide and rule tactic employed by the bosses and by this government.

The demand for a woman's right to work — far from being divisive, as some contend — is vital for alerting all trades unionists to unemployment that is virtually hidden; the kind that is achieved through back door methods such as sacking part-time workers or last in first out policies, which often hit women first.

The capitalist system is so anarchic that these conditions are always changing and that's why women as a flexible labour force are so necessary to the bosses.

What's next?

In fighting unemployment, we have to take up a woman's right to work and the special needs of women need to be taken into account.

Without nurseries, without adequate fertility control, without social services, provision, women do not have the right to work.

The Employment Act is an attack on all workers, but on women workers in particular because of the provision on maternity benefits. The TUC has passed resolutions on rights for part-time workers and on positive action to get women into male-dominated areas of employment, to safeguard women's proper place in the labour force in the future.

Demands for the 35-hour week and work-sharing have to be related to the work conditions of women. This Tory government will stop at nothing — only the unity of the working class can stop them.

So what's all this about a woman's right to work...

A woman's place is where she's always been

'WHO was it who made this law anyway? Who was it made the law which said that a woman's job is stay in the home and do the washing, cooking and ironing?' — Vera, a Gardner's worker.

There is no law saying that women have to work in the home, only the iron law of capitalism in whose economic interests it is to have women as unpaid servants.

It's only pin money, isn't it?

MOST women work because they must: 230,000 single-parent families rely on a woman's wage. With the cost of living soaring most women have to work to keep a family going — there's no such thing as a family wage.

Women's Aid, which deals with battered women's refuges, says: 'Without an independent income a woman is at the mercy of the man and petty tyrannies can grow into full-scale beatings.'

Who the hell will look after my kids?

THE mass media feed us stories of

Chores

When women are unemployed they are occupied with household chores and are not so obviously out of work. This argument is used to justify low wages and appalling conditions for women in work.

Women's role in the home involves unpaid work for the bosses. In the current economic crisis capitalism is forced to cut the cost of social services and to demand that individual families take on the burden of these responsibilities.

If women go, there'll be more jobs for the boys

WOMEN are already being forced to give up their jobs. Unemployment for women has risen at twice the rate for men, and this hasn't helped men to get jobs.

The opposite is the case. Allowing women to be sent out of the labour force first, or in preference to men, weakens the fight against unemployment as a



Little in the way of positive action at women's conference

By Denny Fitzpatrick

THE TUC held a special conference on positive action for women last week. Of the 199 delegates, 52 were from unions, including the engineering union, the miners and the transport workers.

Two approaches have been put forward for discussion by the TUC. The first is for voluntary agreements for positive action to be drawn up by negotiating bodies and employers.

The second, based on the affirmative action programmes in the United States, is to go for a legally enforced system of goals and targets, to increase the number of women in male-dominated industries.

Clear

On the whole the delegates did not see those two choices as counterposed. Marie Patterson, chairman (sic) of the TUC women's advisory committee, 'recognised the need for both legislation and collective bargaining'.

It did not become clear during the conference what changes in the law delegates wanted. Ginny Dunscombe of UCATT, a member of Women in Manual Trades, was the only delegate to stress the need for legislation.

She argued for a quota system to be established by law and in collective agreements in order to get women into male-dominated industries. This would involve strengthening positive action in training, which is already allowed by the Sex Discrimination Act.

Quotas

Although there was uncertainty about the sort of positive action programme delegates wanted, Marie Patterson managed to conclude that there was 'more or less overall rejection of quotas'.

The problem is that unless goals and targets are enforced; unless employers are compelled to review their employment practices, progress towards breaking down job segregation will be very slow.

Many people are opposed to women's low pay, yet to tackle it head on it is necessary to fight the subordinate place of women in the workforce. Goals and targets for positive action are the way to do it.

The law presently forbids employers from specifically taking on women to redress the balance and tackle past discrimination. While the law allows special training for women, management or the unions cannot set targets for selection to complement this. The net result is continuing job segregation.

How to increase women's participation in the unions took up a large part of the discussion at the conference.

The demands of the TUC Charter for equality in the unions, including special allocation of positions on committees, training, and creches, were all seen as vital, but unfortunately to the exclusion of the struggle to get women into new areas of employment. What each union should be fighting for was not debated out. All

Women trade unionists demand action against male violence

By Marian Weir

THE women's conference of the Scottish Trades Union Congress, held on 18-19 November, overwhelmingly passed a resolution against male violence.

Moved by TASS, the white-collar section of the Engineering Union, and seconded by Cathy Finn, of the teachers' union EIS, the emergency resolution stated:

'This conference condemns the media coverage of incidents which play on the fears of women, rather than helping to direct the anger of society as a whole to reforming itself. This conference calls for concerted social action against male violence.'

The resolution was a response to the murder of Jacqueline Hill in Leeds, the brutal rape and assault of a woman in Glasgow, and the

that was agreed was that a report should be made to the Women's TUC in March.

To stimulate the debate, we should ensure there are adequate reportbacks of the conference. Trade union women's committees, officers, and advisory panels should be bombarded with requests for day schools and conferences to thrash out positive action programmes.

Each union ought to draw up a plan for how they intend to fight for positive action. The TUC should be pressed for goals and targets to be mandatory on local employers. This will mean changes to parts of the Sex Discrimination Act. We should not wait for another Labour government to fight for this.

Apply through your union branch to see if you can be delegated to the TUC Women's conference. Trades councils with over 1,800 affiliates are entitled to send delegates. The deadline for motions is 2 January 1981 and delegates have to be registered by 6 February.

murder of a woman in South London. All these incidents were in the week previous to the conference.

The conference also called for the STUC General Council to reserve two seats for women. This is an area where positive discrimination can be enforced now.

Reserved seats for women on committees help give other women confidence to fight for women's issues in the unions, although this move is obviously only a beginning.

Where this aspect of positive discrimination has been won, as in the public services union NUPE, more women have become active within the union.

The fact that the STUC women's conference took an emergency motion on rape and passed a pro-abortion motion without dissent shows that the trade union movement is beginning to fight on the social issues which affect women, not only as trade unionists but in their everyday lives.

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. More info from 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. More info on local activity from 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; Tethric 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 Percivals 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).
SWANSEA: SC sales outside Co-op, Oxford St, 11am-1pm, Saturdays.
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, send in details to this sales column.

International Marxist Group notices

ABORTION: next national fraction 13 Dec at national centre. Documents to follow later.
POEU FRACTION: Sat/Sun 13/14 Dec in Leeds. Agenda: perspectives; Labour Party; women's liberation. Details of venue later.
RAIL FRACTION: Sat 13 Dec, 1-5pm at national centre.
ASSEMBLY point for our comrades on 29 Nov. The IMG car/van and banner will be in Moffley Hill Drive, facing onto the official assembly area which is Sefton Park. Directions from Edge Hill Station: left out of station, straight down Tunnel Rd, Lodge La. Sefton Park Rd, across Ullet Rd. You are now facing the Park — turn left into Moffley Hill Dr.

Birmingham's Other Bookshop

Birmingham's new socialist bookshop now open at 137 Digbeth, just down from the Bullring. Wide variety of socialist and radical literature.

Socialist Challenge Events

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.

French Trotskyists launch election campaign

By J. Melling

FIVE thousand people packed the Mutualité hall in Paris on 30 October at a rally to support the candidature of French Trotskyist leader Alain Krivine in the presidential election.

The election takes place next May and the campaign is already well under way. At one time France was one of the strongest capitalist countries in Europe. Now unemployment is officially put at 1.4m, while the estimate of the International Labour Organisation is closer to 2m. Women and youth are particularly badly hit

Unity

The conservative government of Giscard d'Estaing has introduced a special tax rebate for families with a third child, to encourage women to return to the home.

Unable to solve the economic problems, the government has been racked with financial scandals involving leading government ministers. President Giscard has admitted receiving diamonds from ex-dictator Bokassa of the Central African Republic.

The fightback against the regime and its austerity measures has been hampered by the disunity of the two major union federations, the CGT which is associated with the Communist Party, and the CFTD which is linked to the Socialist Party.

The effects of this disunity between the two major unions and parties on the left were recently shown in the defeat of the fishermen's redundancy fight, when the CFTD and CGT negotiated separately.

The divide-and-rule tactic of the bosses is being aided by the sectarian conflict pursued by the CP and SP at the expense of the working class.

The CP is particularly responsible for this. Its refusal to call for a vote for Socialist Party candidates in recent senatorial by-elections allowed the right wing to be elected.

The Ligue Communiste Revolutionnaire (LCR), the French Trotskyist organisation, together with dissident Communist and Socialist party members, has launched a petition for unity in struggle, which has so far gained 150,000 signatures.

The Krivine candidacy puts the need for a fightback and workers' unity in struggle at the centre of its campaign.

But the campaign is hampered by the undemocratic new electoral laws. Each presidential candidate has to collect the signatures of 500 parliamentary deputies or local mayors to go on the ballot.

The Morning Star and us

LAST Friday the Communist Party's Morning Star announced that it was in crisis.

Losses this year will amount to £94,000, and the projected loss for next year is £374,000. To respond to this situation the cover price of the Morning Star is being increased from 16p to 20p a copy.

But their statement



News from the Fourth International

This is easy for the big parties, but requires a huge effort from the LCR, which hopes to raise £100,000 for the campaign — to advance socialist policies and activities.

In the EEC elections in 1979, nearly a million French working people voted for the revolutionary campaign formed around the demand for a 'United Socialist States of Europe'.

The LCR calls for a vote for Krivine on the first round of the presidential election, and for a vote for the best placed candidate of the workers' parties in the second round.

Most importantly, the League wants the CP and SP to agree to withdraw candidates in the second round where the other party's candidate is better placed to win.

We can be sure that Krivine will not be elected president. But hundreds of thousand of votes for a revolutionary candidate, and the campaign that the LCR is waging, will be a big step towards the building of a revolutionary party in France.



Trotskyists denounce Madrid conference

Demonstrations and meetings, including a rally of 1000 people called by the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria (Spanish section of the Fourth International), greeted the opening of the European conference on 'security and co-operation' in Madrid.

A statement put out by the Fourth International, while noting that peace was a legitimate concern of the working people of Europe and the rest of the world, denounced the conference as a festival of hypocrisy and cynicism.

While talking about peace, the statement

POUR L'UNITE DES PARTIS ET DES SYNDICATS OUVRIERS KRIVINE CANDIDAT

BATTRE LA DIVISION POUR BATTRE GISCARD



MEETING 30 OCTOBRE 20^H

LIGUE COMMUNISTE REVOLUTIONNAIRE
 Section française de la Quatrième Internationale



says, the imperialists are re-arming furiously. While talking about human rights, the United States is supporting reaction all over the world, and the bloody repression being carried out by the junta in El Salvador.

The statement also denounced the oppression of opposition groups in Russia and Eastern Europe, and concludes by calling on the people of Europe and the world to rely on their own struggles, not the 'repugnant spectacle' in Madrid, to win human rights and defeat the threat of war.

Above, Jesus Albarracin of the LCR and Ernest Mandel speak at the Fourth International's Madrid meeting. A representative of the Revolutionary Democratic Front of El Salvador also spoke.

period of increasing financial stringency.

Inflation has hit printing and paper prices particularly badly. Postal charges have rocketed, and so have despatch prices.

As the Morning Star and all other left-wing papers will testify, without increasing income it is just not possible to continue producing a left-wing paper which doesn't have the benefit of huge advertising revenues.

That's why we're asking all Socialist Challenge supporters to: 1. Take out an individual sub to the paper;

2. Help us increase our circulation by selling an extra copy per week; and 3. Above all, help us keep up our fund drive.

Cash

A weekly paper costing 20p is bound to be heavily subsidised. We think that subsidy is well worth it to ensure a cheap paper that can easily be used in strikes, on demonstrations, and in the labour movement.

If you think this is a worthwhile objective, send us your donation today.



OUT NOW! Single copies 10p plus 10 p.p.p. Socialist Challenge, 328 Upper Street, London N1.

REVOLUTION

FOR A UNITED REVOLUTIONARY YOUTH ORGANISATION

REVOLUTION Youth and IMG student fraction — note change of date. Now Fri 12 December in MANCHESTER, at the 'Squat', Devas St, Oxford Rd, Manchester. Noon to 6pm. For details phone Stephanie on 021-359 5921 or write to Anne Henderson, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP. PLEASE NOTE new Revo telephone

number 01-359 8301
 SCOLLEGE MEETINGS: Cruise missiles and Charter '80 meetings should be arranged as soon as possible. Speakers arranged by Ann 01-359 8301 or Stephanie 021-359 5921
 GAY LIBERATION FRACTION: Sat 6 December at National Centre, 11 am. Write for details to Paula, c/o PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

Other THE BOOKSHOP

Slaves of the Slaves — The Challenge of Latin American Women

The Latin American and Caribbean Women's Collective
 Zed Press £4.50

This book sets out to define the particular character and meaning of the women's movement in Latin America and the Caribbean, and to look at the oppression and resistance of women in individual countries.

Strike While the Iron is Hot

Edited by Micheline Wandor
 Journeyman £2.95p

This book contains three plays from Gay Sweatshop, Red Ladder, and the Woman's Theatre Group, which together illustrate a complementary approach to sexual politics in the theatre.

New Left Review 123

£1.50

The latest issue includes a major article by Mike Davis on the specificity of the American working class, which attempts to explain the paradox of the failure of the numerically strongest working class to construct its own party. Also articles by Walter Benjamin, Erik Olin Wright and others.

Available from the Other Bookshop, 328 Upper St, London N1. (Tel: 01-226 0571). Please add 15 per cent if ordering by post.

By Tom Marlowe

THE TORY government's attempt to impose a political 'solution' on the north of Ireland has ended in failure.

Margaret Thatcher admitted as much during the debate on the Queen's Speech in the House of Commons, last Thursday.

Said Thatcher: 'The government had hoped to bring forward legislation on Northern Ireland.'

'For many months the government had been seeking agreement in the province to bring forward proposals for a substantial transfer of responsibility to elected representatives there. That agreement has not been forthcoming.'

Behind these carefully chosen words lies the collapse of the Tories' whole political strategy for the north of Ireland.

It was in October 1979 that the Tory Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Humphrey Atkins, first announced in parliament that at 'an early date' he would put forward 'proposals for transferring to locally-

Thatcher admits failure in Ireland

elected representatives some of the powers of government in Northern Ireland at present exercised from Westminster'.

The following month the government produced 'a working paper', outlining a number of ways such a 'transfer' of powers could be achieved.

A series of discussions were then held with Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party, the mainly Catholic Social Democratic and Labour Party, and the 'moderate' Alliance Party. The Ulster Unionist Party boycotted the talks.

Six months later, in July this year, the outcome of these discussions was detailed in a further British government paper, 'The Government of Northern Ireland: Proposals

for Further Discussion'.

This put forward two options: either a local government run on the basis of 'power-sharing' between Loyalist and non-Loyalist parties; or simple majority, that is Loyalist rule. Inevitably the Unionist parties refused to discuss the first option, while the Social Democratic and Labour Party refused to discuss the second.

The resulting statement was finally acknowledged by Thatcher last week. All she had to offer in the way of future policies was the statement 'the government was considering other ways of making the administration of the province more responsible to local needs'.

This could mean two things: either the for-

mation of an elected assembly with consultative powers only, or the transfer of more power to local councils.

But already the Social Democratic and Labour Party has said it would not co-operate in either of these solutions. In the event of the formation of a consultative assembly, the SDLP has gone as far as to say it would boycott the elections to such a body.

The collapse of the Tories' 'solution' comes at a particularly embarrassing time for Thatcher.

In two weeks she is due to meet Irish premier Charlie Haughey, who is under pressure from his own Fianna Fail party to wring some concessions from Thatcher in the direction of British support for eventual Irish re-unification.

But the strongest pressure Thatcher will face in the weeks ahead will come from the streets of the north of Ireland. Tens of thousands have taken to those streets in support of the H Block hunger strikers.

Many more will join them as the hunger strikers grow weaker and weaker. Around Xmas, Britain could find that its last outpost in Ireland has become unmanageable.

'Save my brother's life'

By Geoff Bell

FIVE weeks ago, Eilish Green was just an ordinary working class woman from the town of Lurgan in County Antrim.

In most ways she is still unexceptional, a fairly typical member of the Catholic community in the north of Ireland. She is 'different' in only one respect: her brother is slowly starving to death.

Dying

His name is Leo Green, one of the seven Irish political prisoners now on hunger strike in the H Blocks of Long Kesh prison. Eilish was in London last week to publicise the case for those hunger strikers.

Socialist Challenge, along with a couple of other left-wing papers, decided her visit was newsworthy. The rest of the British media was not inclined to this view.

The sister of a dying man, even for the ghouls of Fleet Street, is apparently not worth bothering with. But then, the man is Irish, and what's worse an Irish 'terrorist'.

Eilish doesn't see it like



LEO GREEN, left, in happier days

that: 'At the start, ten years ago, the young men and girls now in prison were children or young teenagers.'

'And they saw — regardless of history or political views — they saw the discrimination, and that British policy was to keep the nationalist people down, to keep them in their own ghetto areas.'

'No way did they allow peaceful protest. They

didn't even allow people to express their political views. If you were a Republican supporter you were stopped in the street and taken in.'

'The men in the Kesh, the girls in Armagh, have seen all this and they know that they are where they are as a result of all this.'

The particulars of Leo's case confirm such a judgment. When he was ar-

rested, three and a half years ago, he had no previous record — 'never been involved in any trouble,' said Eilish. He was taken to a police station, and the usual happened.

Eilish described this in an almost matter-of-fact way, as if it is an everyday occurrence. But then, in the north of Ireland it is an everyday occurrence.

'He was convicted solely

on the evidence of a signed statement. He'd been beaten up and forced to sign it. His family was threatened; he was told that if he didn't sign it his family would be shot.'

Today that family is going through the agony of watching Leo on hunger strike. Eilish fears the outcome.

'We have to live in hope,

for hope is all we have. But in the end... well, Margaret Thatcher said it yesterday, she won't give in. So it looks as if they are going to die.'

'But we will live in hope until they do die. There's no way Leo will call it off: we don't know the other six personally, but, if they're like Leo, they'll hang on too.'

The one comfort Eilish and the other relatives and

friends of the hunger strikers have is the wave of popular feeling that has been expressed in Ireland on behalf of the prisoners.

For Eilish, the amount of this support has been 'surprising'. Within her community, 'the vast majority of people have been out on the streets, protesting peacefully. The protests have doubled and trebled in number, and because they're peaceful, more and more people are getting involved'.

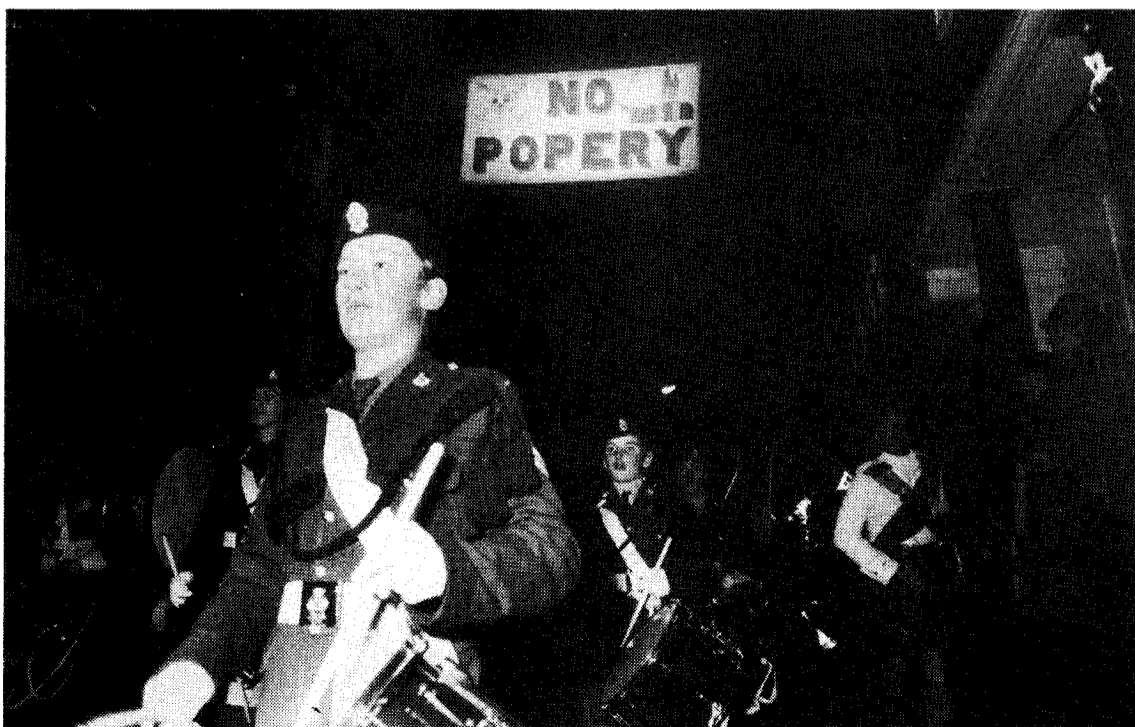
Injustice

Whether in the end this will be enough to save the lives of Leo and the six other hunger strikers only time will tell. But perhaps Eilish's pessimism about her brother's future is understandable. It is easier to handle the death of someone close to you, if you have accepted the inevitability of that death. But even then emotions cannot be hidden.

'We do fear that, in the end, he and the rest of the fellas will die. Then others will follow and they will have to die too,' Eilish said.

'Naturally we don't want Leo to die, but we can understand and we will support him. He feels he has to take his stand against British injustice, because that's why he is there, and if he does die that is what will cause his death.'

By the time you read these words Leo Green will have two or three weeks left to live.



BRITISH soldiers march under the banner of anti-Catholicism. In the North of Ireland? No, in Lewes, Sussex. Every 5 November British soldiers participate in a bizarre ceremony, the local citizens' own variant of the Guy Fawkes night ceremony.

Socialist Challenge, 27 November 1980 Page 12

Not only is Guy Fawkes burned, but so is the Pope. Local citizens dress in 18th century garb, and march behind an effigy of the Pope shouting sectarian slogans. The army gladly participates. Guest preacher at the ceremony was well-known Protestant bigot, the Rev Martin Green.

UDA threatens civil war

THE Ulster Defence Association — the Loyalist paramilitary organisation — is threatening to launch a civil war against the Catholic population of the north of Ireland.

The threats have already been backed by a series of sectarian assassinations.

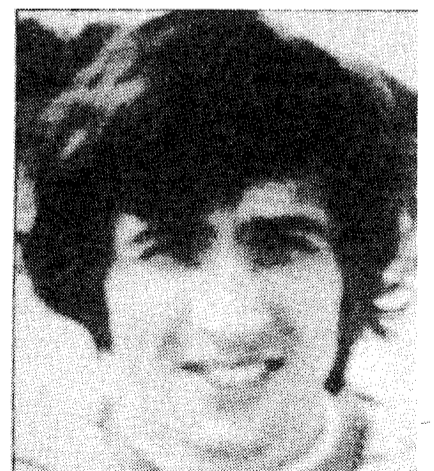
A front-page article in the last issue of *Ulster — The Voice of the UDA* concedes that if the H Block hunger strikers die, the Provisional IRA 'might be seen by the world as the defenders of an oppressed people'.

In this situation, the article continues, 'we dare not put our faith in the British government... The only thing left is Ulster itself. We must prepare to do the job ourselves'.

So far this year UDA members have been convicted in court of six murders, one attempted murder, and five armed robberies.

The organisation also admitted to the *Irish Times* that it was responsible for the assassination earlier this year of Irish Republican Socialist Party members Ronnie Bunting, Noel Little, and Miriam Daly.

Most recently the UDA is believed to have been responsible for the



PETER VALENTE — a victim of the UDA on 14 November

assassination of Peter Valente on 14 November. A brother of Peter is 'on the blanket' in Long Kesh, and a sister chairs a local hunger strike committee in Belfast.

Amazingly the UDA remains a perfectly legal organisation. The British government has repeatedly refused to ban it, in contrast to its outlawing of the IRA and the Irish National Liberation Army.

'The Romans in Britain' Art and politics do mix, but not in Brenton's play

By Michael Marqusee

THE attacks on Howard Brenton's *The Romans in Britain* by the likes of Horace Cutler, Mary Whitehouse, and various Fleet Street critics have given the production at the National Theatre a revolutionary aura which it unfortunately does not deserve.

The debate it may have helped to raise over state subsidies for 'radical' art is an important one for the left, but it is a shame that a play as

weak — politically and dramatically — as Brenton's should have come to occupy such a central position in the discussion.

The Romans in Britain has been attacked for its use of nudity and obscene language; for the violence it depicts; and also, though less obviously, for its concern with the British role in Ireland.

It is always refreshing to see this question raised on any public platform, but Brenton's play offers only the most spurious historical analysis of the situation.

He draws parallels between three periods of imperial conquest: the Romans' first incursion into Britain under Caesar; the Saxon raids following the decline of Roman influence; and the occupation of the north of Ireland by British troops today.

In each case, Brenton argues, the victims have been the same — the native Celts. But the bogus racial implications of this idea are never challenged in the play.

Disease

The play portrays imperialism as a disease, a cancer which affects all historical epochs in the same manner, and carries with it the same consequences of brutality, betrayal, and social chaos.

This idea is dubious enough in itself, but Brenton's treatment of it leads one to believe that for him it is only an excuse to yoke together a

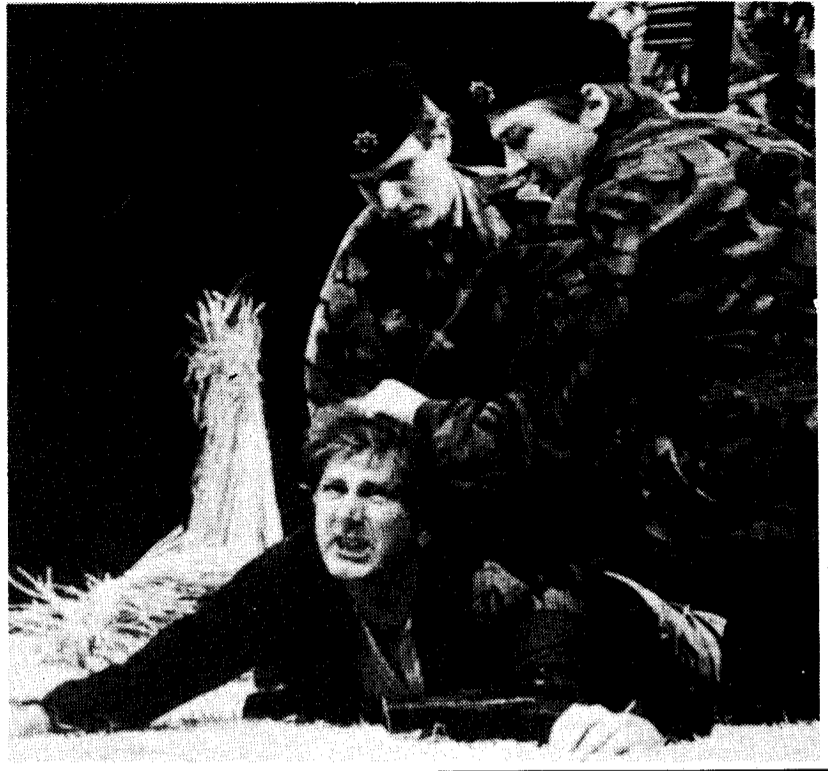
variety of observations on oppression, history, and human survival, none of which is elaborated with anything near the rigour demanded.

In the end, the play becomes an incoherent grab-bag of metaphors and parallels, which far from challenging members of the audience to examine their own role in history, allows them to sit as passive spectators.

Brenton's play has been attacked as a work of propaganda and used by a number of critics as proof that art and politics do not mix — particularly, according to GLC boss Cutler, at public expense.

This argument is nonsense, as a look at any of Shakespeare's historical or Roman plays reveals. The left has to continue to resist it.

But *The Romans in Britain* provides useful ground for that resistance only in that its artistic failure and its political incoherence are in the end one and the same.



A left strategy that takes us down the middle of the road

By John Harrison

INDUSTRIAL production in Britain has fallen by 9.1 per cent in the last year. Over the past three months it has been plummeting at an annual rate of 13.6 per cent.

The equivalent figures for manufacturing are 11.4 and 17.2 per cent. The Crash of 1980 is here.

Capital's response has received a lot of coverage in the wake of the CBI's Brighton cabaret. The star turn was Director-General Sir Terence Beckett's impersonation of Ali (Mohammed, not Tariq), hyping up the coming Big Brawl with Thatcher.

With a more imaginative script-writer, it could have been a great sketch.

'Ladies and Gentlemen! In the right-hand corner, the captains of industry; in the left-hand corner, their political representatives.

'Now, let's make this a clean fight, OK. Save the kidney punches and knuckle dusters for the working class. And for Christ's sake keep Securicorps and the SAS out of the ring.'

Slump

What about the more important issue of the labour movement's response to the slump? What alternatives to Tory monetarism does the movement have to offer?

The one with most support is undoubtedly the Alternative Economic Strategy (AES). This was first developed by the Labour Party during the 1970-74 period in opposition. When the Wilson and Callaghan governments abandoned the central components of the strategy, these were revived by the Labour left around the time of the 1976 IMF loan, in opposition to the PLP leadership.

With minor variations, the AES is now the official

The Crash of 1980

policy of the Communist Party, the Labour Party (as represented by its conference), and the TUC.

Given this formidable body of sponsors, any serious account of the AES is worth discussing. The new book* by the London Working Group of the Conference of Socialist Economists (CSE) deserves particular attention.

It is the first book-length defence of the Alternative Economic Strategy since Stuart Holland's *The Socialist Challenge* (1975). In the intervening years the economic situation has deteriorated and the AES has been changed a bit; notably

used by them in struggle.

Such material should be welcomed by all socialists even where they disagree with the position taken. By raising the level of discussion in the workers' movement it can only aid political development.

This particular book has been adopted by the Labour Co-ordinating Committee, which is joint publisher and has launched the book with all the fanfare of a Westminster press conference. I hope it will do more. It could, for example, sponsor a series of discussions between the authors and left critics of the AES.

The book approaches im-

ment of the case for an expansion centred on tax cuts for low income groups, together with a big growth in welfare provision.

This section is very good.

But any argument for expansion must also deal with the problem of the balance of payments. Here the authors are on weaker ground.

They acknowledge that an unsustainable deterioration in the trade balance would almost certainly occur unless something were done, and they suggest the widespread use of import controls.

The authors' discussion of trade controls is better than most. They take charges of class collaboration and chauvinism seriously and attempt a detailed rebuttal.

They also understand the problem of retaliation. Many AES supporters dismiss it with the argument that, since imports will not be cut (just their growth controlled), foreign capital will not lose markets. As London CSE acknowledges, this misses the point.

Capital's main objection is more fundamental than export volumes. It is that import controls are an attempt to insulate the economy from international market forces. Capital views these forces as essential to discipline any national working class which gets aspirations above its station.

But to recognise a problem is not to solve it. All the authors can do is to point out that a socialist government would face the same difficulty. True. But it would be in a better position to deal with the problem because it would have greater control over the domestic economy.

This brings us to the second stage of the AES, where really fundamental problems arise.

Once full employment is approached, further progress depends on a major investment and modernisation programme. London CSE recognises that capital would not undertake this gleefully with profits desperately low and a radical Labour govern-

ment in office.

The key proposed for clearing this hurdle is a system of compulsory planning agreements.

The idea is that the government would fix desired levels of output, investment and so on for each industry, and then cajole major firms to fall in line using everything from the succulent carrot of tax incentives through to the sawn-off shotgun of directives.

THE ALTERNATIVE ECONOMIC STRATEGY

A LABOUR MOVEMENT RESPONSE TO THE ECONOMIC CRISIS



CSE LONDON WORKING GROUP

How would capital react to these uncouth invasions of the boardrooms of power? Let's ask London CSE:

'The final difficulty with the strategy of planning agreements is perhaps the most fundamental. It can be argued that as long as capital remains in private hands it will do all it can to subvert attempts at planning and to resist the imposition of social control...

'Any measures taken to deal with this problem through the exercise of more direct control by the government or the trade unions would simply harden the opposition of capital and could result in an all-out investment strike.'

Dead right. Capital would stop investing altogether, try and sell off stocks fast, refuse to buy government debt and shift its money abroad. It would be able to cause massive disrup-

tion because it would retain control of the factories. Economic and social chaos would result, opening the way to a right-wing takeover.

To pass a law formally depriving capital of control over economic activity while leaving the real levers of economic power — actual control over the means of production — in its hands is like accepting the formal surrender of an army without bothering to confiscate its weapons or disband the troops. It is a sure recipe for disaster.

Middle

In a contribution to the *Debate of the Decade*, Ann Cesek put this, the fundamental point, in the following way:

'The alternative economic strategy is an elaborate scheme to steer a wobbly course between capitalist power and popular power. It's trying to drive a car on the right and the left at the same time — like in Chile, we're all going to crash' (from the Pluto transcript).

I think it is more like driving hell-for-leather straight down the middle of the road and relying on the legal authorisation pinned to your windscreen to persuade the juggernaut drivers with their cargoes to give you the right of way.

**The Alternative Economic Strategy: A Labour Movement Response to the Economic Crisis*, by the CSE London Working Group. Published by CSE Books, and the Labour Co-ordinating Committee at £2.50.

JOHN HARRISON is author of *Marxist Economics for Socialists* (Pluto Press, £2.95) and, with Andrew Glyn, of *The British Economic Disaster* (Pluto Press, £2.95).

The three books are available from: The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper Street, London N1.



with the addition of import controls.

This new book is also the most sophisticated defence of the strategy in print. It is grounded in a much better analysis of the crisis than most — Holland's writings, for example, stubbornly refuse to acknowledge the severity of the profits squeeze — and it discusses a number of difficulties which other accounts gloss over.

Finally, it is a good example of the best strand of recent CSE work — material directly geared to the needs of sections of the labour movement, which is then taken up and

plementation of the strategy in two broad (and not strictly chronological) stages. The first is expansion of the economy and a return to full employment. The second is the longer-run maintenance of jobs and growth, and the move towards socialism. This division is helpful.

London CSE's case for expansion begins with a discussion of the number of new jobs needed and the growth of output required to create them; a demolition of the myth that full employment is impossible because of either skill shortages or new technology; and a develop-

Blacks protest racist murder acquittal



US wants to deport socialist

THE US courts may look the other way when Nazis machine-gun peaceful demonstrators, but they are far more vigilant when it comes to victimising socialists.

Marian Bustin (pictured above) is a coal miner in West Virginia. She was born in Glasgow, where she was an activist in the local women's movement and the campaign against the Vietnam war.

She joined the International Marxist Group, and when she moved to the USA joined the Socialist Workers Party, supporters of the Fourth International.

The US authorities are currently trying to deport her because of her membership of the SWP. Next week we will be featuring the case of Marian Bustin, and exposing the role of the US Embassy in London.

From Steve Potter in New York

ANGER continues to mount in the USA against last week's acquittal of members of the Ku Klux Klan and the Nazi party charged with murdering anti-racist demonstrators in Greensboro, North Carolina last year.

The verdict, by an all-white jury, came after self-defence pleas by the accused. But videotapes screened across the country showed them taking weapons from the boot of a car and firing guns into an anti-Klan rally organised by a small Maoist group, the Communist Workers Party.

In statements to the police the Klansmen admitted the shootings: 'Some innocent people were shot, but I was only shooting at niggers,' said David Matthews, one of the six.

And according to the *Washington Post*, Jerry Paul Smith, who was shown in the videos running down the street firing a hand-gun, grinned broadly after he was released saying: 'I kind of enjoyed the stick-fighting, but it got kind of out of control when the guns came out'.

Still unexplained is the role of two government agents who operated in local Nazi and Klan organisations and helped to plan and execute the attack on the rally.

Harold Covington, leader of the Nazi National Socialist Party of

America, said that the verdict was 'a great victory for white America'.

As the verdict was given armed police surrounded the courthouse and police chiefs met to discuss extra policing in the community.

Local black leaders were stunned at the decision. Henry Frye, the only black in North Carolina's state legislature, said: 'I thought they would be

convicted of something. I just didn't believe that there would be a jury verdict of not guilty on all counts for all six people'.

Dr George Simkins of the local branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People denounced the verdict as 'tantamount to giving the Klan and the Nazis licence to kill'.

The Rev Jesse Jackson has demanded that the Federal authorities take action in the form of a civil rights prosecution against the racists.

Protests from the black community forced

a similar prosecution in Miami when a black insurance salesman was beaten to death by police who were subsequently acquitted.

The Greensboro and Miami events are only two of a series of outrages against black people which have come to prominence recently.

In another trial going on in Salt Lake City, former Nazi and Klansman Joseph Franklin is on trial for shooting two black youth as they were jogging in a city park. Franklin is wanted in four other states for similar killings.



Part of the 7,000-strong demonstration in Greensboro, North Carolina.

In Atlanta thousands of people have joined teams scouring the city for clues as to the fate of 15 black youth killed or missing in the last 16 months.

Demonstrations against racism have been organised in Buffalo, Chattanooga and Miami.

Last weekend saw an important conference in Philadelphia called to inaugurate an independent black political party. Socialists at the conference raised the necessity of a demonstration to protest the Greensboro scandal.

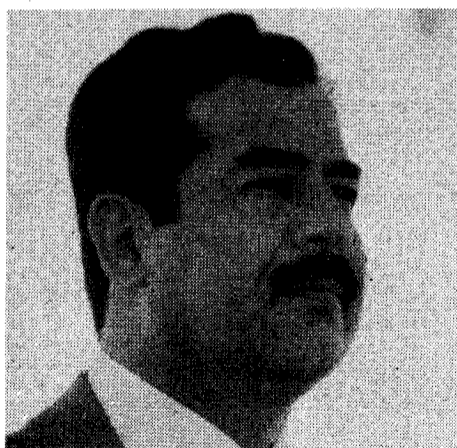
The Philadelphia conference has an added significance after the victory of Ronald Reagan in the presidential elections. Reactionary forces have taken his triumph as a green light for attacks on the rights of blacks, women and the unions.

In a taste of things to come, the Senate — still under Democratic control — passed a bill restricting bussing as a method for overcoming school segregation.

Step

This blow at the civil rights legislation gained in the '60s was followed by a statement from Senator Strom Thurmond, chairperson-elect of the powerful Judiciary Committee in the Senate. He said that he intended to push for the repeal of the Voting Rights Act which enabled the Federal government to intervene against the local state laws which stopped blacks from voting in some of the southern States.

The response to Greensboro will be an essential first step in strengthening the growing sentiment that unity in action of all those under attack is the way to beat the Reagan offensive.



Iraq's Saddam Hussein

By Brian Grogan

THE ten-week-old Iran/Iraq war flared up last week with the battle for the oil town of Susangerd, near Ahwaz. The war continues to rock the reactionary regimes throughout the area, and is producing new conflicts within Iran.

The conditions agreed for the release of the US hostages can only aid the advance of the Iranian revolution. The Iranians have demanded that the United States return the wealth of the late Shah, release Iranian assets frozen in US banks, drop all legal action against Iran, and pledge non-interference on Iranian affairs. This has placed the fate of the hostages firmly in the hands of the US administration.

But despite the agreement, the US administration is stalling on implementing the four conditions. It is becoming clear that they have no interest in the rapid release of the hostages if it also means handing back the huge wealth of the Shah.

After two months of fighting, Iraq has only achieved the occupation of the port of



An Iranian regular army commando in the Shah's days — but where are they now?

Iran/Iraq war — Tension mounts on the home front

Khorhamshar. For all the Iraqi effort, this occupation is still very precarious. Despite continuous claims, Iraq has been unable to take either Abadan or Ahwaz, even after weeks of destructive bombardment.

Iraq aimed to destabilise the Khomeini regime through the invasion, but after two months of fighting it is the Iraqi ruler Saddam Hussein who is in trouble.

Seven Iraqi opposition groups have formed an opposition front pledged to the overthrow of Hussein. The 'National Pan-Arab Democratic Front in Iraq' is composed of communists, and various socialists and Kurdish organisations. The front has declared that it wants to 'consolidate its links with the Iranian revolution'. They also state that they would grant 'self-rule' to the Kurds in northern Iraq.

Inside Iran, the war is throwing all political policies into sharp relief. The basic choice is either to develop the self-organisation of the workers and peasants, or to try to push back the continuing mass mobilisations and strengthen the old state structures around the army. The Khomeini leadership is divided on these questions.

The stubborn resistance in Abadan and Khorhamshar has been achieved through the

fighting spirit of the ordinary workers alongside the Islamic militia — the Pasdars — and the Mujehedin and Fedayin guerrillas. The 15 November issue of the *The Economist* reported: 'Puzzlingly, most of Iran's army has been watching from the hillside while the mullahs, infantry and the revolutionary guards, go whistling into the slaughter with Iraq'.

The *Daily Telegraph* on 20 November quoted president Bani Sadr's defence of the inactivity of the army in front of one million people at the ashura religious holiday: 'We should not arrive at conditions where our army, like the Iraqi army, has to sustain heavy casualties for an insignificant victory'. He asked the nation to unite around the Army.

Iran's rulers would rather forgo military success than aid the present process of self-organisation and arming of the people.

In Teheran there are demonstrations daily. Many of them are spontaneously organised, and independent of the clergy. One and a half million people demonstrated outside the American Embassy on the first anniversary of the taking of the hostages. They demanded that any agreement with the US should be favourable to the revolution.



Iranian president Bani Sadr

The Teheran Federation of Islamic Shorahs (workers' committees) is running a military training camp attended by workers from dozens of factories. This situation has forced Khomeini to call for the arming of all able-bodied Iranians.

The recent repressive measures against left-wing activists are aimed at undermining the mass movement. Mohamed Reza Saadati, leader of the left-wing muslim organisation, the Mujehedin, has been sentenced to 10 years imprisonment for 'spying for the Soviet Union'. No documentation could be produced by the prosecution to support this charge. The judge at the trial has now called for the arrest of all the leaders of the Mujehedin.

Other left-wing activists have been arrested including Nemat Jazayeri, a leader of the Iranian Revolutionary Workers Party (HKE), a sympathising organisation of the Fourth International. Several newspapers, including that of the Tudeh (Communist) Party have been banned and their offices closed.

Part of the support for Iran in its defence against Iraq has to be to call for these measures to be dropped and for the left-wing activists to be released.

What's going on in Zimbabwe?

By Alexander Feldman and Ainsley Dentin

IN ZIMBABWE the violent faction fighting between the two wings of the liberation movement, ZAPU and ZANU, has reached serious proportions.

The fact that the liberation war, after so much suffering by the people of Zimbabwe, has given way to fighting between the two parties which led the struggle must give rise to much bitterness and misery.

How have people been drawn into such a conflict? The nature of the political parties involved and the conditions left by the Lancaster House settlement do much to explain why.

High

First, expectations were very high at the time of independence. Because of the prolonged and bitter liberation struggle, Zimbabweans have been more quickly disillusioned than was the case in many of the African countries that won their independence in the 1960s.

The peasants want land and better services; the workers want better pay and conditions, and the unemployed want jobs. But the government's hands are tied by the terms of the settlement, which protect existing social inequalities.

Offer

Unable to meet popular demands or offer political leadership, the leaders of ZANU and ZAPU are increasingly resorting to building their party machines by blaming each other for what has gone wrong.

Most depressing of all, elements in both parties, but particularly in ZANU, are posing as radical by exploiting this situation. People like



ZANU guerrillas and Nkomo (top right): the possibility of violent confrontation

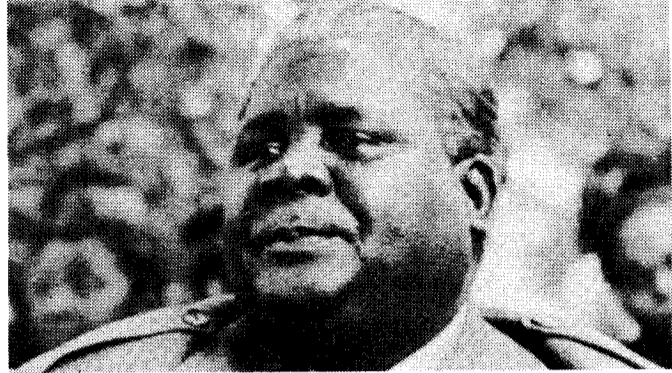
Edgar Tekere, who is currently on trial, and finance minister Enos Nkala have been stirring up discontent about the pace of 'Africanisation' in order to build themselves a popular base.

Nkala set out to inflame the situation by addressing a rally in Bulawayo, traditionally a ZAPU stronghold, on the theme of building a one-party state.

Black nationalism of a kind which has nothing to do with socialism or genuine popular interests is becoming the vehicle of a pseudo-left.

The rally in Bulawayo led directly to the most serious outbreak of violence. Beginning with fighting in the audience at the stadium where Nkala spoke, the conflict developed into a pitched battle between the ZIPRA and ZANLA armed encampments in the Bulawayo townships.

While Mugabe has condemned the violence, he has not disciplined Nkala nor has he deflected the attacks on Nkomo, the leader of ZAPU who is minister of home affairs. Nkomo's personal property has been raided by the



police without his prior knowledge — a considerable provocation since the police are under Nkomo's ministry.

In the past few days, the ZANU minister of state security has escalated the situation by using the Special Branch to arrest nine ZAPU officials, including an MP.

The victimisation of ZAPU, however unjustified, has enabled the ZAPU leadership to present itself as an alternative to ZANU, although it has no more to offer in terms of programme than its rival.

ZAPU has always adopted a stronger, more vocal position against tribalism and racism. It argued in favour of the parties standing jointly as the Patriotic Front in the elections.

Weaker

For the ZAPU leadership, these positions were dictated as much by considerations of political opportunity as by those of principle — ZAPU being the weaker organisation numerically.

Neither Nkomo nor Mugabe ever made a serious attempt to unite their parties during the liberation struggle, although they had no real programmatic differences. Whatever the socialist pretensions, such sectarianism is the hallmark of nationalist politics — for which the people of Zimbabwe are now paying a heavy price.

cess within ZAPU and ZANU, or of a socialist alternative to the sectarianism, factionalism, and opportunism which is increasingly characterising nationalist politics in Zimbabwe, the situation is likely to worsen.

Statute

The fact that the ZAPU officials now in detention are being held without trial suggests there are precious few civil liberties in Zimbabwe to protect people from political repression.

Much of the legislation on the statute book has been carried over from the Smith regime, and Mugabe governs under emergency provisions. Independence has not brought the benefits of full democratic rights to the people of Zimbabwe, despite other gains that have been made.

Socialists in Zimbabwe and their supporters in Britain should advance the demand that the Mugabe government and both party leaderships not only denounce the inter-party faction fighting, but take steps to prevent it.

Only the unity of the masses behind a genuinely socialist programme, based on popular demands, can pose a real alternative in the present crisis. To move towards this, socialists must also fight for the extension of basic democratic rights in Zimbabwe.

Free Namibia Now

Main Speaker: Sam Nujoma, President of SWAPO

7.15pm, Wednesday 10 December
Friends House, Euston Road, London NW1

*Admission by ticket only — 30p before, 50p at the door

Organised by the Anti-Apartheid Movement (01-580 5311) and the Namibia Support Committee (01-388 5539) in co-operation with the International Defence and Aid Fund (01-606 6123)

Arguments for Socialism



FOR the second time in a decade, hundreds of millions of people in the dependent countries face famine.

According to the *Sunday Times* of 9 November, '1,000m people have too little to eat, and 520m are undernourished'.

A quarter of a million children go blind each year from vitamin A deficiency.

Yet in the Common Market alone, vast mountains of food are stored: 240,000 tons of skimmed milk powder, 190,000 tons of butter, 290,000 tons of beef, and 7m tons of grain.

These food mountains are not stored to help meet famine, but to keep up prices. Famine is profitable. Although the world now easily has the capacity to feed itself, capitalist agriculture requires customers who can pay, which the starving poor cannot.

In this situation it is more profitable not to produce to full capacity.

The present famine was

By Brian Grogan

in part caused by the decision of the United States government at the end of 1977 to cut back the area of land under cultivation in the US by 20 per cent. The reason was to keep up prices, which had fallen dramatically at the end of 1976.

The effect of the cutback was to severely reduce the world's food supply.

Famine is popularly explained by bad harvests, drought, and wars. These factors are important, but the underlying reason why the poor countries do not feed themselves lies elsewhere. The economies of these countries have been distorted by capitalism.

Local ruling classes have preferred to produce cash crops for the world market, not for local consumption. So the Shah's Iran replaced rice with more profitable pistachio nuts. The famine-torn Sahel area of Africa replaced food crops with peanuts for the world market — with severe ecological consequences

How the other half dies



such as soil erosion.

In Grenada much fertile land was given over to marijuana. These are just a few of the many examples which could be given.

As a consequence of this form of specialisation, the United States has become

the most important exporter of food, controlling 60 per cent of the wheat trade, 75 per cent of corn, and 90 per cent of soya. A shrinking number of agri-business monopolies have a stranglehold on food production.

Famine is the conse-

quence. There is no merely 'agricultural' solution to the problem. The green revolution which introduced 'super' strains of seed with a much higher yield, was technically sound.

But without a balanced development of the whole

economy of a backward country, which involves the development of industry as well as agriculture, even the growth of land productivity, in the few countries where it has occurred leads to the acceleration in the numbers of the urban poor.

So long as agriculture is not planned with industry, the green revolution will accentuate the social polarisation in the countryside — the rich getting richer, the poor getting poorer.

For a balanced development of the economy to take place, the destruction of the local oligarchies who have a stranglehold over the economy is required.

The causes of famine also have implications for the type of aid needed. Many dependent countries receive food aid. But this doesn't solve any basic problems. What's needed is capital investment for irrigation, agricultural equipment, and industrial development.

To benefit the dependent countries it has to be without strings, or huge interest payments. And it has to be used to develop the economy, not disappear into the hands of the local oligarchy.

As the arms spending of the rich capitalist countries shows, the imperialists have other priorities. A world incapable of feeding itself is perfectly capable of destroying itself several times over.

Fidel Castro recently said: 'Bombs can kill the hungry, the ill and the illiterate, but they can't kill hunger, illness and ignorance.' For that you need a socialist revolution.

Socialist Challenge

RANDOM RIPPER

Now no woman is safe

All women are now his target as he murders victim No 13

Cops are protecting men — not women

By Yvonne Taylor

IF A woman from Mars wanted an explanation of the lowly status of women here on Earth, all she would need to do would be to take a look at last week's press coverage of the latest Yorkshire Ripper murder.

8,000 COPS DEFEND 500 NAZIS

THREE thousand people demonstrated last Saturday against the British Movement's demonstration in Notting Hill, West London.

Two hundred Nazi's turned up and, marched from Marble Arch to Paddington station accompanied by a huge force of police.

The massive police turnout aimed to turn Notting Hill into a 'sterile area', preventing all movement of local people until the marches were over.

At the end of the demonstrations, ANL supporters clashed with dispersing Nazis. Special Patrol Group squads launched assaults on anti-Nazi demonstrators arresting 73.

At Paddington station they attacked press photographers without reason, arresting one and confiscating cameras.

The small turnout by the fascists was a big defeat for the British Movement. On the same day, the National Front could only muster 150 marchers in Bolton — defended by 3,000 cops.



The *Guardian* carried one of the worst articles on its front page:

'The killing points to a worrying change in the Ripper's victims... The last time he murdered a known prostitute... His last two victims... were both respectable girls.'

The *Daily Mirror* echoed the lament: 'Sunday school teacher, model student with a deep social conscience, 20-year-old Jacqui was a far cry from the first prostitute victims of the brutal killer.'

Game

In other words, as long as the Yorkshire Ripper confined his brutal assaults to prostitutes, his actions were quite understandable. After all, aren't such women fair game for every form of male violence?

Of course, there are other types of women who attract this sort of assault. As the police commented when Barbara Leach was murdered by the Ripper, although she wasn't a prostitute, her flimsy dress may have led him to believe that she was.

But how to explain the latest attack — in a well lit street, relatively early on in the evening and on a woman whom the Ripper must have known was a student?

Assaults

In the *New Statesman* a couple of months ago Rob Rohrer tried to answer this question.

Rohrer argued: 'The plain truth is that the Ripper's desire... is to kill women... (his) motivation is actually quite random.'

In other words, every woman is a target for male violence because she is a woman. And there are no rules for moral behaviour that will protect women from this type of assault.

Staying off the streets after dark — even if women were prepared to consider for a moment such a curtailment of their freedom — is no answer. The majority of male assaults on women are conducted at home.

Cope

Women have shown that they are not prepared any longer to suffer silently at the hands of violent men. The women's movement has been taking on the issue and support is growing for its demands.

Women demand the right to fight back. Women like the Maw sisters — sentenced to serve three years in prison after stabbing their sadistic father — must be freed from prosecution by the law.

Women demand the right to take to the streets on every occasion that a woman suffers at the hands of a man like the so-called Ripper.

It's only in this way that women can prevent this issue from continuing as a personal problem which we are expected to cope with on our own.

Demand

The way the police have handled the Ripper investigation is a typical result of the way they look upon all male violence against women.

Women in the Leeds area should demand a public debate with the police and the press to call them to account for the way they have reported the affair and the remedies they advocate.

All photos by Pete Grant (Socialist Challenge)

ANTI NAZI LEAGUE

International Anti-fascist Rally Monday 8th December

7pm. FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE, EUSTON ROAD, LONDON NW1.

Speakers:

Renato Zangheri, Mayor of Bologna.
Henri Buch, Secretary General of FASP,
Autonomous French Police Union.
Leo Heinemann for the VVN, Association of Nazi Victims in Germany.
Tony Benn M.P.
Paul Holborow, National Secretary of A.N.L.

Tickets: £1.00

Available from:
University of London Union,
Malet St., WC1. Bookmarks,
Central Books, Other Books,
Compendium, Colletts,
and other good bookshops.

By post from:
ANL, c/o PO Box 353,
London NW5 (inc SAE).

Thousands rally in Dublin for hunger strikers — now it's your turn



IN IRELAND and throughout the world support for the Irish political prisoners on hunger strike in the H Blocks of Long Kesh — soon to be joined by women prisoners in Armagh — continues to grow at a rapid pace.

In Dublin on Saturday around 20,000 people took part in a march and rally. Over 20 Australian MPs have now stated their support for the hunger strikers, as have many Australian trades unions.

In Spain, the largest trade union in the country has backed the strikers. In the United States 17 demonstrations took place last weekend in different cities.

Now it's the turn of us in Britain. A national demonstration, called by the broadly-based Ad Hoc Hunger Strike Committee, will take place in London on 7 December. All readers of *Socialist Challenge* are urged to attend.

The truth is that anger is mounting over British treatment of Irish political prisoners — be part of that anger on 7 December. Assemble 1pm, Speakers Corner.

Photo: Joanne O'Brien