

Socialist Challenge

SADAT ASSASSINATED

As we go to press, we have heard the news of the assassination of President Anwar Sadat of Egypt. Sadat was a brutal dictator, a vicious enemy of the working class. His slavish support for the interests of US imperialism in the Middle East made him hated by all those fighting for the right of the Palestinians. Socialists will not mourn his passing. See next week's issue for a full analysis.

HUNGER STRIKE



WHOSE VICTORY?



HAS THE Republican movement in the North of Ireland lost the hunger strike? It is true that the prisoners have been forced to call off their protest without winning political status and without winning the five demands.

It is also the case that the intransigence of the Tory government in refusing to make any concessions to the prisoners, either in practice or in writing until the hunger strike ended, appears to have paid off.

But the outcome of a political struggle is not always judged on the terms on which it is eventually settled. It is best assessed on which side emerges from the struggle the stronger. And, by that criteria, there is no doubt who won the hunger strike.

The Republican and socialist movement which supported the hunger strikers have achieved the following:

- Two election victories in the Westminster constituency of Fermanagh and South Tyrone;
- Two parliamentary seats in the Southern Irish general election;
- Several important election victories at local government level in the North of Ireland;
- World wide protests against the intransigence of the Thatcher government. World wide sympathy for the cause of a united Ireland;
- The defeat of the Fianna Fail government in the South of Ireland;
- The marginalisation of the 'moderate' nationalist party in the North of

Ireland — the Social Democratic and Labour Party — because of its failure to support the prisoners;

- The highest level of mass mobilisation against Britain that Ireland has seen in ten years;
- A reported huge increase in funds from abroad to the Republican cause;
- Reports of a rapid rise of volunteers to the IRA.

In Britain, during the hunger strike the *Sunday Times* has definitively come out in favour of British withdrawal from Ireland. James Callaghan has also said that Britain should get out, and at last week's Labour Party conference the overwhelming majority of constituency Labour Parties supported a withdrawal resolution, while the conference itself committed the

Labour Party to campaign for a united Ireland.

None of this would have happened without the hunger strike which has shown to the world that this presence is no longer acceptable.

As Joan Maynard MP told a fringe meeting at the Labour Party conference, 'Bobby Sands' death, and the votes he got transformed the situation inside the Parliamentary Labour Party. As far as Irish unity went, it was mass conversion all round.'

Therefore, consider all that, and consider as well the substantial concessions to the prisoners announced this week by the Tories, and then ask 'who won?' The answer is obvious.

Labour Party



Delegates at Labour's annual conference

Photo: Brian Grogan (Socialist Challenge)

Labour's conference - and the way forward

By Phil Hearse

THE MEDIA are crowing. Benn defeated, the left routed in the NEC elections. Foot back in command, moderates strike back. Every event at the conference was interpreted as a setback for the left. The London *Standard* even managed to put on its front page after the left had won a huge majority for unilateral disarmament 'Left loses out on H-bombs'.

So what was the reality? Was the left driven back? A careful assessment of what happened is a precondition for determining the tasks of the Labour left over the next period.

At the level of policy resolutions, there is no way that the conference could be interpreted as a victory for the right. Decisions were made in favour of a 35-hour week with no loss of pay, unilateral nuclear disarmament, repeal of the '68 and '71 immigration acts, an end to bi-partisanship on Ireland and extra-legal action to defeat Heseltine's attacks on local councils.

But it would be an illusion to believe that these resolutions expressed the real outcome of the conference. The right wing chose to make a stand on the elections to the NEC, control of the manifesto, and the three year rule on conference discussion of constitutional issues.

Victory

On all these the right wing won decisive victories.

A new right wing alliance, centred on the right wing trade union leaderships, but extending to Kinnock on the 'left' and above all using Michael Foot's role as leader, ensured the defeat of the constituency based left. The constituency left

now faces impasse and demoralisation unless it learns the lessons of the defeat.

The scene was set by Healey's victory in the deputy leadership election. True, the 49.5 per cent vote for Benn was remarkable. The right wing had tried to confine his vote below 30 per cent and get a 'vote of confidence' in Healey. His marginal victory was anything but that.

Nonetheless, no matter

how creditable a showing in a lost election is, a defeat is a defeat. Healey's victory set the scene for what followed later in the week and it influenced the whole atmosphere of the conference and made some of the smaller unions feel that they could line up with the right more easily.

The left's defeat on the constitutional amendment on control of the manifesto was a carefully planned manoeuvre, involving wheeling and dealing in which Foot and Peter Shore were centrally involved.

Remove

The right's victory in the NEC elections will have tremendous repercussions. It is likely that Benn will be removed from the chair of the Home Policy Committee and that Eric Heffer will be removed as

chairperson of the organisation sub-committee.

The right wing on the NEC can now ensure that action on left-wing policy is minimal, and the danger looms of a right wing controlled organisation sub-committee starting a witch-hunt against the left.

Michael Foot's promise of 'no witch-hunts' is worthless, against a right-wing on the offensive.

The defeat of the left on the crucial questions of control of the manifesto and control of the party apparatus paradoxically did not reflect any change in the relationship of forces in either the party or the Labour movement as a whole. It reflected more a re-organisation of the right, and the use of their control of decisive industrial unions against the constituency based left.

This right-wing victory based on manoeuvre is precarious. But the constituency left won't change it around unless there is a change in tactics.

The defeat of the constituency left can't be won back in the constituencies. The trade union bureaucracy has to be challenged in its own heartlands. It is to this task that the Labour left must now address itself.

It would be a second, and fatal, illusion to believe that the right's victories at the conference represent a new 'equilibrium' which will now be stabilised. They will go on the offensive throughout the movement. The left faces a very tough battle over the next year.

In this battle the left will need to know exactly

who the enemy is and what methods of struggle to prioritise.

By the end of the conference both the right wing and the constituency left were claiming Michael Foot as 'theirs', hence his standing ovation.

This is a foolish mistake by the left. Michael Foot is now the crucial leader of the right wing; his former 'left' credentials, so skillfully played on, don't matter a fig.

Foot

Eventually Michael Foot must be removed as leader. Whether Benn should challenge him next year is a complex tactical question which cannot be answered now; but the left must constantly try to expose his role and the right wing alliance he has constructed.

The crucial back drop of the coming year's struggle will be the events in the class struggle itself, the fight to remove the Tories.

This Thatcher government is in an unprecedented crisis. This winter they will be struggling to hold the line on the four per cent and to prevent a fight-back on unemployment. So the first lesson is that the left must throw its weight behind all the struggles which challenge the

Tories.

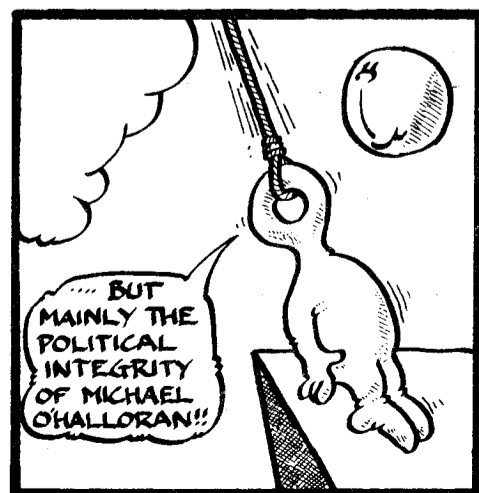
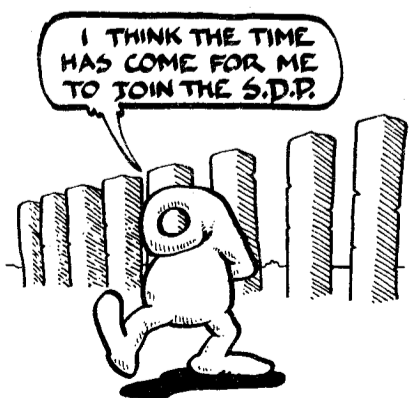
One major victory by the unions would completely transform the situation inside the Labour party. The right only benefits from demoralisation and defeat.

The second lesson is that there can be no 'truce', no attempt to get 'unity' on the right's terms. The idea that a Labour election victory is made more likely by a compromise with the right is mistaken. Against the Social Democrats and the deepening crisis of the Tories, only a party proposing radical solutions, and equipped with the means of ensuring that they can be carried out, will be a credible challenge.

Unions

And third, a new organisation uniting the constituency and union left is needed. Socialist Challenge has consistently argued the need for the Labour left to organise in the unions. If the Labour conference showed anything, it showed precisely that.

The right wing must be stormed in its own bastions. And that means challenging the Duffys, Boyds, Warburtons and Granthams of this world, as well as the Healeys and Foots.



Laurence Scott workers call national solidarity conference

Six months fighting for our jobs



OUR FIGHT to save our factory and our jobs is a national issue. We know that because of just one thing — the magnificent support we have got at every turn from the ordinary membership of the whole movement.

We occupied our factory on 24 April this year to fight closure and the loss of 650 jobs. This was our answer to the proposal to close the factory which has made a profit for the last ten years. Seven months after taking over the firm the new managing director, Arthur Snipe, notified us that we were about to join the dole queue.

Many events have taken place during our six month struggle: secondary picketing of national parent company; an unsatisfactory deal negotiated by national union officials; withdrawal of national official support; eviction by fifty pick-axe carrying scabs carrying iron bars.

But with the backing of the Manchester North District of the AUEW and the Manchester CSEU we have gained the support of all those who want to fight the twin evils of three million on the dole and the scandal of youngsters with no hope of work.

We occupied because we had to say 'enough is enough'. Factories are closing every week. We feel that we were acting fully in line with national union policy. We occupied in line with national union of John Tocher, CSEU divisional organiser and other district officials.

The official policy of the engineering union is against unemployment; officially they are supposed to be fighting redundancies and the EC of the AUEW

was instructed by the AUEW to give maximum support. But in the first week of August, having failed to get two democratic mass meetings of the whole workforce to accept their deal, they withdrew official support.

Within days the other national unions followed suit. The result has been to effectively prevent us from hitting Snipe where it hurts, through picketing his parent company, Mining Supplies, and has meant untold financial hardship for our members.

Even more seriously the EC has trampled on the rule book of the AUEW. Hundreds of branches have protested at this breach of union democracy.

The justice of our fight for jobs and reinstatement of official national support has also been recognised by support from over 100 Labour MPs. From the outset we have received tremendous support not only from the unions involved but from the whole of the labour movement in Britain.

We have called a national solidarity conference in Manchester on Saturday 14 November to mobilise national support for our fight for jobs and union democracy. A victory at Scott's would be a boost in the fight for jobs by the whole movement against the disastrous policies of this government.

Thanking you in advance for your continued support,
Yours fraternally,
Denis Barry, convenor
For details write to: WJ Partlan, 15 Lines Road, Droylesden, Manchester.

Duffy isolated over Laurence Scott

By Brian Grogan
TREMENDOUS support was registered at last week's Labour Party conference for the Laurence Scott workers fight against closure, now entering its 26th week.

Dozens of Labour MPs, including Denis Healey and James Callaghan, agreed to sponsor the fight. The AUEW delegation collected £40 — to the consternation of right wing President Terry Duffy who headed the delegation. Rank and file delegates donated over £300 to the strike fund.

And a fringe meeting addressed by Tony Benn, Ron Halverson of the AUEW national committee and other MPs attracted 130 delegates.

Unify

Tony Benn had already referred to the Laurence Scott struggle in his summation speech on the economic debate at conference. At the meeting he took up the theme of Steve Longshawe who spoke for the strike committee: 'This is not a fight that can be fought alone in your own situation. It has to be supported across the board.'

'There are weaknesses in the trade union structure revealed by this situation... You have a fight in your own union to see that the union leaders really represent their own members adequately.'

He then went on to spell out how they were the victims of deliberate use of unemployment by the Tory government as a weapon to weaken the trade unions, lower living standards and boost profits.

'The answer,' he went on, 'is for Labour to unify against that, to seek both a trade union and a political answer.'

'Because as unions are

weakened by the industrial slump, they necessarily turn for political action, not as a substitute for industrial struggle but as a supplement to the industrial struggle.'

'There are so many lessons to learn from Laurence Scotts. First of all, being a moderate union, as you were, is no protection against the chop when it comes. The idea that trade unions can withdraw from politics and just handle the negotiation of one factory is not enough.'

'Because when it comes to the crunch... it is political consciousness as well as strong trade unionism that is necessary.'

'Other people will look for scapegoats,' Benn pointed out. 'When our economy is in a more serious crisis than in the 30's and people have more to lose than then, the right wing will say: "It's all due to the blacks, it's all due to the women who should be driven out of work into the home, it's all due to communist infiltration of the shop stewards movement, it's due to Trotskyists it's due to whatever..."'

Crunch

'But Laurence Scott... shows that it is the action of management which makes them realise that they must be political... This brings up the relevance of the Labour Party conference and all the issues we are discussing... all the debates about Labour Party democracy are about exactly the same issues that you are facing in relation to the AUEW. Can the membership rely on the leadership to fight when the crunch comes?'

'It is not enough to sit down at Blackpool and plan for the return of a Labour government... But the test for the labour movement this winter is



Phil Penning, LSE steward chairs their meeting at LP conference

not of future policy but of here and now and how we support one another.

'It's no good going to Laurence Scott and giving a lecture about what a future Labour government will do. It will be too late by then.'

'The trade union movement has got to organise to defend the jobs and the living standards and the industrial base of our country. We have got to bring the trades unions and local authorities together... to face the direct challenge of Michael Heseltine.'

'The link between the trades unions, TUC and Labour Party nationally and our representatives in Parliament — that link will have to be forged this

winter. Partly of course, to prepare for the future but mainly to defend the present.'

Knife

'I don't know what's going to happen over the winter politically. I think it's not impossible that Mrs Thatcher is so out of control that the British Establishment may try to ditch her... they are putting their money on a new group of David Steel and Jenkins... Ted Heath, Jim Prior maybe — the man in the cabinet who can put the knife in at the critical moment. So we might see a situation arising where there is a general election before the next Labour conference.'

'The critical thing is that we

keep united and that we demand the right to be represented in our unions and in the party to defend our interests.'

A welcome interjection into the meeting was later provided by David Ennals, MP for Norwich, the site of Laurence Scott's other factory, itself now facing large scale redundancies which had been supposedly ruled out with the closure of the Manchester plant.

He explained that contrary to general opinion, the Norwich workforce was fully behind Manchester and was blacking all work. 'We stand shoulder to shoulder,' he assured the audience.

RON HALVERSON, National Committee member of the AUEW also addressed the Scott's fringe meeting at Labour Party conference.

He started by explaining the scandal of the fact that we could only bring greetings in our personal capacity. This was despite the fact, he explained, that the AUEW NC meeting in April had given unanimous backing to the LSE.

The Executive Council of the AUEW refused to implement this after arguing what he described as 'one of the worst agreements ever put on paper'. The right wing EC had explained the necessity of the agreement by the threat that the LSE management had made to close down all operations in Britain.

'But', he explained 'once you concede to a blackmail you never get off the hook'. He then went on to explain that basis of an agreement, the principle of no compulsory redundancies, now insisted and he would be fighting for the re-opening of negotiations on this basis.

A key point will now be the meeting of the 'Final Appeals Court' due to convene at Eastbourne on 12 October.

The Manchester North District Committee will be taking down a delegation of stewards to this meeting.

With the gathering support indicated by the Labour Party conference, there is every room for confidence that the illegal action of Duffy and the AUEW EC will be called to order and official backing reinstated.

LAURENCE SCOTT STRIKE BULLETIN

Bulletin still available. Write to the Strike Committee, 20 Roundwood, Cheshire SL6 4L.

Socialist Worker — you are abstainers too!

By Phil Hearse

THE LATEST ISSUE of *Socialist Worker*, paper of the Socialist Worker Party, contains a front-page article by Paul Foot on the left-right struggle inside the Labour Party entitled 'What Now for the Left?'

It starts by saying that the showing for the Benn camp in the deputy leadership election was 'magnificent' and that 'most socialists were deeply disappointed' when Benn didn't win. Quite right. A Benn victory would have given a new impulse to the struggle of the left inside the Labour Party and a boost to workers struggling against the Tories the length and breadth of the country.

But it is a little bizarre for *Socialist Worker* to offer their heartfelt congratulations to the Benn campaign, since this was a struggle from which they themselves *abstained* — and part of a wider struggle from which, to read Foot's article, they will continue to abstain.

As Paul Foot puts it: 'Talking about socialism, denouncing capitalism, hounded and abused unanimously by the press, Tony Benn marched forward.'

And we might add, as Benn marched forward, *Socialist Worker* did nothing whatever to promote his campaign and contented itself with its routine and ritual statements about why Tony Benn didn't have the answer (mostly written by... Paul Foot).

Socialist Challenge did promote the Benn campaign. We do not believe that 'Benn has the answer' (indeed our own interview with him and our reply to his positions makes it very clear we do not).

We support his campaign because it was an excellent opportunity to promote the fight inside the Labour Party and the trade unions

against the right wing and to debate out all the political questions facing the working class.

The abstention of *Socialist Worker* derives from something very simple: they regard the struggle in the Labour Party as something which revolutionary socialists should have nothing to do with. In making this assessment, they are making an error of gigantic proportions.

What *Socialist Worker* doesn't face up to is that the crisis inside the Labour Party is the most momentous development in British politics for a generation. Precisely because of the organic links between the trade unions and the Labour Party, the differentiations and debates inside the unions are bound eventually to be reflected inside the Labour Party itself.

And that struggle is a fight about the very soul of the British working class movement. No socialist can afford to step away from that struggle and wash her or his hands of it.

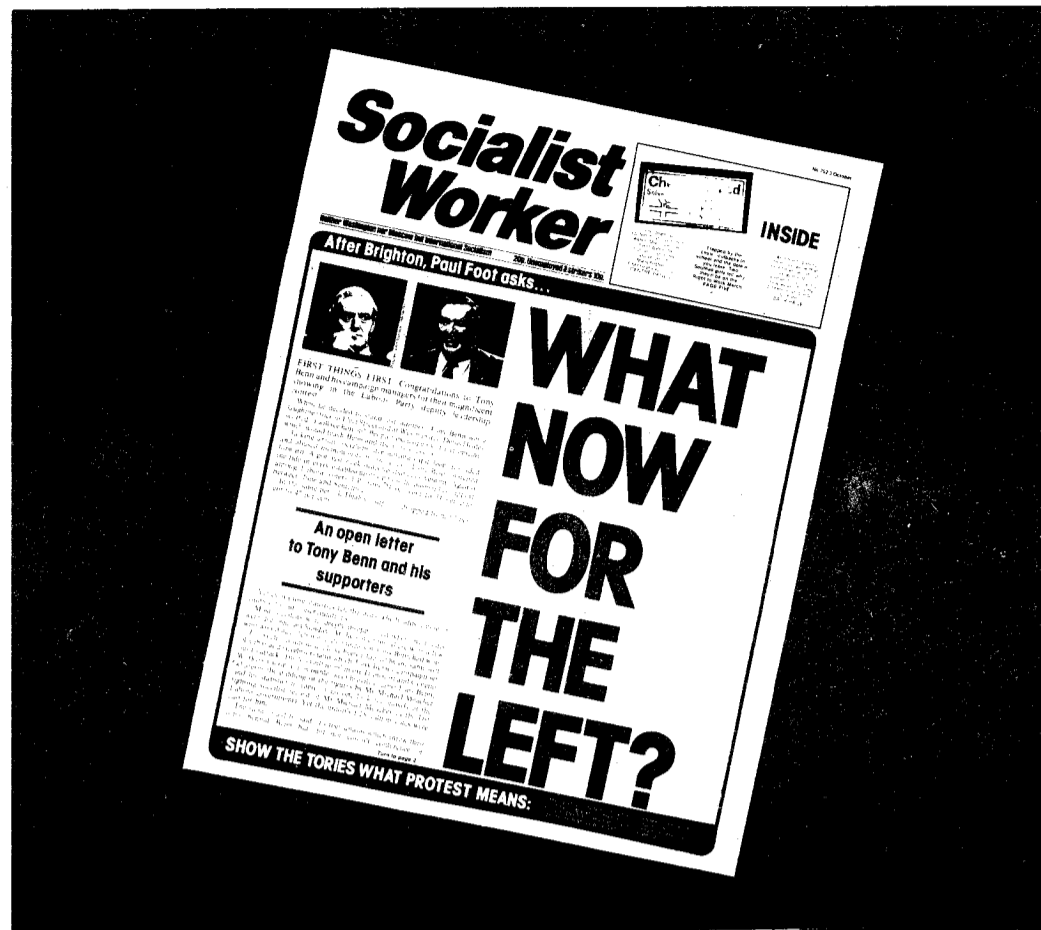
The struggle against the Tories, and the struggle against the right wing in the unions and in the Labour Party are part and parcel of the same process.

The Labour bureaucracy dominates the movement in part because of its ability to divide the constituency left from the militants in the trade unions. To disrupt their hold of the movement it is necessary to *take the struggle to them* in all the bastions which they hold.

The questions which are politically polarising the trade union movement are the questions of debate and division inside the Labour Party. It is around such questions as the Benn campaign as well as the fight against the Tories that new alignments will be formed at the base of the unions.

To be part of those developments it is necessary to intervene in the Labour Party and take a position on these crucial issues of divide.

Paul Foot ends his piece by appealing to the Bennite ranks to get stuck in to the anti-Tory



struggle — on the picket lines, on the protest marches and in the missiles campaign — as a decisive way of turning the tables against the right wing. Sound advice. Those struggles will be the crucial backdrop against which the fight inside the Labour Party will be fought out.

But as the right wing starts its counter-offensive, in the constituencies and the unions,

supporting this or that protest march won't be enough.

It will be necessary to *be there*, fighting shoulder to shoulder with the Bennites against the right, as a crucial pre-condition to debating out revolutionary politics with them. The alternative is, to quote a topical and controversial tactic, *abstention*.

Why Michael Foot is dangerous

By Tom Marlowe

Michael Foot, leader of the Labour Party told the *Tribune* rally at the Labour Party conference, 'I do want to thank you for inviting me here. I have been coming to *Tribune* rallies longer than I care to remember. But I must admit I never expected to find myself occupying the position I do at present.'

At that there was laughter and cheers all round. Michael Foot the prodigal son of the left, had, it seemed, not only returned but had brought with him the leadership of the Labour Party. After all, never before had a party leader addressed a *Tribune* rally.

At the meeting Foot played his left wing past for all it was worth. He reminded his audience of the times he had had the Labour whip withdrawn from him in parliament. He chided, 'Tony has served in more cabinets than I have.'

Success

It was a good performance, a reflection of Foot's success generally at the conference. For, if Brighton was a victory for any one individual, that individual was Michael Foot. This was evident when he was given a standing ovation at the end of his parliamentary report to the conference on the Wednesday morning.

A standing ovation is not always awarded to Labour leaders at conference. Last year, James Callaghan was met with silence by most of the delegates from the constituency Labour Parties. But this year they rose, as a single mass when Foot ended with his declaration that he was 'an inveterate, incurable peace-monger'.

Michael Foot, it seems, has arrived. For a long time he has appeared little more than stop-gap leader, a minor obstacle to the advance of the left, a weakling who had little authority and commanded less respect.

Brighton changed that, and it is now time to take Michael Foot seriously. This is especial-

ly important because the conference delegates suggested that Foot, if no longer the 'darling of the left', still retains much affection and trust with them.

Such a view is not only wrong, it is dangerous. Certainly, Foot has allied himself with many of the left wing policies adopted at conference, in particular withdrawal from the EEC and disarmament. But sympathy for such notions and a capacity or willingness to carry them out are different things.

For instance, Foot, through the snivelling little opportunist Neil Kinnock, campaigned for abstention on the deputy leadership contest; knowing full well that this would mean a Healey victory. And yet Healey, with at least more integrity than some of the 'left' defiantly proclaimed he would not serve in a unilateralist cabinet.

Make no mistake: if Foot has to choose between keeping Healey happy, or implementing a full unilateralist policy, he will pick the former.

It was this notion of 'unity' which finds a real echo on the Labour left, and which is one explanation for Foot's popularity.

But the best remarks on this came from defeated left wing treasurer, Norman Atkinson at the conference on the Wednesday. 'The very people who said for unity's sake we should not contest the deputy leadership are the very people who have just shifted five left-wingers from the national executive.'

'The unity that is necessary on our principles — the replacement of a capitalist society by a socialist society'

The executive elections were another success for Foot. It was no secret that he supported the 'hit list' drawn up by the right wing trade union leaders, a list which was aimed very specifically at those executive members who were openly associated with the moves to democratise the Labour Party.

It is also rather significant that Foot chose to speak on behalf of the executive on the debate on NEC control of the party manifesto. He decided to lend his name to attacking this further move towards democratisation, raising the stakes to such a level that he claimed: 'The way we settle this question may well settle the next election.'

Battle

This assertion is indicative for the battle which is now likely to ensue between the policies decided at conference, and the NEC, the majority of which do not support those policies.

It is particularly relevant in regard to what some delegates were saying, that Foot is now 'a prisoner of the right'. If Michael Foot is a prisoner then he shows little indication of wanting to escape.

Unlike Benn he resolutely defends the action of the last Labour government, in which he played a leading part.

It was Foot who, as leader of the opposition selected as Labour's defence spokesperson in parliament someone who didn't agree with Labour's policy on defence; as Labour's foreign affairs spokesperson, someone who didn't agree with party policy on foreign affairs, and as Labour's spokesperson on the economy, someone who didn't agree with Labour's economic policies.

Michael Foot may still be the grandfather of the Labour left, but he could easily become the godfather of the right. He deserves watching.



Labour Party and Ireland the meaning of the conference decision

By Geoff Bell

IF SOMEONE had predicted three years ago that the 1981 Labour Party conference would commit the Party to campaign for a united Ireland, and would see the majority of constituency Labour Parties supporting a call for British withdrawal from Ireland, then the assumption would have been that such a prophet had been hit too near the temple by an RUC plastic bullet.

Yet, last week's conference did see the Labour Party committed to Irish unity, and, on a show of hands, between 75 and 85 per cent of CLP delegates did vote for a pro-withdrawal resolution.

So Joan Maynard MP was quite correct when she said at a conference fringe meeting organised by the Labour Committee on Ireland: 'We have made a little progress this week'.

Rumours

At the same time the conference rejected two pro-withdrawal resolutions, and it appeared that the strongest withdrawal motion, which included support for the demands of the hunger strikers, did not have majority support even among CLPs.

What was passed was an NEC statement which endorsed unification of Ireland as a general principle but which insisted that this would only be acceptable if the Unionists agreed.

It was the trade union block vote which secured the defeat for resolutions on British withdrawal. A number of unions abstained, but despite rumours that the AUEW was going to back the milder withdrawal resolution, no major union appears to have done so.

Strains

Remarkably, this places the trade unions to the right of the Parliamentary Labour Party. During the week both Joan Maynard and Pat Duffy MP, told fringe meetings that the majority of Labour MPs favoured the milder withdrawal resolution.

But neither this, nor

the endorsement of the Irish unity call means the Tory/Labour bipartisanship on Ireland is completely broken. It should be remembered that in November 1972 Harold Wilson, leader of the Labour Party, called for Britain to withdraw from the North in 15 years.

The call, which was endorsed by the PLP, was to the left of the policy agreed by last week's conference, but it did not break bipartisanship because the Tories' day to day practical implementation of its Irish policy was not opposed.

Nor will it be this time. There will be strains on the Tory/Labour consensus. For one thing Labour is now committed to opposition. For another, the PLP will be expected by Labour's rank and file to articulate the party's aspiration for unity.

Unity

But the general British policy framework — the maintenance of the border, and British policing of that border — will remain unchallenged by the Labour Party.

Unification may be Labour's ultimate aim but even Ted Heath, in 1972, said that if a majority in the North favoured unity then Britain 'would not stand in the way'.

It is significant that Ian Paisley felt able to comment on Labour's conference decision that it 'would not make much difference'.

This is not to imply that no gains were made at last week's conference or that those gains cannot be built on. The NEC document does commit the Labour Party to 'cam-

paign' for Irish unification and CLPs can demand that such a campaign is immediately begun.

Also the conference remitted to the NEC a call for a special one-day conference on Ireland. Again, CLPs can put pressure on the NEC to try and ensure that this remittal does not lie in the waste-paper basket at the Party's headquarters.

The biggest gain was the large majority among CLPs for a policy of active withdrawal. The credit for that important breakthrough can be given to the Labour Committee on Ireland who, in just two short years, have made Ireland one of the major issues of debate in the Labour Party.



Joan Maynard — 'We have made a little progress'.

But to secure the LCI's aim — British withdrawal from the North of Ireland — the obstacle of the opposition of the trade unions remains. The reason for this was illustrated at a lecture that NUPE general secretary Alan Fisher was reported to have given to his delegation at the conference.

Fisher, who is personally sympathetic to withdrawal, told his delegation that it would be wrong to support the withdrawal resolutions, because of NUPE's substantial membership in the North of Ireland. He said if the union were seen to back withdrawal it could split this North of Ireland membership and lead to mass desertions from Loyalists.

The argument about not wishing to divide North of Ireland trade



Peter Hain, who supported calls for British withdrawal.

unionists was also used by Alex Kitson, on behalf of the NEC when he argued against withdrawal at the conference. The same point was also made by supporters of the *Militant* newspaper who opposed both withdrawal motions.

The Kitson/*Militant* alliance was effectively answered at the LCI fringe meeting by Joan Maynard and Kevin McNamara MP.

Joan Maynard referred to the Kitson/*Militant* call for a new North of Ireland Labour Party and recalled that the old Northern Ireland Labour Party had eventually become so pro-partitionist that it supported internment.

'You could set up a hundred Labour Parties and you would still get the same result', said Maynard. 'The minute you would start, people would ask what's your position on the border, and that would inevitably mean you were in one camp or the other.'

McNamara took up the same theme. Because the Kitson/*Militant* alliance was proposing a Labour Party based on one half of partitioned Ireland it thereby strengthened partition, argued McNamara. 'The proposition would become the first barricade of Unionism', he said. 'You have to solve the national question before you get any degree of socialism.'

Correct as these arguments are they do not solve the problem of winning the unions to the cause of British withdrawal: a problem which is compounded by the fact that the membership subscriptions the unions receive from the North of Ireland mean they have a material interest in not offending the Unionist majority.

THEY SAID:

'WE ARE discussing a failure of existing policies: a total bankruptcy of all political initiatives by successive British governments, whether Tory or Labour, over the past ten years.'

'Anyone who runs away from that is indulging in political escapism, is burying their heads in the sand in the way that Britain has collectively buried its head in the sands on the Irish question for far too long. Britain is part of the problem, not part of the solution.'

'I would appeal to the comrades in the trade union movement. Ireland is a taboo subject in the trade union movement. Understandably, because you have trade union members in Northern Ireland. But that does not enable you to shirk your responsibilities.'

'And I hope you and conference will say that the unification as proposed in this inadequate and contradictory NEC document is not enough.'

'If you simply declare in favour of unification without developing a strategy of how you are going to get there, a strategy which involves withdrawal, then it's like saying you are in favour of socialism but you have no strategy as to get it — it's pie in the sky.'

'I ask the trade unions to remember that the Irish Transport and General Workers Union favour an intention by Britain to disengage and to encourage Irish unity, and that is also the view of other Irish unions. The greatest Irish tragedy is the silence of the British labour movement.'

Mick Martin, Fulham CLP.

'The horrendous and heroic deaths of Bobby Sands and others has brought the issue of Ireland to the forefront of the world. Yet, in Britain, we are still sticking our heads in the sand.'

Merle Amory, Brent East CLP.

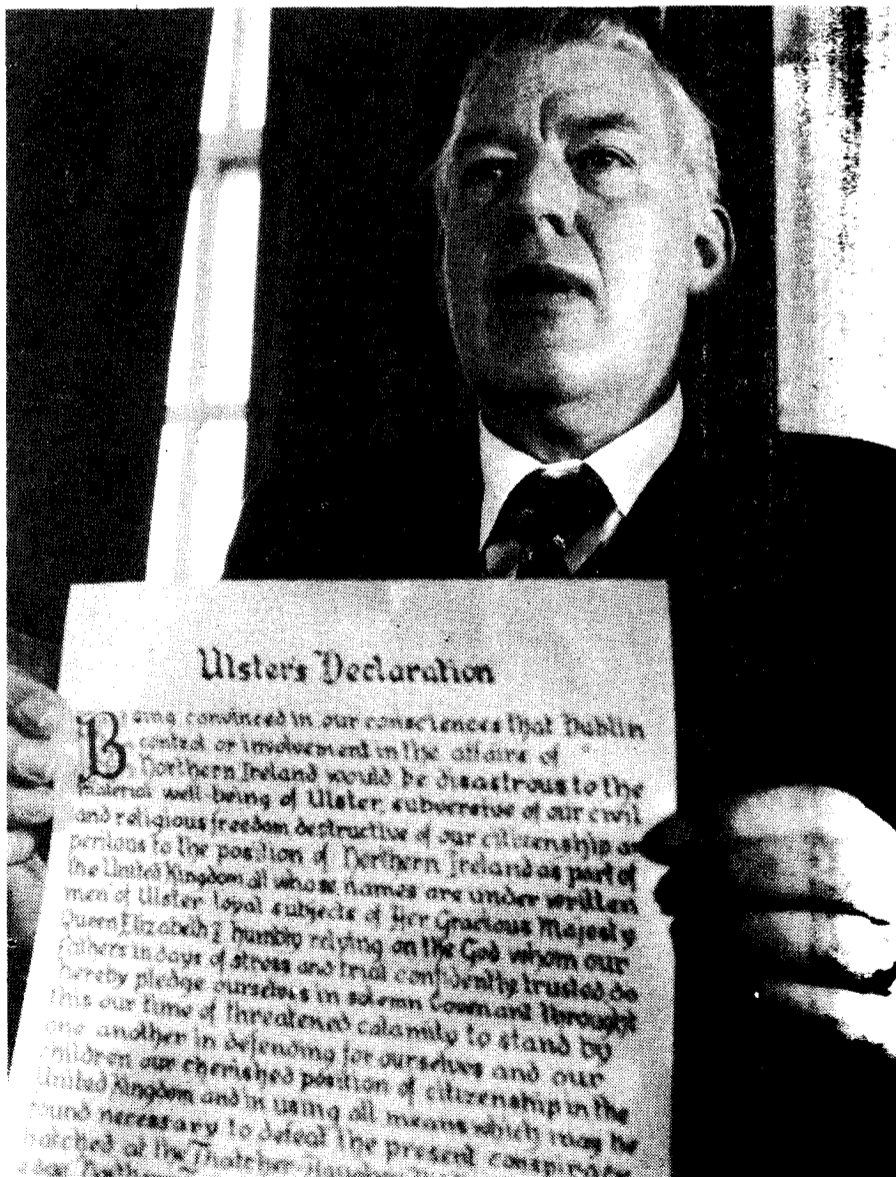
'The one basic flaw in the NEC document is that it leaves the power of veto in the hands of the Unionists.'

How many more generations must be sacrificed because of this veto to live in terror and misery.'

Anne Lavery, St Pancras North.

'This is the unfinished business of the 19th and 20th centuries. The border never worked, never could work and never will work. Successive governments had tried to make it work and they had all failed. The only way forward was a united Ireland.'

Clive Soley, MP.



Ian Paisley — Labour's plan still gives him the right of veto

But there are steps that can be taken. Greater publicity for the views of Irish trade unions, a majority of which do favour British withdrawal, would help shift the present pro-Unionist views in the British unions.

The LCI has already, along with the Committee

for Withdrawal from Ireland, agreed to organise a labour movement conference on Ireland at which the first step can be taken for organising on the Irish issue in the unions.

No-one should be under any illusions about the difficulties of winning

a significant number of trade unions to the cause of British withdrawal. But that does not mean the effort should not be made.

As Joan Maynard said last week, in Brighton: 'We've won the PLP. We've won the constituencies, now we have to win the unions.'

Labour party conference

Women make policy not tea

By Tessa van Gelderen

ALEX KITSON, this year's chairman (sic) at Labour Party conference, received a bouquet from delegate Janet Pickering. The presentation came at the end of the debate on positive discrimination for women.

Its purpose was to show conference that women were not prepared to be patronised by the likes of Kitson. Earlier in the conference he had suggested that women should concentrate on making tea not policies.

It was, perhaps, concern that women were getting too uppity in the Labour Party that resulted in the motion and amendments on positive discrimination for women being remitted. After all it would never do to allow the Labour Party's women's conference to 'have the right to submit five resolutions of the final agenda for debate at the Labour Party Annual Conference.'

And it was certainly going too far for some of the delegates, particularly our trade union brothers, to allow women to 'organise women's sections without requiring ap-

proval of the General Committee.'

The union delegations obviously did not like to be told to put their own house in order by being 'encouraged to ensure that their delegation to annual conference accurately reflect female membership of that union.'

That would certainly cause a shake up in their delegations: women made up less than 5 per cent of the union delegations, and only represented 14 per cent of the total number of conference delegates.

These basic facts were highlighted by Jenny Edwards from Paddington when she spoke in the debate. As she said: 'The need for positive discrimination for women is clear.'

Women did have some successes at conference: they forced the issue of positive action for women on to the conference agen-

da, by persuading conference to refer back the recommendation of the arrangements committee that it not be taken.

There was also a successful reference back of the National Executive Committee's report on women's organisation in the party on the grounds



Jo Richardson: allowing a free vote?

that not enough money or resources had been put into it.

Jo Richardson MP, who had spoken on behalf of the NEC, told delegates that it was up to conference to decide if the report should be referred back. Again, this was hardly a

normal 'recommendation' from an NEC member.

Women delegates were extremely well organised and militant. As one delegate pointed out she had never known there to be so many fringe meetings on women's issues.

But like all the debates that took place in the week, the debate on positive discrimination for women polarised the conference. Delegates challenged the very existence of women's sections, an indication that these structures have become weapons for women in the party. Their main concern is no longer making tea and cakes.

The debate at conference took the discussion on positive discrimination forward. No longer is it enough that there are specific posts set aside for women (for example that the NEC 'when co-opting members for its sub-committees, should adopt the target of 50 per cent of women.); women had to be actively encouraged to participate in the first place.

Many people are now beginning to recognise that women cannot play a full

role in the Labour Party without special measures being taken.

As Mel Read from the technicians union, ASTMS, spelled out at a fringe meeting on a 'Woman's Right to Work': 'Women have been treated shabbily in the Labour Party for years... women outside the party have no trust in it.'

She also pointed out what every woman knows: we have two burdens, at the work place and in the home. And all women active in the labour movement are under pressure to take up both 'women's issues' and trade union questions.

Highlight

These problems were highlighted by Elaine Cross, a TASS shop steward from the Laurence Scott strike.

She explained that when they first went on strike the men usually forgot about her existence if anyone came up to the picket line asking for a steward.

But as she said: 'When



Elaine Cross — picket duty before football.

women are on picket duty, we don't go off and play football on Sundays or cook the Sunday dinner. We're there all the time.'

And women have played an equal role in the occupation of the factory and the engineering union's headquarters — despite attempts by some of the men to get women out when the police were called in.

For anyone who thinks that 'women can make it on their own' not understanding the specific problems they face, Ann Spencer, for the garment union NUTGWU, put them straight at the same

meeting. 'In our union,' she said, '92 per cent of the membership are women. I may be deputy general secretary but out of 47 officers only five are women.'

She went on to argue that the only way to overcome this was to fight locally and nationally for preferential seats for women.

The debates at conference and in the fringe meetings all took up the right of women to work and the need for positive discrimination. The fight inside the labour movement to show that these are not divisive issues still has to continue.

The Labour Party and the trade unions have to put their own house in order while at the same time leading a campaign for women to have the right to work in a society that makes women second class citizens.

That means the labour movement has to understand why specific measures like positive discrimination for women are indispensable in that struggle.



These three left-wingers managed to retain their seats on the NEC — Eric Clarke, Scottish Miners' general secretary with MPs Skinner and Benn

Overheard at Brighton

'Peter Parker has just got a 25 per cent wage rise. That's the rate the miners are asking for. That should be the going rate this year. The police aren't part of the 4 per cent pay policy. Oh no, they want plenty of those in order to stop the hecklers...'

Dennis Skinner, MP

'I want to tell Tony when and if you get that job, I'll still be there because I'm not in the running. You've got to keep them on their toes, like we didn't before.'

Dennis Skinner, MP

'A year ago some trade union leaders wanted a three year rule on constitutional changes reintroduced. When they lost at Wembley, they wanted a change in 6 months.'

Tony Benn, MP

'Not so long ago these same MPs were prepared to vote for Williams and Rodgers and Owen. MPs aren't abs-

enting — they're voting for Healey.'

Arthur Scargill, President Yorkshire NUM

'The Labour Party lost the last election because it tried to practise capitalism better than the Tories.'

Arthur Scargill, President Yorkshire NUM

'I believe the Labour Party should be a broad church but there's no room for non-believers in socialism.'

Arthur Scargill, President Yorkshire NUM

'We may think it's hot now but a future Labour government committed to socialist policies would be even hotter.'

Joan Maynard, MP

'The right knew better. They stuck with Denis Healey, now we're stuck with him.'

Margaret Beckett, one of the five left wingers who lost their seats on the NEC

'There is a lot of talk of a soft left. There is no left soft enough for Duffy, Boyd and Grantham.'

Margaret Beckett.

Benn vs Healey

How did your MP vote?



SIXTY-TWO Labour MPs voted for Healey while their constituencies went for Benn.

David Ennals (Norwich N), Roy Mason (Barnsley), Stanley Cohen (Leeds SE), Ben Ford (Bradford N), Oonagh McDonald (Thurrock), Sam Silkin (Dulwich), William Wilson (Coventry SE), Bob Mellish (Bermondsey), Dale Campbell-Savours (Workington), Gordon Bagier (Sunderland S), Joel Barnett (Heywood and Royton), Betty Boothroyd (Bromwich W), Michael English (Nottingham W).

Derek Foster (Bishop Auckland), Bernard Conlan (Gateshead E), David Clark (South Shields), Frederick Willey (Sunderland N), George Grant (Morpeth), Bob Brown (Newcastle W), James Tinn (Redcar), James Johnson (Hull W), Edwin Wainwright (Dearne Valley), Shirley Summerskill (Halifax), Barry Sheerman (Huddersfield E), Merlyn Rees (Leeds S), Fred Mulley (Sheffield Park), Walter Harrison (Wakefield), Tom McNally (Stockport S), Gordon Oakes (Widnes), Michael McGuire (Ince), Gerald Kaufman (Ardwick), Leslie Spiggs (St Helens), Alan Fitch (Wigan), Jack Dunnett (Nottingham E).

William Whitlock (Nottingham N.), Peter Snape (West Bromwich E), John Sever (Ladywood), George Park (Coventry NE), Geoffrey Robinson (Coventry NW), John Parker (Dagenham), Reginald Freeson (Brent E), Thomas Graham (Edmonton), Clinton Davis (Hackney Central), Ronald Brown (Hackney South), George Cunningham (Islington South), Bryan Magee (Leyton), Roland Moyle (Lewisham E), Bruce Douglas-Mann (Mitcham and Morden).

Douglas Jay (Battersea N), Tom Cox (Tooting), Arthur Palmer (Bristol NE), David Stoddart (Swindon), Jeffrey Thomas (Abertillery), George Foulkes (Ayrshire S), Norman Hogg (Dunbarton E), Ian Campbell (Dunbarton W), Dick Douglas (Dunfermline), James Hamilton (Bothwell), John Smith (Lanark N), Gregor Mackenzie (Rutherglen), James White (Pollok), Maybon Dickson (Greenock).

Twenty-eight either abstained or failed to vote at all in spite of constituency support for Benn:

Guy Barnett (Greenwich), Andrew Bennett (Stockport), Norman Buchan (Renfrew W), Harry Cowans (Newcastle Central), Eric Deakins (Waltham Forest), Albert Duffy (Attercliffe), William Garrett (Walsend), Frank Hooley (Sheffield Heeley), Russell Kerr (Hounslow), Robert Kilroy-Silk (Ormskirk), Neil Kinnock (Bedwellty), Joan Lester (Slough), Alfred Morris (Wythenshawe), his brother Charles Morris (Openshaw), George Morton (Moss Side), Martin O'Neill (Clacton), Stanley Orme (Salford W), Hugh McCartney (Dunbarton Central).

Alan McKay (Penistone), Kevin McNamara (Hull Central), John McWilliam (Blayden), Laurie Pavitt (Brent S), Thomas Pendry (Stalybridge), Jeff Rooker (Perry Barr), John Silkin (Deptford), Sheila Wright (Handsworth), Bob Mitchell (Itchen), Arthur Lewis (Newham NW).

A statement from the Editorial Board

Iranian revolution in danger

THE IRANIAN REVOLUTION is in danger. The Khomeini regime has proved chronically incapable of stabilising the economy since the overthrow of the Shah. The masses are faced with rising unemployment, inflation, a booming black market and severe shortages.

Hundreds of thousands of people have emigrated to the cities from the countryside and the war zones. The Islamic Republican Party (IRP) regime, faced with economic collapse and political chaos, has reacted with a vicious wave of repression against all its opponents.

Hundreds of people are being executed every day. The so-called 'revolutionary guards', the quasi-fascist hezbollahis street gangs and the Islamic courts are responsible for an escalating bloodbath against all those fighting to preserve the gains of the revolution.

Crisis deepens

Last week the State Prosecutor announced new measures under which anyone arrested for 'causing unrest' will be executed the same day, on the evidence of two witnesses; children under twelve will be eligible for execution; and those arrested with wounds after fighting government forces will 'have further wounds inflicted' before death. This repression is particularly aimed at the main force of the armed opposition, the left wing Mujahadin.

Many people who supported the mighty Iranian revolution against the Shah will be appalled by these developments. The 'Islamic' government of Khomeini has shown that it has no solution to the problems of the masses. As the crisis deepens, the repression gets worse.

How has the Iranian revolution reached this apparent impasse?

The 1979 revolution against the Shah was one of the most profound and widespread mobilisations of the masses seen anywhere in the world in the post-war period. Faced with the revolutionary activity of millions, the Shah's army — one of the biggest and best equipped since the war — collapsed like a pack of cards.

Given the extent of the mobilisation, and the Shah's alliance with Western, especially American, imperialism the revolution had a tremendous anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist potential.

Restabilise

In the year following the revolution, the self activity and self-organisation of the masses increased by leaps and bounds. There were strikes, demonstrations and the formation of workers committees — shoras — in the factories. But the working class lacked the ability to impose its own rule.

In the aftermath of the revolution, the Shah's governing apparatus — the army high command, the SAVAK secret police and the state bureaucracy — was crushed. This deprived the most powerful sections of the bourgeoisie (based on big industry and links with the multinationals) of an instrument to restabilise their rule.

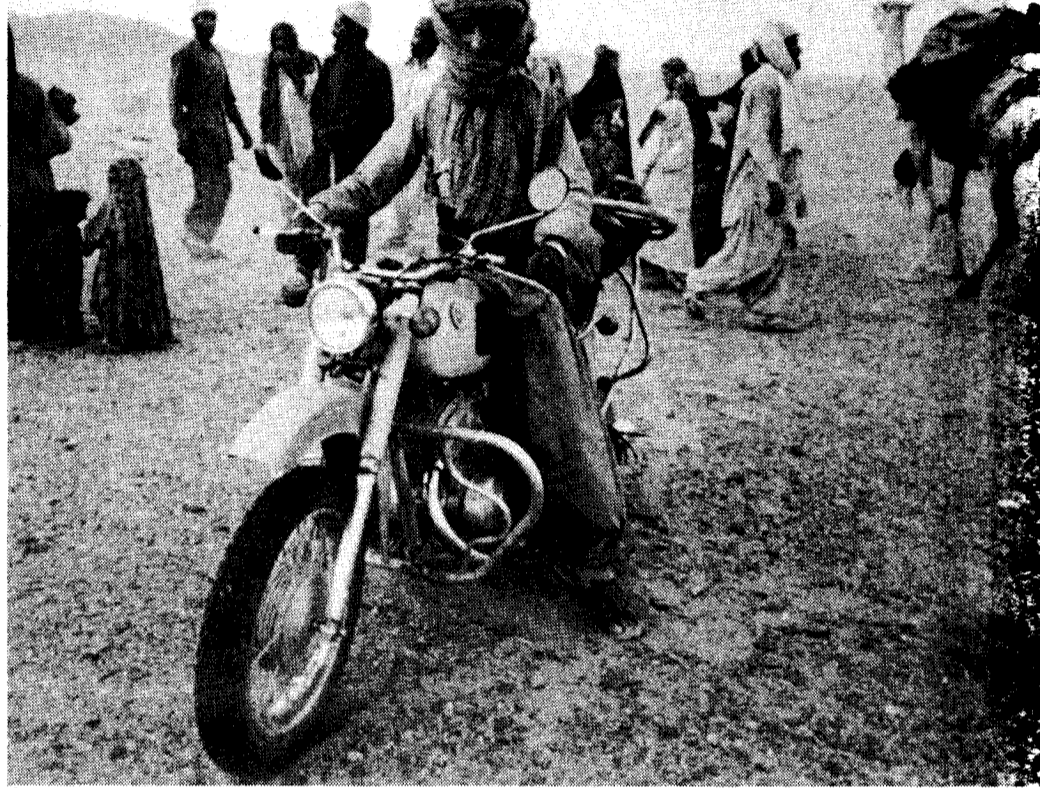
But the lack of a powerful labour movement, and the absence of a high level of class consciousness among the Iranian workers acted as an obstacle to the working class achieving political independence from bourgeois and 'Islamic' politicians.

The governments which came to office after the fall of the Shah cemented an alliance between the mullahs and other Islamic fundamentalists on the one hand, and sections of small capitalists, merchants and the bazaar on the other.

Politicians like the first prime minister Bazargan represented this section of the small capitalists who had fared badly under the Shah. Their project was to reconstruct a capitalism in Iran which would favour their class.

But it has proved impossible to stabilise capitalism in Iran on such a basis.

While they have attempted to play a Bonapartist role between the major classes, they have had to fight off both the demands of



Monarchist guerrillas on motor-bikes wait in the wings

the working class and the efforts of the 'liberal' bourgeoisie who want to reconstruct capitalism on a pro-imperialist basis.

The decisive power has, however, remained in the hands of the mullahs because they possess an apparatus which links together their para-military forces, the mosque and the bazaar.

For at least 18 months after the fall of the Shah this alliance was able to keep a decisive base among the working masses.

Despite the failure of the Iranian working class to impose its own rule, imperialism remained implacably hostile to the Khomeini regime. The revolution deprived them of their major policeman in the region — the Shah's massive forces.

The Iranian revolution continued to be a grave destabilising factor in the region, in particular its effects were felt in countries like Egypt where militant Islam threatened the status quo.

Turning point

US imperialism would dearly love to overthrow the regime and replace it with a new right wing government, perhaps based on the army, just as they did in the CIA-organised coup of 1952.

The Khomeini regime, by launching an offensive against the most advanced sections of the masses, is doing the dirty work of imperialism, paving the way for precisely such a right wing coup.

The events of this summer marked a turning point in the Iranian crisis. First, the regime, alarmed by the growth of the opposition's support launched a murderous attack on a Mujahadin demonstration, killing hundreds of people.

The Mujahadin's response was to launch a bombing campaign against the leadership of the regime, assassinating some of the most prominent political figures in the nation. Every day brings fresh reports of machine gun battles in Tehran.

With the regime opposed by the openly pro-imperialist right wing and by an increasing number of the working masses, its days are almost certainly numbered. The question is, what will replace it?

It would be an illusion to believe that the entire social base of the regime has disappeared, as the mobilisations against the assassinations clearly showed. But Iran is a society in turmoil; hundreds of thousands of the poor and dispossessed have flooded into Tehran.

The social basis of the regime now increasingly rests on these dispossessed. The recruits to the revolutionary guards and the hezbollahis are from the lumpen street gangs of

youth. In no sense are they the advanced section of the youth.

The main opposition to the IRP is represented by the Mujahadin. There are two central problems with their strategy.

First they have entered into a governmental bloc with former president Bani-Sadr, whom they regard as the 'legitimate' President of Iran. This has now led to a 'government in exile, with Bani-Sadr as President. Such a bloc avoids the question of the class independence of the workers and ties the resistance to the projects of this bourgeois politician.

Second, their strategy of bombings and military confrontations is one which leaves the working masses as spectators, and fails to mobilise them around a programme to meet their social and political needs.

This failure does a dis-service to the task of preparing to replace the present regime with a workers' government. Moreover it leaves the masses ill-equipped to deal with a right wing or pro imperialist coup — which could only be defeated by mass mobilisation.

Nevertheless whatever our criticism of the Mujahadin we in no way equate their errors with the criminal acts of the IRP regime. In fact the terror tactics of the Mujahadin are precisely a response to the Khomeini wave of repression.

The workers of Iran have not been defeated in a frontal battle. Their potential power remains immense. In some areas the old shoras remain intact, even in the guise of 'Islamic' committees.

Mass action

But defence of the revolution cannot be in any way be confused with defence of the regime. The working class must *prepare the conditions* for removing this regime.

In our view the best way of preparing for this is by creating a broad front committed to mass action in defence of democratic rights against the repression. This is also the best way to prepare to oppose the inevitable efforts of the monarchist forces to play their hand. Under these circumstances all the anti-monarchist forces should unite on similar principles.

But today unless the working class asserts itself against the Islamic repression, it will be incapable of asserting its own class interests.

The struggle for the independence of the working class should proceed through the creation of organisations which mobilise the workers, but which break with bourgeois politicians of every stripe. Eventually this process must be expressed through the creation of a political party to represent the Iranian masses.

While the repression continues in Iran, socialists in Britain should step up their activity in defence of the persecuted Iranian left.



More and more people are taking up arms against the Khomeini regime

Towards a space war

ONE aspect of Reagan's arms offensive which received little coverage in the British media was his intention to press ahead with the 'development of technologies for space-based missile defence'.

Space is an area where weapons of mass destruction are outlawed by the United Nations, but that doesn't seem likely to stop Reagan planning his own version of 'Star Wars'.

Indeed, already the US has taken significant steps along this road. For, behind the jolly ballyhoo that surrounded the launching of the space shuttle last April, lay something much

more sinister — the first move towards making space war a reality.

For instance, when the shuttle was designed the American Air Force ordered its cargo bay to be enlarged so, if necessary, it could take 'military payloads' — in other words, missiles and rockets.

In fact, a military duplicate of the shuttle base at the Kennedy Space Centre is already under construction at Vandenberg Air Force Base, California. It was due to be operational by 1984 but this may now be speeded up by Reagan.

And even before Reagan announced his new war plans, the US Air Force had announc-

ed, last March, that it intended spending £175 million on a space centre in Colorado. This will have the capacity to control not just military shuttle flights, but civilian ones as well.

Adding to the space war costs is the US Defence Department whose demand for £200 million in 1982 for its own shuttle research is now likely to be granted by Reagan.

Even the shuttle plans already made show the military purpose behind them. Nine of the first 40 launched will carry military experts only, while many of the remainder will also have representatives of the US war machine on board.

The war shuttles will be used to destroy satellites, engage inter-continental ballistic missiles and even become a space 'bomber' and launch nuclear weapons from space.

Already, plans have been made to use the shuttle to test laser weapons, directed against the Soviet Union.

Reagan's announcement last Friday will mean that all these plans will now be stepped up. It seems wherever you go — whether underground, under water or in space — you just can't escape Reagan's missile madness.

AND YOU DON'T BELIEVE ON THE EVE OF DESTRUCTION

When it comes to the arms race Ronald Reagan has shown himself to be Sebastian Coe and Steve Ovett rolled into one. Last weekend the US president showed the most frightening symptoms yet of missile madness when he announced his new arms package. **GEOFF BELL reports.**

The Presidency of Ronald Reagan is becoming a living nightmare for the rest of the world's population. While he and his NATO allies hold their hands to their hearts and claim that, really, they are in favour of a reduction in nuclear arms, last weekend Reagan announced a new 'strategic programme' which will mark a further stock-piling of nuclear weapons.

For Reagan promised more missiles, more bombers carrying missiles, more submarines carrying missiles, and further research into yet how more missiles can be deployed. All of them will be nuclear and they will cost the citizens of the United States hundreds of billions of dollars.

Reagan made his announcement of the new package standing alongside his Secretary of Defence, Caspar Weinberger, who is the architect of Reagan's 'defence' plans. Weinberger was in charge of Richard Nixon's 'Office of Management' when that crook was President.

His aim now, he has said, is to prepare for a 'decade of confrontation'. The nuclear build-up he and Reagan have now embarked upon is designed to ensure that, if necessary, the United States will start such a confrontation.

The Reagan/Weinberger plan for what the Soviet news agency TASS described as a 'sharp escalation of the nuclear race', includes:

- *Several hundred nuclear sea-launched Cruise missiles, to be deployed on submarines from 1984

- *One hundred long-range B-1 bombers — an aircraft scrapped by Jimmy Carter in 1977 as being too expensive

- *The modification of existing B-52 bombers

- *The deployment of 3,000 Cruise missiles on B-52s and B-1s

- *The development of the new Stealth bomber, which would also carry nuclear weapons, and as it would be designed to try and evade radar would be particularly useful for a 'first strike' strategy

- *The deployment of at least 100 MX inter-continental ballistic missiles. Each MX missile would carry 10 nuclear warheads, and would have a range of over 6,000 miles

- *The construction of Trident ballistic missile carrying submarines — one a year between now and 1987

- *The development of a larger and more accurate Trident, the D-5

- *The building of more fighter airplanes — there will be five squadrons of the new F-16 fighter

- *Building six to nine more AWACS 'surveillance planes'.

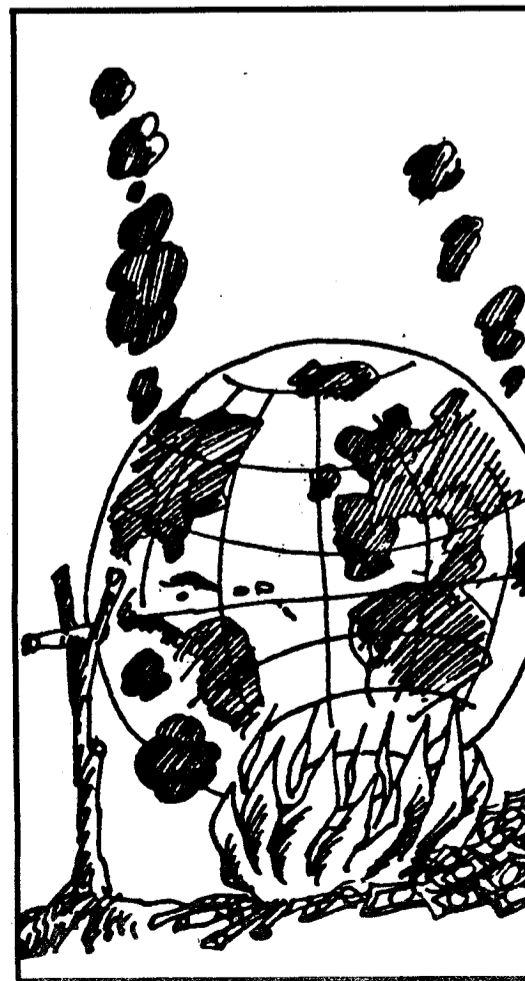
This escalation of the US's existing nuclear arsenal will cost at least \$180 billion. Reagan has called for a defence budget of \$182 billion in 1982, rising to \$243 billion in 1984.

It is the MX missile which is at the heart of the new strategy. Originally, Reagan was planning to have these deployed in underground tracks, along which they could move so that they could

avoid detection. Now he has decided, for the moment, to place them in existing missile silos in Arizona, Arkansas and Kansas.

But that won't be the end of the MX story. Reagan has also said that further research will be carried out to see where else the MX can be deployed. A further escalation in this area will be announced in 1984.

The MX system is particularly frightening for two reasons. First, is its capacity for mass destruction. Each



showdown in Nevada

One group of Americans
 a huge sigh of relief when
 announced his arms build-up
 These were the residents of
 Nevada who had feared that
 would confirm existing plans
 by the MX missiles in an
 underground railway-line system in
 the states.

Reagan's announcement that instead the
 missiles would be placed in existing Minuteman
 bases is the one major surprise of his arms
 build-up. What is instructive is the reason

behind Reagan's change of mind — the mass
 opposition in Utah and Nevada to having the
 missiles in their backyard. It shows that it is
 possible to successfully campaign against
 missile madness.

The opposition to the MX missiles in the
 two states embraced all sections of the popula-
 tion. The most recent opinion poll in Nevada
 and Utah showed that more than 70 per cent
 of those questioned were against having the MX
 system.

All but one of the governors, senators and
 members of congress of Nevada and Utah had
 also come out against the plan. Frances Farley,
 a Utah State Senator summed up local objec-
 tions when she said: 'Any land-basing of
 missiles is a mistake because it effects the land
 and makes the people on it nuclear targets.'

Or, as Nevada governor, Robert Lisk, put
 it, figuratively and literally, 'We feel very clearly
 that it would just turn our landscape and

lifestyle upside down.'

People in both states were particularly wary
 because they had been given false assurances on
 nuclear weapons before.

At the time, the central government's
 Atomic Energy Commission said the tests were
 harmless. But today, in Southern Utah, where
 the Nevada fall-out blew east, the cancer and
 leukaemia rate is eight times the national
 average.

Besides the obvious risk to life and health
 the population of the two states also had envi-
 ronmental objections to the MX system.

The two states are the driest in the USA,
 and the fear was that water in the region would
 become as scarce as 'Nevada Gold' with the
 construction of the underground missile net-
 work.

These fears have now, at least for the mo-
 ment, been laid to rest. Because of the strength
 of the local feeling, and because the population
 of the two states have, in general, shown
 itself to be supporters of Reaganism, the
 cowboy President felt that in this instance a
 showdown should be avoided.

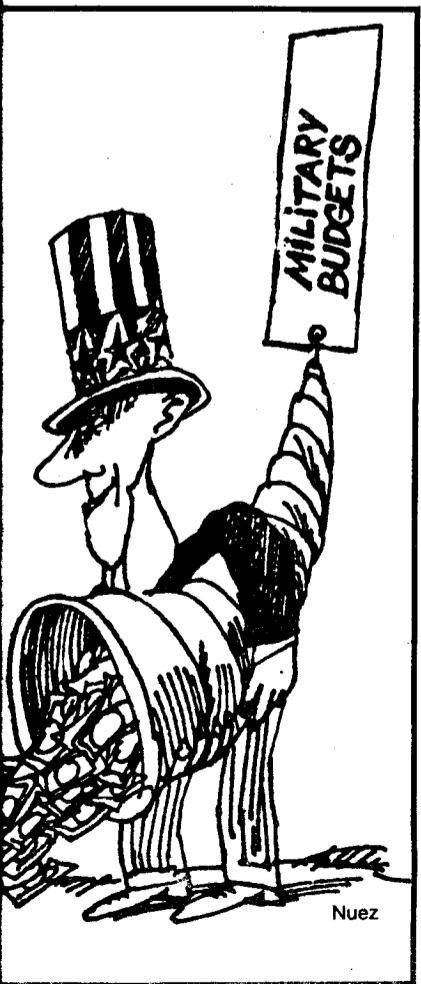
The conclusion is, if the rather conservative
 citizens of Nevada and Utah can kick out the
 missiles, then surely the rest of us can.



ARE YOU'RE REDUCING?

It will be hundreds of times more
 powerful than the bomb which destroyed
 Hiroshima. It would destroy everything
 in a two-and-a-half mile radius, and
 would have a fall-out effect much greater
 than that.

Second is the purpose behind the MX.
 In the words of the *New York Times* it is,
 'designed to escape a first strike,
 as the accuracy needed for such
 strikes.' This 'first strike' strategy is all the
 more obvious now that Reagan has decid-
 ed that it is not his priority to make the



MX sites undetectable.

Presumably, his thinking is that this
 would only be essential if the Soviet Union
 launched a nuclear attack first. If the MX
 missiles were launched before the Soviet
 Union had the opportunity to attack the
 sites it wouldn't matter if the sites were
 blown up or not — the missiles would be
 well on their way by then, indeed they
 would probably have exploded already.

The whole first strike strategy of the
 US is now becoming more and more ob-
 vious. On Sunday the *Observer* reported
 on secret Pentagon plans to launch a
 nuclear strike against the Soviet Union in
 the event of a conventional war in Europe.

Apparently, the US generals do not
 hold out much hope for NATO land
 forces in the event of such a conflict. They
 estimate they would only be able to hold
 off the Soviet Union for five days. Then,
 say the Pentagon, a nuclear attack on the
 Soviet Union would have to be launched.

Such thinking explains why the Cruise
 missile is so vital for the US, especially if it
 is deployed in Europe from where the mili-
 tary targets the US would aim for could be
 more easily reached. Again, the fact that
 Cruise missiles are intended to be chiefly
 aimed at Soviet military targets illustrates
 the 'first strike' thinking behind the use of
 these weapons.

By making the targets military ones
 Cruise is designed to stop the USSR
 retaliating, because again, there would be
 little point in pinpointing such targets if
 the Soviet Union had already used them to
 attack the USA or Europe.

In announcing his escalation of the
 nuclear build-up Reagan declared: 'It is
 my hope that this plan will prevent our
 adversaries from making the mistakes
 others have made and deeply regretted in
 the past — the mistake of underestimating
 the resolve and will of the American
 people.'

In reply, it could be said that no-one
 should underestimate the path to war on
 which Reagan has not only embarked, but
 is running along. The time to stop him is
 now.

It could cost us £1 billion

REAGAN's new attack of
 missile madness could cost
 taxpayers in this country at
 least £1 billion — if we
 have a chance to spend it.

This is just one conse-
 quence of Reagan's deci-
 sion to press ahead with
 the Trident D5 missile
 system. The Trident which
 the Tory government at
 present plans to deploy is
 the C4 system.

This would have the
 capacity to fire eight multi-
 pletely independently-
 targetable re-entry vehicle
 (MIRV) warheads, fired
 out of 16 tubes from four
 or five submarines.

The D5 system is an
 escalation of this — there
 would now be 14 MIRV
 warheads per missile. But
 all this hardware costs
 money. And if Britain
 decided to duplicate
 Reagan's weapon drive it
 would add £1 billion to the
 astronomical £5 billion
 which the Tories have
 already earmarked for Tri-
 dent. The signs are that the
 Tories will follow Reagan's
 lead.

First reaction from
 Defence Minister John
 Nott was to say: 'We have
 for some time recognised
 the possibility of the D5
 option... the President's
 announcement is bound to

have a significance for us...
 If the United States is mov-
 ing to a new system, then
 there will be undoubted ad-
 vantages in us keeping
 alongside them.'

Nott's broad hint that
 Britain will follow
 Reagan's example is not
 surprising. There have
 been constant discussions
 between the respective
 defence departments for a
 number of months. When
 Nott saw US Defence
 Secretary Caspar Wein-
 berger in August the up-
 dating of the Trident
 system was, according to
 Nott, the 'main part of our
 discussion'.

The increased cost of
 the new system is partly
 due to the fact that bigger
 submarines will have to be
 built to house the new ter-
 ror weapons. But of course
 whether they are deployed
 at all by the British govern-
 ment will eventually de-
 pend on who the next
 government is.

For, although a final
 decision on which Trident
 system to buy will be taken
 by the Tories at the end of
 the year, last week's vic-
 tory for unilateralism at
 the Labour Party con-
 ference could mean any
 decision on Trident would
 only be a temporary one.

Labour calls for repeal of Nationality Act

By Toni Gorton

LABOUR'S annual conference unanimously agreed to a five-point plan for new laws to end 'first, second and third class citizens'.

The next Labour government would immediately repeal both the Tory Nationality Act and the 1971 Immigration Act.

This new plan would give British citizenship to anyone born here as of right; it would end the tiered system of citizenship in the Nationality Act; East African Asians and refugees waiting in India would become full British citizens; and sex discrimination in immigration law would be abolished.

Pledge

There would also under the new legislation be a right of ap-

peal against a ministerial decision to exclude a person, and fees for naturalisation would be cut, from £150 to about £50.

The conference declared its intention to continue campaigning against the Nationality Act. In a further pledge about the programme of the next Labour government, conference pledged that the migrant workers threatened with expulsion under the 1971 Act would be allowed to stay in Britain and those already expelled would be allowed to return.



Merle Amory

The debate homed in on many of the central questions of race in Britain today, including the party's 'disgraceful' record.

Merle Amory, a black delegate from Brent Labour Party said: 'The Labour Party's record to date on race has been disgraceful. Not only have they brought in legislation themselves but they also drew up their list of proposals very similar to those now being introduced by the Tory government.'

Bill

The Labour Party, she said, could not take the vote of the black community for granted, but would have to prove that 'it does have our interests at heart.'

It was necessary for the party to go forward and show the black community that it would protect them from racist legislation and, 'defend them from the leadership of our own Party because they have done as much damage in the past as this Tory government is proposing to do now.'

Policy

It is a measure of how far the debate on race and immigration has shifted, that the right-wing Roy Hattersley should be the main spokesperson for this new development in Labour policy.

Hattersley said that any Labour Bill would have to make it clear that no longer could decisions on the future of individuals and their families be taken by the Home Secretary, 'in secret without any right of appeal and indeed without it being necessary to give any reason why a man or a woman should be excluded from this country.'

Racism-BL bosses unite with union officials

By Toni Gorton

A SMALL corner of the curtain that hides the effects of racism in the workplace was lifted this week by the Commission for Racial Equality.

Four years ago complaints of racial discrimination were made at British Leyland, Castle Bromwich. The CRE states that BL and two engineering union shop stewards contravened the Race Relations Act 1976 by refusing to give a job to a black applicant after a shopfloor meeting of machine-tool fitters voted not to accept black recruits.

George Jones, a fully qualified maintenance fitter who was born in Barbados, was the victim of collusion between racist workers, the AUEW shop stewards, and the bosses.

He said that he didn't realise that he had been rejected

because he was black until a friend at the factory told him about the shop floor decision.

This is not the only incident in British Leyland.

Officially, BL has broken the Race Relations Act twice before. In December 1980 it admitted to an Employment Appeal Tribunal that it had rejected two Asians, both former employees, for jobs as labourers because they were unable to complete an application in their own handwriting.

In a second case, a tribunal ruled that the company acted unlawfully in June 1979 when requiring a West Indian employee to change his job

after he became involved in an argument with a white employee.

The white man, a former parliamentary candidate for the National Front, had deliberately abused and provoked the black employee.

Bill Jordan, Midlands divisional organiser of the AUEW, said that his union acted promptly as soon as the case was brought to its attention. All shop stewards were being advised about the union's policy against discrimination.

The whole incident reveals the toothlessness of both legal and trade union rulings on racial discrimination.

Black workers suffer job loss and humiliation while the courts and the unions mouth meaningless platitudes.

Very little will change until a fight to force the unions to act

on behalf of their black members develops.

This fight demands that black unionists organise as blacks in caucuses or similar bodies such as in British Leyland Cowley where a Black Workers Rights Committee was set up recently.

The Cowley group was able in August this year, to get a memorandum withdrawn in which the personnel manager directed that all black workers be searched on entry to the plant.

In October 1978, Socialist Challenge printed an article written by Raghieb Ahsan, a shop steward at the Rover Car plant in Solihull which described his encounters with racists at work in which he referred to the common knowledge of discrimination at BL, Castle Bromwich.

We reproduce a few short extracts from this pamphlet to give you some idea of how black workers see the problems of racism on the job and in the union.

At work against racism

By Raghieb Ahsan, Rover shop steward

IT WAS in February 1976 that I told my friends in Sparkhill that I had decided to apply for a job at Rover. 'You must be joking' they said. 'They don't recruit blacks'. A fair point.

Traditionally, car workers in the Midlands enjoy a higher standard of living than workers in the component supply industry, and the majority of black workers are in the supply industry.

Among blacks in Birmingham, Leyland is widely regarded as a racist employer. Richard Dobson, the former company boss, whose comments about 'wogs' were exposed by Socialist Challenge, was not alone.

At Longbridge until last year, black workers were barred from better paid jobs by a wiring test, and the Castle Bromwich plant has been refusing to employ black workers.

Rumours have also spread in the black community that to get a job in the Washwood Heath plant you must pay a hundred or two hundred pounds to a local trade union official. But I want to concentrate on Rover, where I was one of the few blacks who did manage to get a job.

With the Race Relations Act going through parliament, some black workers were recruited. There was considerable bitterness in the black community against the TGWU, which forwarded to the company the names of those wanting jobs, and passed on a relatively lower proportion of the blacks who applied.

My job at Rover was a fair distance from the track, where I was frightened because of the inevitable racist abuse. Ray Sandom, who was chairperson of the Birmingham National Front started regularly coming to my shop and talked about blacks with one of the old hands.

When I couldn't stand it any longer, I threatened him and informed my foreman that I wouldn't work if Sandom came to my shop in future.

I couldn't get much joy from the shop steward, but all my workmates supported me and the foreman stopped Sandom. That was the first encouraging step for me.

I got elected shop steward. The older hands moved out and my workmates all under the age

of 30 stopped making racist jokes and turned their wit on the fascists instead.

That summer there was a mass meeting of 2,000 people over our pay claim. In opposition to the convenor, I moved a resolution for action. As I left the platform, the next speaker attacked my speech by saying that I had six wives and could afford to stay on the dole.

One day one of my Indian friends, Kim, looked a bit depressed. He told me that there was a sticker saying hang the blacks underneath track three. The white workers who stayed near the sticker refused to let it be taken down. The foreman said he couldn't do anything.

A handful of white workers were angry about the sticker and this encouraged the black workers who were ready to leave their jobs and remove the sticker themselves; but this would have let the shop stewards committee off the hook.

All of the black shop stewards attended the lunch-time meeting — the first seeds of unity among the blacks. We proposed that the executive committee of the stewards should immediately remove all fascist and racist literature and stickers, and that any workers seen distributing these should be warned and subsequently disciplined, up to expulsion from the union. We also warned that if necessary, the black workers were prepared to take action themselves.

For the first time I heard real fighting speeches against fascism. The senior shop steward put an end to the argument by explaining that the left always supports the working class while the fascists will betray it. The resolution was carried unanimously.

My experience shows how deep racism runs in the white working class, even among the more radical elements, and how real progress in the anti-racist struggle will only be made when blacks unite.

This article was written in September 1978 and was published in the 12 October edition of Socialist Challenge.

Southall Sikhs carry 'offensive weapons'

By Oliver New

COMMUNITY policing was not much in evidence in Southall on the night that 200 racist skinheads invaded the town to listen to the Fourskins.

One of the Asian youth who had come out to defend his community was Manjit Singh.

Manjit came up at Brentford Magistrates Court last Thursday charged with possession of an offensive weapon.

However, outside the court and oblivious to the glares of nearby Special Patrol Group officers was a militant picket armed with more 'offensive weapons'.

Even worse, Sikhs are walking about Southall every day carrying the same 'offensive weapon' — the kirpan, a small sword that devout Sikhs are obliged to carry as part of their religious beliefs.

The police decided to drop the charges against Manjit rather than engage in wholesale arrests of devout Sikhs!

Meanwhile the trials continue. On 21 October, Narrotan Lal will be facing the magistrates.

He had also been arrested after the siege and burning down of the racist stronghold in the Hambrough Tavern last July.

But his arrest took place several weeks later. In fact it took place shortly after Narrotan had lodged a complaint against the police for beating him up and hospitalising him.

Of course, if he is convicted his case against the police will carry little weight, but who would be so unkind as to suggest this is the reason for his belated arrest.



Outside the court with offensive weapons

Letters letters LETTERS

Support the Liverpool Typists

TOO little attention has been given in Socialist Challenge to the now three-month old Liverpool NALGO typists strike. This is an epic struggle by low-paid women workers of national importance.

In its most recent developments, the determination of the 400 strikers has begun to alter the attitudes of the NALGO national leadership, and even the structure of the local branch, which is one of the largest and most important in the union.

After having at first refused to sanction the necessary escalation of the strike to include other sections of workers, when lobbied at the TUC in Blackpool, the NALGO National Executive a week later did a U-turn.

They sent John Daly, the deputy General Secretary elect, to speak in favour of escalation at a Liverpool branch meeting

on Monday 21 September.

This followed a week during which two members — Jeff Griffiths of the City Solicitors and Joe Walsh of the City Treasury — had been laid off for refusing to co-operate with management who had left NALGO to break the strike. These layoffs resulted in immediate mass walkouts from these departments. The call for escalation was carried.

The Liverpool typists have shown that they are capable of taking on low-pay, a Liberal-Tory Council who refuse to negotiate or even go to arbitration, the management, and the NALGO bureaucracy — and all this against the odds of three million

unemployed and a Tory government: (20 per cent unemployed in Liverpool)

Not only this, they have shown that they can change NALGO from a tame 'bosses' union into one which fights for its lowest paid and most oppressed members.

For all this — and on only £20 a week strike pay — they deserve more support from Socialist Challenge.

Send messages of support, collections and donations to Typists Strike Committee, NALGO, Duchy Chambers, 24 Sir Thomas Street, Liverpool 1.

NUPE 'democracy'

COMMENTING on the outcome of the deputy leadership election you blame the NUPE executive for not making a recommendation to its membership for the result. You make a grave error in doing so.

1) The executive circulated a four page brochure for the ballot. Three pages were devoted to statements from the candidates. The front page was an executive statement clearly outlining the union's policies.

2) You assume that all the executive had to do was to lay down the line and the membership would follow suit. That is exactly the approach of 'left' bureaucrats.

3) You ignore the real issue in NUPE which applies to many 'left' union bureaucracies. Their radical policies have no real base in the unions membership. Bernard Dix, a strong Bennite, never campaigned for Benn within the union, not really surprising when you realise that Dix has never been elected as Deputy Gen Sec of NUPE or campaigned for union officers to be elected.

How do you expect NUPE members to vote for Benn when they know that for Fisher & Dix workers' democracy only goes so far?

4) We should be arguing for an extension of union democracy in all unions not just the right wing unions.

5) There is no Broad Left in NUPE. Why? Well, why have one if you have a 'left' leadership? 'Without democratic elections, real political issues become buried', to quote Tony Benn. That lesson has to be learnt by the rank and file of NUPE not just in relation to the Labour Party, but also to solve other problems, eg. how to fight the Tory 4 per cent limit.

Without union democracy how can you have Labour Party democracy? NUPE voting for Healey was crazy, against the interests of NUPE members. But entirely logical.

S Madewell (NUPE member), East London

Organising left in NUPE

ALTHOUGH the NUPE delegation at the Labour Party conference was right to vote for Healey in the circumstances, this represented a calamity for both NUPE and the Labour Party.

How could it be that our votes went to someone who is opposed to all the central policies of our union, policies which mirror those of Tony Benn?

How could our members tip the scales for someone who was correctly held in contempt by all sections of NUPE two and a half years ago, when he tried to ram the 5 per cent limit down our throats?

The responsibility for

this debacle lies squarely with the national leadership of NUPE. To begin with, there was no clear recommendation from the executive council for a massive vote for Benn.

Secondly, there was no nationally co-ordinated campaign, not even circulars to all shop stewards urging support for Benn, and the need to win the ranks of the union to Benn as the only candidate who

supported union policy.

Such a campaign was perfectly possible. In my own branch we were able to canvass virtually the entire membership at mass site meetings which coincided with annual branch elections. There were clear informed recommendations from the branch activists, and Benn took 65 per cent of the vote.

Interestingly not one person could be found at any meeting to put a single argument in favour of Healey or Silkin.

Next year, such a campaign must be organised

nationally. Never again must we see the spectacle of NUPE's votes going to someone who represents everything we are fighting against.

For this reason the formation of a national NUPE Broad Left, based on the fight for a campaigning union, is an urgent task.

For too long the left has been complacent in NUPE. Hopefully the rude shock of the Healey vote can now be transformed into a strengthening of the left in the union.

Anyone interested in a NUPE Broad Left, contact Dominic Jahson, NUPE convenor, Churchill, Hospital, Headington, Oxford.

Missing the point

GEOFF Bell's review of Ken Russell's *Altered States* and Michael Cimino's *Heaven's Gate* is very amusing. But what he says about the Russell film totally misses the point.

Geoff interprets it as a fable about Russell's work, and how he now realises that it has been empty and meaningless. Pure speculation. The story was written as a novel by Paddy Chayevsky, not by Ken Russell.

The self-experimenting scientist in the film doesn't just

discover that his hallucinatory experiments are 'a load of pseudo-intellectual crap' as Geoff says, but he discovers that his whole project — 'to find the real, inner self and the meaning of life' — is ridiculous because 'there is no final truth, there is no meaning to life'.

Indeed, he goes further, and argues that the only meaning to life are the purposes and intentions which human beings give to it. Absolutely correct, and very Marxist.

This rejection of the pursuit of absolute truth (which he correctly recognises is essentially a religious notion) is overlaid with an adoption of the power of love as an essential facet of human intentions and purposes, but there's nothing wrong with that is there? In fact it brought tears to my eyes.

Incidentally, I think SC should keep up the film reviews: I very much missed the Under Review page over the past few weeks. Congratulations again on SC's very high quality.

Paul Lawson, West London

Democratic diddles

IT IS rather unfortunate to say the least that the article by Geoff Bell on the TGWU vote (SC 24 September) should have certain factual errors.

In his desire to support the Benn campaign Geoff makes certain errors. The Scottish, London and North 835,000 members, whereas the total membership of the union is 1,831,000 (figures from the May census) — hardly a majority!

Within this, certain features should be pointed out. In London, the biggest region of the TGWU, 53 branches voted for Benn and 42 for Healey — hardly overwhelming support for Benn. And this on a 10 per cent poll.

Whereas in the North and Wales on a 50 per cent poll of the branches the vote was for Healey. In my own area, Yorkshire, the vote was 5 to 1 for Healey. Geoff's claim in the last paragraph 'that the balance of the consultation did favour Benn' is simply rubbish.

What happened is the executive of the union ensured a stitch-up for Benn. Now it is true that the GMWU and AUEW did not even consult their members before the executives voted for Healey.

But this sort of practice in the TGWU (also in the construction union UCATT, where the executive alone took a decision for Benn) makes a mockery of the Left's claim for more democracy in the unions.

To win our position we must ensure full democratic rights for all members paying the political levy in voting for the leadership of the Labour Party. The ballot of the members carried out by the NUM is a model of how the democratic process should work.

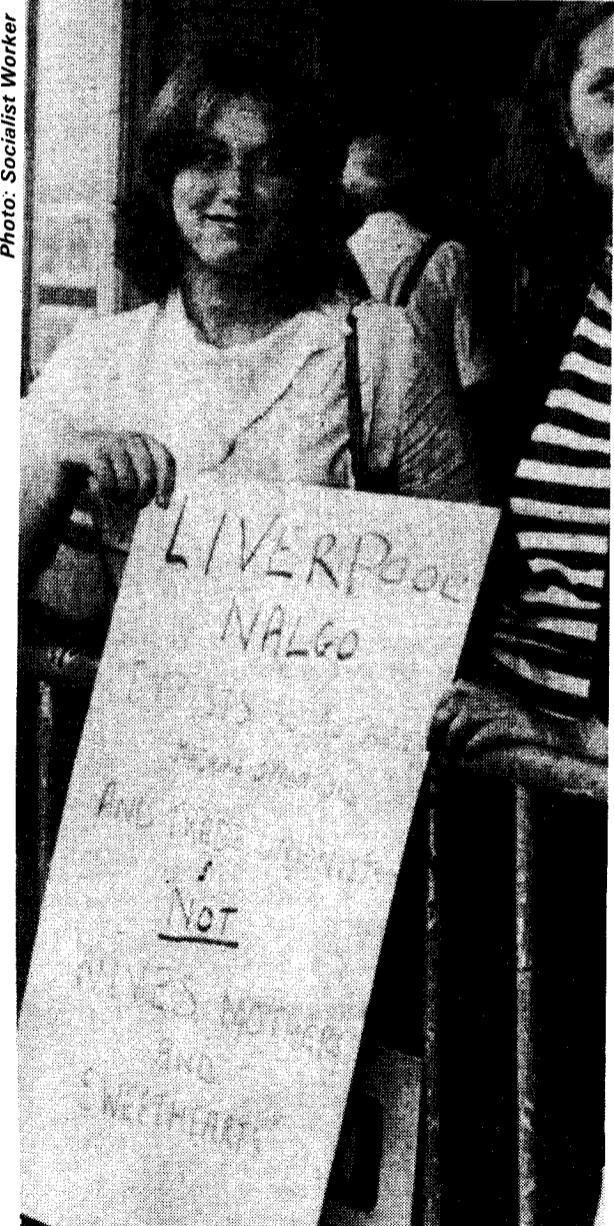
The Benn campaign should not need fraudulent votes, and any socialist should not cover up for them (as leading Bennites such as Michael Meacher MP seems to be doing). We should aim for complete union democracy.

Steve Vokes, TGWU 9/14 Huddersfield

What do you think about union democracy? Socialist Challenge invites contributions on this vital question.



How to democratise the Transport Union?



Liverpool city council typists, now entering the 15th week of their strike for regrading, received two important boosts last week. First, their union, NALGO, agreed to increase weekly strike pay from £20 to 55 per cent of their gross salary.

As many of the typists are single parents, or the main breadwinner in job-starved Liverpool this decision prevents them from being driven back to work.

More important was the successful ballot of clerks who work in the rent offices. They voted to take action in support of the typists, which should cut off an important source of the council's weekly income.

It is a mark of the women's courage and determination that they have stayed out and picketed for so long, without any visible signs of the city coming to a halt.

Polish authorities launch price war on workers

By Davy Jones

THE POLISH government is staging a carefully organised counter-attack against the independent union Solidarity. Last weekend it tried to provoke a split in the movement by falsely claiming that its leaders had agreed to a one hundred per cent rise in cigarette prices.

When the Solidarity congress demanded the suspension of the increases pending negotiations with the government, the authorities refused to budge and defied Solidarity to do anything about it.

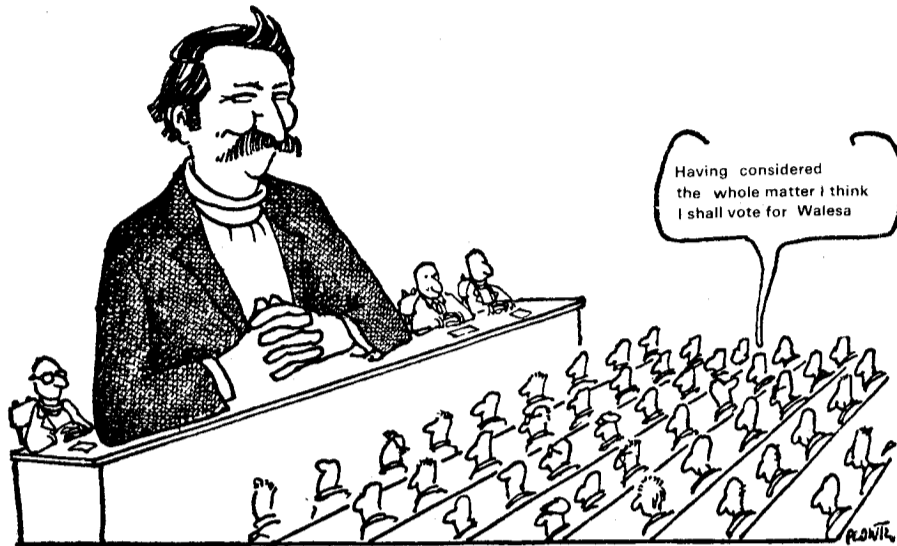
Shake-up

This new 'tough' image may well herald a shake-up in the party hierarchy. Rumours abound in Warsaw that Stefan Olszowski is soon to replace Stanislaw Kania as Party leader.

Such a move is in preparation for the coming confrontations with Solidarity over economic reform and workers' self-management.

Last week's Solidarity congress not only voted against parliament's 'compromise' bill on self-management, it also voted to censure the union leaders who had negotiated it with the government.

Instead the union will continue to press for the alternative positions on workers' self-management to be decided by a referendum of the workers. The differences on self-management revolve around who has the final say on appointing factory



directors and disputes within the plant — the Party or the workers.

But the government have been busy on other fronts attacking the Polish workers. There have been a spate of arrests of union militants for allegedly publishing anti-Soviet

material in union journals.

One of those picked up and released on bail was Kornel Morawiecki, a delegate to the Solidarity congress from Wroclaw, and an editor of a regional Solidarity news bulletin in Silesia.

He was charged with actions 'threatening the alliances of the Polish Peoples Republic' for publishing an explanation of what was happening in the country in Russian, aimed at Russian troops; and for publishing greetings to the congress from a Russian workers' group. If convicted he faces ten years in prison.

The censors too have been busy removing articles from Solidarity's press. Two articles were removed from the 18 September edition of the union's paper *Tygodnik Solidarnosc*. One was the Solidarity congress message to the workers of Eastern Europe.

The other was an appeal by Solidarity to

workers in a Russian auto plant who had attacked Solidarity's message, that they should visit Poland to see for themselves what the union was doing.

Another article to fall foul of the censor's pen was an interview in Solidarity's paper with four members of the committee for an independent union for the police. We have translated the interview from *Le Monde* and reproduce it below.

Relations

In another development the general secretary of the Hungarian official trade unions has written to Solidarity suggesting the establishment of relations between the two union movements. This clearly shows how far the bureaucrats in Eastern Europe have come to regard the existence of Solidarity as inevitable in the short term, however unpalatable that might be.

It is now up to the labour movement in the West to show the Polish workers that their real allies are not the Hungarian bureaucrats, but the workers of the world in the struggle for socialism and workers' power.

Polish police fight for independent union

THE interview below was removed from the 2 October issue of Solidarity's official newspaper by the state censor. It was conducted with the police officers who attended the Solidarity congress to appeal for support for their independent union.

WE ARE sons of workers, peasants and employees. We would like the job of the police to be maintaining order and public security, not carrying out tasks useful solely to certain individuals.

Who?

Those who have been blamed for 1956, 1968, 1970 and 1976, when, instead of dealing with the causes of the disturbances which had led to the riots, they used our armed force. After all, the interests of society are also ours.

The need to create our own union organisation has been growing up in our ranks for a long time. In Lublin for example we started off in September

1980 at the base of the party organisation, because most of the police are party members.

We organised open meetings that lots of people took part in. At this time we drew up some demands and sent them to the Minister and commander of the region.

We never received a reply, and at that time a witch-hunt was started against us. People spat at us. And sometimes in the real sense of the word. It reached such a pitch that the police were afraid to go to work in uniform.

That led us not only to defend ourselves but to think intensively about the reasons for this public

hostility. We must make clear to society who we are and what we do.

And how has your movement developed?

The union as such has only just started to develop in different regions and without any co-ordination. None of us know anything about each other. In Lodz after a meeting of discontented police they set up initial commissions to control some of the activities of the regional commander. In Katowice they set up

a founding committee for a union. In Cracow the same, and also in Lublin on 29 May.

After that a national meeting was organised by the party police committee that took place on 25 May in Warsaw. Despite the information blackout from the administration five regions were represented. Wisely, the assistant chief commander of the police promised to satisfy several demands and he got the meeting postponed till 1 June.

On that day the meeting took place and all the regions were represented, this time by two thousand delegates who brought with them lists of supporters with their name, Christian name, grade, position, place of work and their signatures.

In your opinion how many people did that represent?

Forty two thousand, and it was at that moment that we realised what was hap-

pening. We were elected by the delegates to be members of the praesidium. We debated all night.

On 2 June General Jaruzelski appointed a governmental commission to negotiate with us led by General Kiszczak. We fixed a new meeting for 9 June and we all went home.

But the discussions with the Kiszczak commission came to nothing. We wanted a real union. They had in mind corporatist councils representing the

ordinary police from their officers.

In the face of our continuing opposition they agreed to common councils. But they were not allowed to co-ordinate between themselves, and were only allowed to act on a local level. That wasn't what we wanted so the discussions were broken off.

To prevent the next meeting taking place on 9 June all the police were placed on alert the night before. But still two hundred persons came to the meeting. We thought about occupying the local police headquarters, but we received inside information that they were planning to use the military police against us if we did.

The general political situation at the time was uncertain, the party congress was approaching, and finally we received a letter from the head of the governmental commission which guaranteed us immunity.

Despite that on 17 June they laid us off without any explanation. They forced us to sign a declaration saying that they would withdraw from the union. Many refused and redoubled their activities. **How many were laid off?**

About 500, they were prepared to pay any price to stop our movement.

What were they afraid of?

In the first place, our desire not to be used as an 'argument' in social conflicts. Also our wish to have an independent union and to control our own affairs.

We want the law to be the same for everybody so that none of our people can be laid off for describing some dignity as dead drunk. Finally we are for socialism, not centralised but self-managed. There is no justification in the charge that we are anti-socialist.



Gdansk cab driver wearing popular badge: **Soviet tanks, no thanks!**



In the leadership election in Solidarity Walesa received 55 per cent of the vote as union leader. His nearest rival, Marian Jurczyk, a Catholic union leader from Szczecin, received 24 per cent; and two more radical figures within

Solidarity, Andrzej Gwiazda from Gdansk and Jan Rulewski from Bydgoszcz received nine and six per cent respectively.

MAN OF IRON

By Jenny Flintoft

YOU MAY have to queue to see *Man of Iron*. It's worth it. This film, winner of the Cannes Grand Prix, is riveting.

Sequel to *Man of Marble*, the film about Birkut, a Stakhanovite worker-hero of the 50s, *Man of Iron* moves to Gdansk in 1980, to a celebration of the shipyard occupation, with a new worker-hero, Maciek, the son of Birkut. Maciek appeared briefly at the end of the first film; now he plays a leading rôle.

After the death of his father — shot by the police in the Gdansk strike of 1970 — Maciek abandons his university studies to become a shipyard worker, just as his father was.

He propagandises against the regime. He sticks up posters and is arrested by the secret police — 'When we move,' his father had said, 'we'll all move together'.

Then Anna Walentinowicz, a shipyard worker of 30 years standing, is sacked. Maciek promptly seizes the initiative and agitates for strike action. The Gdansk shipyard strike of 1980 begins.

The bureaucracy manoeuvres, threatens; the workers stand firm. Increasingly the bureaucrats are humiliated as their attempts to break the strike fail, and the workers prove they can control the shipyard in a disciplined way.

Alcohol is prohibited in the shipyard. Nobody can enter with a special pass. And the workers refuse to repeat the mistake of 1970 — they will not be drawn onto the streets to be shot down.

Agnieszka, the film student in *Man of Marble* also reappears — this time as Maciek's wife. Her studio pass confiscated, she has relinquished her glamorous media career in Warsaw for a life as a political activist in Gdansk. This has involved sacrifices: she has had to send her child away, and at the beginning of the film she is in prison.

Just as *Man of Marble* had a media worker, Agnieszka, in a central rôle, so also does *Man of Iron*. But whereas Agnieszka was a principled seeker of truth, the TV reporter of the second film is a semi-alcoholic hack, weak and greedy, who has been set up by the authorities to discredit the strike by proving that Maciek is a mentally unstable counter-revolutionary in the pay of the CIA.

Never enthusiastic about the task, he shifts his allegiance part way through the film. 'Whoever wins', he says, 'I'm going to get a kick in the pants'. He gets his when the shipyard workers expose him as an agent.

The fictional elements in the film are interwoven to great effect with documentary material, particularly film of the Gdansk riots in 1970, when protesting workers were brutally shot down in the streets by the police.

Poland

The central theme of *Man of Iron* is that solidarity is strength. The individual, alone, can achieve nothing; the working-class, disunited, can only suffer defeat. In 1968, the students got no support from trade unionists. In 1970, striking workers on the streets appealed to the students for help, they remained inside behind closed doors. The intelligentsia was silent.

But in 1980, united in Solidarnosc, the Polish working class feels its strength. Its confidence grows. The film ends with



Maciek Tomczyk — the 'Man of Iron'

Solidarnosc's triumph in Gdansk.

There are flaws in *Man of Iron*. One is the sentimentalisation of Agnieszka. In *Man of Marble* she is the Polish stereotype of the American woman — aggressive, hyperactive, denim-clad, neurotically chain-smoking.

In *Man of Iron*, throwing away her cigarettes, she swaps her jeans for a blouse and skirt, and her independence for a supportive, secondary rôle to Maciek, whom she positively hero-worships.

She is still a strong woman: she bears her separation from her child with courage, and her imprisonment with jauntiness.

But the Agnieszka of *Man of Marble* would never have uttered feminist-wincing lines such as 'I just knew it had to be a church wedding.'

Nor is it easy to imagine the Agnieszka of the first film dewy-eyed in white looking like a cover picture of 'Brides'.

These reflect the general sentiments of Catholic Poland where part at least of a woman's function is to be virtuous enough to be the keeper of a man's conscience and decorative enough to have her hand kissed frequently.

The second flaw is the uncritical portrayal of the church. The church wedding, of course, attended

by Lech Walesa (yet, the real Lech Walesa, not an actor). The shrines. The crosses. The church and Solidarnosc walking blissfully hand-in-hand.

No hint that the church might in any way manipulate or cash in on the struggle of the workers for its own ends or attempt to 'moderate' their struggle.

Moving

Last Christmas in Warsaw I saw a line of people as long as a bread queue waiting patiently to see the crib in the Basilica.

There in the alcove, along with Baby Jesus and the obligatory animals were the shipyard cranes of Gdansk and the monument dedicated to the dead of 1970.

Don't let these criticisms put you off seeing the film, though. *Man of Iron* is a deeply moving memorial to the workers who were shot down in 1970. The bureaucracy tried to conceal their deaths.

The bodies were put in plastic sacks and thrown into army lorries, to be buried in hidden graves. But now these workers are popular heroes of the Polish masses, and their struggle lives on in the daily fight of the whole working class.

That struggle brought to life by *Man of Iron*. It is working class history at its most dramatic. In Wajda's own words: 'In general history passes us by; but here you can feel it, see it, touch it.'

Where you can buy Socialist Challenge

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ABERDEEN: SC available at Boomtown books, King St. For more info ring Bill 896 284.
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BRISTOL: Fullmarks, 110 Cheltenham Rd, Bristol 6.
BIRMINGHAM: Other Bookshop, 137 Digbeth, Birmingham.
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MILTON KEYNES: Oakleaf Books, 109 Church Street, Wolverton.
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LEICESTER: Blackthorn Books, 70 High St, Leicester, and V Karia, 53A London Rd, Leicester.
LIVERPOOL: News from Nowhere, 100 Whitechapel, Liverpool L1
LONDON: Central Books, 37 Grays Inn Rd; Colletts, Charing Cross Rd, WC2; Paperback Books, Brixton and Charlotte St; Kilburn Bookshop, Kilburn High Road, NW6; The Book Place, Peckham High St, SE15; Books Plus, Lewisham; Balham Food Co-op; Housmans, 5 Caledonian Rd, N1; Compendium, Camden Town NW1; Owl, Kentish Town; New Beacon, Seven Sisters Rd, N4; The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper St, N1; Bookmarks, Seven Sisters Rd, N4; Centreprise, 126 Kingsland High St, E8; Dillons, QMC; Page One, E15; The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper St, N1; Reading Matters, Wood Green next to Sainsbury's.
YORK: Community Books, Walmgate.



1970: Students carry the body of a murdered worker



How Nicaragua fights underdevelopment

From *Intercontinental Press*

By Matilde Zimmermann reporting from Managua

IF YOU heard someone talking about the crisis in Central America, you would probably think of the military situation — the civil war in El Salvador and threats to peace in the rest of the region.

But there is also a deep economic crisis wracking the region. Over the last few weeks, this has forced several Central American countries, including Nicaragua, to take severe emergency measures.

Like most non-oil producing underdeveloped countries, the nations of Central America have serious balance-of-payments deficits. The price of what they sell has always been less than the price of what they buy. This gap is growing.

The prices of the agricultural products these countries export are unstable and in many cases have been falling. Meanwhile, the cost of imported oil and manufactured goods has been rising sharply.

Moratorium

In order to survive, these countries borrow money. The foreign debt of the Central American countries went up 63 per cent from 1978 to 1980. Costa Rica, for example, owes \$2.4bn to 129 foreign banks.

On 1 September, President Rodrigo Carazo announced a total moratorium on the payment of Costa Rica's foreign debt. Carazo admitted that even with \$300m in loans coming from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the country simply could not make any payments on the principal of its staggering debt.

He said \$60m more was needed immediately for debt service and another \$60m to bring in the coffee and rice crops.

At a meeting of Central American foreign ministry officials a week later, Carazo frankly summarised the IMF's recommendation for improving Costa Rica's economic standing: hold off on building schools, roads, and hospitals, tighten credit, and raise the level of unemployment.

The government of nearby Honduras sees no way out of its economic crisis except to beg desperately for



A major literacy campaign is underway in Nicaragua

IMF assistance. On 8 September General Policarpo Paz Garcia, the head of the Honduran military regime, announced a \$30m cut in the public budget and warned that further cutbacks were coming.

The economic crisis in Honduras is aggravated by the fact that Texaco, which has a monopoly on oil refining, is refusing to deliver any petrol until it gets millions of dollars of retroactive payment for price increases that the government has declared illegal.

Nicaragua faces many of the same structural economic problems as other Central American countries. If anything, it has historically been even more brutally underdeveloped and over-exploited than its neighbours.

Nicaragua suffered a devastating earthquake in 1972 and severe economic damage during the war of 1978-79. Nicaragua alone of the Central American countries has experienced an abrupt cutoff of US economic aid. A process of decapitalisation by businessmen opposed to the revolution has further weakened the economy.

The Nicaraguan government has responded to the crisis quite differently from Costa Rica or Honduras — to say nothing of El Salvador or Guatemala.

Working people and small farmers here have to some extent been cushioned from the full effect of the international economic crisis by the social benefits won since the revolution: a massive literacy campaign, new schools, and clinics, significant rent cuts, food subsidies, loans for farmers, improved working conditions, better wages, and more job security.

But Nicaragua's poverty, lack of infrastructure, low level of industrialisation, and economic dependency are not problems that can be solved easily or quickly. In early July, commander of the Revolution, Daniel Ortega, told trade-union delegates that the country could fall \$100m short of its 1981 foreign exchange projections.

Speculation

On 10 September, the Government of National Reconstruction invoked a 'state of economic and social emergency', during which various activities are banned, such as price speculation and hoarding, the publication of false information designed to generate economic panic, the sabotage of production, illegal strikes and factory takeover, and land oc-

cupations outside the framework of the agrarian reform law.

A series of austerity measures were announced including a 5 per cent cut in the current budget, a freeze on hiring in the state agencies, and a 10 per cent cut in certain government subsidies.

Not affected are subsidies for milk (which costs 4.2p a pint), public transport 5.7p a ride or any of the basic food stuff because of government price support. Nor will gas, water, or electricity rates be allowed to rise.

Three new laws are designed to tighten control over the economy and save or generate foreign exchange. One imposes stiff penalties for various types of business fraud — tax evasion, double bookkeeping, corruption. The second raises import taxes on several categories of luxury goods manufactured outside Central America.

A third decree has temporarily closed the so-called parallel market, that is, the buying and selling of US dollars on the street at more than the official rate of exchange. The parallel market will be allowed to reopen in a few weeks, but only in authorised offices and under tight control by the central banks. The uncontrolled parallel market has contributed to

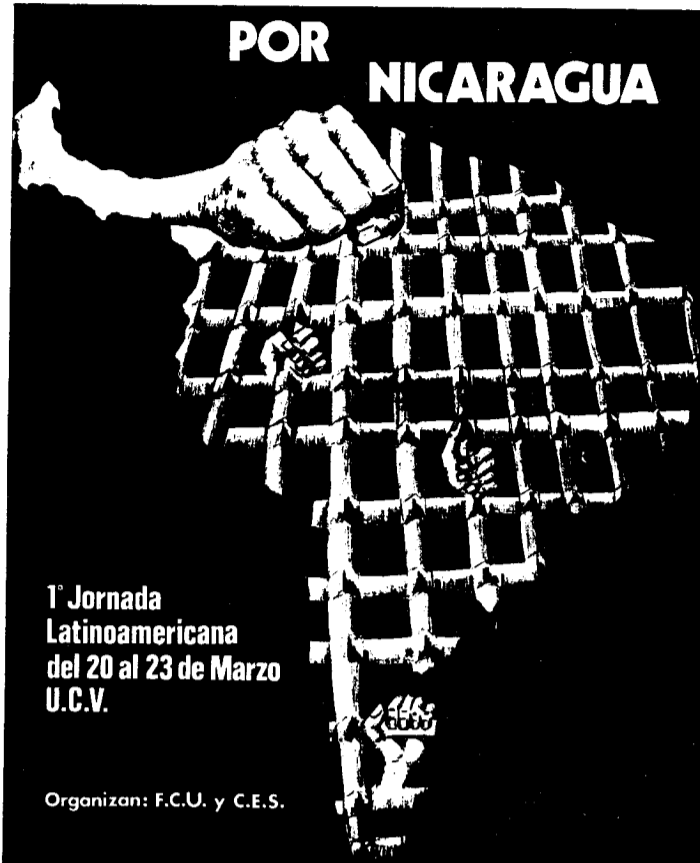
decapitalisation, or capital flight, by giving the rich a way to obtain dollars they can stash in foreign bank accounts.

The approach of capitalist governments is always to try to make working people and the poor bear the brunt of an economic crisis. Such governments use violence and repression when necessary to keep workers from defending their standard of living. El Salvador is an extreme example of this, but the general approach is not peculiar to Central America.

Nicaragua is different. Workers here are not exempted from the emergency measures and will in some cases be asked to work harder and postpone wage increases or other improvements.

But Nicaraguan workers and peasants have never known anything but austerity and sacrifice, and they will not find their lives greatly changed by the new laws.

The most striking thing about the emergency decrees just adopted here is that they represent a clear attempt to find measures that can actually ameliorate the critical economic situation without jeopardising the standard of living of the poorer sectors of society.



Murder no crime

By Tessa van Gelderen



Barry Prosser 'believed in British justice'

BARRY PROSSER was murdered. Found dead in his cell where he had been held in isolation, there can be no other explanation for the horrific injuries he received.

A ruptured stomach and oesophagus cannot be self-inflicted. Three medical examiners explained this in court. In fact an earlier inquest found that Barry Prosser had been 'unlawfully killed' in his lonely cell at Winson Green prison.

Yet, despite all this evidence, the Director of Public Prosecution has now closed the file on the case.

This is not the first time that prison wardens at this prison have been charged — and subsequently freed — for beating up prisoners. The men who were charged with the Birmingham riot in 1976 were acquitted. In 1978, a man who had been charged with

trates must be guilty.)

Barry Prosser, according to his wife, Dorothy Prosser, 'believed in British justice'. But as she added, 'He has been proved wrong.'

There is a growing number of prisoners who die at the hands of prison officers, police and wardens at remand centres: Liddel Towers, Richard 'Cartoon' Campbell, Jimmy Kelly and Blair Peach are but a few.

Many of their killers are not even named, never mind charged. The whitewash begins at the inquest when the verdict in many of these cases is 'justifiable homicide'.

Ill treatment in prison and police cells is a common occurrence. Barry Prosser's sister, Jean Webb, has pointed out that they had 'received a lot of letters voicing support, some of them from prisoners claiming that they had been beaten up while in gaol.'

Many of us may not immediately identify with Barry Prosser. But for trade unionists who have been on picket lines or in factory occupations, for the youth who took to the

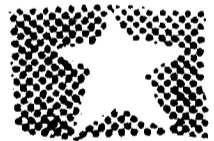
streets this summer, for the black and Asian communities fighting to defend themselves from fascist attacks, they all know about the role of the police and the courts.

Anyone of us can end up the same way as Barry Prosser at the hands of these people — dead. Barry Prosser was murdered by the wardens in Winson Green prison. And the British state machine aided and abetted in that murder.

INQUEST is a new organisation which has been set up to bring together individuals and organisations in a united protest against state violence and deaths in custody in particular, and in a united campaign against the procedures or inquiry used in dealing with complaints.

The initial aim of the campaign is to gain a government-instituted public inquiry into the adequacy of the procedures of investigation used in recent cases. These cases include the deaths of Richard Campbell, Jimmy Kelly, Matthew O'Hara and Blair Peach.

For further information contact *INQUEST*, Box 37, 136 Kingsland High St, London E8 2NS.



Chile

Solidarity Campaign

Picket the Chilean Minister of Mines Jose Pennera at his meeting with the Metal Exchange

Tuesday 13 October 6.45pm Grosvenor House Hotel, Park Lane

Schreibers win the battle but not the war

By Phil Davies, ex-convenor Schreiber, Manchester

A MASS meeting at the furniture maker, Schreiber's, Runcorn, voted last week to reject their stewards' recommendation and end their strike against 88 compulsory redundancies.

The 400 strikers had been out for five weeks.

During the strike feelings had become very bitter. Schreiber had sacked all the strikers and their families were harassed by several letters from him to each family. The Runcorn work had been transferred to southern factories and scab drivers were crossing the Runcorn picket line.

Schreibers, a part of the

Weinstock General Electric Company empire, is becoming a determined anti-union employer.

It's a scandal that Schreiber himself holds an associate members card of FTAT, the furniture union involved.

The stewards responded by concentrating on the picket.

Two stewards were arrested on the picket line con-

frontations.

The stewards realised themselves that they should have occupied the plant from the start.

This would have given them a base to work from.

By itself it would have stopped problems on the picket line and let the strikers go out to get support.

As it was, Schreiber was able, with police co-operation to make the picket line the focus of his attack and so divide the workforce.

However while Schreiber and Weinstock may have won this battle, they've certainly not won the war.



Derby sends 55 marchers out on three day protest march against unemployment

Leamington boss - 'we have to get rid of the dossers'

AROUND 1,500 workers at Automotive Products Ltd in Leamington Spa walked out after a mass meeting was held on Wednesday 30 September.

Members of three unions, from the clerical section of the transport union, TGWU; technical section of ASTMS and the technical section of the engineering union, AUEW — overwhelmingly supported a recommendation of the joint staff representative committee that an immediate all out strike was the only option and the need to show unity in the fight for jobs was crucial.

Select

The action followed a management statement that in its opinion, the best way to return the company to profitability was by selective redundancy based on an individuals effectiveness to the company.

The bosses stated that they would continue to recruit during this period and in the words of the General Manager, they needed to get rid of 'the dossers'.

Since Wednesday the members have organised themselves into a very effective 24 hour picket, with one hundred to two hundred people turning up to cover the four entrances to the plant.

Considerable success has been achieved in cutting the vital supplies of components and materials into the factory.

Ford, BL

Automotive Products Ltd is a major supplier of components, mainly brakes and clutches, to Fords, British Leyland, Renault and Peugeot, and the effects of the strike are

likely to spread soon.

Support for the official strike will be recommended to other plants within the staff unions' combine at meetings throughout this week.

Shopfloor

These will be held on AP plants across the country including Banbury, Birmingham, Speke, Bolton and Hartlepool.

Unfortunately, lack of support and traditional antagonism between staff and works is again causing difficulties.

The shop floor is continuing to work and the right wing AUEW convenor is even encouraging lorries to cross the picket line.

Because of this, the need to build support between the two groups to defend jobs and living standards is of paramount importance.

Unity

Keith Kennell, chairperson of the staff unions combine committee stated that this is a significant dispute because the members are prepared to fight for their jobs and they aren't going to accept compulsory redundancies now or in the future at any AP plant.

He also said 'redundancies would continue to occur while workers are busy fighting each other, instead of uniting in solidarity to fight the common enemy.'

Messages of support and donations can be sent to the AP strike committee, c/o 36 Foxes Way, Warwick.

Robb Caledon sit-in '100% support'

By Ralph Blake

'IF WE could win the battle at Robb Caledon's and make a stand at every factory throughout Britain, we could turn the tide against this government's policies. We could get rid of them once and for all.'

This was the message from Jimmy Airlie, of the Upper Clyde Shipbuilders work-in of ten years ago, at a rally in support of the three week old sit-in at Robb Caledon shipyard in Dundee.

£5000

300 trade unionists came from all over Britain to offer their support and various pledges of financial support were made.

One union representative from the neighbouring Kestrel Marine Yard donated £1000 and a further £4000 was raised from

the meeting.

Bob Barty, the shop steward convenor at the yard, said he was pleased with the outcome of the meeting.

South

'We have colleagues in shipbuilding who travelled up from the south of England from the west of Scotland and Edinburgh.'

'The support was tremendous and if anyone needed convincing of the support we were getting, it was there for all to see in the Park Hall today.'

Workers in the shipbuilding industry are working to rule and engaging in one day strikes in support of Robbs.

At least 16,000 went out on 5 October.

Puzzle

Bob Barty said that, 'It puzzles me why the television and the newspapers say that there was a mixed response and yet in almost the next breath they say that yards in Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow were on holiday and that support from those yards working was almost 100 per cent.'

At Robbs' sister yard in Leith, Edinburgh, workers returned from a week's holiday on the

Monday of the first national strike in support of Robbs.

The workers at Leith decided to come out in support of Robbs on the Friday and were out again the following Monday!

Bob sees the dispute in relation to the rest of the British shipbuilding industry this way.

'Some workers at other yards have been laid off and naturally were concerned.'

Attack

'But if British shipbuilders break us it will give them the green light to attack the whole industry.'

'We already lost 20,000 jobs in the last decade. We must put a stop to that

now.'

The dispute at Robbs looks like turning into an all out battle with British Shipbuilders and the Tories behind them.

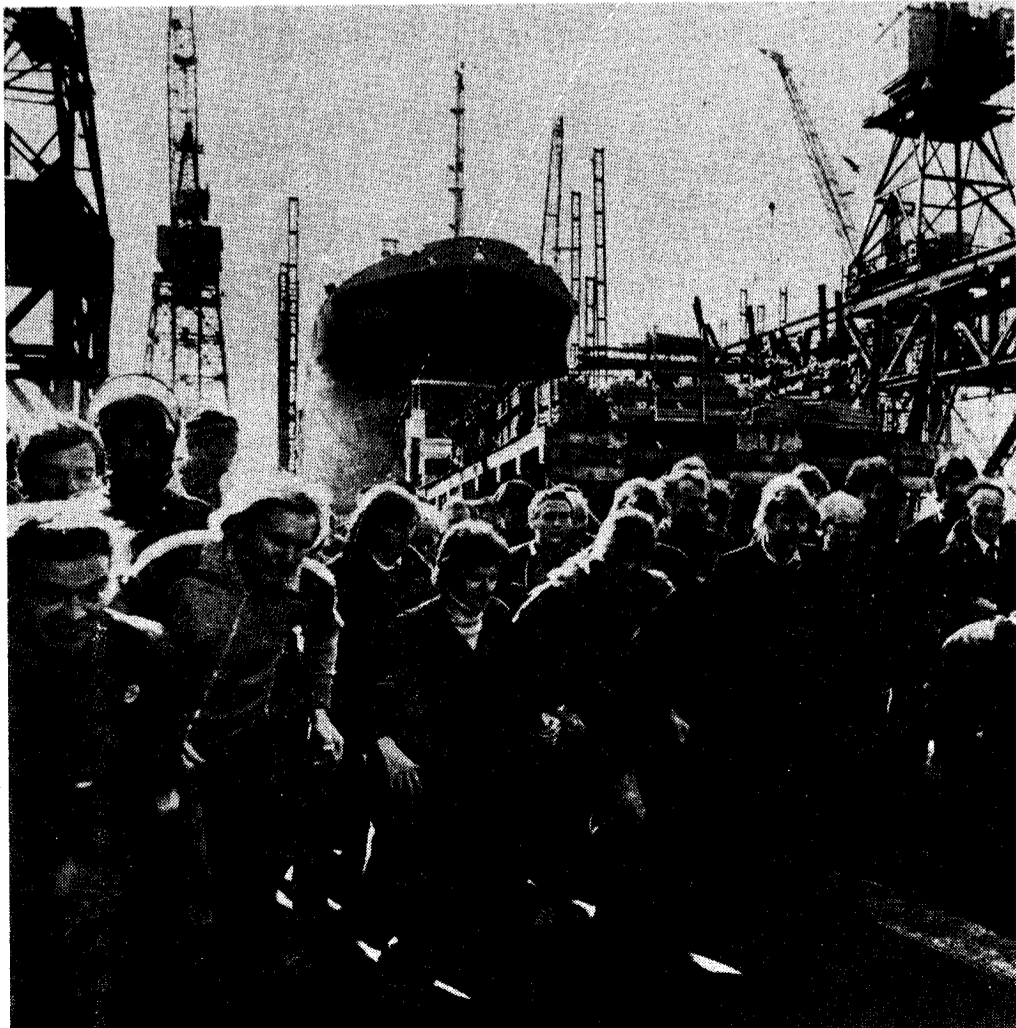
Shining

Support for the work-to-rule and the one day strikes has been good so far.

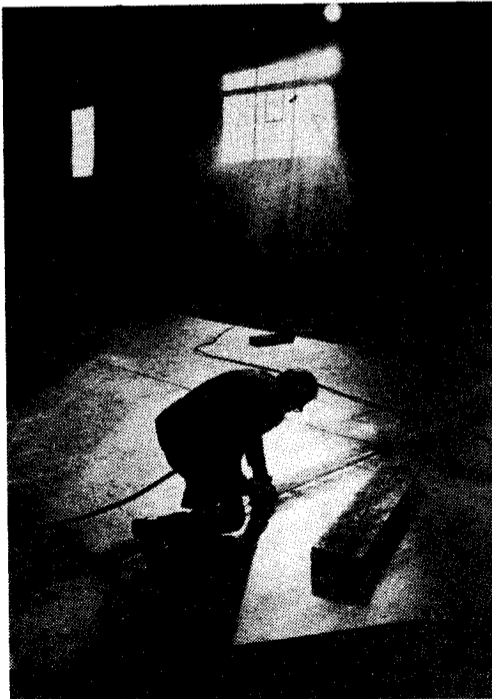
But the action needs to be stepped up.

An all out strike in the shipbuilding industry can win the dispute and also be a shining example to other workers of how to save jobs.

Donations and messages of support should be sent to the Finance Committee c/o Bobby Jones, Robb Caledon Shipyard, Dundee.



Robb Caledon ship yard, convenor Bob Barty centre right



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Socialist Challenge

STAFFA: bosses plot exposed

By Toni Gorton

THE 390 workers occupying the Staffa hydraulic motors plant in Leyton, East London against redundancy, have discovered documents proving conclusively that management planned a cynical campaign of lies and manipulation to fool the workforce into accepting redundancy without a struggle.

The company used industrial consultants HAY Communications Ltd to prepare a detailed plan of campaign to get production transferred to the company's plant in Plymouth with the loss of at least 350 jobs.

- The plan involved:
- Lying to the workers about the number of jobs that would be lost.
 - Keeping the move secret to disarm any union reaction.
 - Deliberately giving the impression to workers that they would be kept on, when it was certain they would be sacked.
 - Giving misinformation to the press, television unions and the local council about the company's intentions.
 - Preparing contingency plans for workers' response up to and including an occupation.
 - Co-ordinating their lies with a strict control of management statements and response, with elaborately worked out scripts for press statement, interviews and meetings with the workers.
 - Preparing detailed 'scenarios' for how to deal with a hostile response from any section of the community.

But the best laid plans go wrong. Staffa are now faced with an occupation and a full revelation of the

cynical and manipulatory attitude to their own workforce.

Their plan from HAY Communications cost them £10,000.

It makes fascinating reading for every worker because it shows in detail exactly how the bosses consciously prepare to fool workers and the media to get their plans through.

HAY Communications told the management: 'All communications should be tightly co-ordinated so that the same basic (sic) story is told to everyone; and meticulously synchronised — no one should know the news before the employees. If there is any risk of a 'leak back', this would destroy your ability to control the situation'.

A glaring example of the cynicism of the bosses and their consultants is given in the following excerpt from a script which shows how to deal with an awkward question — why did it take so long to tell the workforce of the closure?

'Q. Everyone knew weeks ago — the unions have asked for information — why have we hung on so long and how can we be credible now?'

'A. Nobody knew because the final decision had not been made.'

Although Staffa had studied and recommended what should happen it had still to be agreed by Brown and Sharpe and planning permission has still to be granted.

'Obviously we couldn't tell anyone before the final decision no matter how strong the rumours were'.

Every part of this scripted reply is a lie. The final decision had already been made and planning permission acquired months before the announcement.

Other scripted replies and scenarios dealt with every aspect of how to fool the workers, the press and even MPs.

One part of the script which was not written was what to do if the whole plan itself was discovered!

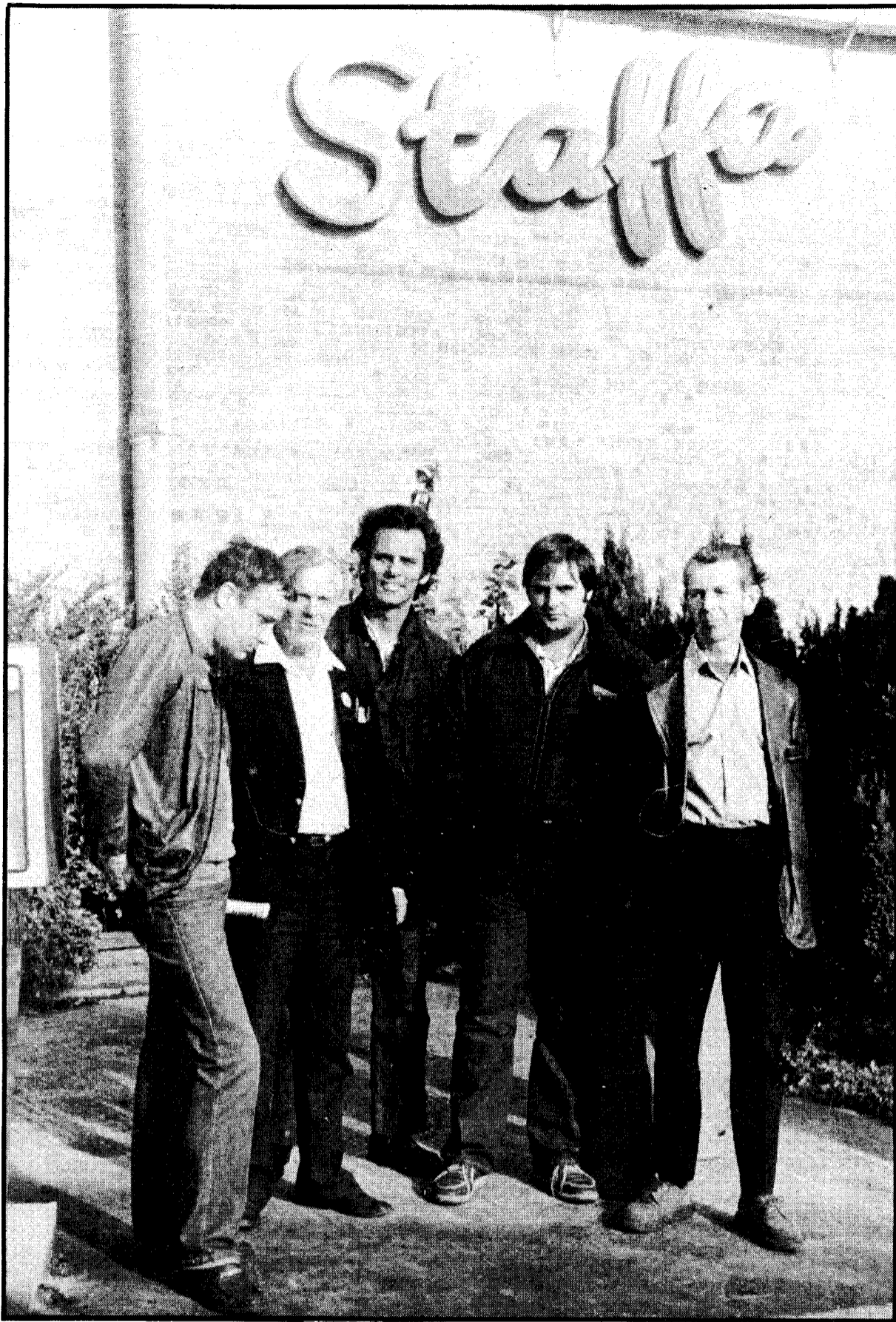
Was Leyton MP lined up by bosses?

Staffa workers who have been studying the documents of HAY Communications Ltd suspect that their local MP, Bryan Magee, who voted for Denis Healey in the recent deputy leadership election, was lined up by the bosses in advance.

One of HAY's scripts, under a title 'Response to various threats' reads: **'Union: our MP will put a stop to this.'**

Answer: 'A comment that the local MP had previously indicated an unwillingness to become involved in management decisions such as redundancy might be appropriate.'

It seems that this is almost word for word what Magee did reply — local labour movement activists should investigate!



Steve Longshawe of LSE (Second from left) at the Staffa works

Staffa fightback

By Toni Gorton

STAFFA Products, a subsidiary of US-owned Brown and Sharpe, announced their redundancy plan in June. Rejecting a government offer of £4m grant, which the GLC offered to match to keep jobs in London, the company went ahead with its plans to move production to Plymouth, where it hopes for a reduced and more docile workforce.

250 engineering workers occupied the plant on 29 September and were joined two days later by 140 staff workers in the ASTMS.

The company's plans were denounced at a joint mass meeting of the two unions at Staffa products last Friday.

Surrounded by about £2m worth of the hydraulic motors that they produce, the 400 workers listened to speeches from Dave Green, the 22 year old steward of the engineering union, the AUEW and factory convenor, and Jim McCullagh, steward of the technical union, ASTMS.

A big welcome was given to Steve Longshawe, a senior steward at the Laurence Scott sit-in in Manchester. Steve was able to give

the Staffa workers the benefits of the LSE experience.

'Remember,' he said, 'people are never redundant — jobs are. These jobs aren't lost, they're here — there are no jobs outside. You have to fight together to keep these jobs here.'

A writ has now been served on the occupation, naming over 300 individuals.

A march is planned to the court for Wednesday 7 October to the court.

Send all messages of support, donations and telegrams to Chris Newson, AUEW Strike Committee, 39 Somers Road, Walthamstow E17. Collection sheets are available.

Socialist Challenge

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