

# Socialist Challenge

**STOP THE WAR  
WITHDRAW THE FLEET**  
NATIONAL  
DEMONSTRATION  
this Sunday  
Assemble Hyde Park 1.00  
Called by Falklands ad hoc committee

# TORIES GO FOR BLOOD BATH



NAPOLEON once said 'you can do everything with bayonets except sit on them'. The same is true of the ships in the South Atlantic. If they are not withdrawn — *now* — there will be a terrible bloodbath.

Britain is fixing a breakdown in negotiations; an invasion only awaits this breakdown.

The world can now see Thatcher is out for blood. The junta was quite prepared to sacrifice Argentinian sovereignty; even this cynical betrayal of the Argentinian people was not enough for her. She wants complete and utter prostration.

She can't get this from diplomacy, because Galtieri could not cling to power if he complied. So she will have to impose it by force. This means that things cannot end with an invasion; 10,000 troops, stuck out in the middle of the South Atlantic, cannot be sustained without further aggression. Argentina itself will have to be 'subdued'. If Thatcher goes ahead with her invasion, the war can therefore only escalate.

So much for the hypocritical claim that Thatcher's war was going to help world peace. This desperate government is not on-

ly driving itself to yet more acts of desperation — it is dragging the rest of the world pell-mell in behind it.

Where will it end? Thatcher still refuses to answer Tony Benn's request to confirm or deny that the task force carries nuclear weapons. Columnist James Anderson says that it not only carries such weapons, but the commanders have the right to fire them.

*There is only one way to stop this government in its tracks: get the ships, troops, guns, bombs and rockets out of the South Atlantic — now.*

# WITHDRAW THE FLEET

# Mass action can stop the war

DO YOU WANT TO STOP THIS WAR? Because it can be done.

Ask yourself a simple question: is this government a strong one?

The opinion polls show it sweeping the country. The newspapers report it surging to military victory. But behind the rhetoric — and the lies — there is desperation.

Why are the Tory Party, the Commons and the press follow-

ing the Neanderthal wing of the Tory Party? Why has hysteria grown so far that the left finds itself defending the BBC? Why did Thatcher have to stall negotiations when the Argentinian government was virtually giving in to her demands?

These are not signs of strength, but of weakness. Only a government driven by desperation born of hopelessness would proceed so audaciously.

Why does it get away with it?

Why does it not fall? Not because of its strength — but because of our weakness. It is because Foot has backed Thatcher to the hilt; because the Labour Party Front Bench has stayed silent; and because, faced with this paralysis, the labour movement has not — yet — acted to deal with the government.

But it can be done. When America went to war against Vietnam, it was stopped by a mass movement of opposition.

One and a half years ago, the CND brought 250,000 people out on the streets against Cruise Missiles. The message we have to take to the people who came on that demonstration is this: the present war is an even more deadly threat than the Cruise Missile.

We appeal to our readers: continue the resolutions, the rallies, the statements. But these must lead to action. Marches — small, but growing — are now beginning all over the country.

London has seen a demonstration every Sunday, with a national demonstration planned for May 23. This, and 6 June — the national demonstration against Reagan — must be turned into huge demonstrations of the *real* feeling in the country about this insane war, and this insane government.

ALL OUT ON 23 MAY!  
ALL OUT ON 6 JUNE!

## The Tories: Neanderthals have it

By Brian Grogan

AS WE go to press, it seems that Britain has got the breakdown in negotiations at the United Nations that it wanted and has started the countdown for the invasion of the Malvinas-Falkland islands. An all-out war with Argentina is therefore only days away.

Why has Thatcher so insisted on a bloody show down with Argentina? Why did she reject the Argentine concessions on sovereignty made in the middle of last week? Simply because any solution which does not put British imperialism in a stronger position than before the retrieval of the Malvinas-Falklands by the Argentinians would be a disaster for the future of British imperialism.

The facts are that Britain's international economic operations are far too bloated for the present strength of the home economy to sustain. It is for this reason that Thatcher has set about defeating the working class at home with the sledgehammer of unemployment. She realised that to maintain Britain's capitalist international holdings and operations, something quick and dramatic had to be done to bring the domestic economy into line.

But the contradictions between the geriatric British economy and its international role are there for everyone to see. This is why Galtieri knew he had every chance of pulling off a winner over the justifiably popular cause of reclaiming the Malvinas-Falklands for Argentina.

Anything short of imposing iron-clad British

rule on these islands is therefore a massive body blow to British imperialism. It would only be a matter of time before others followed the Argentine road. Not so much the re-appropriation of direct colonies like Gibraltar, but the restrictions on the operation of British capital, the closing up of protected markets and, in some instances, the appropriation of British assets. This is the fear.

All sections of the Tory party rallied to Thatcher's war aims (as did the SDP-Liberal Alliance and the Labour leadership). But the weakness of British imperialism — and that of the United States — gives no one great confidence that a British push for its own interests will not produce a counter reaction which will get out of control — in Argentina, then in the rest of Latin America and then elsewhere. Will Britain's bluff — for this is basically what it is — actually be capable of being carried off, reason several of Britain's allies in the Common Market. This is why Common Market backing has collapsed.

These fears also touch off a certain degree of uncertainty amongst sections of the Tory Party. But to suggest that there is some eye-ball to eye-ball conflict between Thatcher and her foreign secretary



Francis Pym is ludicrous. As Peter Jenkins put it in the *Guardian* 'Although ostensibly the leader of the "peace party" within the government he may not have pressed as boldly or decisively along the road as his knee-jerk critics suspect'.

The reality is that the main critics of Thatcher's policy from the extreme Tory right wing. It is to this tune that Thatcher is dancing.

Thatcher is taking incredible risks. In all

likelihood the impact of an invasion and a probable bombing of the Argentine mainland will provoke wide sympathy for Argentina and throw imperialist solidarity into disarray. The loss of British life and those of the islanders — not to mention the lives of Argentine soldiers — will turn the tide of support for Thatcher in Britain. Her government will therefore be in serious jeopardy.

But she and the British ruling class have very little choice. Such is the pro-

blem that imperialism faces in the present relationship of forces on a world scale.

If, however, Thatcher is successful, this will bring the threat of world war closer. It will lead to a firmer alliance of other imperialism's behind Reagan's war drive. US direct intervention will at once be made more necessary — because of the crisis of its proxies — but also more possible.

These are the stakes.



N. St. John Stevas — a Tory wet.



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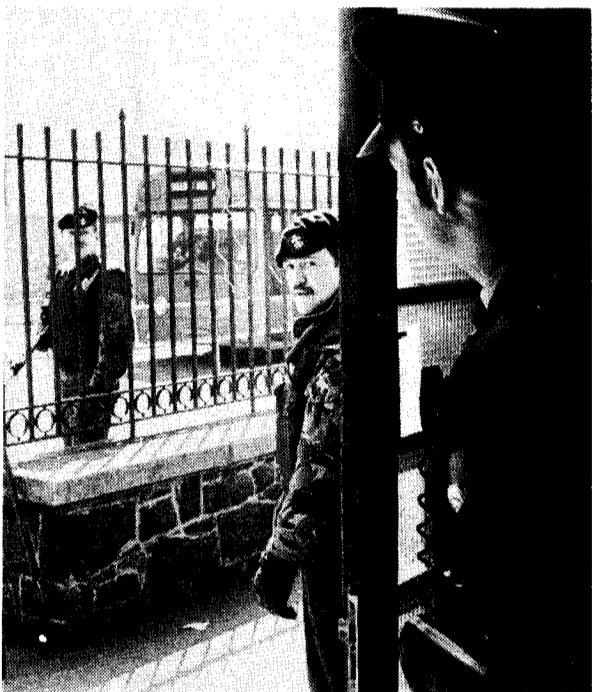
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It's us ...



... or them

# Tribune opposes the war

**'I CALL upon people in this meeting to stand up and argue for withdrawal of the task force, for an immediate ceasefire and for a diplomatic settlement', said miners' president Arthur Scargill to Tribune's 'stop the war' rally held on Wednesday 12 May in the House of Commons.**

Scargill welcomed the proposal to invite the Argentinian trade union federation, the CGT, to Britain. 'But I can see the headlines now,' he said, 'Arthur's flying pickets go to Buenos Aires.'

The rally was the first step in a series of proposed major changes through which *Tribune* is passing under its new editor Chris Mullin, who we interviewed a fortnight ago in Socialist Challenge.

The changes aim to make *Tribune* an open, campaigning paper fighting within the Labour Party for socialist policies and accountability.

The war is the first issue *Tribune* has had to confront. Recalling its anti-war traditions during the Suez crisis, it has come out editorially against the war. It has linked this stand to the left-right struggle in the Labour Party. Its front-page editorial claims that

'History records that whenever the self-styled "tolerant" wing of the Labour Party has lost the arguments, it has opted for a witch-hunt.'

*Tribune* intends to build up a nation wide network of sellers, it says, coupled to a series of major rallies.

Attendance at this first meeting was disappointing, reflecting the disorientation which the war has caused amongst some of the left — probably stronger amongst *Tribune*'s present readership.

But the meeting was given very clear evidence of the growing tide of opposition in the Labour Party to the disastrous stand taken by Michael Foot and the front bench. Amongst trade unions NALGO, the FBU, USDAW and SOGAT have so far come out against the war.

The much-publicised seafarers' union decision to call for an invasion was thrown into a slightly different light by a contribution from seafarer George Cartwright, who said that only two per cent of the naval reserve had agreed to volunteer.

The pressure on the union executive is caused by the simple fact — as Socialist Challenge has pointed out — that you cannot sit in the middle of the South Atlantic with one of the biggest armadas in history without exposing crew and troops to grave risk of life.

'Get in or get out' is the sentiment amongst seafarers; and the lack of serious opposition from the Labour leadership has driven the union into an even more bellicose stance than Michael Foot. But the NUS is only following Foot's logic.

Tony Benn, speaking from the platform, recalled the Labour Party's response to the Suez war. He told the audience that a motion calling on the NEC to organise a national cam-

paign against the present war had been defeated.

Dealing with the hysteria whipped up by the press and the Tories, he said that 60 per cent of the country was opposed to any loss of life. This was not reflected in the Commons.

He reminded the meeting that the House of Commons had bitterly opposed votes for women — 'and I say this in Arthur Scargill's presence.' 'The House of Commons is the last place to go and find out what the people want,' he said.

The small, but significant meeting was a welcome first step towards a serious co-ordinated reaction against the war from within the Labour Party. The next task for socialists is to put the weight of local Labour Parties and unions into building mass demonstrations and rallies against the war. If *Tribune* throws itself into this task it will meet an enthusiastic response from the Labour Party rank and file.

●Foot must go — see Tessa van Gelderen's article on page 5

# Socialist Challenge FUND DRIVE '82

## ... and press ... more ... ever

... the ... press ... more ... ever ...

... the ... press ... more ... ever ...

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## A week's wages for Socialist Challenge

Last week Socialist Challenge journalists donated a week's wages. The ...

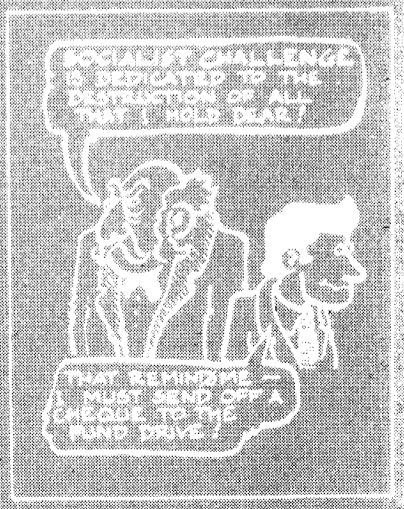
But Socialist Challenge is in a desperate financial situation. A cumulative crisis, slowly but surely creeping up on us, has come to a head.

We have a current account short-fall this quarter alone of nearly £4000 (see table). This is on top of large scale debts which have accumulated over previous quarters. And if this wasn't enough, the rent for our offices has quadrupled. The existence of Socialist Challenge in anything like its present form is imminently threatened.

This is why we are making an appeal to all our readers for a week's wages to Socialist Challenge. Only such a commitment from our supporters will solve our financial mass, allow us to meet our new rent, begin the purchase of our building or move to new premises.

This is a sign of the commitment and seriousness with which they approached the appeal. An emulation campaign of this order from each and every one of our supporters is what we need.

Exeter	£27.00
Hackney	127.00
Various standing orders	12.00
Newport	6.00
Cardiff	48.00
Portsmouth	22.00
Lawichem	40.00
Loughington	25.00
Anon	3.50
Brent	100.00
TOTAL	£410.00
TOTAL SO FAR	3836.50
SHOULD BE	7384.56
SHORTFALL	£3848.06



## NEW SOCIALIST Debate on war

The Argentinian CGT should be invited to Britain to discuss with British trade unionists, said Tony Benn at a *New Statesman* debate on the Malvinas/Falklands war on Tuesday 11 May in London.

He was replying to a question from a Socialist Challenge supporter after speaking against the war, along with Frank Allaun, MP. Speaking for the opposite view were MP George Robertson and Sam McCluskey of the seafarer's union NUS.

George Robertson listed previous Labour Party policy statements in support of the 'islanders' rights'. Tony Benn replied that no body of the Labour Party had ever agreed to go to war with Argentina over the principle — and that moreover, in our evaluation of the principle of self-determination, 'the fact that these islands were taken by force a hundred and fifty years ago by the British should also be taken into account.'

'A military victory is impossible,' he said. 'A harsh reality of life is that you can't keep 10,000 soldiers on an island 8,000 miles away to defend 1800 people who can't even come here.'

Tony Benn also argued that self-determination had to be viewed in the light of Britain's immigration policy in the islands.

'There must be room for many more people than the 1800 islanders if they can station 10,000 troops there,' he said, 'but no Argentinian is ever allowed to settle

there.' In his view the oilfields in the region had had an important impact on British policy. 'I remember as Energy Minister that no American companies would accept licenses from us in the region,' he said, 'because none of them believed it was going to remain British.'

'I don't believe the Falklands belong to us,' he said, 'and both they and the whole of the Antarctica should be a UN possession.'

His view was echoed by many questioners from the floor, including one who drew loud applause after remarking 'I've been in the Labour Party for fifty years and I've never heard so much about self-determination as in the last six weeks.'

The fact that an imperialist power, a hundred and fifty years ago, settled the island with our own people, doesn't make it theirs any more than the penguins. It's a fraud: they'll give the islands away after it's all over.'

George Robertson drew an angry response from a Guyanese member of the audience when he defended the British presence in Belize on the basis of a Venezuelan threat to Guyana. 'The working people of Guyana have nothing to fear from the



Photo: G Cookson

working people of Venezuela,' said the speaker, 'and the government of Guyana is as much our enemy as the people of Venezuela. We will set-

tle our own problems ourselves and as far as we are concerned the Malvinas belong to Argentina. The black people of this country have nothing to gain

from what you are doing. I absolve Tony Benn from the past decisions of the Labour Party and I am one hundred per cent with him on this issue.'



London demo

## Leamington

A PACKED meeting of over 200 at the Spa Centre in Leamington last Friday heard the call for a local ad hoc committee to be set up over the Falklands dispute. National MP Les Huckfield addressed the audience on the Labour leadership's failure to take the common sense from the beginning of the crisis. 'There has not been a word said by the Labour front

bench, he said, and because they have not spoken out they suffered in last week's local elections.

Tajah Sahota, the national secretary of the Indian Workers Association (GB) said that British and American imperialism wanted a strategic route open to the Pacific, and that their main concern was not the islanders, but the oil and mines in the

vicinity. The meeting agreed to set up the ad hoc committee on the basis of three demands:

- immediate ceasefire
- immediate withdrawal of the fleet
- negotiations through the UN

A coach was arranged by the local ad hoc committee to take supporters to the national demonstration in London on 23 May.

## Round-up

IN BRIGHTON 300 marched against the war and for the withdrawal of the fleet on the initiative of the 'No War' ad hoc committee. It heard speakers from the El Salvador Campaign, CND and the SWP amongst others, including Harry Spillman, prospective Labour Party candidate for Pavilion constituency.

The Executive of Kemp-town Constituency Labour Party refused to back the committee by nine votes to eight when *Militant* supporters voted with the right wing.

In Newcastle over 700 at a meeting called by the trades council agreed to set up an ad hoc committee; a meeting is being held on Tuesday 18 May in Glasgow to set up a co-ordinating committee; in Walthamstow over 200 marched from Leyton to Selborne Park where a meeting was addressed by Eric Deakins, Labour MP for Waltham Forest.

**TEESSIDE THORNABY**  
CLP's General Management Committee has passed a resolution calling for the withdrawal of the British Fleet from the South Atlantic and for a settlement to be negotiated on the basis of recognition of Argentinian sovereignty.

OVAL WARD, Vauxhall Labour Party in Lambeth has passed the following resolutions:

This GC condemns the actions of the Tory Government in their military adventure in the South Atlantic and is horrified at the needless waste of life, both Argentinian and British.

We note with anger the failure of the Labour front bench to distinguish itself from the warmongering of the Tories. In particular, we condemn the shameful actions of Michael Foot and Denis Healey in collaborating in this adventure and refusing to support calls for an immediate end to the fighting.

We call on the NEC to organise an immediate, nationwide campaign of action, to include public demonstrations coordinated with action in Parliament, for:

- \* the total withdrawal of the fleet from the South Atlantic
- \* the renouncing of all British claims to the Malvinas and the recognition of the Argentinian claim

- \* the financial compensation of and granting of full citizenship rights to any islanders wanting resettlement.

Additionally, we call on members of Vauxhall CLP to work with local CND in their petition campaign to stop the war, and to support such initiatives as the demonstration called by the Peace in the Falklands Committee which aim to stop the war.

## Birmingham

BY A ONE vote majority Birmingham trades council supported a call to set up a 'British Forces Out of the Atlantic Committee' at its meeting on Thursday 13 April. The resolution passed by the trades council, moved by an AUEW branch, read as follows:

'This trades council expresses its deep concern at the developments over the Falkland Islands crisis. It calls for a policy aimed at achieving the resolution of the United Nations Security Council for withdrawal of all troops from the Falkland Islands.

The council fully supports the security council resolution and calls for a de-escalation of the situation by recalling the British task force, the ending of the 200 mile war zone, and the reference of the whole situation to the United Na-

tions, aimed at establishing a UN administration of the islands, pending settlement of the question of sovereignty.'

An amendment, proposed by Socialist Challenge supporters and others in the Labour Party, read as follows:

'The trades council agrees to sponsor a 'British Forces Out of the South Atlantic Committee', an anti-war contingent on the Ronald Reagan demonstration on 22 May in Birmingham, and supports the organisation of a major Labour Movement rally with speakers including Tony Benn.'

Preparations to organise the committee are going ahead, and 22 May will see the first major public opposition to the war.

## Manchester

A 400 STRONG rally against the war, called by the Greater Manchester Committee for Peace in the Falklands, was addressed by MPs Judith Hart, Frank Allaun, and Bob Litherland and by North West TUC secretary Colin Barnett.

The rally was joined by a 150 strong youth contingent at the end of a ten mile sponsored walk. They had just raised £900 to send an unemployed youth delegation to the 6 June national demonstration against Reagan's visit.

The marchers were joined and addressed by Mary Simpson, Manchester representative of the New Jewel Movement. She warned marchers of

Reagan and Thatcher's threats to the Caribbean revolution and called for a 'hot reception for Reagan when he gets here.'

Prominent slogans on the walk were 'Withdraw the British Fleet' and 'No war'. Terry Wade, speaking on behalf of those on the walk, told the Falklands rally that Labour leaders had allowed the Tories to launch the war, and called on everyone present to join the Labour Party and fight against the betrayal.

A demonstration has been called by the Peace in the Falklands Committee for 10.30 at All Saints in Oxford Road, Manchester, on Saturday 22 May.

## Edinburgh

SOME 200 people attended an Edinburgh Stop the War Committee public meeting on 13 May, called at a few days' notice. Speakers were Ron Brown MP, Steven Maxwell of the SNP, the Rev Professor Duncan Forrester, and Jill Lee of Youth CND.

Edinburgh has already experienced the freedom and democracy for which we have been fighting. There has been no need to send our young people to fight in the Falklands. The only reason for the war is the greed of the oil and mineral companies.

people and those defending freedom. It is not in our nature to treat the people of another country as a means to an end. The only reason for the war is the greed of the oil and mineral companies.

## Oppose the war! Kick out Foot!

By Tessa van Gelderen

**'ONLY extra-parliamentary activity will stop this war.'** Tony Benn, speaking at the *Tribune* rally against the war last week, has become the spokesperson for the growing movement in opposition to the war.

*Tribune* itself, now under the new editorship of Chris Mullin, has come out clearly against the war. Its back page has an article 'Will the real Michael Foot stand up?' Written by Anthony Arblaster, it ends on a note of warning to Foot: 'Your failure and that of the whole official Labour leadership, to oppose this ruthless, futile war makes it your darkest hour as leader of the Labour Party.'

This growing awareness inside the Labour Party that the Labour leaders are on the wrong side in this war has raised the stakes inside the labour movement as a whole. The crisis that is looming for the Tories will not by-pass

Labour. The results for Labour in the local elections show that.

Michael Foot, the 'inveterate peacemonger' has shown his true colours: he supports the forces of oppression and exploitation.

The present leadership of the party has shown itself to be incapable of implementing socialist policies in the next Labour government.

The growing anti-imperialist movement is a direct challenge to this leadership. Between now and the Labour Party conference in the autumn, that movement will be out on the streets in its hundreds of thousands: against the war that That-

cher, aided and abetted by Foot, has got us into; against Trident and Cruise; against Reagan's visit and his policy in El Salvador.

That in itself will be a grave indictment of the Labour leaders who are supporting Thatcher's role in the South Atlantic.

How can Foot pose as a leader of the nuclear disarmament movement when he endorsed the sending of the fleet? More and more the voices of opposition are making themselves heard.

Arthur Scargill, president of the miners union, has come into conflict with both right and left alike in his opposition to the war. The Barnsley Labour Party supported a resolution moved by Scargill and backed by miners' delegates, calling for the task force to be sent back.

The Malvinas issue will force the big battalions in the working class to take sides. The transport union, which supported Benn in the deputy campaign last year, cannot remain silent for long.

Labour movement activists inside the trade unions and the constituencies will want to register their opposition to this war and the stand taken by Foot and Co. Last year, the left focussed its campaigns for reforms in the party through the 'Benn for deputy' campaign. The campaign was, as Benn put it, around 'politics not personalities'.

Now more than ever the left needs a focus to take deep into the Labour Party so that it can register its opposition to the war, Thatcher and the Labour leaders. Tony Benn has to

stand in opposition to that leadership.

Michael Foot can no longer, by any stretch of the imagination, be regarded as a 'prisoner of the right'. He is condemned by his own words and action. Denis Healey continues to be a spokesperson for the British ruling class. Tony Benn himself has argued at Labour Liaison '82 that the crucial issues facing the labour movement are the Falklands/Malvinas issue, unemployment, defence, the Common Market and Tebbit.



Scargill: facing opposition from the right and left

But the over-riding concern of the left now has to be what side will the Labour Party take in Thatcher's imperialist war? It is a crucial test for all socialists. How Labour responds to this issue will determine its course over the next few years.

The growing anti-war movement in this country to Britain's war in the South Atlantic is the basis for winning the Labour Party to socialist policies. Tony Benn making a firm commitment now to challenge this renegade



Opposing Foot would be the best opposition to the war

leadership of the party, can be a tremendously important component of that process. Standing against Foot himself would be the clearest way of showing opposition to all that the Labour leaders stand for.

As the leaders of all parties take us into a bloody war the left has to take a position of outright opposition. It has as a matter of urgency to fight to link local Labour parties to the growing anti-war movement.

Never was the need so great to oppose Thatcher and her attack on workers at home and abroad. Never was the need so great to get rid of the right inside the Labour Party.

*Against the War! Kick out Foot!* should be our rallying cry.

## National executive gags anti-cuts fight

RAY DAVIES, Mid Glamorgan County Councillor and a member of the steel union, ISTC, has been expelled from the Council Labour group for the third time in as many years. His 'crime' was to vote against social service cuts, in opposition to Labour Group policy.

Previously the Labour Party's national executive had accepted Ray's appeal and he was reinstated on the Labour Group. Last week, however, the NEC backed the decision to suspend him from the group and all council responsibilities. Ray Davies explained the issues to Socialist Challenge.

'By taking this decision the NEC is gagging councillors like me who want to campaign against the cuts. During the last 3 years I've been campaigning on a firm "no cuts" platform in the valleys of South Wales and throughout the trade union movement.

'How can I publicly in the outside community campaign on a firm "no cuts" position and then go into the council chamber and vote for public expenditure cuts which cost jobs and services? As far as I can see I am only implementing the 1981 conference resolution which called for "a major campaign to defeat the proposed (Heseltine) legislation" and which stated that the "conference believes that Labour councillors must refuse to make the cuts that will be needed to balance the books".'

'I am bitterly disappointed that the NEC has gone against conference decisions and backed the Mid Glamorgan Labour Group against me. The Labour county council has organised no fightback against the government onslaught. It has just implemented the cuts when asked. A great opportunity has been lost in the fight against the Tories. This weakness will be of great comfort to the Tories who will no doubt come back again and again with punishing cuts.



Ray Davies

'My proposals to the Council meeting involved the Mid Glamorgan County Council, the largest local authority in Wales, initiating a Welsh campaign against Heseltine's legislation and the calling of rank and file Labour Party and trade union conferences to plan the fightback. This was rejected and replaced by total capitulation.

'I appeal to CLPs and trade unions to contact the NEC and demand it reverses its decision. This isn't just to defend me. It is a defence of all other councillors who want to implement national conference decisions and vote against the cuts.

'Whatever the final decision of the NEC, I for one will not be deflected from the task of defending jobs and services of working people.'



The 'peace monger' supports Britain's imperialist war



Roy Grantham: saying what other Labour leaders think

## Coalition with defectors

*THE supreme responsibility of all people of good will who want to see Britain a decent country in which our children and so many others can find work is to ensure that this government is thoroughly beaten at the polls. It may well be that neither the Labour Party nor the Alliance will have a majority but their obligation to the unemployed is to make clear that they will co-operate to cut unemployment and get our industry going.*

*The Labour Party has a hang-up over coalition governments that goes back to 1931. But in 1940 we joined a coalition to fight a clear menace. In 1976-78 we had a clear agreement with the Liberal Party to keep a Labour government in power to tackle our economic problems and keep out Mrs Thatcher. The need is greater today ...*

*That it will be difficult to construct an understanding with people whom many regard as defectors is clear. The SDP equally has no reason to love the Labour Party. But the need to get Britain moving again, is much greater than the foibles of politicians.*

*David Steel was the author of the 1976-78 agreement with Labour. He has the reputation to act as the man to bring together the two groups on a programme for two years to start to get our country and our people working. Thereafter we can resume our legitimate differences and put them to the test of the people's decision.*

**Roy Grantham**  
General secretary, Association of Professional, Executive, Clerical and Computer Staffs writing in the *APEX Journal*, 3 April 1982.

# Bradford 12 'acted in self-defence'

By Paul Hutchinson in Leeds

IN THE third week of the Bradford 12 conspiracy trial police testified about the defendants making petrol bombs. Detective Inspector Sidebottom gave his version of the arrest and questioning of Tarlochan Gata-Aura on 30 July 1981.

Tarlochan's first statement written by himself admitted involvement in making petrol bombs. He was emphatic that they had been for possible use in the expected fascist attack on the black community in Bradford.

For example, there had been a phone call to the Fourth Idea Bookshop, a local radical shop, about a possible attack by skin-heads.

Two subsequent statements were written by police which they claimed were taken at the same time as questioning took place but Mike Mansfield,

Tarlochan's counsel challenged parts of these.

For example, these statements say that the defendant made references to Brixton and Toxteth.

Tarlochan Gata-Aura's first statement referred to Southall where local Asian youth acted in defence against a mass attack on their community by white racists.

It also emerged that Sidebottom had obtained Tarlochan Gata-Aura's photograph from records in what is called 'the col-lator's office'.

He was reluctant to say anything about these records but eventually ad-



2 June will be another mass picket and rally in Leeds

mitted that they included general information that did 'not necessarily' concern illegal activities.

Sidebottom also said that he had never heard of a recent Home Office report on racist violence. This report included an

analysis of West Yorkshire and showed that overall, Asians are fifty times more likely to be attacked than whites.

Judge Beaumont got increasingly edgy about questioning that exposed police indifference to

racist violence and during the cross-examination of Sidebottom suspended proceedings and summoned all counsels to a secret meeting.

Two defence counsels refused to attend. The Bradford 12

defence campaign stated: 'We say there must be no cover-up. The Bradford police have been guilty of sustained criminal negligence for year. They have conspired to neglect our fears.'

Police interest in the politics of the defendants was revealed in the cross-examination of Detective Sergeant Huntingdon. He was sent to Tarlochan Gata-Aura's house to look for evidence of the alleged offences.

Literature he took from the house included a copy of Bradford Black, a local journal; a book by Malcolm X; and a copy of The New Statesman. These were supposed to be evidence of the defendants' 'extreme views'. Yet books by Enoch Powell were left untouched.

It was also clear from this that Huntingdon's conception of 'extreme views' was limited to radical and left-wing opinions. He defined left-wing as 'anything that's against the police or in general criticising the run-

ning of the country'.

The defendants and defence campaign received a morale boost at the beginning of last week in the form of a telegram from New Delhi from the All-India Coordination Committee of Working Women which stated: 'Full solidarity and support to your demands and campaign. Revolutionary greetings.'

In addition to the picket for black defence campaigns on 26 May, the campaign is calling a final mass picket to be followed by a short rally for 2 June in Leeds.

**BRADFORD 12 SPECIAL APPEAL FUND.** One of the defendants, Masaad Malik was told that his father had unexpectedly died. An appeal fund has been launched to send his body to Pakistan. Cheques should be made payable to the Bradford 12 Defence Fund marked on back for the Masaad Malik appeal.

Bradford 12 National Mobilising Committee can be contacted c/o Box JK, 59 Cookridge St, Leeds 2. Tel 0532-439500.

Photo: J HARRIS

## Why abortion is a 'crime'

By Leonora Lloyd

**THE CAMPAIGN** against the buff form introduced by the Tory government earlier this year and the threatened prosecution of doctors showed clearly the inadequacies of the 1967 Abortion Act and led to renewed discussion in NAC on the importance of decriminalisation. Many people do not realise that abortion is still illegal.

Abortion has not always been a crime in Britain. Until 1803 it was legal under common law and had been tolerated for six centuries even when England was Roman Catholic.

In 1803 however, the Ellenborough act was passed which made abortion after 'quickening' (foetal movement) punishable by death for the abortionist, while abortions done earlier could be punished by whipping or transportation up to 14 years.

The passing of the law was not the result of some sort of 'moral majority lobby' but arose directly out of the needs of the ruling class at the time.

Britain was fighting a war with France, whose population was nearly three times bigger. The French were actively pursuing a policy of demographic aggression — there was even a campaign to make celibacy a capital offence. In 1801, the first census in Britain showed that the population was 9.5 million.

In 1837 an act was passed amending the laws relating to offences against the person which made the punishment for abortion the same at any stage of pregnancy; imprisonment for up to three years or deportation.

The census of 1861 showed the success of this policy — the population had doubled! Despite this another Offences Against the Persons Act was passed and this is the one which prevails today.

Under this law the abortionist can be kept in penal servitude for life, or for any term no less than three years, or for up to two years with hard labour/solitary confinement.

It is this law which in the so-called 'permissive society' governs women's lives today!

The 1861 act implied that abortion could be legal under some circumstances and in practice this came to mean when the mother's life was under threat. In 1929 the Infant Life Preservation Act introduced the concept of viability (ie the state at which the foetus could exist without the mother) setting it at twenty eight weeks.

The 1967 abortion act was merely an amendment to this law which means that abortion is still a crime today. Its history shows how the ruling class use the issue of abortion to control women's lives.

That's why it's vital to take up decriminalisation since this would be a fundamental challenge. But this must be accompanied by legislation to ensure a woman's right to choose and to ensure that the facilities are available so that women are not forced to the back street abortionists.

# Big issues before NAC conference

By Ann Potter

**IN SOME ways** the past year has been a successful one for the abortion rights struggle. An attempt to severely restrict women's rights to abortion through removing the social grounds for abortion and prosecuting the leading pro-choice doctor, Peter Huntingford was defeated.

However, this again was a struggle to defend the very unsatisfactory 1967 Abortion Act and little progress has been made in the fight for better facilities and laws.

With the Tory government whittling away the health service this should be a main focus of the campaign.

Some major decisions which challenge the very future of NAC face the National Abortion conference taking place 20 and 21 May. One such decision is the proposal to change the name of the campaign.

Socialist Challenge supporters have always argued that the major threat to women's rights have come from attacks on the abortion law and facilities, and that this is

where our major work must be.

NAC has been and must remain a campaign to defend and extend the legal right to abortion and for facilities and it should keep the name which for seven years has done this.

One resolution from Leeds NAC suggests that the constitution of NAC should more or less be scrapped in favour of a declaration that the main aim of NAC is 'to contribute to the attainment of a society in which every woman ... has the right ... to control her own fertility and determine her own sexuality.'

This is absurdly vague. It would mean that the campaign would become so dissipated and activity so varied that there would be nothing to hold it together.

The question of abortion remains the key issue for controlling women's fertility and sexuality.

If NAC does not keep up the fight on this issue, any ultimate goals we may have will be lost. Moreover, there is a danger that we will allow much of the fantastic support that NAC has built up inside the labour movement and among the mass of women to fall away.

## Concern

It is clear that the fight on abortion rights is by no means over. The proposed facilities forum must be taken up by conference as a means to draw public at-

tention to the vast inequalities in abortion provision throughout the country and the effect of Tory cutbacks, and to demonstrate the inadequacies of the present legislation.

It can also be used to show the quality of facilities that women need, and to build support for the facilities bill which has already been discussed in parliament.

NAC has been discussing positive legislation since 1976. Yet it has not developed this campaign very far. The 1967 Act has proved itself inadequate to defend our needs. The pro choice forces must start fighting for the type of abortion law and practice

which we want and committing the next Labour government to take this up.

The next stage in such a campaign is to begin to look at the issue of decriminalisation of abortion. Huntingford faced thirteen years jail because abortion is still a criminal act. This must be changed and decriminalisation must be accompanied by legislation which ensures a woman's right to choose whether or not to continue with a pregnancy.

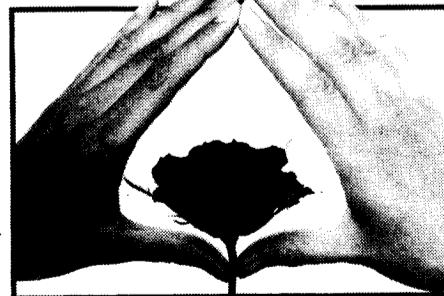
NAC should be getting to grips with these issues and consolidating its gain inside the labour movement rather than sitting around discussing its own name.

## National Abortion Campaign NATIONAL CONFERENCE

22 and 23 May in Leeds  
Bellvue Centre, Bellvue Rd, Leeds 3  
£6 sponsored, £4 waged and £2 unwaged  
Please register in advance:  
NAC, 374 Grays Inn Rd, London WC1  
tel 01-278 1053

Manchester  
Socialist Challenge Rally  
**Women fight back for their rights**  
Film: Rosie the Riveter  
Speakers: Rulecan women strikers, El Salvadorean woman, plus others  
Thur 27 May 7.30  
UMIST, Barnes Wallis Building,  
Sackville St, Manchester

## WOMEN'S FESTIVAL



Saturday 5 June

Battersea Park, London  
from noon

Rally ★ Music ★ Forums ★ Stalls  
Theatre ★ Children's Events  
Refreshments ★ Crèche available ★

**WOMEN'S RIGHTS TO JOBS & EQUALITY**

for  
**WOMAN'S  
RIGHT TO WORK  
DEMONSTRATE  
5 JUNE**

Badges available at 25p  
each + 12½p postage.  
Please order from J  
Arkwright, PO Box 50,  
London N1 2XP. Bulk  
rates available on re-  
quest.

## March to the Women's Festival

Assemble at County  
Hall, Waterloo from  
10.30 to move off at 11.  
Go to Battersea Park.

The march is called by the  
Action Committee for a  
Woman's Right to Work  
and co-sponsored by the  
South East Regional  
Council of the TUC.

# Stop the missiles



## 2 weeks

### Stop Reagan, stop Thatcher's war events

**BIRMINGHAM:** Sat 22 May demo, 'We won't die for Thatcher — we won't die for Reagan', assemble 10.30 at Colmore Circus. Sat 29 May sponsored walk on same theme, assemble 9.30am Chamberlain Square. Mon/Tues 24/25 May factory tour by Manuel Bravo of El Salvadorean FDR, including Tues eve 8pm meeting for trade unionists at Star Club, Essex St.

**BRENT:** Reagan Reception Committee at Brent Carnival, Roundwood Park, NW10 on Mon 31 May, all day.

**EAST LONDON:** Thur 20 May Rock Against Reagan gig at Stoke Newington Town Hall, N16 with Walking Wounded, Kaleidoscope, Oxy and the Morons, Parkdown Jets. Tues 25 May Newham CND meeting, 'Stop the Missiles, Stop Reagan', with CND, El Salvador campaign speakers, Lister Rooms, East Ham Town Hall. Wed 26 May Reagan Reception Rally at Stoke Newington Town Hall with Ernie Roberts MP, El Salvador FDR, Grenada New Jewel Movement, Pat Arrowsmith.

**GLASGOW:** trains and buses for London demo (ring Scottish CND for details, 041-331 2878). Glasgow march on Mon 7 June, 6pm Blythswood Square to Custom House Quay, Clyde St. Rally and festival from 7.30pm at Kelvin Centre, Argyle St. Reagan Reception Committee secretary Alec Park (041-423 4719).

**LAMBETH:** Reagan Reception Committee rally, Fri 28 May 7pm Brixton Town Hall with displays, slides, posters and Stuart Holland MP, Central American solidarity campaign and CND speakers. Rock Against Reagan gig on Fri 4 June at South Bank Poly.

**MANCHESTER:** 16-22 May Week of Action against warmongers including tour by FMLN/FDR of factories, four AUEW district committees and colleges. Thur 20 May 7pm rally in Room 16 Moss Side Community and Education Centre, 'Revolution in the Caribbean basin', speakers from FMLN/FDR and Grenadian NJM. Fri 21 May 7.30pm at Central Hall, Oldham St, Manchester. Film, 'First fruits — the decision to win'. Speaker Manuel Bravo, FDR. Demonstration on Sat 22 May 11am All Saints, Oxford Road, 'Stop the Falklands War' called by Greater Manchester Ad Hoc Committee for Peace in Falklands. Sat 22 May Rock Against Reagan gig at Hulme Labour Club, Bonsall St from 8pm till late with Harlem Spirit and disco and bar.

**NORTH LONDON:** Sat 29 May Twelve Hours Against Reagan festival at North London Poly from 11am, with films, speakers, discussion, stalls, food, music, exhibitions. Speakers from El Salvador, Grenada, CND, Turkey, Chile, Namibia campaigns plus Tariq Ali, Jeremy Corbyn, Andrew Thompson. Special debate on the Falklands. Evening Rock Against Reagan gig from 8pm with No Nukes Music in Pied Bull, The Angel. Groups include: Living Legends, Attila the Stockbroker, Oxy and the Morons. Fri 4 June Rock Against Reagan gig London Musicians Collective. Sat 5 June Cruise around Camden from 12 to 2pm floats, leaflets, etc.

**NOTTINGHAM:** Sat 22 May Demonstration, 'Stop the Falklands War', 11am from The Forest. Called by Ad Hoc Stop the Falklands War Committee.

**EDINBURGH:** Demo on Sat 22 May 11.30am, 'Stop the War', march from Waverley Bridge to Caly Cinema, called by Stop the War committee.

**ROTHERHAM:** Tues 25 May Youth CND meeting, 'Stop the War Drive' with video, 'El Salvador — Another Vietnam', speaker Clive Turnbull. Phone 78401 for venue.

**SOUTH WALES:** Lobby Wales Labour Party conference on Sat 22 May against War in the Falklands.

# Why black people should march against Reagan

By Toni Gorton

As we swing into the final two weeks of preparing our welcome to Ronald Reagan, few if any of the major black organisations seem to be with us. Why? Doesn't this issue have anything to do with black people in this country? On the contrary black people do have a stake in coming out to 'greet' Reagan.

First, because he is the leader of the greatest imperialist power in the world: a power which systematically oppresses

and exploits the third world, and the revolutionary aspirations of the black people there, through direct military in-

tervention of 'destabilisation' campaigns by the CIA. Examples are legion: Vietnam, Dominican Republic, Angola, El Salvador, Jamaica, Grenada, Cuba and many others.

Second, he should be opposed as the main ally of Margaret Thatcher, the leader of the British government, which is dedicated to repression of black youth, restricting the right of blacks to live here and imposing such economic measures on all working people that the right to work and to decent living standards are denied to the vast majority of black people.

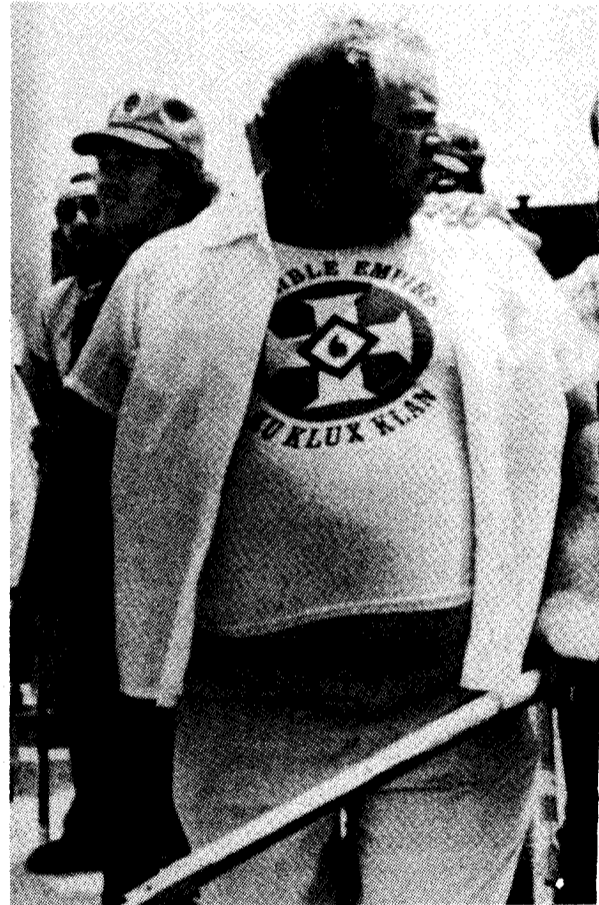
### Austerity

Third, protesting against Reagan would express solidarity with blacks in the heartland of US imperialism. While the US black movement has been quieter in recent years, it is picking up steam again as blacks suffer the effects of Reagan's austerity programme at home and its increasing war drive.

Malek Miah, a member of the National Black Independent political party and a leader of the Socialist Workers Party in the United States recently passed through Britain. He told us: 'Reagan's election is clearly a shift to the right by the capitalist class. He has not only continued many of the policies of Carter and Nixon before him, that is, anti-labour, anti-black, anti-woman policies. He has qualitatively accelerated the nature of the offensive.

'Austerity drives, discussion of militarisation, re-implementing the draft of young people into the army — Reagan says we all have to sacrifice. He means working people have to sacrifice.

'What this means for



Ku Klux Klan are the friends of Reagan's anti-black policies

### Reagan prepares for war

By Paul Lawson

THE UNITED STATES is preparing to go to war. The enemies it has targeted for attack are the growing movements for revolution and social justice in Central America and the Caribbean.

Since the proclamation of the 'Monroe doctrine' in the 19th century the United States has considered the whole area as part of its 'back yard' — under its exclusive domination. American multinational corporations like the United Fruit Company, have long dominated the economies of the countries in the region — making huge profits at the expense of mass poverty among the people.

The United States has specialised in supporting rotten and reactionary right wing dictatorships in the region, politically and militarily.

In line with this policy of domination of the region the US has been willing to intervene directly to put down any threat to its rule. In Guatemala in 1954, the left-wing Arbenz regime was overthrown by a CIA-organised invasion. Some 40,000 American marines invaded the Dominican Republic in 1965, to overthrow the government of Juan Bosch, a moderate left winger.

The victory of the Cuban revolution in 1959 signalled that the people of the region were beginning to fight back. But the United States bolstered its clients in the region, supporting vicious military repression to prevent further revolutionary victories.

But two recent events have changed all that. In March 1979 in the tiny Caribbean island of Grenada the dictator Gairy was overthrown by the New Jewel Movement. And in July 1979, in the Central American republic of Nicaragua, the Sandinista revolutionaries overthrew the Somoza dictatorship.

The Nicaraguan victory in particular spurred on the revolutionaries in El Salvador and Guatemala presenting a regional challenge to the US-backed dictatorships.

Reagan's response has been to declare war on the peoples of the region. Hundreds of millions of dollars have been poured into backing up the dreadful dictatorship in El Salvador, including US officers and advisors and millions of dollars worth of military equipment. US military personnel in neighbouring Honduras have been reinforced, and they assist the counter-revolutionaries in carrying out raids across the Nicaraguan border.

These same counter-revolutionary groups received training at camps in Florida and other parts of Central America. The United States continues its preparations for direct military intervention through seeking new air bases in Colombia and Honduras, together with a series of naval exercises which have involved marine landings at the US naval base at Guantanamo in Cuba.

The message is clear. Reagan and Secretary of State Alexander Haig do not intend to allow further left wing victories in the region. And they are prepared to go to war to prevent them. Our task is to stop them.

blacks is that since Reagan has come into office unemployment has increased. Unemployment for blacks has always been twice as high as for whites — 12/13 per cent while 6/7 per cent among the population as a whole.

'Among black youth traditionally unemployment has been 30 per cent official. In September 1981 for the first time since they've been keeping figures, official unemployment among black youth was 51 per cent.

### Youth

'That doesn't count the youth who've stopped looking for work or who are underemployed.

'In some cities like Detroit where the official rate is about 20 per cent, the rate for black youth is in the region of 80-90 per cent.

'It's always been a saying in the black community that a recession for the economy as a whole means a super-depression for

blacks who've never really got out of the depression of the 30s.

'So Reagan coming has meant a worsening conditions for black people. For example one of the gains of the 1960 civil rights movement was improvement in education including desegregation schools, certain progress in bussing programmes. Reagan is against all this.

'There's been a cut back in the schools which affect all youth, with few grants for blacks to go to college.

'Across the board things have got worse. This sets the stage for what happens in the black movement about what should be done.'

Just as the black movement in this country responded to the civil rights struggles in the USA, so should it join the new black movement opposing the US war drive and act in solidarity with US blacks fighting against racism and the austerity drive.

## Trade unionists demonstrate at Greenham Common

By Fred Kingdom

ON WEDNESDAY 12 MAY over 200 trade unionists attended a demonstration called London Region CND outside the works gate entrance to the Greenham Common Air Base the proposed site for 96 Cruise Missiles.

The demonstration was backed by six local trades councils, the Greater London Association of Trades Councils, the NUM executive, and many other union bodies. It aimed, not to 'try and stop work on the base' as the media has claimed, but to start a dialogue with the construction workers and lorry drivers working on the base.

The demonstrators leafleted the workers entering the base in the morning and about fifteen attended a lunchtime rally. They heard Tony Woods, southern region organiser of the building workers' union, UCATT, say 'UCATT wants you all to have jobs, but building houses and schools rather than nuclear bases which are only there to be used to launch an attack and get us all exterminated in the process.'

Later Tony had a lively discussion with the workers, many of whom said that they would prefer to work elsewhere but simply had no choice. Some expressed support for the demonstration, others that they didn't feel strongly enough about the issue and that if they didn't work there, others surely would.

Claude Harvey, a black trade unionist and

local UCATT official, pressed the hope that the next Labour government would dismantle all American bases in Britain and refuse the Cruise missiles.

The demonstration was the first of its kind since the 1950s. It was encouraging to see many union banners and delegation of construction workers from Southampton. At the forthcoming UCATT national delegates conference in Great Yarmouth, the southern region will put forward a resolution calling for union to boycott all work on missile bases.

Alan Sapper, TU chairperson, told a press conference before the demonstration that 'There must be industrial integration into the campaign for nuclear disarmament. We've got to block nuclear bases.'

Such important movement need to be linked to creation and implementation of alternative production by labour movement so that workers employed in arms industry are not being asked by other trade unionists to go on the de-industrial action around the bases should be linked to the building of a movement to force government to unilateral disarmament.

# ARGUMENTS AG

## And here is Winston Churchill with the news

'TRUTH — the first casualty in war' said the BBC on the front page of its weekly review, *The Listener*. The Tory Party's neanderthals are demanding a propaganda service so slavish that even the Beeb has to defend itself. The media aren't exactly God's gift to the working people. When America's Henry Kissinger was asked about the British media he said, 'if we had had this sort of coverage during the Vietnam war, I would have been the happiest man alive'.

That is what makes the Tory onslaught so horrifying. Young Winston's battle for air supremacy over the BBC shows yet again how this war is being used to erode working class and democratic rights at home: another reason to oppose it. A radio and television service adapted to Winston's demands would be little more than a Goebbels-style lie factory.

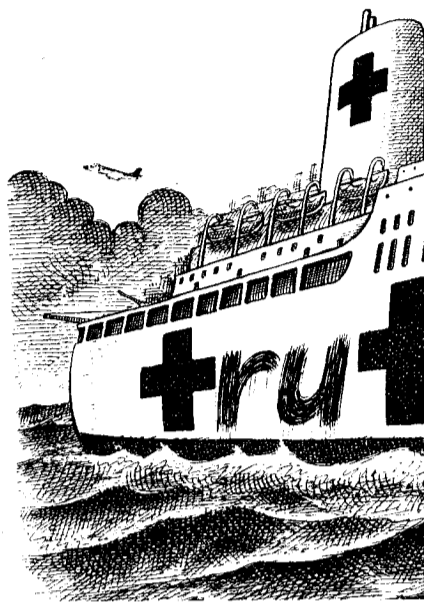
But the press — and not just the *Sun* — has repeated and supported the Tories' main arguments. Goebbels worked on the principle that a falsehood, if repeated often enough, will be believed. The Tories' lies must be answered. Since the war began Socialist Challenge has done exactly this: week in, week out, we have explained the real issues involved.

At last the movement against the war is beginning to take off; and on these pages, as a service to it, we summarise what you haven't heard from the BBC: the arguments against Thatcher's war.



THE L  
6 May 1982 Price 50p (IR 76p, USA)

The first casualty of war



## They say: 'We must oppose aggression'

**WHOSE AGGRESSION must we oppose? That is the point at issue. A factory occupation is an act of aggression: does this mean we should support the boss against the workers? A riot is an act of aggression: should we support the use of the police to terrorise and brutalise those taking part? We say that oppression is the cause of aggression, and this is what should be opposed.**

Any oppressor can manipulate events in a dispute so that it appears to be the injured party, when the real cause of the conflict is a longstanding injustice, sustained by the armed might of the oppressor over decades and even centuries.

'The Malvinas were taken from the Argentinian people by force over 150 years ago. This is pointed out in an

**The Malvinas were taken from the Argentinian people by force over 150 years ago.**

advert entitled 'some facts you may want to know about the Malvinas and have never been told,' inserted in the *Times* on 24 April 1982 by a group of Argentinian Americans. From 1600 to 1811, it points out, Spain claimed the islands; this claim was disputed by no one. In 1774 Spain put the islands under Buenos Aires' jurisdiction and handed over this task to the newly independent nation of Argentina in 1816. In 1820 Argentinians settled on the islands.

On 2 January 1833 the British came in force, ordered the Argentinians out and forbade them to return. Is this aggression justified simply because it has been unanswered for a hundred and fifty years?

But even setting these facts aside, the substantive underlying issue is this: Britain is an imperialist and colonial nation with an invisible economic empire worth over £67bn in foreign investments — according to the government's own figures. Argentina is a dependent nation with foreign debts of over £16bn.

Argentina's major industries are owned by investors from the imperialist nations — including large British shareholdings. Argentina's workers slave under a double yoke: from their own capitalists and from

Thus Argentina, with a foreign debt of £16½bn, pays £2bn per year in service charges on this debt alone; while Britain has an income from foreign investment of £8bn and a further income from the City's 'invisible' earnings of over £2.5bn. Over a quarter of British bosses' profits come from overseas.

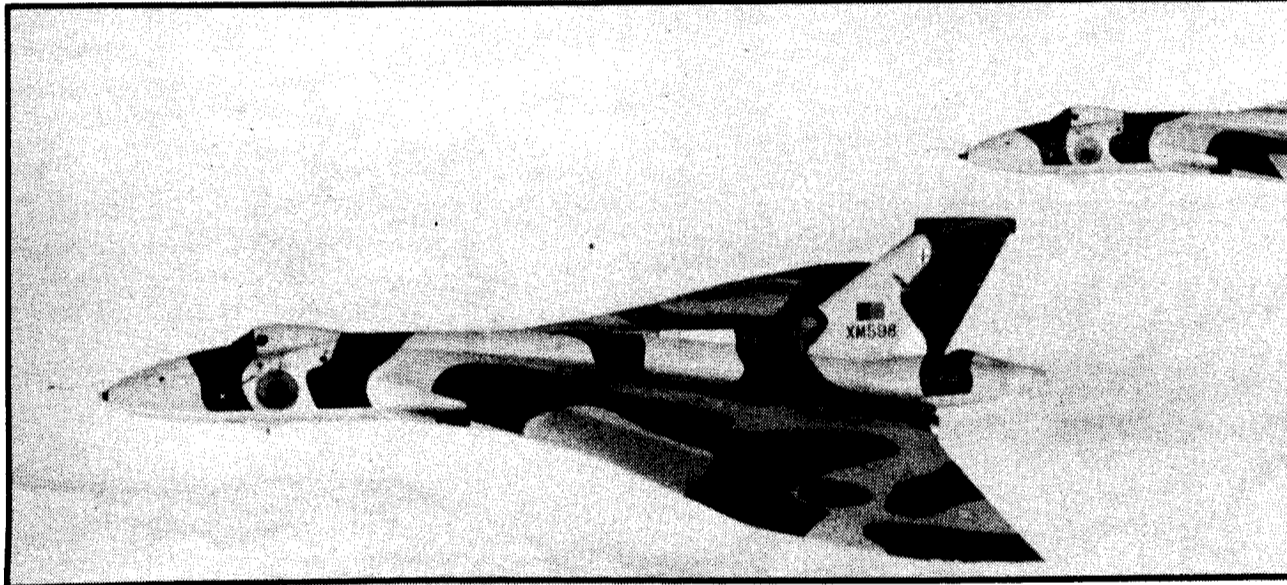
What does this mean? If you strip it of all legal niceties, according to which Argentinian workers 'of their own free will' contract to sell their labour to British bosses, our ruling class depends on millions of wage slaves throughout the world.

But slavery can only be maintained by force. The British and American armed forces, allegedly keeping 'world law and order', are debt collectors and rebellion-crushers. They are not just fighting 'communism' but every revolt against their iron grip. This is why America has backed Britain and not Argentina. As one American diplomat told *Newsweek* rather shamefacedly 'We never told them that we cared about things other than communist subversion and now they're surprised to find that something else matters more.' The 'something else' was imperialist profits.

The problem facing socialists is now: do we support all rebellions against our slave-owners or does it depend on who is leading them? Argentinian workers are exploited by British bosses *whoever* is in the government. If British workers try to pick and choose who to support against Thatcher, we will participate in the oppression which her class visits on these Argentinian workers.

But these Argentinian workers are in a different situation: their bosses oppress them and no one else. Galtieri's actions cannot harm British workers: but Thatcher's actions can and do harm Argentinian workers.

We, as socialists, seek unity between the workers of the world to defeat capitalist aggression against the working class. This is the only way to remove all relations of force and oppression from society, by removing their foundation: class society. But unity between workers is impossible, as Lenin argued incessantly, while any group of workers supports the violence of its own ruling class against other workers. It is Thatcher's aggression that must be opposed: and in Britain, this means preventing her from proceeding with her



## They say: 'We should fight for the islanders' right of self determination'

**WHEN THE Tories use this argument it is nothing short of outrageous. They founded the largest empire in world history — Britain's. Everyone who has broken free has never fought for it. The Tories have never supported self-determination except when it helps them maintain Britain's domination of the world.**

Their recent joint naval exercises in the Caribbean with the USA, involving more than 45,000 troops, included mock invasions of Grenada and Cuba. And Britain was the only European country to send observers to the 'elections' in El Salvador — while the United States was plotting proxy intervention in that country by Argentina itself, and while Argentine 'advisors' were already working with the Salvadorean death squads to help suppress the Salvadorean people.

When the USA recently asked for the British island of Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean as a naval base, Britain just evacuated the 1300 islanders to Mauritius. And fifteen years ago when the island of Anguilla wanted independence from the British-created federation of St Kitts — St Nevis-Anguilla, a British naval task force was dispatched to stop them.

Moreover the Tories don't even accept the islanders' own claims to be British. Their immigration act prevents the islanders from coming here and when an attempt was made

to alter the act to let them into Britain, Lord Trefgarne had the following comment to make:

'I must remind their Lordships that however strong their affection, the fact remains that the Falklands are not and never have been part of the United Kingdom.'

**'I must remind their Lordships that however strong their affection, the fact remains that the Falklands are not and never have been part of the United Kingdom.'**  
— Lord Trefgarne, speaking in the Lords on the Immigration Act.

The Tories organised a three-line whip to prevent this fact being changed in the Lords.

The islanders are only allowed to come to Britain once every two years for a short stay: yet they cannot, for the most part, actually live out their lives on the island. Seventy per cent of the land is owned by the Falkland Islands Company, a subsidiary of the Coalite Group. This company turfs them out of their tied cottages when their useful working lives are over, so they have to 'emigrate' to New

Zealand or Australia.

The islanders have been used as an excuse for Britain's territorial claims. Although the community has declined from 3,000 to 1,800, no Argentinian has been allowed to settle there. If there had been free movement of peoples, a majority of islanders would by now be Argentinian, since hospital facilities and most transport and other services are provided by Argentina.

The island's independence is completely nominal. Their administrators are appointed from Britain — not elected — and the 'governor', Rex Hunt, is also governor of British Antarctica in his spare time. Who voted for him — the penguins?

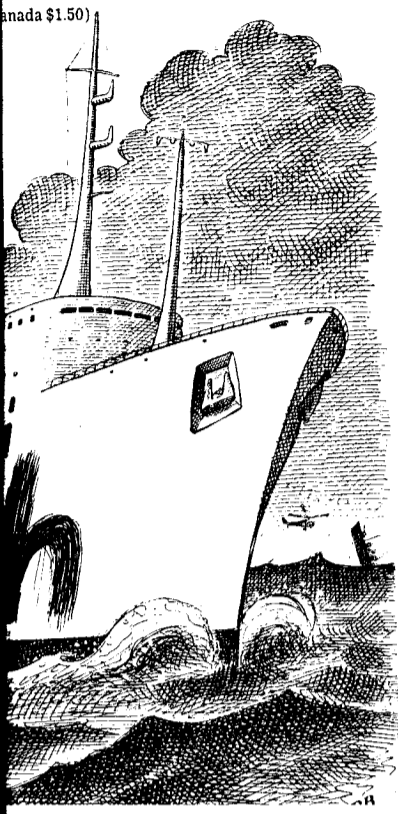
These facts show what is really at stake — the *territory* around the islands. Argentina's natural and mineral resources have been plundered by Britain over the century. Now that oil has been discovered off Argentina's coast, Britain's territorial claims would allow oil companies like Coalite to secure the title to much of this wealth. The islanders have been used as an artificial device. Their *human* and *democratic* rights would best be preserved by allowing them to resettle at British expense, and by helping the Argentinian workers to overthrow the junta.

Moreover, once we look at matters from the viewpoint of the Argentinian workers to overthrow the junta.



# AGAINST THE WAR

LISTENER



Who do you trust to fight fascism? Argentinian oppositionist Blimps



## They say: 'We must fight fascism'

**FROM THE Tories and the Labour Party front bench, this argument is hypocritical.**

**From 1976 until 1979, Britain was the junta's biggest military supplier. At that time not even America would sell arms to Argentina, because of Carter's human rights policy.**

The Tories carried on this policy. Plaid Cymru MP Dafydd Elis Thomas testified to Socialist Challenge that a British made T-42 frigate, sold to Argentina this year, was still completing its trials in Cardigan Bay in early March!

But the Tories went even further. Within three weeks of arriving in office they slammed the door in the face

of the junta's political opponents. 'Friendly' governments like Chile and Argentina couldn't be antagonised; so Thatcher's henchman Nicholas Ridley closed down the refugee programme. As far as he was concerned the best place from which to fight the junta was inside its jails.

Nor has friendship with Chile ended. How can Britain be fighting fascism when it makes common cause with mass murderers like Chile's General Pinochet?

But, say some Labour Party members, although this is all true, shouldn't we socialists fight the fascists without accepting Tory hypocrisy?

But let's look at the facts. Has the British navy ever replaced a right wing government with a left wing one? No — and for a simple reason. It is the ruling class's navy. It can't be used for progressive ends.

Sit back and think: if Britain stations 10,000 troops in the South Atlantic, and the Argentinian people rise up against Galtieri, do you really believe the troops will support the people against the junta? Of course not; they will be used like British armed forces in the Caribbean, who are supposed to be there to defend the people of Belize against the 'dictators' in Guatemala. They are now taking part in joint naval exercises with the USA, directed *against* the revolutions in the Caribbean that have overthrown dictators — Cuba, Nicaragua, and Grenada. And the British armed forces are also helping to deter the Salvadorean and Guatemalan people from themselves overthrowing their dictators.

**Only those who have nothing to gain from slavery will fight against it.**

The real issue facing socialists is this: in whom do we place our trust to fight the fascists — in our own class, which has been fighting the junta for six years, or in Margaret

Thatcher and her navy who profit from the activities of dictators throughout the world, and in many cases put them in power? A socialist policy understands that only those who have nothing to gain from slavery will fight against it.

Our objective must be to create the best conditions for the Argentinian working class to settle accounts with Galtieri.

It is not true, as the British *Militant* seems to think, that Galtieri can be crushed between the British navy and the Argentinian working people. If Galtieri is forced to retreat before British military might, the most likely outcome in Argentina would be a right wing coup and a *more* repressive regime, which would not only have to accommodate Britain but contain the anger of its own people.

**A British victory will make it harder for the left in Argentina and a British defeat will make it easier.**

A British victory will make it harder for the left in Argentina and a British defeat will make it easier. The facts show this: since Galtieri recuperated the islands, the trade union and political opposition have had much more freedom to organise. This is not because Galtieri has become the people's friend, but because by biting the hand that feeds him, he has *weakened* himself inside the country.

Those who argue that Galtieri's move is merely a manoeuvre, to win popular support, fail to understand how to prevent the manoeuvre succeeding. Galtieri retains what support he now has *because* he is fighting Thatcher — in short, because Thatcher is fighting him. If the British fleet were to sail away tomorrow, the Argentinian people would not feel any inhibitions about removing him from power. The war *helps* sustain Galtieri: ending the war offers Argentinian workers the chance to deal with him.



Mass mobilisation in Buenos Aires. Fighting Thatcher and the fascists.

ion'

Argentinian workers, we see that a different issue of self-determination is really involved: the right of the Argentinian people to self-determination. If they are to free themselves from imperial domination they must have unrestricted access to the natural resources of their territory.

**A different issue is really involved: the right of the Argentinian people to self-determination.**

Those who point only to the fascist nature of the junta ignore the feelings of the Argentinian people themselves. They feel the island should be part of Argentina, they want access to the seabed and mineral resources of the South Atlantic coastal regions, and it is *their* rights which are being attacked by the third largest navy in the world.

In short, the issue is a typical Tory trick. The alleged 'rights' of 1,800 people are being used as an excuse to attack the rights of 27,000,000 people on the mainland. It's the same dodge as Norman Tebbit's so-called 'Employment' Bill which claims to defend the freedom of 400 scabs — so as to smash up the rights of 2,000,000 trade unionists.

For socialists who defend self-determination, Argentinian sovereignty should be supported as the only consistent policy.

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 National Healthworkers fraction. 30 May 12noon. Socialist Challenge office. National Womens Fraction 29 May Socialist Challenge office 10.30am

# Under Review

# Christian Rakovsky: revolutionary in opposition

By Frank Lovell

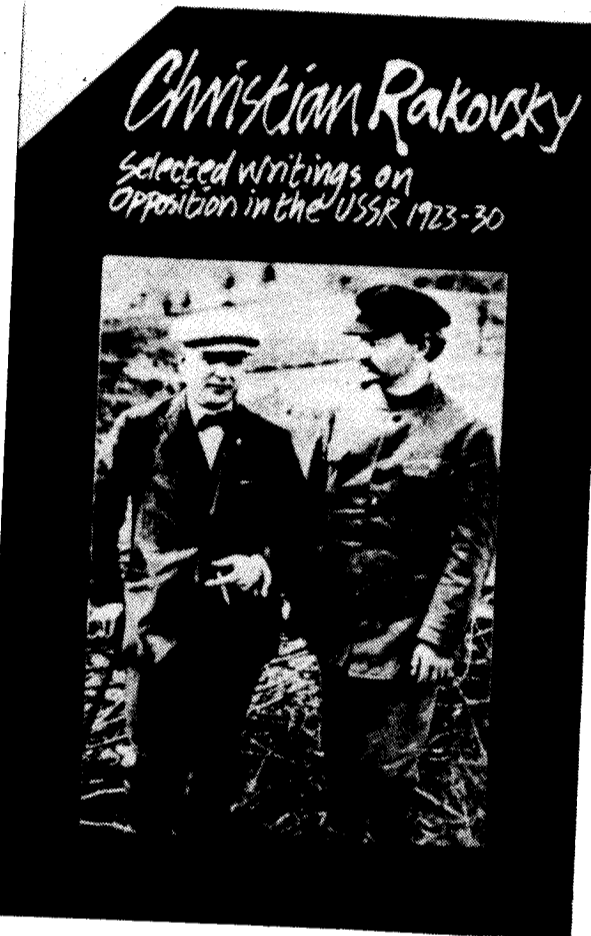
*Selected Writings on Opposition in the USSR, 1923-30, by Christian Rakovsky. Edited and with an introduction by Gus Fagan, Allison & Busby, available from The Other Bookshop. £4.95 plus 20% p&p.*

THIS IS the first collection in English of writings by Christian Rakovsky (1873-1941), a contemporary of Lenin who has been unjustly neglected. He was one of the outstanding Marxists of his time and contributed significantly to the building of the first workers state.

Rakovsky was truly a man for all seasons. Born in Bulgaria, he joined the revolutionary movement as a youth and became the best-known leader in the Balkans. He was repeatedly arrested and expelled from one country after another. A lifelong internationalist, he knew Frederick Engels and worked with George Plekhanov, Lenin, Rosa Luxemburg, and Leon Trotsky. He fought against World War I and the treachery of the social patriots in the Second International. He was one of the organisers of the anti-war conference held in Zimmerwald, Switzerland, in 1915.

### Trotsky

Rakovsky was imprisoned in 1916 by the Romanian government for his antiwar activities, and liberated by Russian troops and Romanian workers in 1917. He was



active in Russia on the side of the soviets that came to power that year. He joined the Bolshevik Party in 1918 and became a member of its central committee the next year. Assigned to work in the Ukraine during and after the 1918-20 civil war in Russia, he became president of the Soviet Ukraine.

At the head of the government in the Ukraine, Rakovsky fought against the bureaucratic

and oppressive policies Stalin employed against non-Russian nationalities in the Soviet Union. In 1923 he adhered to the Leninist Left Opposition headed by Trotsky. The Opposition sought to return the Communist Party and the Soviet state to the internationalism and workers democracy that prevailed before Lenin's final illness and death.

For these reasons Stalin managed to have

Rakovsky removed from the Ukraine and assigned to diplomatic posts abroad. As ambassador to Britain and later to France, Rakovsky negotiated recognition of the young workers state by those countries. This earned him a reputation as a great revolutionary diplomat.

and convicted in the third Moscow frame-up trial. Like other revolutionary leaders, he was falsely accused of conspiring with the German and Japanese imperialists to overthrow the workers state he had done so much to build. He was sentenced to 20 years in prison and died or was killed in a prison camp in 1941.

### Deported

In 1927 Rakovsky was expelled from the Communist Party along with Trotsky and the other Oppositionists. He spent the next seven years in places of remote banishment under conditions of severe repression. Despite these conditions and ill health, he stood firm against Stalinism and the weaker elements in the Opposition, like Karl Radek, who capitulated to Stalin. After Trotsky was deported to Turkey in 1929, Rakovsky was recognised as the principal Opposition leader inside the USSR.

But after being deported to Central Asia, he was isolated from his comrades and from political information. He was wounded during an unsuccessful escape attempt shortly after his deportation. Worn out by illness, and his morale broken, the 60-year-old Rakovsky finally gave up the struggle in 1934. The bureaucracy pressured him into signing a declaration submerging his differences with the party and submitting completely to discipline.

But Stalin feared and never forgave him, and in 1938 Rakovsky was tried

The present book selections and extracts from Rakovsky's writings as an Oppositionist in the Soviet Union, has a very informative 58-page introduction by the editor Gus Fagan, Socialist Challenge supporter in Britain, about Rakovsky's long and inspiring career. It is the best and fullest account available in English. This alone makes the book worth reading.

### Memories

The selections by Rakovsky include: a short autobiography he wrote in the mid-1920s; a speech about the national question given at the Communist Party's 12th congress in 1923; his memories of Lenin; his constantly interrupted speech at the 15th congress in 1927 when he was expelled from the CP; and six documents he wrote during his banishment. These six were preserved because Trotsky published them at the time in his Russian language magazine *Bulletin of the Opposition*. This is the first time they have been published together.

Reprinted from *Militant US socialist paper*.

### The Other Bookshop

328 Upper Street London N1  
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## Playing apart

By Andy Miller

**RED LADDER**, the Leeds-based socialist theatre group is touring clubs around the north of England with a new show 'Playing Apart'. It is the first play the present group has written. Attempting to break new ground, the play follows the story of a young woman from the North east and the impact of unemployment on her life.

There's plenty of humour in 'Playing Apart' - particularly the guest appearance of bike-riding Norman Tebbit. The piss-take of the SDP - 'With a glass of claret and a new Volvo car, I'm the new politician who's bound to go far' - is hilarious. The music is also good.

'Playing Apart' subtly shows the different aspects of violence against women. The narrator comments on sexism and sexual harassment in the

office: 'The men used their brains and the women their hands - at least that was how it was supposed to be. As far as I could see it was the other way round.'

The weakness of the play is that the characters come across as helpless and powerless. The main character gets no backing from the union when she is made redundant. Her father goes to get drunk the night he is given his notice. The song that ends

the play tries to point out that things can be changed. But it is not strong enough to get the message across and it doesn't flow from the rest of the play.

Red Ladder tries to get the audience to ask questions rather than providing ready made answers. I would have been possible to present an alternative without ramming a 'line down the audience's throat. But it's a good night out (and it's free). Definitely recommended.

Future shows include: *Manchester 25 May; Leeds 27 May & 1 June; Halifax 28 May; Sheffield 2 June, Rotherham 5 June. For full details about these and other performances ring Pam Bone Leeds 792228/9.*

# Vital force of reggae

WHEN I read the Linton Kwesi Johnson interview (SC 29 April), I gave thanks for him pure dread. Not only can he write good poetry, he also understands the relevance of his chosen art form in society — poetry plays a role in the struggle for ideas, the struggle on the ideological terrain.

Whilst Socialist Challenge has occasionally reviewed radical white music there has been little or no reviews of the vital force of reggae and dub music. (The notable exception was the excellent article by Paul Gilroy at the time of Bob Marley's death.)

As Linton has said rebel music is 'the ground-beat of survival itself. It is a music that is at once violent and awesome, forceful and mighty, aggressive and cathartic. It is a music that beats heaving against the walls of Babylon, that the walls may come a-tumbling down; a music that chucks an heavy historical load that is pain, that is hunger, that is bitter, that is dread.'

This is the only thing which black people actually possess — control is their culture. The poetry and lyrics and the roasting of rebel music is 'experiential'. It contributes to the oral history of black people — history not as 'fleeting memory of the distant past, but the

unbearable weight of the present'.

Even pure dub music (no lyrics) is experiential, conveying things too dread for words. The language of these art forms is Rastafarian. The culture of Rastafari can no longer be passed off by the white revolutionary marxists as promoting political passivity.

The historical experience of black people is one of the most acute human suffering, desolation and despair which brings about a need for 'inner peace' — an inner strength or 'spiratual well-being'.

'This impelling need to be free of the inner pain, the oscillation between psychic states of despair and rebellion does not oppose the physical and social quest for liberation.' The historical phenomenon called Rastafari is in fact laying the spiratual and cultural foundations from which to launch a struggle for liberation.

STEVEN ARCHER  
Leeds



Linton Kwesi Johnson: poetry in the struggle for ideas

Letters letters Letters  
Letter: letters LETTERS

Editor reserves the right to cut any letter over 400 words.  
Write to SC letters, c/o PO Box 50, London N1

## Russia: no right to nuclear weapons

RICHARD ROZANSKI in his article about the LPYS Conference (SC 22 April) writes: 'The defence of the workers state against imperialism also means defending the right to have nuclear weapons'. This is a very depressing statement. What a distortion of socialist theory to end up with a 'right' to a nuclear weapon!

A nuclear missile is a piece of technology. It's designed by scientists and produced by men in factories. It costs a lot in money, and lives too, in exploiting the earth's resources needed to produce them. Even to consider the effect of one weapon is heartstopping.

They indiscriminately and horribly kill all people, old and young, handicapped and well, and all animals. They put the planet at risk

by destroying the structure of nature, and through radiation worming into our skin and blood and guts, they will kill future generations. How can there be a right to this thing?

Nor is there any sense whatever in the remarks by Richard Rozanski about the arms race and the US advantage. If even one weapon was delivered to its target the effect would be crushing, not only in terms of actual damage, but also psychologically. Look at the effects of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombs 37 years later, and these were tiny in comparison to modern bombs.

Yet today the US has about 30,000 weapons to the USSR's 15,000. In terms of numbers the US has an advantage. In terms of the

future of the planet, talk of an advantage to one side or the other is insane.

CND concentrates on the technological object — the bomb. It's not a deterrent or a defender of democracy; it's a monstrous product of some really sick men, capitalists and communists.

The young socialists who join CND will learn about what's happening. They will see that CND is about something far beyond methods of government or different uses of money. It's about waking everyone up from a nightmare that's a real true possibility. The nightmare of the destruction of all life.

PETER ELLIS  
Bath

## CND: desire for respectability

FOR those of us fighting for a strong anti-imperialist orientation within CND the stand taken by Youth CND at its conference (as reported in SC 29 April) is a heartening development. It also reveals quite graphically the gap which exists between the leadership of the campaign and the majority of its supporters.

The vote that was taken at the Council of London Region CND effectively reversed a decision taken at that body's AGM which voted to support activities organised

during Reagan's visit. This decision was taken by a much more representative collection of London CND groups and supporters. Whilst they are busy organising meetings with El Salvador and Reagan Reception Committee speakers to mobilise for all events taking place before and during Reagan's visit, CND seem intent on ignoring the opportunity to oppose the world's number one warmonger.

Instead of denouncing Reagan's bellicose foreign policy in the Middle East and Latin America, and remember in the '73 oil crisis US forces went on worldwide nuclear alert; instead of drawing attention to the clear links between the development and deployment of the new generation of nuclear war-fighting weapons and these policies, CND denounces the RRC and its activities.

This is a continuation of the far-left bashing that it has indulged in since the resurgence of CND. The reason flows from the clear strategy that it has, in particular the CP, for advancing the campaign. Its desire for respectability, to win the support of respon-

sible persons (parsons) leads inevitably to the downplaying of the most extreme of its policies, opposition to NATO, unilateralism, and the most consistent advocates of those policies, the far left. This is the real reason for the hostility to the RRC and its clear anti-imperialist thrust.

Yet CND has made an excellent response to the Malvinas crisis. Its clear-headed opposition to the sending of the task force, and to the dangers of escalation inherent in the conflict (the task force does apparently carry nukes) is a voice of sanity amidst the howls of jingoism. But the question remains, if you oppose the warmongering of Thatcher in the South Atlantic, why not oppose the visit of her mentor, Ronald Reagan? Why the contradiction?

It is a question whose answer has everything to do with CND's, and the CP's sectarianism. The contradiction will be overcome on 7 June when the ranks of CND turn out en masse on the picket of the US embassy.

PHIL WATERHOUSE  
East London



## RAJ-END

Our flabby union jack now hangs slack. We forget the ack-ack guns of world war two ran out of flak decades ago.

That shabby flag (and all it stands for) is just a flashy rag no longer fabricated in mills of Accrington, but manufactured where this scrap of cloth no longer flaps its flaccid vanity — in India, Taiwan, Sarawak.

The union jack is just a load of cack.  
PAT ARROWSMITH  
21.4.82

## Not a proud record

JACK LAVIN must need his eyes testing (SC 6 May) if he reads Eileen Murphy's article on women in the mines as 'an attack on miners and their union'.

The NUM was largely responsible for getting women-out of the coal processing jobs they did on the surface of Lancashire pits right up to the mid fifties. There is no getting away from that and there is no getting away from the fact that it was a reactionary policy.

Jack Lavin can smugly point a finger at the Lancashire area as being 'right wing'. But this had nothing to do with it. Other areas (including Nottingham) had got rid of women process workers long before Lancashire had, and it was the union in those areas, as in Lancashire, which led the campaign against the women.

He can just as smugly point to the actions of Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire miners in fighting to better the pay and conditions of pit cleaners and canteen workers, but this misses the point altogether.

It is the type of job done by women which is central to this whole debate. Cleaning and cooking is traditional women's work and (with some rare exceptions) the miners union has always argued that women in the

pits should be restricted to those very areas. Having succeeded in forcing them there, no one is disputing that the NUM will then defend their pay and conditions.

What Eileen was saying is that there is no sign yet of any section of the NUM fighting to restore women's right to work in the now exclusively male processing jobs on the surface — jobs which are far less strenuous than they were when the Lancashire pit brow women did them.

Trade unions should never be seen by socialists as tin gods beyond any criticism. There is no dispute that the history of women in the mines is full of complications and contradictions, but the NUM's record throughout it is not a proud one. That has to be recognised.

Jack Lavin should read Angela John's excellent book on the subject; he'd find the involvement of the NUM extends much further than Joe Gormley 'and his right wing colleagues'.

NEIL DUFFIELD  
Secretary of Bolton Trades Council and member of Pit Prop Theatre

## Wonder Woman strikes back

AS A member of the Amazon Faction (British Wonder Woman Support Group) I would like to claim responsibility for the disappearance of Super Financier (SC 29 April).

Our agents will ensure that HE will not be swinging into action. HE will not pour money into leaflets or deliver FISTFULS of anything to anybody as we have deprived HIM of HIS cloak and glasses.

Forward to equal representation for members of the Amazon Faction on questions of finance.

PAULA FRAMPTON  
Acton Amazon Faction

Seven years after liberation

## Washington's war against Vietnam goes on

By Gary Erlisker

SEVEN YEARS after the liberation of their country, the people of Vietnam face massive problems. These are due to the legacy of imperialist exploitation and destruction, particularly that carried out by Washington in the 1960s and early 1970s, and the US-organised campaign to starve and economically throttle Vietnam.

A good exposure of US policy appeared on ITV on 29 April. *Return to Vietnam*, a documentary about the trip of a group of ex-US servicemen back to Vietnam late last year, was a stirring indictment of US policy.

The servicemen returned at the invitation of the Vietnamese, both to find out more about the destructive effects of the chemical defoliant Agent Orange and to assist the Vietnamese in tracing remaining missing US troops.

Agent Orange not only had horrific effects in defoliating Vietnam, it also led to widespread deformities in children whose parents were exposed

to it. While this is obviously much more prevalent in Vietnam itself, it also affected US, Australian, New Zealand and other pro-US forces who were occupying Vietnam.

During the course of the Vietnam war, Washington dropped more bombs on that country (which is about the size of the UK) than were dropped by both sides in all theatres of World War II and the Korean War combined.

Millions of people were killed or wounded and 15 million people were left homeless in their own country.

Over a third of the rice paddy areas were con-

taminated by US defoliants. Over 11¼ million gallons of Agent Orange were dropped on Vietnam, along with huge amounts of other defoliants.



Three years ago tens of thousands of Chinese troops invaded Vietnam, tracing massive strains on the country.

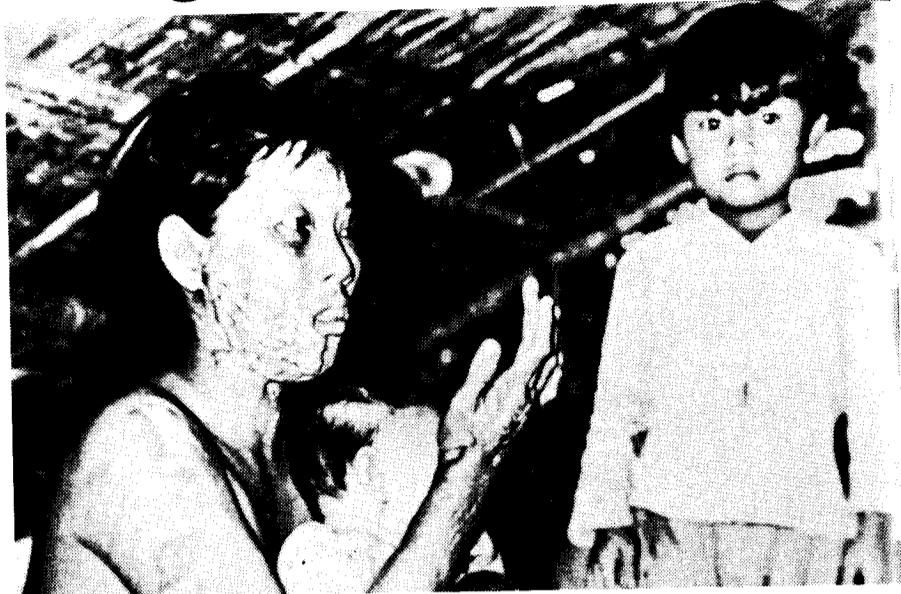
'It is an honour and a privilege to be the first soldiers to come back' and begin the process of repairing the wounds the servicemen told their Vietnamese hosts.

This brought out the effects of the US blockade of Vietnam.

For a start the US has not paid a penny of the miserly \$7.5bn agreed in 1973 as reconstruction over the next five years (the total figure Washington spent through the war totals \$479bn!)

Because of the effects of the war and its aftermath some 20 per cent of Vietnamese children suffer from malnutrition.

But, in the words of Assistant Secretary of State for Pacific and East Asian Affairs John Holdridge, in order to make Vietnam 'feel pain' Washington recently prevailed upon the EEC to stop sending 15,000 tons a



Vietnamese victims of chemical warfare

year of dried milk, oats and oil to children's hospitals there.

When Vietnam appealed to the UN for 384,000 tons of cereal to feed 10 million people, Washington refused to

contribute and lobbied other countries to follow suit.

The Reagan gang has also tried, with some success, to prevent private charity and relief agencies in the US from sending any aid.

In order to stop Reagan and Thatcher and their allies killing a lot more, Vietnam desperately needs support. It is necessary to press for US and allied hands off Vietnam and for massive reconstruction aid.

## Israel prepares to invade Lebanon

By Ernest Harsch

Shortly before dawn on 25 April, an Israeli flag was lowered at Sharm el Sheik in the southern Sinai Peninsula. A few hours later an Egyptian flag was raised in its place, marking the completion of the Sinai's return to Egypt, 15 years after Zionist forces seized it in the 1967 war.

In a statement to Israeli military forces, Defence Minister Ariel Sharon proclaimed, 'We are demonstrating our desire to move forward to peace.'

Just how committed the Zionist rulers are to 'peace' in the Middle East was demonstrated in the weeks preceding the return of the Sinai:

- Since late March, Israeli troops and settlers in the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza Strip have been shooting down Palestinian youths protesting against the occupation.

- In the Golan Heights, Syrian territory that was annexed by Israel in December, Israeli troops and police have been trying to impose Israeli identity cards on a defiant population. Haim Cohen, a former justice of the Israeli Supreme Court, condemned the Zionist regime's policy in the Golan Heights April 15 as 'the law of barbarians'.

- Following weeks of threats and provocations, Israeli jets struck at a series of Lebanese villages south of Beirut April 21, just four days before the Sinai's formal return, killing more than a score of Palestinian refugees.

- On the very day of the turnover, a military tribunal in the West Bank convicted Mayor Wahid Hamdallah of Anapta of violating occupation

regulations, specifically for his 'involvements in political affairs not directly related to his activities as mayor — he signed protest petitions, issued manifestoes and protests.' The Israeli authorities dismissed Hamdallah from his position five days later, the fourth Palestinian mayor they have deposed since March 18.

- In the very statement in which Defence Minister Sharon preached about peace, he spelled out the government's determination to extend its grip over the occupied territories even further — in opposition to the 1.3 million Palestinians who live there.

- 'We shall turn to increasing and consolidating our settlements on the Golan Heights, in Judea, Samaria (the West Bank) and the Gaza district,' Sharon said, 'settlements that are an integral part of our security, basis for our security, settlements that are a true basis for political plans — all in the framework of the Government's avowed policy.'

The same point was stressed two days later by Begin, who stated that the dismantling of the Israeli settlements in the Sinai would never be repeated in the Golan Heights, West Bank, or Gaza Strip. 'It will not happen again,' Begin declared.

To underline this



determination, nine new Israeli settlements were opened in the West Bank the same week.

The Israeli rulers never intended to abandon their aggressive policies when they signed the Camp David accords in 1978.

What they did want was an agreement with the Egyptian government. This, they calculated, would free their hands to try to crush the Palestinian liberation movement, both in the occupied territories and in Lebanon, and enable them to concentrate their military forces against Syria.

Israeli hopes that they would be able to deepen the split in the Arab world by enticing other govern-

ments to join the Camp David framework were also a total flop. Instead, the Egyptian government found itself politically isolated.

But the Israelis have not given up on their plans.

Since early April, several divisions of Israeli troops have been massed in Lebanon, along the border with Israel, and Israeli spy flights over Lebanon have been stepped up. The Palestinian forces in Lebanon braced for an Israeli invasion, and the Lebanese government was so concerned that it sought to raise an international alarm about an impending attack.

On April 21, Israeli jets pounded the predominantly Palestinian villages of Damur,

Naameh, Aramun, Saadiyat, Khalde, Doha, and Ein Mazbud, just south of Beirut. According to the Lebanese government, 23 people were killed in the bombings and many more were wounded. Two Syrian jets that challenged the Israeli attack were shot down.

The Zionist war preparations, however, are meeting growing opposition in the region.

Within Israel, more and more Israeli workers are resisting the government's efforts to drag them into a war. The Palestinian forces in Lebanon are getting ready to meet any Israeli invasion. And in the West Bank and Gaza Strip,



Left, Palestinian camp under fire, top, Palestinian leader Arafat, above, children in Palestinian camp in Lebanon.

Palestinian youths are continuing to stand up to the brutality of the Israeli occupation forces.

Following the statements by Begin and Sharon that they would never give up the occupied territories, a new wave of protests broke out. Israeli troops answered with gunfire, killing two more demonstrators by April 30.

In towns and refugee

camps throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip, youth demonstrated by the hundreds, blocking roads and clashing with troops and police.

When they raised the outlawed Palestinian flag — the symbol of their hopes and their struggle for national liberation — they defiantly showed just what they thought of Begin's 'peace' policies.

## Namibia: where Britain ignores UN resolutions

By a supporter of the Namibian Support Committee

**MARGARET THATCHER** claimed on BBC's *Panorama* (26 April) that her action on the Falklands was 'standing up for all those small territories and peoples the world over ... for self-determination ... for the international law against international anarchy.' So opened a new chapter of Tory lies and buffoonery.

If the one and a quarter million black people of Namibia had been watching TV, they might have died laughing, rather than being slaughtered at the rate of 50 a week by the barbarous South African army, whose military hardware is supplied by the very same Tory government.

SWAPO, the national liberation movement of Namibia, has been fighting a 15 year long guerrilla struggle to free Namibia from South Africa's brutal military occupation, declared illegal by the UN in 1966.

Britain has been the chief supplier of weapons, oil, mercenaries and finance to maintain the occupation. Both Labour and Tory governments alike, for the first time in British legal history, have also refused to comply with a 1971 International Court of Justice (ICJ) opinion backing up a string of UN Security Council decisions banning all trade.

Over the last three weeks, Britain's two largest bankers on apartheid, Barclays and Standard Chartered, announced at their annual general meetings that they would not stop servicing the racist army of occupation in Namibia.

Apart from diamonds, lead, copper, luxury furs and fish, Britain imports

half its uranium supply, and more which it re-exports, from the Rio Tinto Zinc-owned Rossing mine in Namibia, the largest in the world.

stop the trade since 1973 still lies on the Walworth Road shelf. The Tories just continue Labour's Tory practice.

The truth is that both UN and Labour Party resolutions that threaten the interests of imperialism are never binding unless acted upon by the independent strength of the working class and the oppressed masses.

imperialist movement.

Huge racist South African troop movements and reconnaissance are taking place in northern Namibia and southern Angola prior to a possible revenge invasion of Angola. This follows SWAPO's latest military successes deep inside Namibia's white farmlands and the rejection by SWAPO of the



These three SWAPO fighters, Comrades Sagarias, Jason and Malambo, captured deep inside Namibia, are at the centre of a show trial to prove that South Africa is countering SWAPO militarily — they may well be given the death sentence this week. SWAPO regards the court as illegal, the prisoners as POWs, and is demanding that the British government, amongst others, intervenes to save them.

Harold Wilson, James Callaghan and the Labour leaders (plus Tony Benn, who actually signed the uranium contract and then unsuccessfully tried to stop it) have defended to the hilt the British opposition to the United Nations and the ICJ rulings.

Labour Party to

The only way Namibian uranium will be stopped from 'illegally' entering Britain is through a workers' blockade (moves to do this are now afoot among TGWU branches, the seafarers' union and ASLEF). Likewise Namibia will only be freed by a revolutionary anti-

Western powers' latest deal for Namibian 'independence'.

Last month Namibia's national liberation army, PLAN (the military wing of SWAPO), launched a series of attacks in central Namibia, killing and wounding over two dozen racist troops and destroying key communication links and an army base. At the same time PLAN hit several South African defence forces (SADF) detachments across a wide span of the northern 'Bantustan' areas.

Frightened white farmers fled to the nearest towns, mainly Tsumeb (where a British-registered company, Consolidated Goldfields, has just bought a quarter of the rich copper-lead-zinc mines) and Grootfontein, demanding to know why the SADF could not keep 'law and order'.

The South African generals had just previously been boasting of 'breaking SWAPO's backbone' (in reality they had been ordering the wholesale slaughter of Angolan peasants and infrastructure).

White politicians were rushed to the towns to ask the white farmers to stay put. Already the white population of Namibia has been reduced from nearly 100,000 to 70,000 since the war really got underway. But, since the Western powers started their secret diplomacy to stem the struggle in 1977, the number of South African troops in Namibia has increased ninefold (to 100,000), making the country, in the words of the local weekly newspaper, 'the world's greatest military occupation' (1 foreign soldier to every 5 adults).

Unlike Mozambique, Angola and Zimbabwe, the guerrillas have to operate in very arid and semi-desert conditions, with very low population concentrations and against a much stronger enemy: the enormous South African military machine, equal in size and strength to France's national army, and backed by the full force of Western imperialism.

The ruling South African National Party has blocked and delayed the independence election plan for Namibia since it was drawn up by the 5 major imperialist powers in mid 1978. It feared a SWAPO victory and a white settler exodus from Namibia, as well as a white electoral backlash in South Africa itself.

The South African government has since persuaded the Reagan and Thatcher governments to amend the election plan to suit the white settlers and the pro-SA puppet parties. After a year of secret diplomacy, property safeguards and a peculiar 'double vote' system are now proposed, but SWAPO last week rejected these. That's the reason for the new moves to invade deeper into Angola.

## Thousands back Polish general strike

By Davy Jones

**TENS OF THOUSANDS** of workers in Poland supported last Thursday's 15 minute general strike called by the underground Solidarnosc movement. Despite systematic threats of repression by the military authorities, workers in a significant number of factories, especially in the Warsaw and Gdansk areas, downed tools for fifteen minutes at midday on 13 May, five months after the imposition of martial law.

Elsewhere too drivers jammed their car horns and people hung out of office and house windows to show defiance against martial law. In Krakow more than ten thousands people were dispersed by riot police with water cannons and another march was held in Warsaw's old town. Polish officials claimed that 679 people in all were arrested on 13 May.

On the same day, some 16 leading members of Solidarnosc in the Bialoleka internment camp launched a hunger strike against martial law. They include Jacek Kuron and Andreaj Gwiazda, two longterm leaders of the Polish opposition.

Last weekend the Polish authorities released new figures on the economy. They revealed that industrial production for the first quarter of 1982 was down 10.2 per cent over the same quarter of 1981. Such a result in a period of Solidarnosc's activities being suspended and its leaders interned,

gives the lie to the myth that Solidarnosc was in any way 'responsible' for the economic crisis.

This is doubly proved by the fact that the Polish workers have been forced by the martial law authorities to accept a huge cut in their living standards. Government statistics admit that real income levels have fallen by a massive 23 per cent in the last year in Poland.

As the resistance movement develops in Poland it is more urgent than ever that the British labour movement mobilises in their support. We would urge all our supporters to endorse the call from the Greater Manchester Polish Solidarity Committee for a national labour movement conference this autumn. Their appeal has already been backed by dozens of labour movement bodies and individuals.

Write for details to Jon Silberman, 51 Montrose House, Crete St, Oldham, Lancs. Or ring 061-620 2885.

### To all members of the Independent Self-Governing Trade Union 'Solidarność', to the Polish people

Five months have passed since the introduction of martial law. Contrary to the calculations of the authorities social resistance is not weakening. The whole nation is ostracising collaborators and refusing to co-operate with WRON.

The thousands who have been interned and arrested, who refuse to be broken and bravely voice the idea of Solidarity in the camps, prisons, and the court-rooms deserve the highest praise. Until they are released, the 13th of each month will be a day of protest against repression and violence, a day of commemoration of those who in December 1981 gave their lives for freedom.

WE CALL FOR all enterprises in the country to stop work between 12.00 and 12.15 on the 13th May. We ask for freedom for trade union activists and its leaders, together with Lech Walesa.

WE APPEAL FOR all urban traffic to stop for one minute at midday on 13th May. Let all trams and buses, cars and pedestrians come to a standstill and let the sound of car horns be heard.

The coordination of action nationwide will be a measure of our solidarity and strength. We call on other Regions to join our protest, at the same time, not giving up any actions planned locally.

Temporary Coordinating Committee  
**NSZZ 'SOLIDARNOSC'**  
**Zbigniew Bujak (Warsaw Region),**  
**Wladyslaw Frasyniuk (Lower Silesia Region)**  
**Wladyslaw Hardek (Krakow Region),**  
**Bogdan Lis (Gdansk Region).**

### Euro MPs call for ban on plastic bullets

By Davy Jones

**THE European parliament has overwhelmingly demanded the banning of plastic bullets. Every European party in the parliament, except the British Tories and the Rev Ian Paisley, supported the resolution which was passed by 110 to 43.**

At least 43,000 rounds of the bullets have been fired in Ireland causing at least 13 deaths and dozens of serious injuries. Many of those who have died or been maimed were innocent children. Sile de Valera of Fine Fail opened the debate at the European parliament, demanding that the soldiers responsible for the deaths of these defenceless children should be prosecuted for murder.

Despite the Strasbourg parliament's vote the British government and the Northern Ireland Office have made clear their determination to continue to use the deadly bullets. A police spokesperson said: 'We are seriously concerned about the situation but our decision is quite

clear. We will continue to use them in accordance with our current instructions.'

The failure of the government to heed this Euro parliament decision is further proof of their preparedness to ruthlessly repress the nationalist population in the North of Ireland. It is not the first time that the British government's policies in Ireland have been condemned as either illegal, inhuman or repressive by international bodies like the Euro parliament.

Equally sinister for the labour movement in this country is the fact that the police forces of England and Wales have now stockpiled some 5000 baton rounds of these same deadly bullets for possible use in 'riots' in British cities. Nor has the government denied reports that it has just bought two new water cannons from the West German police for further use in 'public disorders'.

As the Tories prepare for war against the working class at home, the British labour movement has every interest in demanding that the government implements the Euro parliament's ban on plastic bullets.

### Namibia Support Committee Conference

Sat 22 May 11-5pm  
 County Hall, London

Speakers from SWAPO, PLO, ANC, Amrit Wilson, Lionel Jeffries and others; plus films, creche, food

Details from NSC, 53 Leverton St, London NW5. Ring 267-1941/2

### Socialist Society

Poland discussion

Sat 22 May 11-5  
 ULU, Malet St, London WC1

Daniel Singer, Oliver MacDonald,  
 Mario Nuti, Monty Johnstone

## ⇒ Rail: the war at home ⇒

### BR Workshops under attack

By R. Brooks, NUR Guard

BR WORKSHOPS at Shildon, Co. Durham, and Horwich, Lancashire, are to be closed, and 6,000 jobs throughout the country in all 12 BR workshops are threatened in the next 18 months.

Shildon produced £800,000 of the £1.3 million profit of British Rail Engineering Ltd (BREL) last year, and its previous managing director described it as the most efficient wagon works in Europe. The first railway in the world ran through Shildon, and three or four generations of local people have worked there.

BREL is not getting enough orders from BR. Last year, BR's locomotive, carriage and wagon fleets were reduced. The wagon fleet alone is to be further slashed from 132,000 to 40,000 in the next three years. Shildon Works has no orders for 1983.

By contrast BREL has received £50 million worth of new export orders to supply 74 coaches to Kenya and 124 waggons to Southern Ireland. This is three times last year's orders.

Whilst the Tories continue to run down the railways, other countries are re-stocking and modernising. So the workshops which deal with export orders are being kept open, whilst those dealing with British stock are to close.

This situation will con-

tinue unless the rail unions fight the Tories and stop the destruction of what used to be the world's best railway system. The unions are well aware that BR has a lower level of investment per train kilometre than any other European country. Some 98 per cent of diesels and 60 of electrics in BR's fleet of 10,000 are over 15 years old. Just to replace them means an increase of 30 per cent investment in the next ten years. This is not happening. Instead, investment is going down and the rail subsidy for this year has been reduced by £15 million.

NUR members should ensure the union carries out its threat of strike action to save Shildon and Horwich and put an end to any further job losses in the workshops. We must get resolutions through our branches calling for support for the action being taken by the workforce at both places and rejecting outright the job losses. We should collect money for a tour of the convenors at the threatened workshops, so that every depot in the country can be made aware of the extent of the Tory attack, and the need for solidarity.

**NO JOB CUTS**

**FIGHT for the RIGHT to WORK**

**BR HORWICH**

**OUR Childrens future. OUR Works. OUR Town.**

### Fighting unity develops

By Chris Jones

FIGHTING UNITY against British Rail's closure plan is beginning to develop between the threatened workshops of Horwich, Shildon and Swindon. All three will attend a mass lobby of parliament called for Tuesday 26 May.

The campaign in Horwich has taken off in a big way. Posters are appearing in windows and car stickers and badges are being produced. 10,000 leaflets are being put through doors. Children from local schools are writing to Rail chief Peter Parker asking him to reverse his decision. It is their jobs which he is destroying.

BR is of course trying to divide the campaign by offering local talks, to which the Town Councils were invited. Dennis Green, deputy convenor, explained the works action committee boycott of this 'public relations exercise' on the grounds that 'it would be wrong to get involved in talks at a local level when the matter is being handled nationally'.

### Freight stop

By R. Brooks

BR has put a temporary stop to freight traffic from the continent because Sealink, now a private subsidiary company, has not got enough ferries to transport 250 waggons from Zeebrugge in Belgium.

Sealink got rid of three ships from its Harwich/Zeebrugge service, leaving just one which does one round trip a day. So anyone who thinks privatisation leads to greater efficiency should think again.

Freight losses were halved in 1981 with a small increase in the amount of freight carried. Four new rail heads have recently been built at factories and according to BR, business has made a major surge forward this year.

But whilst the Tories' main priority is profits, rather than building an integrated transport service, freight, like everything else in rail will continue to be subject to the whims of 'productivity' and 'efficiency' measures with short term gains for their friends in the city and long-term chaos for the system as a whole.

### Democratise the NUR

IN THE build up to the National Union of Railwaymen's Annual General Meeting (AGM), conferences of the workforce meet — the 'Grades Conferences'.

You might think that such conferences are designed to give the union membership an opportunity to democratically put forward policy for the union. Unfortunately this is not the case.

These conferences have no authority with the union leadership. They cannot mandate the leadership or even send resolutions to the AGM. They have a purely consultative role through a system of liaison committees.

Thus, last year, for example the traffic grades conference unanimously voted against the 'open station' concept, a 'productivity' exercise which will decimate jobs by getting rid of ticket collectors as we know them. In spite of this outright rejection, two pilot schemes are continuing and the union still backs BR's plans.

The NUR leadership uses these conferences to reinforce the divisions in the railway workforce. Such divisions act as a brake on the united fight-back against the leadership's strategy of the 'common approach' between management and the unions — something which has led to closure of 'collected and delivered' parcels; the open-station concept and one-person operation of trains. These led to the loss last year of 9741 jobs. Attachment to this same strategy found the NUR backing the Rail Board against the traindrivers.

This year's AGM is a rules revision conference. This gives an opportunity to change the structure of the union in order to make sure that the views of the membership decide.

Delegates at the grades conferences will have the opportunity to look at this lack of democracy inside the union. Key here will be the two proposals which militants have been campaigning around: that the general secretary should face regular election every five years and that the AGM should be restructured to adequately reflect the views of the membership to allow one delegate per branch with a card vote.

A campaign around these sorts of reforms in the framework of the rising tide of militancy and action by railworkers can lead to a transformation of our union and by giving control to the ranks of the union where it belongs.

### NUR guards and shunters conference '82

By R Brooks, NUR guard

SIDNEY Weighell's oft repeated statement that 99.9 per cent of guards support flexible rostering is not reflected in the resolutions put forward by National Union of Railwaymen's branches to the Guards and Shunters grades conference in Brighton on 21 and 22 May.

Nine of the 48 resolutions take up flexible rostering and they are all against it. The resolutions refer to the 'anger and concern' felt by rail workers, and ask for the agreement to be renegotiated. Streatham branch has put out a call for a special general meeting to consider the cancellation of the agreement.

Drivers are not the only railworkers to stand by a guaranteed working day. Birmingham No 4 branch's resolution demands that all future negotiations are based on the fixed guaranteed day.

Other resolutions like Dundee's point to the lack of consultation at branch level and the loss of jobs to which flexible rostering leads. The lack of democracy in the functioning of the NUR, and the job losses are the two key issues faced by the conference.

Both the 'open station concept' which has led to huge reductions in platform staff, and the 'one man operation' of trains which directly threatens guards jobs are rejected. Tinsley branch calls on the NEC to refuse any discussion with BR on one man operation, whilst Streatham wants the NEC to honour grades' conferences and AGM decisions which are all solidly against it.

The argument over flexible rostering which many guards, including the Guards Action Committee in the London area, have been having with the NEC shows that the structure of the NUR is undemocratic. If the NEC had referred flexible rostering to the branches, and had wide discussions at depot level, their mandate would clearly have been not to agree to it. But the NEC is out of touch with the branches, and

with the different sections of railworkers.

Two branches have put forward resolutions which try to deal with this problem. Three Bridges branch wants agreements which fundamentally change the conditions of work to be referred back to branches, whilst Streatham's resolution wants future proposals to change the working day voted on by all NUR branches.

The strong feelings behind the resolutions which will be discussed are summed up by the statement of the Nottingham and District branch in their resolution opposing flexible rostering, 'the grade of guard is being used as a scapegoat for traffic losses over the past 20 years'. Guards and shunters know only too well that with all other railworkers they are being asked to pay in wages and conditions for the crisis created by management and the Tories. Support for resolutions at this conference must be carried forward to the AGM of the NUR.

### Death on the Tracks

During the first three months of 1982, 10 rail workers were killed at work. 7 were killed on or near the track, 2 of them being hit by trains whilst employed as lookout staff. This number is double that of a similar period last year. Statistically, working on the railways is one of the most dangerous jobs you can have. This is not reflected in the low wages earned by 'permanent way' workers (track workers).

### NUR Supports El Salvador Campaign

The NUR NEC was against the recent decision by the government to lend authority to the elections in El Salvador in March by sending British observers. They sent a letter of protest to Lord Carrington explaining that the elections could not reflect the democratic views of the El Salvadorians whilst the civil war continued. They drew particular note to the number of trade unionists who have been murdered, including 17 members of the executive committee of the Salvadorean Communication Workers Union and the General Secretary of the International Council of the Federation of Transport Unions all of whom were opposed to the present dictatorship.



Guards besiege NUR headquarters to protest flexible rostering.

## Famous Names strike into 5th week

By Joe Reddick on behalf of Famous Names strike committee

OUR BATTLE for a decent increase in wages is in its fifth week of strike action taken against the company, Famous Names Confectionery in Greenbank, Bristol.

A claim put forward to the company by the union, which takes into account that eight per cent of the workforce is women, that they are on the lowest grade and the lowest pay — is for £10 across the board.

### Wages

The company's low offer of five per cent has been rejected on numerous occasions and will continue to be rejected unless the company is prepared for real talks on real wages.

Solidarity among the workforce is 100 per cent and is building more strength from the support it's receiving from the labour movement.

The stewards committee would like to extend their gratitude on behalf of all their

members of Famous Names to all the people and all organisations in supporting our struggle which is not a lone one.

It is in fact for recognition of workers' need for fair wages, better standards of living and for a shorter working week.

This is part of a national and worldwide fight.

We on the stewards committee are prepared to meet others to discuss and exchange ideas and experiences to build up solidarity within the labour movement.

Send all motions of support and finance to the Famous Names Strike Committee, TGWU, Transport House, Victoria St, Bristol.

JUDITH ARKWRIGHT spoke to one of the women strikers at Famous Names on the picket line. JEAN explained that eighty per cent of the women who work at the factory are on grade two jobs — the lowest grades paying a take home rate of £45 per week.

The grading system was introduced at the same time as the equal pay law in order to avoid paying the women equal pay.

The demand of the strikers — men and women — is for £10.

She went on to say that the women's jobs were extremely hard: 'We work the hardest and we should be treated the same. The men simply wouldn't do our jobs.' Here the men on the picket line agreed vociferously.

'In our job we have to ask to go to the toilet and now they want to cut the time for our tea break. It's like the slave trade. They keep saying it's only meant to be for pin money anyway but we don't work for pin money — I've got six to look after.

'Her husband and my son work as fitters — they've accepted the offer and they're working inside — they support us though.

'The convenor is a woman and just before this strike new stewards were elected — the old ones were with management too much.'



Bowling them out on the Famous Names picket line

Photo: J REDDICK

## Mechanics call for TUC led 24-hour general strike

THE National Society of Metal Mechanics' conference last weekend called for the TUC to organise a 24-hour general strike to fight the Tebbit Bill being given its third reading this week.

The resolution came from the union's youth conference held earlier in the year and was critical of the TUC's 'half-hearted' campaign. It saw the strike as 'a means to mobilise the movement'.

At a conference called by the Yorkshire and Humberside regional TUC in Sheffield, Arthur Scargill, president of the miners' union declared that 'extra-parliamentary action' was necessary to defeat the Tebbit anti-trade union legislation. A collection of £1,808 was taken to finance the TUC's campaign against the Bill.

■■■

## Flavell strike ends

THE first strike in over 200 years by 550 members of the General and Municipal Workers Union at Flavels in Leamington over their annual wage claim ended after nine days in confusion and bitterness.

The company which manufactures gas appliances originally offered £4.50 per week.

This was increased by another 50 pence on

Wednesday 12 May. The members rejected this and on Friday the GMWU full time official told a mass meeting that the company's offer was now £5.40 per week. A vote was taken which was claimed accepted.

This was vigorously contested by many of the strikers, who felt that the officials had sold them out.

## 300 march to support Kigass women

ON Saturday 15 May 300 trade unionists demonstrated in Leamington in support of the women strikers in Kigass. The women, who have been on strike for seven weeks, led the march chanting 'union recognition now!'

The demonstration was called by the Coventry West District Committee of the engineering union, AUEW, and was supported by the local Labour Party and Trades Council, Talbot Shop Stewards Committee, and Massey Ferguson shop stewards.

At the rally a cheque for £320 was handed over from Massey Ferguson plus £140 from Warwick University collected from Association of University Teachers branch.

The demonstration forced the Kigass management to cancel the normal Saturday morning shift, and the strike forced the firm to pull out of the world gas exhibition in Switzerland because of lack of orders.

An official of the AUEW told the rally that they were 'going to step up the action in support of the Kigass strikers and more demonstrations will be arranged'.

Mass pickets every Saturday at 5.30am at Warwick factory and 7am at the Leamington factory. Donations and messages of support to Mrs Stanford, 77 St Helens Rd, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire.

# Civil service union swings to the left

By Stuart McLennan

THE ANNUAL conference of the Civil and Public Service Association held last week marked a gigantic swing to the left in the election of its national officers and the policies adopted.

The Broad Left grouping swept the right wing from power electing 23 members to their three.

The new president is a Militant supporter, Kevin Raddy and the senior vice-president is a member of the Communist Party, Ray Alderson.

The election results reflect the revulsion of the membership over the mishandling of last year's pay campaign and the lack of any serious campaign this year.

The decisions taken at conference, most by a large majority, also show an increasing politicisation and militancy among our

members.

Thus the conference made the historic decision to campaign for affiliation to the Labour Party and contemptuously rejected the attempts by the incoming right wing general secretary to prevent affiliation to CND.

Two of the most far reaching agreements reached by the right wing in its last months of office were thrown out: the interim agreement on new technology which did not guarantee protection against job loss and a new agreement on trade union facilities which fundamentally encroached on basic

rights of representation.

In addition the DHSS section, which is the largest with over 50,000 members, voted overwhelmingly to go out on a consultative exercise to the membership to campaign against cuts.

All of these decisions and others invariably set the CPSA on a collision course with the government.

The dramatic events at the CPSA conference are being reflected in other parts of the civil service. The Society of Civil and Public Servants meeting in the same week consolidated its moves to the left and a Broad Left has been established in the Banking, Insurance and Finance Union.

## Tax officers' union moves left

By Keith Legg & Dave Carter  
Stockton Taxes branch secretary and delegate

A BIG SWING to the left surprised the Executive Committee of the Inland Revenue Staff Federation at the union's conference in Peebles last week.

Delegates defied the executive by voting for flat rate pay increases, and a total

overtime ban. Affiliation to CND had been supported by the executive and was duly agreed by the conference despite a warning from the union solicitor that it was outside the IRSF's rules.

Over 200 members attended the inaugural meeting of a Broad Left group within the union which merited a

whole article in the following day's *Financial Times*!

The traditionally moderate IRSF now has a well organised left as more and more of its members realise that only political solutions provide the way forward to the attacks of their employer, the Tory Government.

## Peter Weiss

By Charlie van Gelderen

The sudden and unexpected death of Peter Weiss in Stockholm, at the age of 65, robbed the world not only of one of its greatest playwrights but certainly of the greatest Marxist playwright of our day.

He is perhaps best known in Britain for his *Marat Sade*, written in 1964 and later brilliantly directed by Peter Brook at the Aldwych Theatre. This play dealt with the bourgeois revolution, the Great French Revolution, and it was during his research for this work and its subsequent production that Peter Weiss became a convinced socialist, which he remained for the rest of his life.

For readers of Socialist Challenge, however, the chief interest in Peter Weiss probably lies with his play *Trotsky in Exile*. Although he had joined the Communist Party, Peter Weiss retained his considerable critical faculties. Just as the theme of *Marat Sade* was the bourgeois revolution, his *Trotsky in Exile* dealt with 'the forty odd years of the contemporary socialist revolution' (Mandel).

In this play Weiss examines the October Revolution and rehabilitates the men and ideas submerged by official Stalinist history. It reveals Weiss as a thoroughgoing Marxist with an extraordinary skill in combining his craftsmanship as a playwright with the Marxist method of historical analysis.

Weiss' latest play *The Trial*, based on Kafka's novel, is presently running to capacity houses in Stockholm, but he was not only a great playwright. Perhaps his greatest work is the three-volume *The Aesthetics of the Resistance*, a semi-fictional account of the history of the German Communist Party. After a visit to that country, he created a scenic collage of 2,000 years of Vietnamese history, which made a great impression when it was shown in both East and West Germany. His *Canto of the Lusitanian Bogeyman*, exposing Portuguese colonialism in Africa and his *Oratorio in Eleven Cantos on the Auschwitz Trial*, were other facets of his many-sided genius.

Socialist Challenge salutes the memory of Peter Weiss who sought, in his play on Trotsky 'to sketch the historical truth and to do justice to an historical character ... the fight (for which) cannot be a fight against socialism, for socialism, the truth of our century, has no need of crutches built on lies' (Mandel).

Mandel on Peter Weiss' *Trotsky in Exile* (*Spokesman Offprints* — 50p). From *The Other Bookshop*, 328 Upper Street, London N1. (Postage extra).

### SOCIALIST CHALLENGE BANKER'S ORDER FORM

Your Bank .....

Name of Account to be debited .....

Account Number.....

Our Bank..... Socialist Challenge  
Co-operative Bank Ltd  
110 Leaman St, London E1 8HQ 1

Account No ..... 70267802

Sorting Code..... 08-03-08

Amount to be paid..... Monthly

First Payment due..... And on the same date in the month thereafter.

Signed.....

# Socialist Challenge

## Health workers step up fight

By Dominic Johnson, NUPE convener  
Churchill Hospital, Oxford

**THE PAY struggle in the health service has now begun in earnest. On Wednesday 19 May tens of thousands of health workers in every district of the country responded to the official call for a one day national strike.**

This started what promises to be a tough struggle against a government determined to keep thousands of NHS workers on poverty wages.

It's not difficult to explain the determination and militancy of the health workers. Last week High Court judges were awarded pay rises over twice as large as the annual wage packet of most health workers.

Over the last five years governments of all shades have consistently exploited our relatively weak bargaining position to impose real wage cuts.

This year the government badly miscalculated the mood in the health service.

Even with a faltering leadership at national level the rank and file are displaying a willingness to fight which has surprised

even those seasoned optimists among us.

If organised and led properly, with the full support of the Labour Party and trade unions the health workers could deal a body blow to Thatcher's entire economic strategy.

Unfortunately union leaderships are not building on Wednesday's success by escalating the dispute through prolonged national strike action with emergency cover under workers' control.

Instead a series of weekly two hour stoppages are planned, together with selective action. Certainly selective action can be disruptive.

At present for example

laundry workers at the Royal Infirmary Aberdeen are out on strike, together with Central Stores in Newcastle and Northumbria.

But it must be spelled out that on its own partial action cannot win disputes. Without placing it in the context of a run up to national strike action involving all members' selective action will rapidly play a demoralising role. The main task in the NHS today is to weld together the action at local level into an irresistible force for extended national strike action.

An opportunity for this occurs next week at the NUPE national conference.

NUPE is the largest health service union with the greatest tradition of militancy. There will be a major push for NUPE to 'name the date' to call out its health service members.

At the same time the rest of the trade union movement must make the health workers struggle their own. In fact a victory will depend on concrete solidarity obtained from other workers. The call by South Wales miners for a one day strike through the coalfields is an important

example.

The initiative of Chesterfield trades council in calling for a token one hour sympathy stoppage on Wednesday must be followed up in all areas.

Locally Socialist Challenge readers should:

- make contact with health service workers and offer practical assistance
- make regular collections in workplaces

- discuss solidarity actions in workplaces
- get resolutions of support through union and Labour Party branches
- send delegations to picket lines

- organise public meetings
- invite healthworkers onto platforms of public meetings building for the women's march and festival on 5 June

## Metal Box workers 'chain things up'

By Toni Gorton

**'WE'VE chained everything up — including some of management who didn't move fast enough,' declared Richard Lee, works convener at Metal Box in Shipley, West Yorkshire.**

The 350 engineering workers who 'sat in' their plant on 4 May have now escalated their action by completely sealing off the main engineering block in an attempt to stop management from imposing compulsory redundancies on the workforce.

Nationally the Metal Box unions have accepted 9000 voluntary redundancies in the past two years along with closures of entire plants. The Shipley union has now excluded TASS and APEX members who were not supporting their efforts as well as the management who didn't 'move fast enough'.

'It was like an SAS operation,' said Richard, 'with 30 men dressed in dark clothes with balaclavas rushing around in the middle of the night chaining everything up.'

'We set up an action centre: we've got a hardship desk, a transport desk, and a place to get advice about the DHSS. It's like a huge union building with little offices everywhere organising various aspects of our fight.'

'We've set up rotas for staffing the place and everyone has a job to do. The issue is clear. There will be no compulsory redundancy. We've told management we're ready to meet, despite them cancelling a meeting last Thursday, and despite them sending letters to our members' wives.'

Richard went on, 'We're stepping up the action. We'll be picketing

Scott occupation which set an example for all workers struggling for jobs.

Ray explained how the company was trying to victimise the union by selecting three shop stewards for redundancy, two of whom are key to the national combine.

A lively discussion followed about the danger of the AUEW national executive selling out the struggle as happened at Scott's; the danger of the Tebbit Bill for the basic rights of trade union organisation; and the ex-

perience of the Staffa dispute in East London which showed the existence of official strike breakers.

A collection of over £22 was raised and labour movement meetings were set up to build solidarity for the new occupation.

Metal Box is one of the main engineering employers in Britain with some 24,000 workers in 50 plants throughout the country. It is also part of a powerful multi-national with plants in South Africa, Chile and India.

The fight in Shipley will have national and international significance and readers of Socialist Challenge are urged to contact the strike committee and offer all assistance in the form of:

- resolutions of support
- arrange labour movement meetings
- get official collection sheets

Contact the Joint Shop Stewards Committee c/o A Mackin, Treasurer, 14 Westcliffe Rd., Shipley, West Yorkshire. Tel 0272 590520.



Photo: J HARRIS  
One of the many rallies of health workers around the country

example.

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Photo: JOHN SMITH (IFL)

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