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Break
links
with
Tories

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PULL TUC OUT OF TEBBIT TALKS!

EVEN the stony features of Tory 'Employment' Secretary Norman Tebbit must have wrinkled into a grin at the news that the TUC leaders have voted to restart talks with him over his next round of anti-union legislation.

Not that talks were ever properly stopped. Union bureaucrats have trailed along tamely with Tories and employers to meetings of the NEDC; and they have shamefully collaborated with Tebbit and the MSC in formulating the exploitative 'Youth Training' Scheme (see Editorial, p. 2).

But one timid gesture of defiance had been TUC refusal to negotiate with the Tories over their future rounds of legislation to shackle and crush the unions. Now even this has been discarded by leaders in headlong cowardly retreat.

Union chiefs have tried to put a stern face on it. Some argue that they will 'only' talk about the future of the political levy.

Hangman

Nothing could be more stupid. This is arguing in effect that they will 'only' talk about the topic on which they are most impotent to resist a determined Tory offensive.

As Arthur Scargill pointed out, it is like discussing with the hangman over the quality of the rope.

For while Tebbit's plans are larded with hypocritical

By Harry
Sloan

protestations of concern for 'democracy', the union bureaucrats remain completely opposed to the kind of mass, participatory workers' democracy which could galvanise the membership and expose the cynical Tory deception.

TUC bigwigs know that once their members got a taste of workers' democracy and the feel for mass activity, this would spill over to every aspect of union affairs — demanding that officials be made accountable, cutting away the roots of bureaucratic privilege, and disrupting officials' cosy relations with the employers.

Even while they prepared to visit Tebbit, TUC leaders were once again demonstrating their contempt for the membership — staging a secret top level backroom meeting in an (unsuccessful) attempt to stitch up the Labour leadership election.

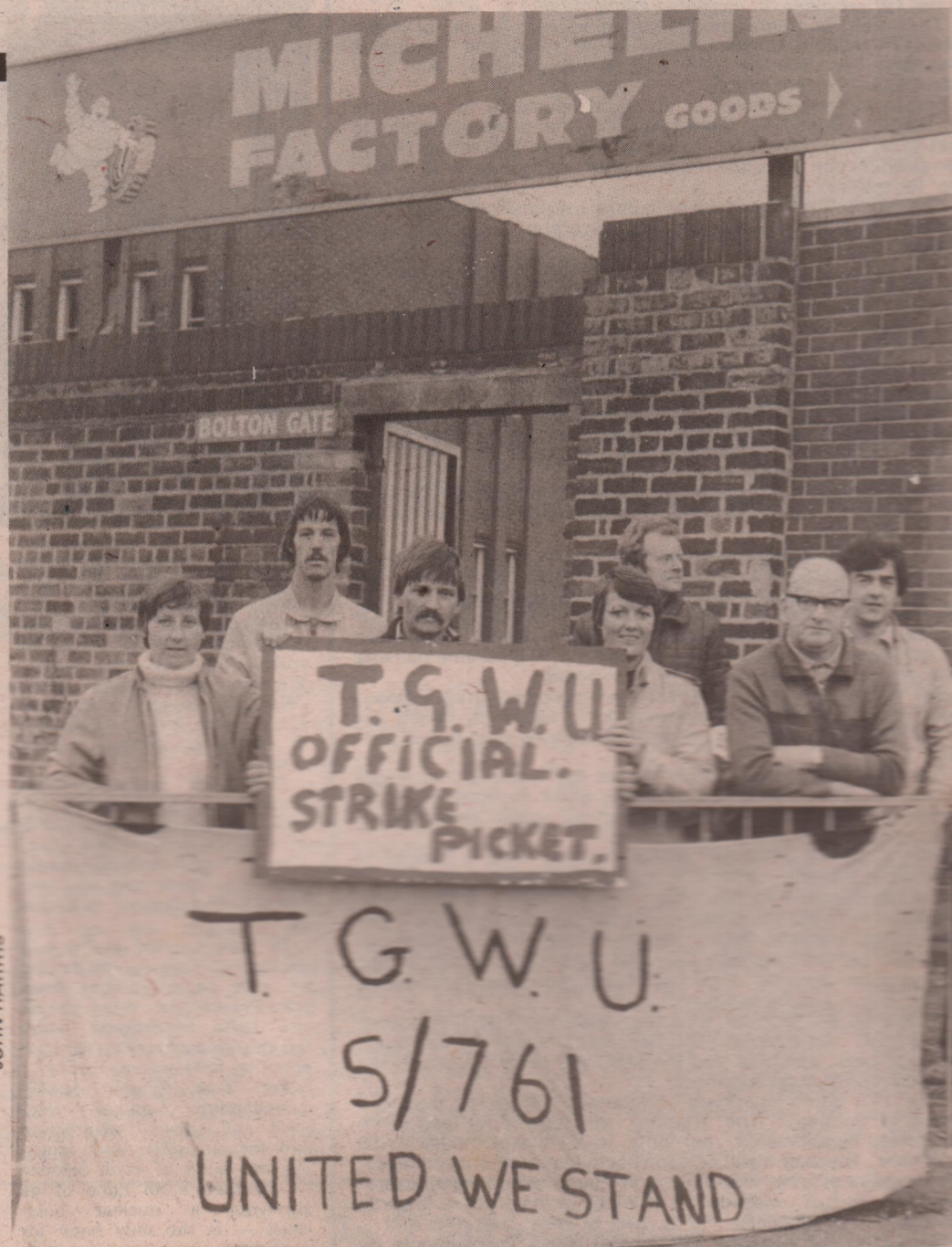
The very decision to talk to Tebbit was taken by a handful of union leaders on a two-vote majority after no consultation whatever with their members. &

How, then are the TUC equipped to fight Tebbit's phony 'democratisation' of the unions?

How can they even pose as credible opponents of the employers, given the TUC's scandalous decision to back the management of the Financial Times, and threaten to expel the print union NGA if it does not return to work?

How does TUC support for Tebbit's low-wage 'Youth Training' Scheme — designed to drive down wages for youth and workers as a whole — help convince members of the need for unions to defend and improve living standards?

The fight to break links at every level between the TUC and the Tory government is thus part and parcel of the fight to defend the unions



Michelin strikers have again voted to continue their fight against 4-shift working — story page 3

against the latest set of Tory proposals to undermine and destroy the unions as fighting organisations.

Every avenue must be explored between now and the TUC Congress for forcing an emergency resolution onto the agenda demanding immediate withdrawal from the talks with Tebbit.

And within each union the fight must be carried out to withdraw particular union leaders from any such talks. Already in ASTMS — whose

two votes tipped the balance in favour of talks at the TUC General Council — the union's biggest Divisional Council has tabled a motion to the next NEC calling on them to reverse their decision and adhere to previous Conference decisions not to talk to Tebbit.

A similar struggle must be waged throughout the trade union movement, extending to the demand for TUC withdrawal from the MSC, YTS and the NEDC, and for the discussion of a programme of

concerted mass action to combat the Tory offensive on the NHS, social services and job throughout the public sector.

The motion by the Bank Union to the TUC call for a 24-hour general strike 'as the first step in solidarity action' in the event of Tebbit laws being used to fine or arrest trade unionists pointing more in the direction needed by the labour movement.

Stop the talks! Prepare for action!

Why did SAS snatch ship?

By Martin Thomas

The SAS and the SBS kept the ship until Wednesday midday. At first they refused to say anything about what they were doing. The ship was on charter to the Ministry of Defence, they said (for 'Fortress Falklands' operations), and what they did with it was their affair.

Since then they have stated that it was an anti-hijack exercise. The SAS and SBS were acting the role of terrorists who had seized the ship, and Kent police were set the task of recapturing it. Some credibility is given to this story by

the report (in the Morning Star) that "Irate residents near the docks complained that their sleep was being disturbed by shooting and helicopters".

The National Union of Seamen press office told Socialist Organiser that the union no longer held to their first suspicions, that maybe the seizure was an attempt, or a practice, for clearing the nuclear waste which the Government is still unable to dump because of trade union boycott action by the NUS, the TGWU and the NUR. And legally the whole operation was unchallengeable because shipboard law gives the master of the vessel almost medieval powers over the crew.

Yet the operation, like the navy's take-over of MV Kenton while back for Falklands operations, raises serious questions about the new shape of the Thatcherite strong-arm state.

If it was really a straightforward military exercise, why wasn't a navy ship used? Or are the civilian ships (with civilian crews) requisitioned or chartered by the Ministry of Defence for 'Fortress Falklands' operations to be regarded as fully militarised?

Even if this was nothing to do with the dumping of nuclear waste, could not the same tactics be used for that? What is the political function of this sort of operation? Where will the SAS swoop next?

EDITORIAL

ACCORDING to the TUC, next month will bring a new dawn for jobless youth.

The trade union Movement has long campaigned for training opportunities for all young people. The Youth Training Scheme [YTS] is a mighty step in that direction.

Don't believe it! The YTS is a 'mighty step' in the direction of the Tories' plans for increased exploitation.

They want to create, among young workers, a pool of cheap labour, available to work without the rates and conditions that have been won by trade unions over decades. And they want to carve up education.

In place of the concept of all-round education for everyone — feeble though the resemblance of the present system to that ideal is — they want to move to a two-tier set-up: traditional education for a (dwindling) elite, and job-centred 'training' for the rest.

The Youth Training Scheme comes into operation this September. It will take 460,000 school-leavers, each for 12 months of work and training.

It is not a temporary scheme. It is designed to expand to cover all school-leavers. It links up on the one hand with the Tories' 'New Technical and Vocational Education Initiative' (presently at the pilot-scheme stage), which will put 14-18 year old school students into 'work experience'; and, on the other, with the Tories' drive to abolish all time-served apprentice schemes by 1985.

Already the Tories have the Young Workers' Scheme, under which subsidies are given to employers who pay young workers under £47 a week. Despite a few successes, the YWS has generally failed to push down youth wages.

The YTS is a more drastic attempt. Trainees will be paid 25 a week, less than half the current average wage for under-25s of £50 to £60.

The YTS is supposed to be voluntary; but the Tories wanted to make it compulsory, and the Daily Mirror reported on July 10 that young people who 'unreasonably' refuse to go on YTS will have their dole cut by 40% for six weeks. The penalty can be reimposed indefinitely if the young people continue to be 'unreasonable'. And youth who leave a YTS scheme halfway through will also suffer this 40% cut in benefit.

Not very voluntary! TUC assistant secretary Ken Graham could muster no better response than to appeal to Tebbit not to put 'undue pressure' on careers officers to impose the penalty!

The TUC also claims, in its 'Guide for Trade Union Negotiators' on YTS, that 'YTS schemes which operate in workplaces will need to have the support of unions there before they can be approved'. This is not true.

Only if unions positively object do they have a chance of blocking a scheme. Simple failure to approve will not do it. And it all depends on the union reps on the Area Manpower Boards — who are appointed by trades councils, and not necessarily answerable to their members unless they are made so. The MSC bureaucrats also have the option of playing off one union against another — getting round objections by securing approval from a more compliant union.

'The MSC will monitor schemes,' says the TUC. Not even that is true. An internal MSC document, leaked by the Guardian last week, admitted that the MSC will carry out practical inspection of most schemes.

'The YTS offers hundreds of thousands of young people a chance of training.' The 'training' will (generally) lead to no recognised qualification, but only to a mickey-mouse 'YTS certificate'. Much of it will be done not in local authority colleges, but by private firms like Sight and Sound and on employers' premises. In fact, one sideline of YTS is a major drive towards privatisation of education.

The YTS is not what the TUC claims it is. There should be emergency resolutions at the TUC next month insisting that the TUC withdraws its collaboration with the MSC and fights instead for proper training and re-training, in the public sector, at trade union rates of pay and conditions, leading to recognised qualifications, and with trade union supervision of content. Resolutions to the TUC aren't enough, however. Some YTS schemes are already underway. Barring a huge turnaround in the political situation, a lot more will start in September.

Some trade unions — NGA, NUJ, CPSA — simply have a policy of boycotting YTS. Obviously we must support them as they fight to defend that policy against employers; and obviously unions must retain the option of boycotting YTS.

But boycott alone does nothing to organise the YTS trainees and, for socialists, organising is always the key to a fight back.

Unions must demand full information on where schemes are operating in their area, and set out to recruit the youth involved.

The basic non-negotiable demands should be:

- Trainees' pay to be topped up to trade union rates,
- Union membership for trainees,
- Employee status for trainees. (Otherwise they have no rights under the Race Relations Act, the Sex Discrimination Act, and the Employment Protection Act; and only limited rights under the Health and Safety at Work Act.)

These demands strike at the basic cheap-labour purpose of YTS, and are a starting point for further demands. They must be won. Hackney and Islington councils in London, for example, have agreed to them.

Where they are not conceded, the unions should campaign openly and strongly against the schemes being introduced.

The most important other demands are:

- A guaranteed job at the end,
- No job substitution,
- Training to be done in local authority colleges and to lead to recognised qualifications,
- All trainees to receive a card stating their rights. (This is supposed to be an MSC rule).
- More than the minimum 18 days holiday,
- Positive discrimination for women and blacks.

The demand for guaranteed jobs for the youth at the end of the scheme can also be pursued jointly with the rest of the workforce at the end; it should be raised from the outset as an objective of the unions.

So far the Left and the labour movement has failed dismally to organise youth on the dole and in the cheap labour schemes. This is the biggest challenge so far. We can't afford to duck it.



Heffer: his motion against witch-hunt defeated

Youth 'leg it for peace'

THANKS to the courage and endurance of the Greenham Common Women, everybody now knows that 1983 is the year this present government intends to welcome cruise missiles to Britain. We in East London Youth CND want to raise our voices along with the thousands of others in protest at this criminal act.

With our health service crumbling about our ears and unemployment over 20% (official figures!) East Londoners — and especially young people — know only too well where Thatcher's priorities lie.

In East London we've had enough of this — we're fed up with going straight from school onto the dole queues and most importantly we're fed up with not knowing whether or not we will have any future.

For East London youth, campaigning against weapons of mass destruction and for our jobs, and exposing the farce of civil defence — for there's no hope of us surviving a nuclear holocaust — is the only hope for our future.

A couple of months ago, Youth CND groups from Hackney, Tower Hamlets, Newham, Barking and Waltham Forest got together to form East London Youth CND. The idea is to enable us to co-ordinate our local activities better — and so have bigger impact in this vital year against the missiles.

We have organised a two day march on the 17th and 18th of September, calling it Leggin' It For Peace! The first leg of the march will be from Kelvedon Hatch, which is a Civil Defence HQ to the Wanstead bunker — which was to be area control for East London 'til the GLC closed it down! — where we hope to have a film and disco.

The next day the march will continue through East London to London Fields in Hackney where we will have a rally (to which Tony Benn and Ken Livingstone have been invited) followed by one last hop — just to finish everyone off completely!

We need a lot of support to make this event a real success, and a way of attracting people to the disarmament movement in East London. The best ways you can help are by joining the march if you are young — and helping us financially if you are not so young! All individual donations will be really gratefully received — but also raise it in your trade union, political organisation or commu-

nity groups and sponsor a marcher.

With your help 'Leggin' It For Peace' will make the voices of protest that much louder.

Together we can stop the bomb!

•• Anyone interested in joining the march, or helping out financially or otherwise, should write to East London Youth CND, 39, Albion Rd., London E17.

"Witch hunt as usual"

John Bloxam reports on the July meeting of Labour's NEC.

JOHN HARRIS

AUDREY WISE described last Wednesday's meeting (July 27) of the Labour Party NEC as a return to 'business as usual'.

The right-wing majority — with Foot and Kinnock well among them — couldn't find time to discuss the causes of the election defeat. But a motion to defer the issue of the witch-hunt because of the Penrith by-election was thrown out 14-7. A similar motion from Eric Heffer had the same fate.

The right wing then pushed through a motion from Dennis Howell, deferred from the March NEC meeting, to deny Militant supporters the use of Labour Party facilities. All affiliated organisations will now receive a letter advising them that they should not allow the sale of Militant during Labour Party events, Militant fund-raising on Labour Party premises, or the hire of halls for Militant meetings, and they should not use Cambridge Heath Press (which prints Militant).

The NEC will also write again to the three Constituency Labour Parties covering the five Militant Editorial Board members, and threaten them with disbandment if they don't comply with the decision to expel the five.

Whether this goes beyond bluff and bluster will largely depend on the CLPs involved. For six months they have mounted

determined defiance, with wide support, and the NEC has not felt able to do anything about it.

Indeed, it has even accepted a resolution from Hammersmith CLP for this year's Labour Party conference agenda, though Militant EB member Keith Dickinson is still active in that CLP's General Committee. The resolution calls for the abolition of the register and immediate reinstatement of the five.

The right wing has also clearly been defeated on the register issue. Wednesday's meeting accepted a request from Labour Party general secretary Jim Mortimer that there be no further action against those who refused to join the Register, beyond denying them certain facilities, specifically, coverage in the official Labour Party conference diary!

The NEC also confirmed the fear of ideas and debate which has so far taken up two Shadow Cabinet meetings and the TUC General Council in moves to prevent a debate at the TUC between the four Labour leadership contenders. By 15 to 6, the NEC called on the Labour Party magazine New Socialist (would-be sponsor of the debate) and the candidates not to go ahead.

The NEC decided not to publish the nominations for the leadership election until the final agenda, in September. It is not surprising that the right wing want to keep quiet about the figures for MPs' nominations, which show more support for Eric Heffer than the media will admit.

Kinnock: 49
Hattersley: 37
Heffer: 23
Shore: 14.

Labour movement CONFERENCE

September 17

September 17, 10.30am-5pm
University of London Union
Malet Street, WC1

Called by
Socialist ORGANISER

How to fight the Tories



*Many on the left of the LABOUR PARTY who had fought for left policies and accountability, fell silent during the election — despite the right wing sabotage. How can we develop an organised, and politically confident left in the Labour Party capable of standing ground under pressure? What kind of perspective should be put forward by the left to go beyond the limited 'Alternative Economic Strategy' which so plainly failed to convince a sceptical electorate?

*With five more years to work on restoring 'Victorian values', Thatcher's blows will again fall hardest on WOMEN. Why won't the Labour Party and unions develop the special strengths and fighting capacity shown by women workers, and take their special problems seriously?

*BLACK WORKERS too are beginning to organise against tacit and open racism from the bosses, the state, the police and most scandalous of all, from the labour movement. How can we help develop that struggle?

*Thousands of YOUTH are now faced with another 5 years — seemingly a lifetime — on the dole. Millions of adults are on the same scrapheap. How can we act at rank and file level to remedy the criminal failure of TUC and Labour Party leaders to organise and mobilise the unemployed? How should the unions respond to the new threats posed by Tebbit's so-called 'Youth Training Scheme'?

*OUR CONFERENCE 'How to Fight the Tories' will attempt to promote discussion and give some answers to these and other questions facing the labour movement.

Open to delegates and observers from all labour movement bodies.

Credentials (including discussion papers) £2.50 (employed), £1.50 (unemployed).

Please send me details/credentials for the September 17 conference. I enclose £...

Name

Address

Send to
Socialist Organiser, 28, Middle Lane,
London N8. (Please mark the envelope
'September 17 Conference'.)

*So the Tories are back. The bland phrases in their Manifesto are already turning into renewed attacks on jobs, on union rights, new cuts and the privatisation of vital services.

*Already even as Tebbit prepares new ANTI-UNION LAWS the TUC right wing have run up the white flag. But Arthur Scargill and Ken Livingstone have correctly pointed to the need for mass, direct action by the labour movement on the streets and picket lines. Our conference will focus on the problems, policies, and tactics for achieving this kind of fight.

*Against previous CUTS, many union leaders wrongly argued we wait for a returned Labour government while Labour councils blamed lack of union action for implementing Tory policies. A new 5-year mandate for Thatcher makes this a plainly useless policy: instead we need occupations, supporting strikes, the extension of struggles on a national level — and we must learn lessons from such struggles in the past.

*PRIVATISATION in British Telecom, the NHS and other services threatens jobs, working conditions and union organisation. But the action

against privatisation so far has been either localised and isolated or largely focussed upon protest. We need a plan of action NOW, before the whole public sector is carved up by the bankers.

*The SHOP STEWARDS' MOVEMENT has come under fire on the engineering industry — but has developed in the NHS in the course of last year's pay fight. What policies and politics are needed to rebuild and extend the stewards' movement and defend its independence of full-time union officials and management propaganda?

*New, more radical BROAD LEFTS have been emerging in many unions, but under fire from employers and the right wing, some — like the CPSA Broad Left — can crumble. How can we link Broad Left activity at national level to day-to-day struggles in the workplaces and develop a consistent, principled leadership?

Platform and workshop speakers include:
Jeremy Corbyn MP; Reg Race, Joy Hurcombe (Labour CND)*; Val Dunn (Manchester Labour councillor)*; Andrea Campbell (COHSE Group 81)*; Colin Talbot (POEU Broad Left)*.
*In a personal capacity.
Workshop discussions, coupled with the showing of videos, will cover a wide range of topics and current struggles, and enable everyone present to contribute in debate on policies for the way forward.
CRECHE FACILITIES WILL BE AVAILABLE ALL DAY

Cops set dogs on demo

DURING recent months the Asian community in Batley and Dewsbury have witnessed an ever increasing number of racist attacks. The racists have rampaged through the streets in cars shouting abuse. They attack shops, homes, and places of worship.

On Sunday July 24, at approximately 3pm, four whites in a white Ford Capri rammed two Asian cars and beat up four Asian youths sitting in one of the cars.

Later that evening, twenty whites emerged from the Scarborough Hotel at approximately 8.30 and viciously assaulted five Asian youths. One youth, Umar, was admitted to a specialist hospital with a fractured skull.

During both incidents the whites were carrying iron bars. At the pub incident they were also armed with pool cues.

The police were immediately informed about the afternoon incident. They were even given the registration number of the car involved. The police took no action. Had they made arrests, Umar would not be in hospital with a fractured skull.

After the incident outside the Scarborough Hotel, the police escorted the whites away in a Black Maria and cleared them. No arrests were made.

At 4am on Monday morning the police raided an Asian home. Three brothers were arrested and a door smashed. They have been charged with actual bodily harm, damage to police property, and causing an affray.

Peaceful

On Monday evening a spontaneous march took place in Saville Town. The march was peaceful. It headed towards the police station to form a picket, demanding the release of the three Asian youths. The march was stopped and dogs released. Two children were bitten.

A Dewsbury Defence Committee has been formed, with the following demands:

* That charges be immediately dropped against these three Asian youths.

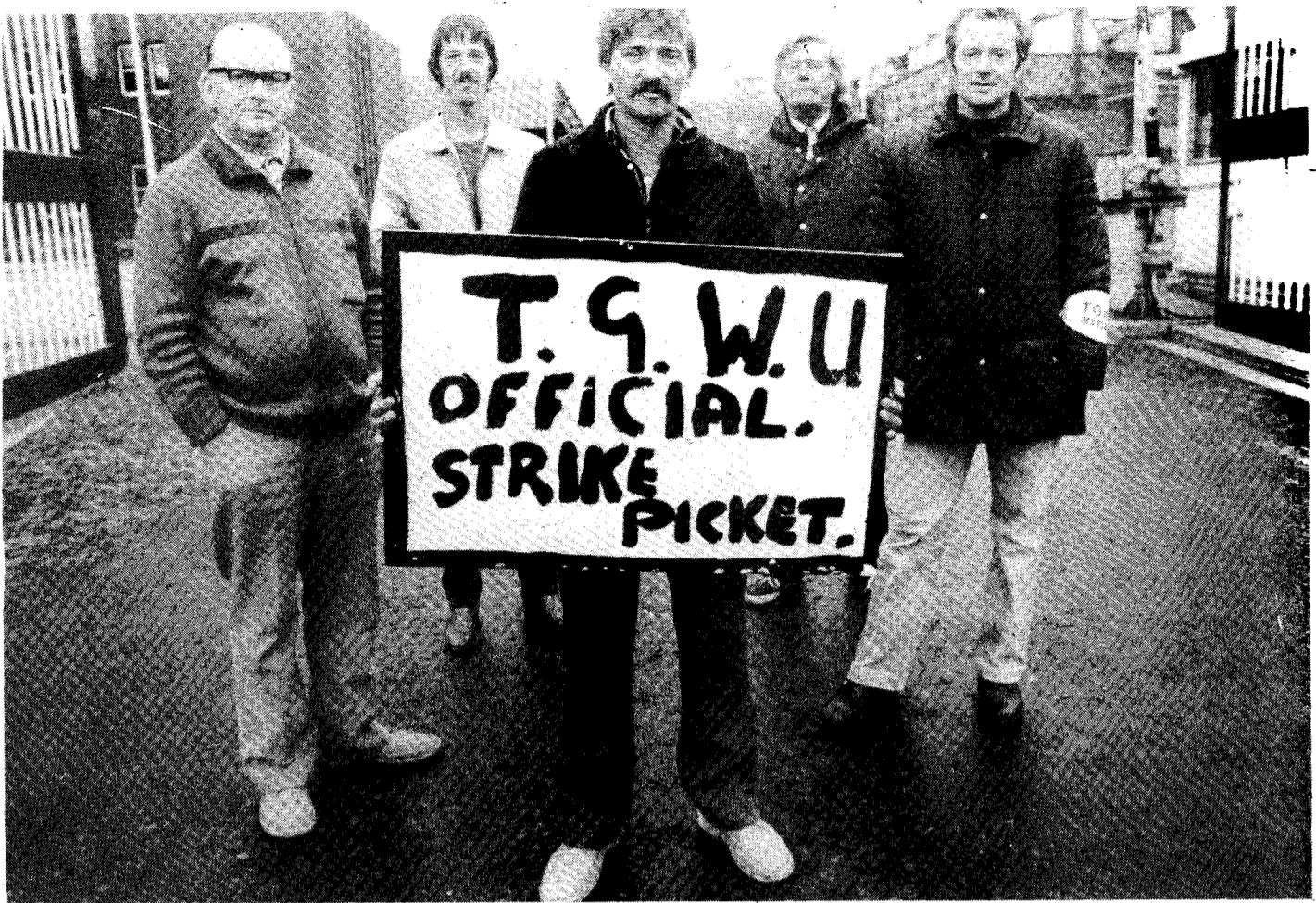
* The closure of the Scarborough Hotel, a breeding ground for racists.

* An investigation of the appalling police behaviour and attitude during these incidents.

A 700-strong demonstration supporting these demands, on July 30, drew groups from Birmingham, Sheffield, and Bradford. It came in for a fusillade of racist reports from the press, which unashamedly took the side of the whites and echoed their anti-Asian comments, seeking no statement from the Asian youth.

A fascist-inspired counter-demonstration attracted less than 100 whites.

Contact: Dewsbury Defence Committee, c/o 93 Little Horton Lane, Bradford.



JOHN HARRIS

TYRE STRIKE TOUGHENS

WORKERS at Michelin in Stoke have now been out for three weeks, and the action is toughening up. Last Tuesday, 26th July, the strike by 1,000 workers in the Lightweight Production Department was eventually made official and strike pay was handed out. On Thursday night a mass meeting at Stoke Town Hall voted solidly to reject new proposals from management, and to start 24 hour picketing of the plant from the next day.

Management, who have been taking workers back into other departments in dribs and drabs, offered a lifting of their lockout, and negotiations on condition that the new 4 shift working, which caused the dispute

in the first place, was implemented from August 15th. There was no way the workers were being conned by that.

Works convenor Gordon Howle read out letters of support for the strikers including a telex from Michelin workers in Holland.

SO supporters who are councillors in Burslem Central ward had also successfully moved that a letter of support be sent from the branch secretary on behalf of the local councillors, and the ward also asked the press officer to write to the local newspaper expressing our solidarity with the strikers.

Works Convenor Gordon Howle also read a statement from 130 workers in the truck

retread department (DCP) who are already working the 4 shift system. It read:

'We the undersigned workers in DCP wish to deny any statement made by the company that implies our lives are successfully organised around four set working.'

When the vote was taken on Thursday night only a handful opposed continuation of the dispute, despite no recommendation being made, and a cheer went up when it was announced that 24 hour picketing would be imposed. When Gordon Howle then suggested imposing the picketing from Monday there were shouts from the floor which carried the day that picketing should start immediately.

The aim of the picketing is not particularly to stop workers in other departments going in, but to stop materials going in, and tyres going out.

Strengthened

The action was strengthened on Saturday July 30 when 63 lorry drivers at the plant voted to join the strike. They will join the pickets on the gates to stop contract drivers going in and out.

Now the strike is official all Michelin products should be blacked. Much of the production is exported so blacking at the docks is vital, but blacking of Michelin products throughout the motor industry could quickly win the dispute.

Doing OK!

SO YOU thought the Brazilian economy was gloom all round? Not at all. One firm has recently reported record profits - 35% up on the previous year.

The firm in question is Citibank, one of the US banks with big loans in Brazil. While Brazil accounts for only 5% of Citibank's loans, with over-the-odds interest rates it yields 20% of the profits.

Barbarism is still with us!

IN CASE you thought that civilisation might have arrived with the massive anti-hanging vote, recent newspapers provided plenty of evidence that barbarism is still with us in the guise of 'law and order':—

1. 28 prisoners have been charged with 'mutiny' under

YS FOR YCND

Dynamic YSers based in South London seek young people from anywhere interested in YS and YCND, with a view to go-ahead participation in our national campaign.

Contact: YS for YCND, c/o Lansbury House, 41, Camberwell Grove, London SE5.

GRAFFITI

By Gerry Byrne

prison regulations for their alleged involvement in the rooftop protest and 'riot' at Albany prison last May. They will be 'tried' by the prison's Board of Visitors.

They will be denied legal representation, or even a friend at their hearing. Defence witnesses could only be called with the leave of the Board of Visitors. There will be no public airing of the complaints about prison conditions which led to the 'riot'.

At the end of this, prisoners face loss of remission which could be equivalent to years added to their sentences. The last prison riot to be dealt with by the courts, Parkhurst Prison in 1970, resulted in the acquittal of 2 defendants, compensation for several others for injuries inflicted by prison officers and much wider public awareness of the appalling conditions in the prison.

Since then, such cases have been heard by the Board of Visitors and internal prison disciplinary hearings. As the New Law Journal comm-

ents 'The Home Office learnt its lesson quickly'.

Dreadful thought?

2. If you accept the defence case, it is a dreadful thought that as the facts of this story developed and as the web of conspiracy was spun, every police officer who took part, from the youngest police constable upwards, immediately and without hesitation turned his hand to criminal dishonesty. Every single one - thus summed up the trial judge in the trial of John Twomey for armed robbery. Suffice it to say that the jury did accept the defence case to acquit Twomey!

This is Twomey's seventh acquittal on a serious charge - including murder, armed robbery and wounding. He claims to have been framed by the police to punish him for giving evidence in the Operation Countryman enquiries into police corruption.

Pre-emptive

3. Pre-emptive strike: Merseyside Police have opened an internal enquiry into police brutality in connection with a demo outside Walton Prison, even before they received an official complaint.

This may not be unconnected with publication in several national newspapers of a photograph of a police officer kicking a protestor in the face. While the internal enquiry goes on, of course, police will be unable to comment on the incident.

Nor is any prosecution likely until the enquiry reaches its conclusion, which may be months away by which time everyone will have conveniently forgotten the events.

Anti-terrorist

4. Four Italian policemen have been found guilty of torturing a suspect, Red Brigades' member, Cesare Di Lenardo.

The four, members of the anti-terrorist (!) squad, tortured him to gain information, including by applying electric shocks to his genitals. They received suspended gaol sentences, from one year to 14 months.

A fifth policeman had the case against him dropped after he got elected to Parliament. Criminal prosecution of a legislator can't go ahead without the approval of Parliament! It's called looking after your own.

Standing by pogrom call

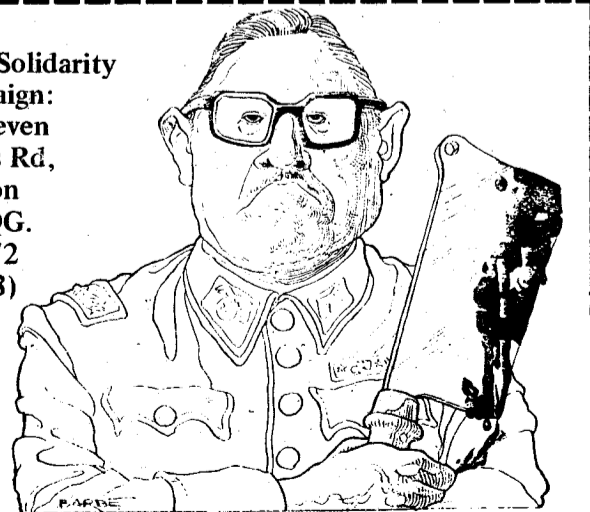
THE Zimbabwe government has pulled back from the outright pogromist call of chief whip, Naison Muroyiwa, who accused Asian and Jewish business men of sabotaging Zimbabwe and said 'Do not think I am being another Idi Amin if I advocate their being kicked out'.

The legal Affairs Minister

said that he wanted to make it clear Muroyiwa was not speaking for the government, who find 'such racialism and suggested racial discrimination totally abhorrent'.

However, Muroyiwa is unrepentant and there is no suggestion that any action is being taken against him or that he is being replaced as Chief Whip.

Chile Solidarity Campaign: 129 Seven Sisters Rd, London N7 7QG. (01-272 4298)



DEMONSTRATION: Tenth anniversary of the Chile coup. Sunday 11 September. Assemble 1.00 p.m. at Clerkenwell Green for a march to Trafalgar Square.

LCC swings sharp right

Ian McCalman reports from the Labour Coordinating Committee Conference.

THE LCC General Election post mortem held in Manchester on the weekend of July 23/24 was characterised by a good attendance at, well organised discussion groups and the remarkably right wing policies of a section of the leadership.

There was much talk of 'new vision', 'policy re-appraisals' etc., but the outlines of what was emerging are rather alarming.

There are of course socialists who have consistently opposed an anti-EEC stance but that was not what we were witnessing at Manchester.

This was clearly a move to drop what was regarded as an electorally unpopular stance. Unilateralism will soon follow that out of the window. The LCC election analysis, 'After the Landslide' refers to opposition to Cruise and Trident, deprecates the row over Polaris and contains no hint of removal of American bases.

Opposition to the sale of council houses was the next 'sacred cow' for the slaughterhouse. 'An obvious vote loser', '90% of newly married couples would like to own their house' we were told. Well, that's certainly cut the shopping list. 'Goodies were handed out on every page' of the manifesto we are told. Perish the thought that socialists should be in the business of making promises.

What then are we left with? The LCC's own sacred cow must be saved. The Alternative Economic Strategy remains sacrosanct. The consideration that workers had no confidence in such a reformist pot-pourri solving their economic crisis is not even entertained.

Anyone, such as Ken Livingstone, who may suggest the need for a more coherent socialist strategy is given the bum's rush. In a keynote speech Peter Hain opened up by lambasting Tony Benn. Livingstone & Arthur Scargill. In characteristic fashion, Hain condemned Scargill's call for extra-parliamentary action, ridiculing the miners' leader for trying 3 times to get industrial action against pit closures and failing. Arrogantly pontificating on the basis of his experience as the Mickey Mouse politics of the Young Liberals, Hain pours scorn on the efforts of a workers' leader strenuously trying to rouse his members in defence of their jobs.

This nauseating spectacle was made complete by the sound of applause he received from his Clause 4 devotees. In the light of this speech the statement that 'extra-parliamentary politics is so vital' in the LCC election analysis rings very hollow.

Mike Connarty's rallying call to Peter Hain to do battle with the 'London loony left' is a fair warning that the gloves are off.

Labour Conference 1983

Eyes on the next election?

by John Bloxam

LABOUR's election defeat and its aftermath dominate the 560 resolutions in the initial agenda book for the 1983 Labour Party Conference. And the overwhelming message from Labour's organisations is the need to defend existing Party policy; improve Party organisation; make propaganda and even protest at Tory policies. But most of them basically focus on the next election and the return of a Labour government.

This is clear in two of the largest sections in the book - on 'Campaigning Strategy' and 'Party Organisation and Structure'. The 61 resolutions are almost wholly on creating a more 'professional' organisation, and spending the next 5 years 'getting the message across'.

Indeed, no less than 26 organisations in a different section support the call for the establishment of a labour movement daily paper as part of this general approach.

What is almost completely missing here and elsewhere is even the possibility of direct action to defeat the Tories before their 5 years are up, and the need for Labour to give a lead in this.

The resignation and defeatism is best expressed in the resolution from COHSE. With the Health Service and its own membership threatened with decimation in the next year or so, this present day Nero puts forward the need for a 'Programme of Action' to be ready for discussion and adoption at the 1986 Labour Party Conference and Trades Union Congress, so that all sections of the movement may unite and campaign together for its acceptance by the people of Britain at the next election.

In the section on 'Campaigning Strategy', some resolutions advocate the Party organising mass 'campaigns' against the Tories but these Militant inspired resolutions confine themselves to propaganda alone.

In fact, the only resolutions that see direct action as the central part of the fightback against the Tories are the 3 based on the model circulated by Socialist Organiser.

The idea of direct action and a real fight against the Tories does appear in one or two other sections. 31 organisations have submitted resolutions opposing the Tories' attack on local government, including the threat to abolish the GLC.

Many of them, however, do no more than just advocate a 'defence' that amounts to little more than propaganda, however often the phrase 'actively oppose' is used.

Deadline for Amendments: August 26 1983. [For model amendments suggested by SO on witch-hunt etc. contact John Bloxam, c/o 28, Middle Lane, London N8, or telephone 01-981 3348].
Deadline for payment of Affiliation Fees: September 9 1983.
Deadline for Delegations: September 9 1983.

Most of the 10 resolutions on privatisation also focus on the need 'to ensure all practical aid and support for those workers who engage in industrial action to resist privatisation' (Northampton South).

Most deal with the threat to British Telecoms, and clearly follow the lead of sections of the POEU. That union has submitted a resolution which calls 'for the next Labour Government (to) renationalise without compensation, any part of British Telecom which is privatised...'

Health Service

But these examples are exceptions. 30 resolutions have been submitted on defending the Health Service and, while support for workers is mentioned in a few, the great majority see this as being done through propaganda and waiting for the next Labour government. Similarly with the 42 resolutions on Defence. The action of the Greenham Common women is mentioned in one of the resolutions!

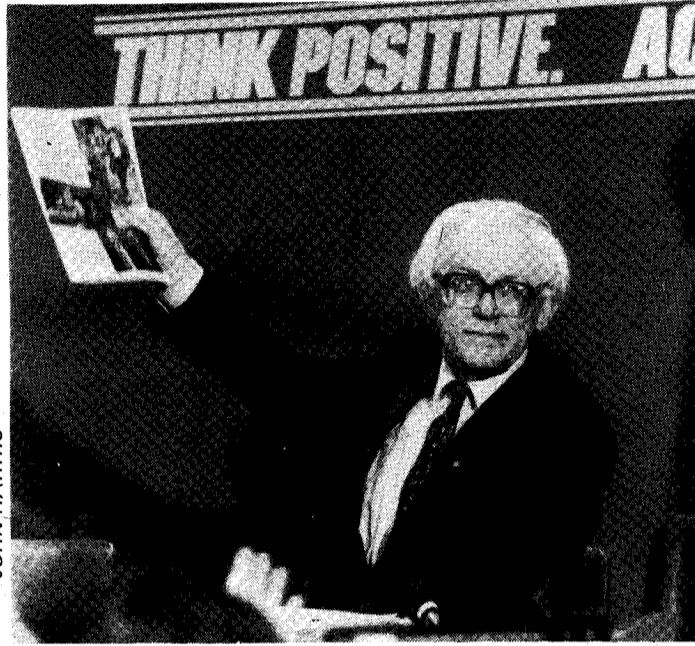
In fact, the 'Defence' resolutions sum up much of the tone and content of the resolution book in other ways. Almost all reaffirm support for unilateralism, and a number demand that this should be advocated by the Party spokespeople; many talk generally about campaigning 'inside and outside Parliament', but the actual focus is the next election; there are no resolutions calling for withdrawal from NATO.

Non-existent

But, while the drive from the right to reverse Party policy is strong in the leadership elections it is virtually non-existent in the resolution book. The furthest the UCW dare go is talk about a 're-think', along with the need for 'radical socialist policies'; and the only example of an attempt to directly reverse a particular policy is the AUEW, whose resolution calls for the ditching of unilateralism in favour of multilateralism.

The right's major push, in fact, is on Party democracy. Led by the EPTU, 20 organisations have submitted resolutions calling (in one way or another) for individual membership ballots, particularly in the election of Leader and Deputy Leader. The demand is for the new NEC to submit a constitutional amendment for this to the 1984 Conference.

For the left, a central part of the programme must be women's liberation. This is the only resolution which mentions women's liberation.



JOHN HARRIS

COHSE looks forward to a new Programme - in 1986!

ferences, 20 organisations have submitted the WAC model resolutions demanding in particular that Labour women should elect women's seats on the NEC; should have as of right 5 resolutions on the Labour Party Conference agenda; and have their Conference given proper status and recognition in the Party.

Although split into 3 different sections, there are a similar number of resolutions on the witch-hunt, with the great majority clearly against. 5 resolutions call for the immediate reinstatement of the 5 Militant EB members, and Wallasey calls

'for an immediate halt to all witch-hunts'; 2 resolutions support the Greenwich constitutional amendment and 10 follow the CLPD model resolution on 'give and take'.

These are rendered relatively safe for socialists in the Party because they say expulsions should only be carried out by Conference, and do not spell out the kind of 'impartial conditions' the CLPD would like to see imposed on Party members.

9 organisations call for an increase in the CLP's voting share at Conference, but most of the mechanics are referred to the NEC or a working party for report to the 1984 Conference.

The number of resolutions on Northern Ireland has increased from last year (from 5 to 13), but there is still nothing on the scale of 1981 following the hunger strikes. 8 come from the LCI or sympathisers; 4 say that existing Party policy on establishing a Labour Party in the 6 counties should be carried out.

On gay rights, there has been no change, and still there is the solitary resolution on the last page entitled 'Homosexuality' (in this case from NOLS).

Immediate issues and debates inside the labour movement are also reflected in the book. NUPE's resolution is in support of a national minimum wage, and there are 13 other resolutions supporting this. 7 resolutions from Scotland call on Labour to support a Scottish Assembly. The 5 resolutions on the EEC call, in different ways, for a fight for 'socialist policies' and 'socialist reforms' there, and a shift from the 'withdrawal position'.

11 resolutions deal with unemployment, but all (including the Militant ones) focus again on propaganda. There is one resolution calling for 'a national registered union of the unemployed'.

6 resolutions specifically deal with the YTS, although the issue is also dealt with under the general heading of 'Youth'.

Most talk about organising on the schemes prior to their replacement; only one (City of Durham) 'resolves and exhorts the Labour Party and affiliated organisations to: (i) refuse to co-operate with the Manpower Services Commission in the implementation of the youth training scheme...'

Amendments that must be moved

THE initial agenda for the Labour Party conference this October shows a fair range of resolutions on the witch-hunt and related subjects. But in order to ensure proper debate of all the options, two items urgently need amendments to throw the weight of further CLPs behind them.

The deadline for amendments is August 26 - less than three weeks from now.

We need many more CLPs behind the call for the Greenwich amendment to be properly debated, and many more simply calling for an end to expulsions.

Greenwich

Bow & Poplar and Greenwich CLPs have both submitted variants of the model resolution on this subject. To give them the necessary reinforcement, Labour Against the Witch-hunt now suggests a simple amendment along the following lines (preferably with some insignificant difference in the wording):

Amendment to Resolution n. 125 (from Bow and Poplar) or to no. 124 (from Greenwich).

After 'opinion' (end of first sentence), insert the following sentence: 'Conference respects the right of individual members to be expelled from the Party if they are found to be in breach of the Party's discipline, and as a result of this to be expelled from the Party.'

An End to Expulsions

Wallasey CLP has submitted a useful resolution calling for a halt to the witch-hunt. To provide the necessary back-up, LAW now suggests an amendment along the following lines (preferably with some insignificant difference in wording):

Amendment to Resolution no. 109 (from Wallasey).

Add at end, 'Conference therefore resolves that no individual member of the Party should be liable to expulsion provided that s/he accepts the Party's

objects as defined by Clause IV and provided that s/he does not stand or campaign against the Party's candidate in a public election'.

In order to prevent the witch-hunt being quietly brushed under the carpet in Brighton, your CLP's amendment is urgently needed. There is no time to lose.

Please keep LAW informed of your intentions. The following will be happy to discuss LAW's suggestions with you: Keith Lichman, 01-802 1709; Francis Pridcaux, 01-960 7460; John Bloxam, 01-981 3348.

Socialist ORGANISER

LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE MEETING

Socialist Organiser's Labour Party conference meeting this year will be on building Labour Party workplace branches and the fight against the Tories. Speakers will include activists who have had direct experience of building workplace branches.

LABOUR PARTY AGAINST THE WITCH-HUNT!

Join LABOUR AGAINST THE WITCHHUNT
Membership open to Constituency Labour Parties, trade union organisations, Labour Party affiliates, and individuals.
Fee. CLPs and unions £10, wards £5, individuals and other organisations £3. Write to LAW, 11 Wilton Road, London N16.

Despite abstract approach of some feminists

Class struggle central to women's liberation

BEATRIX Campbell has attained a certain reputation in the struggle for women's rights; but having heard her speak in the discussion at the recent conference of the Labour Co-ordinating Committee, Jack Smiley was prompted to question whether she has any policies on offer for the actual struggles of working women.

In what may be a provocative discussion article he looks at some of the weaknesses of 'passive propagandism' and asserts the primacy of mass class action in the struggle for women's liberation.

One got the impression that Bea Campbell, Barry Hindess and Dave Purdy were almost gleeful that the 'craft dominated, sectionalised, economic, patriarchal elitist male working class' had been pulverised by Thatcherism.

They seemed to feel that these defeats were the precondition for the emergence of a 'New Politics' based on a non-struggle conception of feminism, incomes policy, and an alliance with the LIB/SDP.

Indeed, Bea and Barry, were only a few short paces away from their former colleague Sue Slipman (the SDP PPC for Stevenage).

Dave Purdy, however, went one step further in the workshop on Incomes Policy. He blamed the overthrow of the Allende Government in Chile on the 30% wage increases demanded by the Chilean working class! If only Allende had placed a legal straightjacket over his supporters, then he would really have been able to tackle the multinationals, Purdy argued.

The platform speakers contributions were extremely abstract and schematic, whether it was in explaining developments in the Labour party, the relationship of the women's movement to industrial struggle, or the economic policy of a future socialist government.

Again, Bea Campbell was a major culprit. Bea elaborated in a very tautological fashion, the argument that trade unions had been forced into a patriarchal, parochi-



JOHN HARRIS

Women on strike for AUEW recognition: common struggle does more for liberation than passive propagandism

al mould through the development of Capitalist production techniques and that these developments excluded the vast majority of women from any role in decision making about their own class and personal lives.

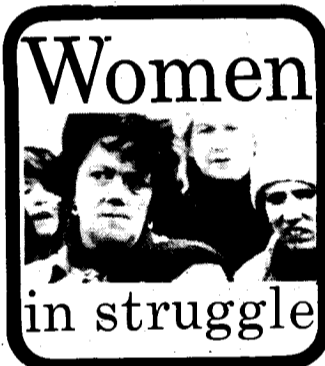
All true of course, but Bea went on to rather arrogantly dismiss the accumulated experience of class struggle over the last 150 years on how to fight the employers and winning victories out of them.

Of course NALGO members need to be brought into the mainstream of the movement, but the idea that they 'have nothing to learn from the experiences of workers in BL or the craft unions' as Bea argued in a ludicrously short-sighted and sectarian view.

Whether you work in a hospital, a car factory, or a DHSS office — the only way you are going to get a wage increase or save a job is through organising collective industrial action.

This approach is not a product of masculine domination over centuries, but of an aggressive working class consciousness that was forced into existence by the brutal encroachments of capitalism on the lives of working class people.

Now this does not mean women's oppression is not a central issue for socialists. Far from it. What it does



mean is that feminists like Bea Campbell need to relinquish their passive propagandist conception of women's liberation and realise that it is only through the common mobilisation of women and men, together in struggle against a class that is grinding them down, that men are going to be broken from the disfigured conceptions that they have of women.

What does this mean in practice for socialist feminists?

It means re-diverting a lot of fire away from militants at the base of the movement — and on to the labour bureaucracy that has been historically responsible for reproducing patriarchal values within the working class.

It means demanding of the TUC, for instance, that they spend some of their £6 million grant for TU education from the Tories on courses on Gay Rights, Oppression at Work, etc.

It means commissioning articles from well placed, sympathetic feminist journalists so that they utilise their positions to open up a serious debate with the TUC leaders on how they can transform themselves and their unions' attitude towards women, blacks, gays, etc.

It means being honest with ourselves as socialists by recognising that it is much, much easier for us to berate Syd or Bert who is vainly trying to stop redundancies at his place of work, than it is to attack Terry, Moss, or David, about institutionalised sexism within the unions they lead.

Unfortunately and sadly, these principles were lacking in the contributions of most speakers at the Conference.

Maybe the material basis for this lay in the number of PPC's (Prospective Parliamentary Candidates) attending the Conference.

Finally, lip-service was paid in a number of workshops to the Lucas Aerospace workers' plan movement.

'If only we had more such plans for more industries how much stronger we would be,' one speaker argued.

When is the left going to start growing up and stop playing at trade union politics?

Lucas Industries have experienced 8,000 redundancies plus the victimisation of Mike Cooley since the Plan was conceived!

The Lucas Plan is just as much a product of Dohovan's 'respectabilisation' of union management relations in the sixties as it is the growth of permanent negotiation machinery in industry.

Liquidation

In many ways it has helped the process of liquidation of a combative independent shop stewards movement.

Again it is much easier to argue on the shop floor at Lucas that 'we should be making kidney machines rather than missiles' than it is to wage an argument for all-out strike action to stop the employers.

Look at the problem from the employers view. If you know your shop stewards are incapable of taking industrial action against your redundancy programme — then you can roll-up the shop floor organisation like a carpet and place it in the dustbin.

This is what has happened in the 4,000 plant closures in the North West over the past four years.

These are lessons which the GLC itself has also failed to learn. What's the point of spending hundreds of thousands of pounds on Greater London Enterprise Boards when the average worker has no confidence that his trade union can be effective in defending his/her job?

The GLC's cash should be redirected to sponsoring industrial struggle against plant closure.

We need to return to the basic principles of left wing trade unionism that brought the labour movement into exist-

ence. As Tom Mann said on Tower Hill in 1889, during the Great Dockers Strike, that marked the rebirth of trade unionism;

'The gaffers say they can't afford a tanner, that they are going to lay the lads off.'

There's nowt for it — you'll have to roll thee sleeves up. I've told Lord Davenport that every port in the land will be brought to a standstill if we don't get our right.'

They got the tanner.

Such an attitude, crude, sexist and economic as it was, nevertheless contained a profound kernel of truth that many delegates to the LCC conference failed to learn.

Millions of trade unionists have deserted Labour because working class organisations were effete and ineffective.

They possessed a large paunch and no teeth. The renaissance of the labour movement lies in the mobilisation of mass struggle, and through principled leadership, becoming able to impose defeats on the capitalists.

The success of such struggles on a mass scale is the fundamental bedrock of the flourishing of a socialist culture that can go well beyond the ideas of Tom Mann.

Bigoted mum faces court rebuff

By Jenny Fisher

MR. Justice Woolf has ruled that the DHSS circular which advises doctors they don't need to inform parents if they give contraceptives to the under-16s is a partial victory for women fighting to control their own fertility.

The victory lies in the fact that a young woman can now visit her doctor or family planning clinic for advice on contraception knowing that the doctor/FPA staff probably won't inform her parents if she doesn't want them to.

However, the circular doesn't direct doctors that they must respect the wishes of an under-16 year old. And it'll still be easier to slip into the chemist for a packet of Durex, or get them from a slot machine, than to go to the doctor's hoping not to bump into your mum's friends, and that nothing will upset your alibi.

Furthermore, the ruling only rests on the fact that contraceptives aren't an 'instrument for the commission of a crime'. The judge admitted that doctors could be guilty of a crime if they 'intentionally encourage unlawful sexual intercourse'.

Roman Catholic Mrs. Gillick brought her case against the DHSS and her Area Health Authority to protect her 5 Roman Catholic daughters. Said daughters spent the day of the court case at home with Mrs. Gillick's 5 Roman Catholic sons, praying for 'mum to win her battle' (Daily Mirror).

After the ruling, Mr. Gillick commented 'God help the doctor who puts my school-age daughters on the Pill. ... What it means now is that we are a breeding farm for the state'. Conventionally, the Pill is regarded as being 99.8% safe in protecting women from this...

Local clinics, however, welcomed the chance to carry on working to prevent the growing number of under-16 year old pregnancies and abortions.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Gillick plans an appeal...

A QUESTION OF SOLIDARITY
Independent Trade Unions In South Africa

Published by Socialist Forum for Southern Africa Solidarity. Available (at 90p plus 20p post) c/o SO, 28 Middle Lane, London N8.

90p

Bob Fine

NEWHAM 8

A national demonstration in support of the 'Newham 8', Asian youths facing conspiracy charges after defending themselves against attack, has been called for September 24 in East Ham.

The trial is due to be held at Snaresbrook Crown Court October 24.

There will be a picket every Monday, and labour movement bodies should organise now for maximum support.

Send invitations for speakers, or resolutions of support, to Newham 8 Defence Campaign, c/o PO Box 273, London E7 9JN.



International news

Unions and Reagan

A CENTRAL component of Reagan's arrogant show of strength is the alarming political impotence of the America workers' movement.

Appallingly it was at a trade union conference — the convention of the International Longshoremen's Association, in Florida — that Reagan made his most blood curdling threats against Nicaragua.

And on July 19 Reagan's administration announced the appointment of top union bureaucrat Lane Kirkland, President of the AFL-CIO [the US equivalent of the TUC] to a post on the newly created 'bipartisan national commission on Central America'. Head of the commission is warmonger Henry Kissinger, who has openly advocated the use of troops in Central America, and whose bloody record includes 'destabilisation' of Allende's Chile and the genocidal bombing of Vietnam.

Of course in the USA the two main parties, Republicans and Democrats, are both bosses' parties, though both [as the ILA convention shows] are able to enlist support from various sections of the trade union bureaucracy. A 'bipartisan' commission is simply an exercise to debate the various views of the American ruling class.

Kirkland is a veteran, vicious anti-communist in the mould of his late predecessor George Meany. The AFL-CIO's international department works hand-in-glove with the CIA as an agency for the suppression of left wing influence in the workers' movement. The confederation actively supported the US war effort in Vietnam.

But even the AFL-CIO is notionally pledged to oppose American intervention in El Salvador. And leaders of 12 US unions have sponsored a National Labour Committee in support of Democracy and Human Rights in El Salvador — which has just completed a fact-finding tour of El Salvador that returned denouncing current US policies.

The fight to build on this opposition, and pull Kirkland out of the Reagan/Kissinger committee must be linked to the fight for labour movement boycott and strike action to halt the war drive in Central America.

Reagan rushes arms to Chad Threat to Gaddafi

IN A new exercise in intimidation, the Reagan administration has issued a blunt warning to Colonel Gaddafi's Libyan regime to halt its military support to the rebel forces of ex-President Goukoni Oueddi in Chad.

Weight was added to this warning by an express shipment of \$10 million in arms and military equipment to the government forces of President Hissene Habre, the chosen stooge of French and American imperialism in the central African country.

And on board the aircraft carrier Eisenhower, steaming off the coast of Libya, the crew was reportedly on full

By Geoff Bates

alert, having deliberately violated Libyan airspace last month in a show of force.

In 1981, a similar show of strength led to the shooting down of Libyan jets by US Tomcat fighters over the Libyan Gulf.

Meanwhile Reagan's efforts in Chad come as a supplement to the French airlift of tons of arms, ammunition and other equipment ordered by Francois Mitterand's 'Socialist' government to back up Habre's pliable regime

in Chad.

The American-backed Mobutu dictatorship in Zaïre has sent 250 paratroopers and promised up to 2,000 troops to assist Habre, and further backing is forthcoming from Sudan, Egypt, and Gaddafi's new-found 'brother', King Hassan of Morocco.

The events in Chad underline above all the new determination of US imperialism to hold back any further encroachments on the authority of imperialist rule — even when, as in this instance, the immediate imperialist power concerned is France and not the USA.



North and South

by Paddy Dollard

Why Benn's plan won't do

TONY BENN has outlined a policy for ending the conflict in Northern Ireland in his Guardian column on July 18.

He wants to make the proposal for British withdrawal central to public debate in Britain. 'For too long those who have so courageously advocated it have been denounced as if they supported terrorism', he says.

Benn's solution is this:

1. Britain should set a date for withdrawal, not more than two or three years ahead.

2. The UN should be invited to send troops to replace those of Britain.

3. A tripartite agreement should be negotiated — 'including safeguarding of human rights' — between Britain, the Southern Irish state, and 'a new Northern Ireland government'

4. There should be an amnesty for prisoners 'held under the emergency'

5. Financial aid should be given to the new Northern Ireland government, equal to what is now spent on 'security' and the present British subsidies to Northern Ireland, for a five year period.

This is, essentially, the 'independent Northern Ireland' policy long favoured by the Ulster Defence Association (UDA) and by one or two Catholic mavericks like former SDLP socialist Paddy Devlin. It begs questions that Benn does not even consider, let alone try to answer — and these are the decisive questions.

What would be the political system in an independent Northern Ireland? Majority rule such as the Protestant majority in the present Northern Ireland Assembly call for? Rule by the Protestant majority artificially built into the state?

The references to 'guarantees' suggests that Benn's trend of thought would lead him to answer yes. The Catholics have no reason to believe such guarantees, and would fight on indefinitely rather than accept it.

They would be right to do so, for majority rule would be sectarian rule, whatever the guarantees. For 11 years the British government, though it makes propaganda that the Six Counties are the democratic expression of the rights of the Protestant majority, has in practice refused to let them exercise their majority. Why? Because there is no way that 'majority rule' in N.Ireland could avoid being, or quickly becoming, Protestant sectarian rule. The British government knows it — and so do the Northern Ireland Catholics.

The 'independent Northern Ireland' policy is unviable because the Six Counties is not a stable entity — it would quickly dissolve into communal civil war. If the South could be kept out of it, all the UN could hope to do would be to freeze the conflict at a certain point, as in the Lebanon.

The explosive communal eruption now occurring in Cey-

lon, with its mass movement of people to their own 'safe' areas, shows us what would inevitably happen in an 'independent Northern Ireland'.

Benn hopes that such proposals and a British declaration that it was going 'would force both communities in Northern Ireland to discuss how they could best cooperate to tackle the real (!) problems of the province. These are mass unemployment, bad housing, poverty, inequality and social deprivation, the solutions to which require reconciliation and political action, especially by the Labour movement, that could override the sectarian hostilities that have been deliberately encouraged to divert people from the main tasks that have to be faced'.

Division

The ruling class in both Britain and Ireland encouraged and took advantage of the communal division: it is much deeper-rooted than that, though.

The 'real problems' include the problem that — in social and political fact — shapes and conditions all others: the problem of the right to national self-determination of the majority of the Irish people. That is what the Catholics fight for.

To appeal to 'bread and butter questions' as 'the real issue' — though where possible working class unity should be built even on this minimal basis — is to repeat the error of the 'socialism-the-only-answer' activists who over a decade ago were outflanked in N.Ireland by the rising IRA. Militant is the heir of such politics for Ireland.

Another argument thrown in by Benn is that Britain sees a united Ireland as possibly posing a military threat. This is out of date by three decades and an epochal revolution in military technology (from battleships and World War 2 aircraft to Cruise missiles).

In fact Benn's policy is an unjellable mix of the UDA, Militant and the Communist Party (Bill of Rights/guarantees). The UN presence would not jell it. Nothing could.

The solution is a united Ireland with, within it, as much autonomy for Ireland's natural minority (the Protestants) as is compatible with the rights of the majority.

Footnote: A by-product of Benn's article was a letter to the Guardian by Merlyn Rees, former Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, which claimed that the Labour Cabinet discussed British withdrawal from Northern Ireland in the mid-'70s after the Orange general strike brought down the power-sharing executive.

They didn't withdraw. They threw the full weight of the British state into beating down the Catholics, a policy continued now by the Tory government.

Thatcher boosts junta

By Terry Smith

WELL pleased with his official visit to the Thatcher government in Britain, Turkish Foreign Minister Iker Turkmen told an Ankara press conference that:

'Britain is pleased with the developments in Turkey, and has agreed that democracy in Turkey should be developed in keeping with the dictates of the stability the country needs.'

For the Thatcher government to refer to General Evren's savage military junta in Turkey as 'developing democracy' is perhaps an indicator they have in mind for British unions.

Currently 64 leaders of the main left wing union confederation DISK face possible death sentences in a show trial centred on their politi-

cal activity prior to the 1980 coup.

Hundreds more political opponents of the regime face trial and possible draconian sentences.

British MPs have written to support the defendants in one such trial, who are linked to the Turkish Peace Association: in return the MPs have been accused of committing an illegal act by the Turkish military court!

Captain Atilla Ulku accused them of 'seeking to unduly influence, pressurise and thereby threaten the court,' and asked for additional proceedings to be taken against one of the defendants named in the letter.

The Turkey Solidarity Cam-

paign in Britain is planning for a series of events around the third anniversary of the coup on September 12.

A public meeting is being held in Hackney Town Hall on Saturday September 10 with speakers invited from Hackney and Islington councils.

A feature of this event will be the British premiere of a video on the trial of 770 people from the Black Sea town of Fatsa, 268 of whom face a possible death penalty, and the launching of a pamphlet on the struggle of the Fatsa townspeople, which has been produced by the Islington and Hackney borough councils.

It is also hoped to have in attendance a representative from one of the delegations which have visited the trial this year.

Japanese key to Pacific strategy

THE USA is stepping up its military and nuclear presence in the Pacific. In particular, this means pressure on the right-wing Nakasone government in Japan to allow US nuclear bombers on Japanese soil and Japanese involvement in preparations for submarine war-

fare. This will mean an increase in the Japanese defence budget of 8% to 16,400 billion yen per annum.

The US Army completed its major withdrawal from Japan in 1957, leaving behind a small force in Okinawa, and the headquarters of the 9th Army Corps in Camp Zama near Tokyo, considered to be merely a paper command, but actually capable of carrying out a vast plan of operations on a quick build-up of strength. The US Air Force has not been present in Japan for some 10 years.

All this changed in 1978 with the 'Guidelines for Japan — US Defence Co-operation'. Since then joint manoeuvres have been strengthened and accelerated to the point where Nakasone can say, 'Japan is a partner of the Western allies', implying that the relations now equal those of the NATO alliance.

The participation of the Japanese Armed Forces in the Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC 80) exercise was the turning point in this development. The Reagan administration is putting tremendous pressure on Japan to accept the responsibility for ASW (anti-submarine warfare) operations, air defence and readiness to mine the 3 straits (Soya, Tsugaru and Tsushima), the defence of 1,000 miles of sea lanes from the north of the Philippines to the west of Guam, and much more. This fits into

US strategy for a counter-offensive against the Soviet Union from the sea in case of an emergency (for example in the middle East), an addition to its reliance on the RDF (Rapid Deployment Force) and Swing Strategy.

The dramatic build-up of the US Navy and the scheduled deployment of Tomahawk missiles (sea-launched Cruise missiles) in the Pacific in June 1984 is to be seen in the same context.

As the US/Japan joint exercises make progress, US forces are now returning to mainland Japan, in the shared use of Japanese Defence Forces bases including anti-aircraft radar stations. The most symbolic development is the planned deployment of 48 F16 fighter-bombers at Misawa, which has been approved by the Japanese government.

At Misawa the F16s will be capable of carrying out 'penetration missions' deep into Soviet air-space for direct theatre nuclear attacks targeting ground, air and naval bases and military concentrations of the USSR. The USA is now demanding that housing for US officers and families be built at Misawa, at the cost of 500 million dollars, and a new runway is also part of the demand. The Japanese Defence Forces are quite willing to meet these costly demands, as with other bases.

Gensuikya (the Japanese CND) sees this Misawa base as the thin end of the wedge and is determined to fight it every inch of the way.

New! **TURKEY** INFORMATION BULLETIN

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FATSA: A TOWN ON TRIAL

International news

Is Reagan bluffing on Central America?



Reagan: a war in Nicaragua would be a regional war.

THREE flotillas of US warships cruising off the Caribbean and Pacific shores of Nicaragua equipped with helicopters, fighter aircraft, artillery and cruise missiles; 5,000 US troops on six month 'exercises' near the Honduran border with Nicaragua; and open blustering threats to 'quarantine' the Sandinista regime: has Ronald Reagan's administration stepped across the threshold and embarked upon a military intervention in Central America?

Or is the whole massive build-up an exercise in traditional 'gunboat diplomacy' simply designed to force political concessions from the Sandinistas, the liberation fighters in El Salvador and the Cuban leadership?

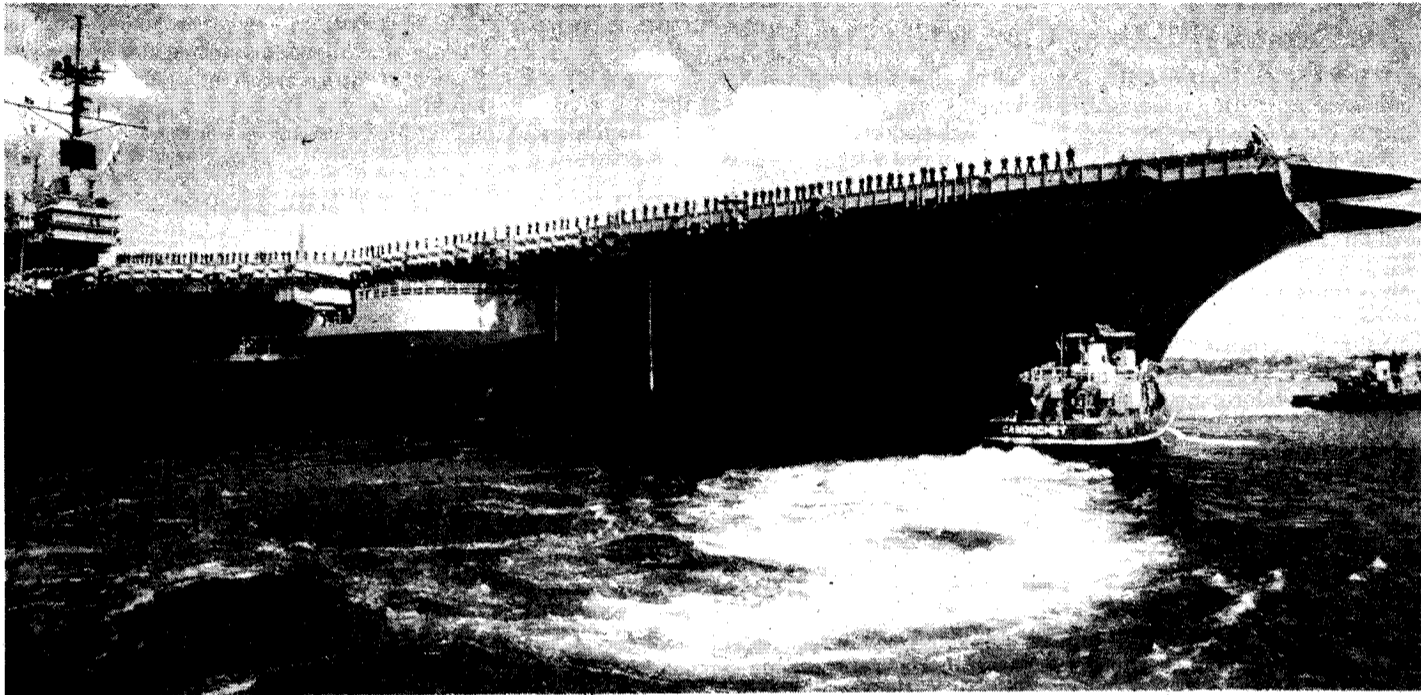
It is certainly the case that when so much fire power is concentrated in such a heated atmosphere, the dividing line between a show of force and the outbreak of a shooting war may well prove to be a faint and narrow one.

But despite the murderous activities of the 10,000 CIA financed 'contras', conducting cross-border raids into the North of Nicaragua from US-run bases in Honduras, the whole US activity remains within the general lines of a display of sabre-rattling. The contras cannot win short of a full-scale intervention by Honduran and American troops.

Verbal

On a verbal level, of course, the offensive against the Sandinistas has been stepped up. The brutal imperialist arrogance with which the US views the countries and peoples of Central America are perhaps best summed up in the candid words of Deane Hinton, until recently US Ambassador in El Salvador, who indignantly told Newsweek:

'The Soviet bloc has come to play in our backyard, and when we respond, we're accused of "escalating" the



5 times bigger than Falklands flag-ship Invincible, USS Ranger heads out of San Diego to 'show the flag'

By Harry Sloan

conflict'. (18/7/83)
This is the line which the US imperialists have with increasing success persuaded the mass media — even those critical of Reagan's tactics — to echo in the coverage of Central America.

Of course it is true that the USA regards the area as its own — rundown, blood-stained, debt-ridden, dictatorial and cruelly exploited — backyard. But Hinton's chiefs in Washington know full well that the bureaucratic leadership in the Kremlin accept such a state of affairs, and have no wish to jeopardise their 'peaceful co-existence' with imperialism in what is so clearly the US 'sphere of influence'.

The claim of Soviet involvement is a handy pretext for US intervention against Nicaragua and for a concerted move to re-establish imperialist authority in the region.

Neither Brezhnev nor Andropov has shown the slightest interest or concern with the struggles in Central America. Sandinista representatives at the last CPSU Congress were left to organise their own 'fringe' meeting outside the official agenda. Soviet military supplies and assistance have been limited in the extreme to a fledgling regime struggling to defend itself against the massive armed might of US imperialism and its stooge regimes in Central America.

Soviet ships

Asked last week what substance there was to US claims that a dozen Soviet ships laden with arms and military supplies were headed for Nicaragua, Sandinista Foreign Minister Miguel d'Escoto replied 'I only wish the reports were true'.

The Soviet reluctance to get seriously involved in a confrontation in Central America is echoed by the attitude of the Cuban bureaucracy — though their outward rhetoric has been adjusted to the different climate and audience of the region.

Though willing to extend a certain degree of aid to the Sandinista regime after it had successfully ousted the US-backed Somoza dictatorship, Fidel Castro has skillfully avoided any explicit pledge to go to its defence against an imperialist attack.

And he has consistently stated the view that Nicaragua should not seek to become 'a new Cuba' by expropriating capitalism, but should simply build a 'new Nicaragua' on the basis of a mixed economy.

The Cuban attitude to the struggle in El Salvador has been even more tentative: repeated efforts by the CIA to produce proof of Cuban arms and advisors being supplied to the FMLN guerrillas have failed lamentably.

Recent speeches from Castro have been directed increasingly towards procuring negotiations between the

petty bourgeois leaders of the FDR-FMLN political alliance and the USA, to open the way to some form of settlement.

Reform

This approach renounces any revolutionary overthrow of capitalism and restricts the goal in advance to some form of 'democratic' reform that would give the FDR leaders a role in a future Salvadoran government.

Last week — under the impact of Reagan's military power politics and no doubt some arm-twisting from his backers in the Kremlin — Castro went one step further, and offered to halt military aid to the Sandinistas if agreement were reached to free the region of all foreign arms and advisors.

Castro's retreat under pressure is no doubt one of the factors that have brought parallel retreats by the FDR-FMLN leaders and by the Sandinistas themselves.

Monday saw the first ever official meeting between Reagan's hard-line special envoy Richard Stone and FDR representative Ruben Zamora (the one-time minister in El Salvador's 1979 'reformist' junta, who was described two months before the formation of the FDR as 'a close ally of the US State Department').

Though US spokespersons were reticent over the outcome of the meeting, Zamora declared himself 'definitely more hopeful', and appears to have agreed that a meeting between Stone and the full political and diplomatic commission of the FDR-FMLN would be 'worthwhile'.

No concessions

Since no concessions are on offer from the US and its sponsored junta in El Salvador, the value of such talks can only lie in the adoption of a softer line by the FDR — with potentially lethal results for the FMLN guerrillas in the field against the US-backed Salvadoran army, and for the workers and peasants of El Salvador.

Meanwhile a similar climb-down has also come from the Sandinistas, with the unveil-

ing of a 'peace plan' by Commander Daniel Ortega, co-ordinator of the revolutionary government.
Though correctly stressing that the situation in Central America stems from US aggression, Ortega used the platform of a 150,000-strong rally in Leon to announce a six-point plan for a 'negotiated political solution' involving

- An immediate non-aggression pact between Nicaragua and Honduras;
- An absolute halt to all arms shipments to 'any of the forces involved in conflict in El Salvador';
- An absolute halt to military support to 'forces opposed to any of the governments in Central America';
- Agreement not to establish foreign military bases and suspend military exercises with foreign armies in Central America.

Ortega went on to proclaim his support for the efforts of the Contadora group of alarmed bourgeois governments — Mexico, Venezuela, Columbia, and Panama — to get talks going.

Coexistence

And he specifically voiced the call for the 'fundamental principles of peaceful coexistence among nations' which has been the watchword for those seeking to renounce any revolutionary ambition since the rise of the Soviet bureaucracy headed by Josef Stalin in the mid 1920s.

Nor is the Sandinista quest for 'peaceful coexistence' restricted to foreign policy: Ortega's regime continues to favour the existence of a 'mixed economy' within which a substantial private sector stands as an obstacle to a planned economy and a potential 'fifth column' to assist any more concerted efforts by the 'contras' to overturn the Sandinistas.

The reality of course is that no 'negotiated settlement' acceptable to the USA would resolve any of the crushing problems of the workers and peasants of Central America: the quest for such a solution, or for 'peaceful coexistence' between a radical petty bourgeois regime such as Nicaragua and brutal right wing dictatorships such as

Guatemala, Honduras and Slavador is a fool's errand which can only mislead the working class and endanger the gains that have been made in the Nicaraguan revolution.

There seems little doubt that in responding this way to US gunboat diplomacy the 'revolutionary' leaderships of Central America are overestimating Reagan's strength and capacity to follow through on his threats.

It is comparatively easy for the President to whip up a task force of battleships and dispatch troops for 'exercises': but to engage in serious intervention in either El Salvador or Nicaragua would trigger a regional war which would rapidly escalate beyond the scale of the forces currently at his disposal and without any apparent end in sight.

Already top Democratic Party leaders have shown the divisions within the ruling class on the issue, declaring themselves opposed to any US war in Central America.

An escalation into full scale military involvement would create a huge political crisis in the USA and mass opposition — with elections come in 1984.

Cash at stake

But it is not only the domestic scene that alarms employers: there is a vast amount of cash involved too. One reason why the Contadora group has been running around in such a frenzied way is because it fears the impact on the Latin American masses of a full-scale war. Without a doubt an impact of such a war would be to intensify the pressure on Mexico and other regimes massively in hock to the world bankers to default on their punitive debt repayments. The effect even one government taking such action could be cataclysmic for the banking system, with knock-on effects in the USA and Europe.

Intervention may seem easy from a purely military point of view — though US military brass are not too confident that the operation would be a simple one — but is hugely complicated in political terms.

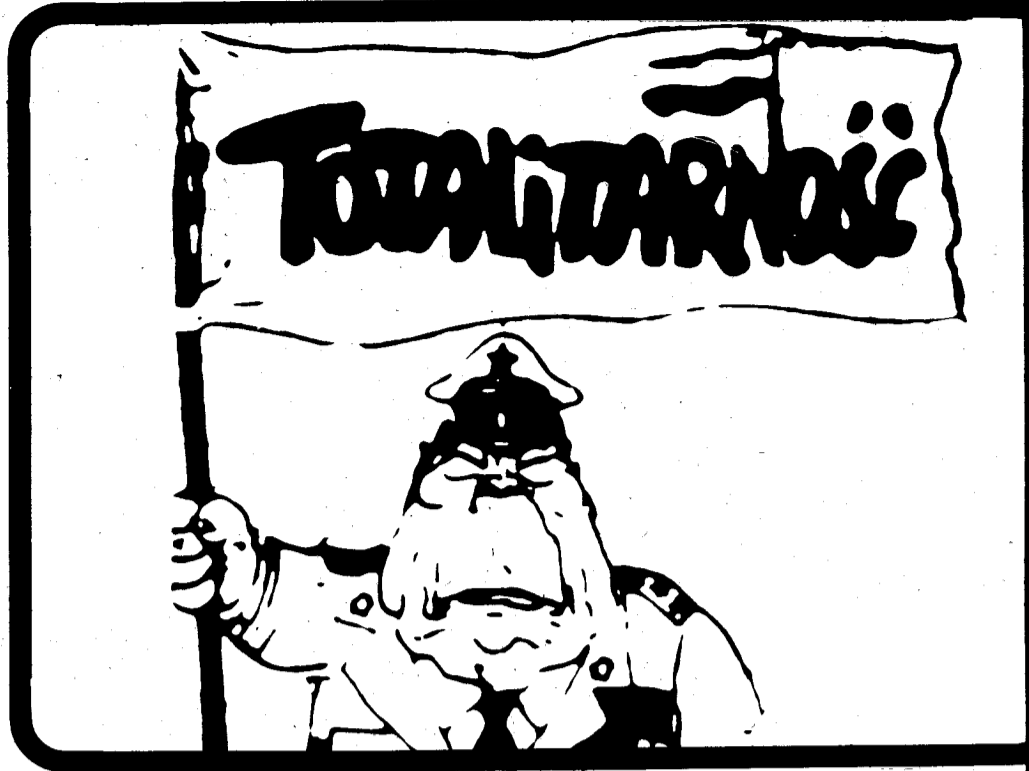
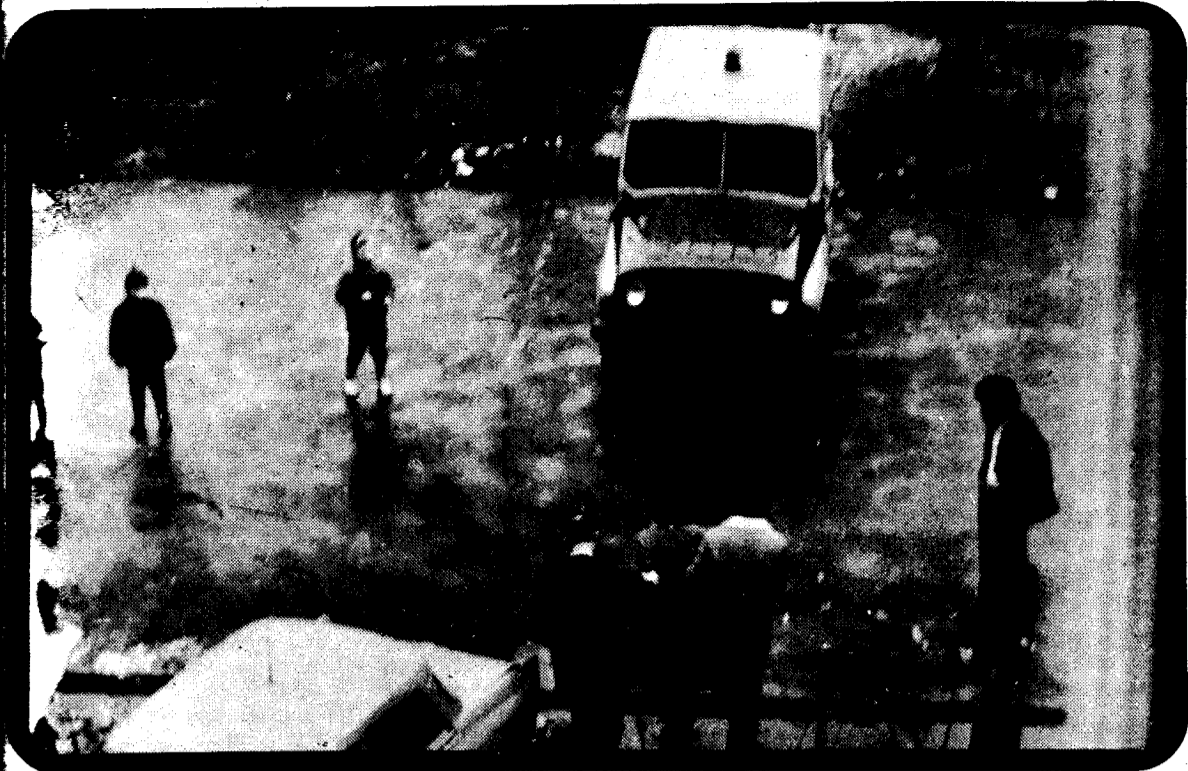
Even assuming Reagan were successful in ousting the Sandinistas and inflicting setbacks on the FMLN, the problem of installing a sustaining new, pliable, right wing regimes in the teeth of mass opposition would prove an open-ended nightmare for US imperialism into the next century.

Hard though the opposition are for those in the front line the only way to combat Reagan's offensive is by staying firm and fighting to raise the widest possible popular resistance amongst the workers and peasants of Latin America.



US hands off El Salvador!

El Salvador Solidarity Campaign: c/o 29 Islington Park Street, London N1.



The case of Vladimir Klebanov – fighter for union rights Andropov's men say this mine

VLADIMIR Klebanov and Alexei Nikitin are both miners from the Donbas Coalfield in the Soviet Ukraine.

They are also very brave men — they have to be, because for several years now they have been hounded and persecuted by the Soviet authorities for speaking out against violations of workers' rights in the Soviet Union.

Klebanov was also involved in the formation of a short-lived Free Trade Union, which pre-dated the emergence of Solidarity in Poland.

Both men are currently detained in Psychiatric hospitals: there is no evidence that either is mentally ill.

In 1958, Klebanov who was a foreman began to take up his fellow miners' complaints against the mine-management at Makeyevka.

'I demand correct wage payments and in particular, an end to the concealment of industrial injuries in official reports; the correct definition of invalid categories and proper compensation for miners who suffered injuries through the fault of management. I demanded a prosecution of the criminals who steal valuable materials — men in important industrial and soviet positions — an end to bribery, the incorrect allocation of the housing fund and so on. (For 10 years) I was the instigator of collective complaints

and collected the workers' signatures.'

In 1959 he had been suspended for 20 days and in 1961 he was reported to the KGB by the mine management. In 1962 his 'invalid status' — due to eye damage at work — was rescinded. He took his complaints to Moscow and complained in person to the highest authority, despite the fact that his complaints were 'upheld' the persecution did not stop.

Ukrainian miner Vladimir Klebanov tried to build a Solidarnosc-type trade union in the USSR. John Cunningham, a Yorkshire miner, reports on his fate



Klebanov

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When Klebanov went to Moscow again in 1964 he was arrested in the reception room of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Court. He was committed to Kashchenko City Psychiatric Hospital and kept there for 20 days. He was diagnosed as having a 'paranoid development of the personality'. On his release he returned to the Ukraine.

Back at Makeyevka, Klebanov found he had been sacked on the pretext that he 'left work on his own initiative... They were now armed with the 'diagnosis' from Kashchenko as well. A period of 3 years unemployment followed and in 1965 the police tried to throw Klebanov and his family out of their flat... but miners from where I worked prevented this arbitrary act...

Klebanov fought for reinstatement and eventually he was given a job as a design engineer with the mine administration, having qualified himself by correspondence course.

Not much is actually known about what happened next but it appears that unrest caused by the adverse conditions and a new wage system exploded in September 1968. There were protests, possibly strikes, by the miners at Makeyevka and probably other mines as well. In the following months large numbers of Ukrainian miners were 'transferred' to other mines in the Soviet Union, some being forced to work in such bad conditions that they quit. On September 12th Klebanov was arrested and charged with slandering the Soviet State.

In February of the following year he was sent to Dnepropetrovsk Special Psychiatric Hospital for compulsory 'treatment'.

'The psychiatrist's job was to beat out of my head what was socially dangerous... as a trade union organiser, I came out with criticisms of the management. This was "undermining their authority". This is what they try to cure people of here!'

From this time until his discharge in 1973 Klebanov was kept in a succession of Psychiatric Hospitals and Prisons. Such was his isolation from the rest of the world that his wife thought he was dead. As a protest against his arrest Klebanov went on hunger strike. The authorities replied by throwing him in an isolation cell:—

'There was no glass in the window. It was damp. The cold rose up to my ears. The late September wind blew in. On the second day I was beaten... by a Junior Lieutenant of the MVD (Ministry of Internal Security) who first shackled my hands and feet, then threw me on the ground and kicked me.'

After 20 days on hunger strike he was shackled and force-fed by having a tube pushed down his nose. Finally he came off hunger strike because no one knew about it.

Not much is known of how Klebanov was treated inside Dnepropetrovsk, but the Soviet dissident, Leonid Plyusch spent some 4 years there, 1973-76, and he had this to say of his experience there:—

'Most of the inhabitants of Dnepropetrovsk Special Psychiatric Hospital are mentally deranged — murderers, rapists, hooligans. There are about 60 political prisoners, in general mentally healthy people... the horror of the madhouse gripped me from the start. In the ward there were more patients than beds. I was put as a 3rd person on 2 beds that had been pushed together. One man's tongue was lolling out, another man was rolling his eyes, a 3rd walked around unnaturally bent over. Some lay and groaned with pain — they had been given injections of sulphur* As they explained to me, they were being punished for bad behaviour.'

Finally in June 1973 the compulsory 'treatment' ceased. He went home, but, they wouldn't give him work. he was 'blacklisted'. All Soviet workers have to carry a 'labour book' which contains a history of the individual's work record. The mine-management at Makeyevka had written in his 'Dismissed in connection with arrest'.

Repeated appeals to State and Party institutions finally got him partial financial compensation for his period of unemployment. If it was intended as a bribe then it fail-

*Actually Sulfazine — a 1% preparation of purified sulphur mixed with Peach Oil. It has not been used in the West since the 1930s. It has no therapeutic value whatsoever and is used solely for punishment.

ed for he carried on.

Over the years 1975-78 Klebanov met more and more people like himself, who had made the long and costly trip to Moscow in an attempt to seek justice. For all these unfortunate people — endless queues, forms to be filled, endless questions, more queues often till an individual's savings were exhausted and they then had to make the long trek home with nothing gained. Many, because they could not obtain resident's permits, slept in railway stations.

On one occasion, according to an eye witness '... before the eyes of hundreds of citizens from various cities across the country, one petitioner, driven to despair, committed suicide' in the waiting room of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU).

Finally a band of petitioners, among them Klebanov, came together and began to act collectively:—

'We are Soviet citizens from various towns of the Soviet Union — united in bitterness. We have been... sacked and left without means of livelihood... for speaking out against wasters of socialist property, poor working conditions, low pay, high rates of injury at work, speed up and increased output norms... the only response we get to our requests

is continuous persecution... a dog would not have the kind of humiliation and derision that we have suffered.'

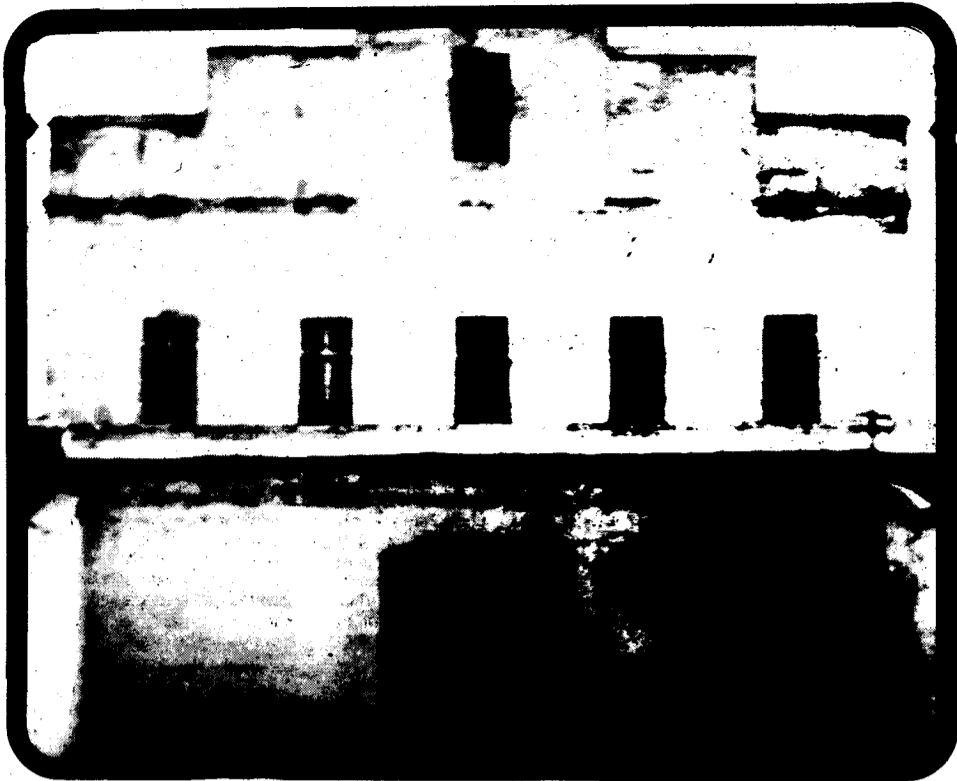
Vladimir Klebanov was prominent amongst these people. On the 20th May an 'Open Letter to International Opinion' was addressed to the West signed by 8 people, a further 'Open Letter' (from which the above extract is taken) was issued on 18th September 1977, this time signed by 25 people. Copies were sent to the press of the USSR and the Central Committee of the CPSU but they were never acknowledged or printed.

Finally on 1st February 1978 an 'Appeal to the International Labour Organisation and the Trade Unions in the West' was issued and signed by 43 people — members of the newly formed 'Free Trade Union Association of Working People in the Soviet Union'. Amongst the signatories was Vladimir Klebanov who played a leading role in its formation. According to one source Klebanov originally intended the FTUA to be a miners union, but changed his mind when other people showed an interest. The other factor was that many of the signatories, by the very fact of being in Mos-

Solidarnosc
WITH
EDMUND BALUKA
LET'S GET HIM
OUT OF GAOL

Edmund Baluka was recently jailed for five years by the Polish... They have offered to release him if he is prepared... Get your union to send... demanding his release.





Soviet prison hospital!

ner is insane

complaining about their execution, had been dismissed from their jobs, therefore the new union had to all-embracing.

Along with the 'Appeal' he issued the statutes of the FTUA signed by the 43 original members. There are another 160 whose names, for various reasons, were not published. Members of the FTUA 'should be equal and non-manual workers whose rights and interests have been illegally flouted by the administrative, Party and judicial organs.' Unlike the official unions, the FTUA officials from top to bottom are elected by the members and are accountable to them.

The final section (4) stated:— 'As soon as the FTUA is recognised by the ILO or trade unions of foreign countries, as soon as it receives moral and financial support, the State will be reviewed in the light of the special situation of working people in our country. The review will be carried out not earlier than one year after the foundation of the Association.'

The promised 'review' never happened. The FTUA was stamped out by the KGB as soon as it made its public appearance. As one of the leading figures of the FTUA, Klebanov was one of the first to be arrested.



Andropov

On February 10th he was taken by the KGB to a Moscow Police Station where a psychiatrist was waiting for him. He was accused of placing a bomb in the Moscow Metro. He was then sent for 2 months to No. 7 Psychiatric Hospital in Moscow.

On his release Klebanov and his comrades in the FTUA held their first press conference, to which journalists from the West attended. Further arrests followed.

The owner of the flat where the conference was held was arrested and Klebanov and 2 colleagues were arrested on 19th December while walking down Gorky Street in Moscow. Klebanov was separated from his colleagues and again taken to No. 7 Psychiatric Hospital. From here he was taken South to Donetsk.

Protests from fellow FTUA members and supporters secured his release and Klebanov soon returned to Moscow. Another attempt was made to arrest him on January 28th, 1978, again in Gorky Street, Moscow. A fight followed in which Klebanov with the aid of some FTUA members and passers-by beat off the KGB. Around this time Klebanov went of his own free will to be examined by an independent psychiatrist, Dr. Alexander Voloshonovich who was also a consultant to the Working Committee to Investigate the Use of Psychiatry for Political Purposes.

In a 6 page report Dr. Voloshonovich reached the following conclusion about Klebanov's state of health:—

'On the basis of my questioning and an objective examination of Vladimir Klebanov one can draw the conclu-

sion that Victor Alexandrovich Klebanov has an underdeveloped personality which shows a degree of hypersensitivity not amounting to psychiatric disturbance, at the present time, as during the period of the offences he was charged with (1964, 1968) he has been aware of his actions and has been able to direct them. He is responsible for his actions.'

Obviously Klebanov was not, in any sense, insane.

This was not the end however, on 7th February the KGB pounced him again. This time they succeeded and Klebanov was taken to Donetsk Psychiatric Hospital, later being transferred to the Special Psychiatric Hospital in Dnepropetrovsk. While in either Donetsk or Dnepropetrovsk he was tried in his absence by the Donetsk Court. Even his wife wasn't allowed to be present.

In Dnepropetrovsk Klebanov was subjected to intensive 'treatment' by behaviour modification drugs and his physical and mental condition deteriorated to such an extent that grave fears were expressed as to his future.

One of the last reports to come out of the Soviet Union, reported in the Sunday Observer in November 1980 stated that he had been administered large doses of behaviour modification drugs intended for use with severe paranoids or schizophratics. His face was severely swollen and his features distorted, his complexion was yellow and physical movement was impaired. As well as suffering all this Klebanov was forbidden to walk in the hospital and allowed out only for 1 hour's exercise a day.

Scargill's response

"More people are dying in El Salvador"

Dear Arthur,

I am writing to you about the Ukrainian miner dissidents Vladimir Klebanov and Alexei Nikitin. It is some time now since anything has been heard about their well-being or whereabouts — certainly I have made enquiries and even Amnesty International don't know where they are. Would it not be possible for yourself to raise the question with the appropriate USSR body?

I know the issue has been discussed within the NUM in the past and I am aware that it was decided that enquiries could go no further, but that was over two years ago and I understand that Mr Effremenko who was then the Soviet Miners leader has since been expelled from his post. Would you therefore be good enough to make some enquiries afresh?

It is a difficult issue to raise I know, particularly when so many right-wingers are waiting to jump on any anti-Soviet bandwagon they can find (witness Bernard Levin and the recent antics of Mar Butler here in Sheffield) but I don't believe any service to socialism is rendered by ignoring the fact of repression within the USSR and particularly the abomination of consigning dissidents to so-called 'psychiatric' hospitals. What's more, when all is said and done Mr Nikitin and Mr Klebanov are miners — our people, if we can't speak out for them who can?

Please understand, I am not anti-Soviet, I am not a right-winger, nor do I ignore repression in other parts of the World (witness my recent article in the Yorkshire Miner on the repression of miners in Turkey) but these 2 men have suffered terribly for doing, what basically myself, you and countless other NUM members do every day, that is, defend, to the best of our ability, the living standards and conditions of our members.

I have been told that a delegation of Soviet miners is attending our annual conference in Perth this year. If this is true could you raise the question with them, I'm sure you could do this without in any way offending our guests or compromising ourselves as hosts.

Perhaps it would be possible for me to call in at the new HQ and have a chat with you about the matter, but I realise that your time is limited so I will understand if this can't be done. I work at Dinnington Colliery but am a Sheffielder, I'm on the Branch Committee at Dinno' and NUM delegate to the Sheffield DLP also on the GMC of the new Sheffield Central CLP — of course I'm writing this letter in a personal capacity. I look forward very much to hearing from you.

fraternally,
John Cunningham
PS. Welcome to Sheffield — it's a great City!

Dear Mr Cunningham,
I am in receipt of your letter raising the question of V. Klebanov and A. Nikitin.

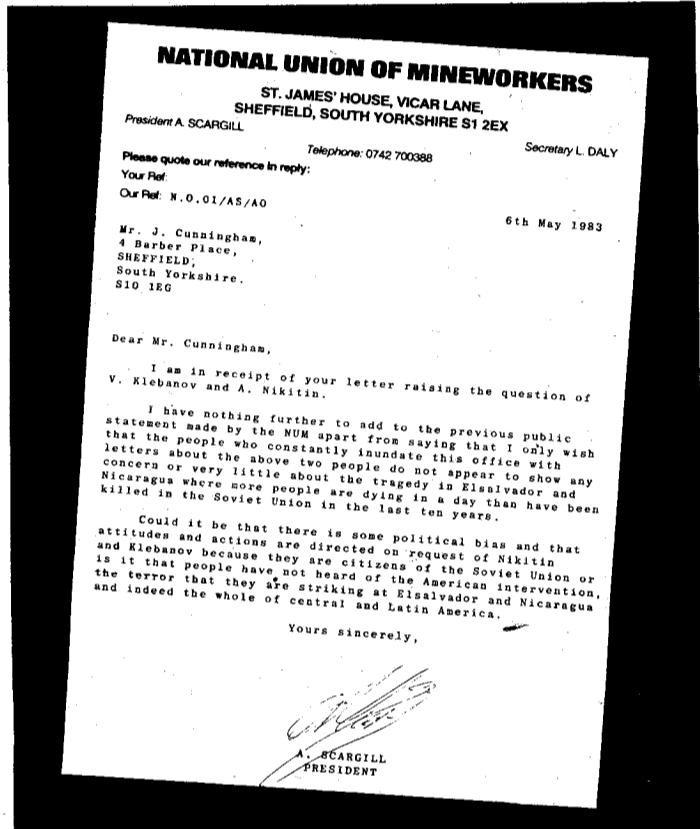
I have nothing further to add to the previous public statement made by the NUM apart from saying that I only wish that the people who constantly inundate this office with letters about the above two people do not appear

The National Union of Mineworkers has accepted the official USSR story that Klebanov is insane. This is how NUM president Arthur Scargill responded to an attempt to re-raise the issue.

your reply.

As well as totally ignoring my questions you suggest that I am acting out of political bias and that I am either uncaring or ignorant of US intervention in Nicaragua and El Salvador — all of which is totally untrue.

I believe it to be a disgrace for a person in your position to treat a fellow NUM member in such an evasive, derogatory and insulting manner and I think I deserve an apology



Scargill

to show any concern or very little about the tragedy in El Salvador and Nicaragua where more people are dying in a day than have been killed in the Soviet Union in the last ten years.

Could it be that there is some political bias and that attitudes and actions are directed on request of Nikitin and Klebanov because they are citizens of the Soviet Union or is it that people have not heard of the American intervention, the terror that they are striking at El Salvador and Nicaragua and indeed the whole of central and Latin America.

Yours sincerely,
A. Scargill
President

Dear Sir,
I am in receipt of your letter (May 6th) in reply to my letter of 26th April.

I have no intention, in this letter, of pursuing the issue of Mr. Klebanov and Mr. Nikitin as you do not appear to be concerned by their plight. However I do protest most strongly about the nature of

from you. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,
John Cunningham
(Branch Committee, Dinnington NUM writing in a personal capacity)

Dear Mr Cunningham,
I am in receipt of your further letter dated 15 May 1983 in which you suggest an apology is due from me for my previous letter dated 6 May.

I have no intention of issuing an apology for something that does not warrant one. I reiterate that the points made in my letter were in the context of the hundreds of letters I am receiving from various organisations and individuals about the cases of Klebanov and Nikitin, and it seems to me that there is an orchestrated campaign taking place directed towards my office.

It is well known that I have already made representations on behalf of Messrs Nikitin and Klebanov and my letter to the Russian Miners' President and his reply suddenly found themselves published in leading newspapers.

My letter to you was not evasive, it was not derogatory and it was not personally insulting.

My letter was certainly emphasising the concervative and orchestrated campaign, not on the issue of Nikitin and Klebanov, but of directing letters to me as President of the National Union of Mineworkers after it is known what the NUM have done on this issue.

Yours sincerely,
A Scargill
President

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SPOTLIGHT

Roosevelt Sykes, Harry James Farewell blues

ROOSEVELT Sykes and Harry James both appear in the catalogues under the general heading 'Jazz and Blues'. They both died in late July. Apart from that they didn't have much in common — But the differences between them tell us much about popular music this century.

James was a white trumpet player and band leader; Sykes was a black pianist and blues singer.

James died a wealthy man, famous far beyond the confines of the jazz scene; Sykes ended up comfortably off and well respected in limited circles — a far better situation than many of his contemporaries, but definitely not in the James league in terms of material success.

Sykes is credited with influencing Ray Charles, Fats Domino, and even Elvis Presley, and the kind of hard-driving urban blues he played has long been a part of the basic rock vocabulary.

Born in Elmar, Phillips County, in 1906, Sykes moved with his family to St. Louis in 1909. At the age of nine he ran away from home to play piano in the pool halls and brothels of St. Louis' 'Deep Morgan' area — once described as 'the ugliest spot in the world'.

Ugly it may have been, but it spawned some powerful music. At about the same time young Roosevelt started up there, Big Bill Broonzy, 'Jazz' Gillum and Washboard Sam were all to be heard in the neighbourhood.

Sykes soon established himself as a top blues player, and also as a bit of a flash harr. His nickname 'the Honeydipper' refers to an approach to life in general (and women in particular) that would these days be described as sexist, to say the least.

Prolific

He made his first records (for the Okeh label) in the late twenties, and in the thirties he recorded prolifically (though not particularly profitably) for the numerous small 'race' labels that specialised in black music mainly in Chicago.

Like all his contemporaries Sykes was totally eclipsed by the swing boom of the late

Jim Denham looks back

thirties (when people like Harry James hit the big-time) but unlike many he persevered, and was rewarded in some small measure by the revival of interest in the blues, sparked by folklorist Alan Lomax's 'rediscovery' of Leadbelly in the mid '40s.

The blues 'revival' — together with the increasingly bluesy style of the late-forties 'jump' bands like Louis Jordan's — in turn gave birth to rock n' roll. And while some black artists (notably Fats Domino and Joe Turner) did well out of the new fad, it was the white boys who really cleaned up.

Rock n' roll also sounded the final death knell for the old-style big swing bands — though some, like Harry James, kept going on a limited basis, appealing to ageing white middle class audiences on a nostalgia kick.

James was born in Albany, Georgia in 1916, into a family of circus musicians. In 1931 his family moved to Texas, where James became a professional trumpeter.

His first big break came in 1935 when he joined Ben Pollack's band — one of the few white dance bands with any real jazz feel at that time.

However, it wasn't Pollack, but a former sideman of his, clarinetist Benny Goodman, who discovered that a mass audience existed for a white dance band playing up-tempo jazz-inspired arrangements.

In 1936 Goodman's band was on its uppers and in desperation he threw caution to the wind and dug out the jazz arrangements acquired from the black band-leader, Fletcher Henderson. The kids in the dance halls went wild and, as they say, swing was born.

When Harry James joined the Goodman band in 1937,

it was riding high and Goodman was the undisputed 'King of Swing' with a fanatical following of 'bobby soxers' and lucrative sponsorship from Camel cigarettes.

To his credit, Goodman always acknowledged the debt he owed to Fletcher Henderson (the black arranger, of course, received no public acclaim and little financial gain from the juggernaut he'd set in motion) and made a point of featuring black players like Lionel Hampton and Teddy Wilson in trio and quartet spots.

James, however, was initially less willing to acknowledge the debt. Leftist jazz promoter John Hammond recalls being appalled by James' racist depreciation of black musicians, and decided something had to be done about it.

Hammond and singer Billie Holiday brought James along to hear Count Basie's black band with lyrical Buck Clayton leading the trumpet section. They proved their point. James was forced to admit that white players still had a lot to learn.

After a slow start in 1938 James' own band took off commercially. By the end of 1942 he had won the Coca Cola show's favourite recording poll and unseated Glen Miller for the top spot in Martin Block's 'Make Believe Ballroom' poll.

In June 1942 Columbia



Harry James (left) with Benny Goodman

announced a 'shellac famine' had been caused by demand for the James recording of 'I've heard that Song before', which was then the company's all-time biggest seller at 1,250,000 copies.

Dorsey and James didn't know it, but the success Sinatra brought them was to rebound back in their faces after the war when the record and radio companies realised they didn't need the expense involved in carrying the big bands.

All they needed was a solo singer like Sinatra backed by a studio orchestra.

Simple economics killed the big bands, and though Harry James and a few others kept going sporadically throughout the '50s and '60s, the big swing band became a sort of musical dinosaur whose main attraction was its curiosity value.

James himself seemed to lose whatever taste he had for jazz quite soon after leaving Goodman.

He could still play virtuoso trumpet right up to the last years of his life, but numbers like 'Carnival of Venice' or 'Flight of the Bumble bee' were hardly the stuff jazz is made of.

The music industry today is still very much the wheeler-dealer world of high finance, contractual intrigue, exploitation of young fans and all the other unsavoury features of the 'swing boom' that Harry James was (however unwittingly) a part of. In fact, it's a great deal worse.

But as for the music itself — that's a different matter. James leaves behind him a handful of jazz recordings of lasting value — 'Blues in C Sharp' with Teddy Wilson and Red Norvo, for instance.

Roosevelt Sykes leaves a musical heritage that remains very much a part of the best of today's popular music. Maybe Sykes did get the last laugh after all.

TV The underdog strikes

By Darian Nashe

EVER nurtured a grudge against your employer? Ever wanted to get your own back — to do him real damage?

If so, I hope you saw 'The Last Company Car' (Sunday, ITV) a delightful short play by Mike Stott, which offered a real carnival of the exploited.

Tommy has saved hard for a new car, and finally draws all the money from his Building society to buy a new Fiesta.

In contrast, his boss's son, 'young' Midgeley, rides round in a brand new company Mercedes.

Next day comes the announcement: the firm is bust, everyone redundant. Midgeley and two other managers make a mad dash for their company cars — which Tommy learns they have bought at knock-down prices knowing that the firm was finished.

Consumed with anger at this symbol of injustice, Tommy longs for revenge. First he vandalises the Mercedes — only to realise that this is not enough to hurt Midgeley. Then he 'borrows' two shotguns from Jack, a policeman friend, and goes off to force Midgeley into a duel.

In the confrontation, Tommy vents his resentment at the idle, sponging, privileged, conservative and wasteful existence of Midgeley: he in turn replies expressing his public school bourgeois contempt for the working class — before dropping dead of a heart attack.

There had been no union in the plant; Tommy's had been an individual solution — but he got his man. And fortunately his wife and Jack's are on hand to lend a more intelligent and practical approach than that of the men — 'one dead and two daft'. A good laugh.

'Of Bread and Guns' by Nigel Harris Short on answers

Reviewed by Bob Sutcliffe

MacDonald's hamburgers as make steel (though there are those who say the two have a lot in common).

And the significance of armaments in the world economy by the estimate that world military expenditure amounts to £432,406 a minute.

The emphasis of Harris's account is change — from the days of the Keynesian myth. And the change which he puts most emphasis on is the internationalisation of the world economy. The vast extent of this internationalisation through investment, trade, the development of the multinational company, the use of modern telecommunications is cogently described and this is clearly, I think, the main contribution of the book.

The world economy is a system which, he argues, on occasions when it functions well is capable of fulfilling human need, if very unequally, all over the globe.

Today, however, — after the great post war boom which Harris correctly emphasises — it has once again ceased to function well.

With reference to the advanced economies, the Third World and the states of the

East (which he believes are capitalist as well) Harris describes this malady well enough, though his recent statistics are sometimes hard to follow because they tend to be separated from a context which would make them more meaningful.

But two questions insistently emerge which I don't think Harris is able to answer any better than any other socialist writers who have written on the crisis. One is: why has it happened? The other is: what can be done about it?

Nigel Harris answers the first in passing only: his answer seems to be that the crisis has occurred because the rate of profit has fallen. And that has happened through the mechanism described by Marx of a rise in the organic composition of capital — a notion which Harris converts into a kind of metaphor speaking of the 'weight' of accumulated capital bearing down on the rate of profit. All this is dogmatic and unhelpful (a kind of lip service to theoretical orthodoxy) but it hardly plays a major role in the book.

The second question — what is to be done? — is designed to play a more important role in the book. Harris convincingly argues that the new internationalism of the

world economy makes national solutions even more difficult. This allows him rightly to dismiss the narrow protectionism of the alternative economic strategies so popular at the top of the labour movement. But the two final chapters where the writing becomes more loose and rhetorical fail to make clear either what the solution is (except 'world socialism') or to helpfully define the questions.

And it seems confusing that on the one hand Harris should argue that: 'The core of socialism, human freedom, had been subverted by the doctrines of worship of the state... This was part of the explanation as to why, so often, the left made little contribution to the movements of the seventies, so often was no more than those who trailed behind movements' — and then say little more about how to resolve today's 'stalemate between the world classes' than to express a faith that somewhere, sometime, a repeat of 1917 will spark off a new fire of world revolution. In a number of asides on questions of industrialisation, technology and similar questions, Harris himself seems to share many of the conceptions which state-worshipping socialists usually adhere to.

Trotsky on Stalinism

The classic Marxist analysis of Stalinism is Leon Trotsky's 'Revolution Betrayed: What is the Soviet Union and Where Is It Going?' Available via Socialist Organiser, 28 Middle Lane, London N8: £2.50 plus 50p postage.



Background to Sri Lanka's communal violence

THE communal violence in Sri Lanka has already led to the slaughter of hundreds of Tamils, the uprooting of at least 50,000 of them, and the beginning of a mass movement by Tamils towards the North, where their community is the majority.

Large numbers of factories in the 'development zone' around Colombo have been gutted, and so have many Tamil-owned enterprises in Colombo itself. The communal eruption also threatens Sri Lanka with an economic catastrophe.

The 'strong President' Junius Jayawardene has given official encouragement to the Sinhalese pogromists by banning their Tamil victims and banning from political life and exercise of their civil rights all those advocating a separate Tamil state in the North and East. This means banning the Tamil United Liberation Front, the official Parliamentary opposition.

In an attempt to blame it all on the left, Jayawardene has also banned three left wing parties — the JVP, the NSSP, and the Communist Party. All three of them are Sinhalese parties with a chauvinist past.

The wave of anti-Tamil pogroms sweeping across the island was sparked when Tamil separatist guerillas killed 13 Sinhalese soldiers. But it has been long brewing. You could even say it has been brewing since Ceylon gained its independence from Britain in 1948.

Ceylon is a case study in the problem of coexistence by different but overlapping and intermeshed communities or nationalities in one territory. It is now giving the world bloody testimony that the approach to such questions advocated by Lenin in the quotation above is the only proper one for socialists and democrats.

The Buddhist Sinhalese, who make up three-quarters of the island's 14 million people, came from North India to Ceylon about 13,000 years ago. The Hindu Tamils divide into two groups.

Those who form the majority in the northern and eastern provinces came to Ceylon from southern India about the same time as the Sinhalese. For centuries they had a separate kingdom in the north of the island. In the 1971 census there were 1,416,000 of them.

There were 1,105,000 other Tamils — who live as plantation workers, mainly in the Central Highlands, and were brought in by the British in the mid 19th

communal violence

IN SO FAR as national peace is in any way possible in a capitalist society based on exploitation, profit-making and strife, it is attainable only under a consistently and thoroughly democratic republican system of government which guarantees full equality of all nations and languages, which provides the people with schools where instruction is given in all the native languages, and the constitution of which contains a fundamental law that prohibits any privileges whatsoever to any one nation and any encroachment whatsoever upon the rights of a national minority. This particularly calls for wide regional autonomy and fully democratic local government, with the boundaries of the self-governing and autonomous regions determined by the local inhabitants themselves on the basis of their economic and social conditions, national make-up of the population, etc.

Lenin, Resolution of the 1913 conference of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (Central Committee)

By Frank Higgins



Jayawardene

century.

The situation is complicated by the fact that the Tamils are part of a people who number 60 million, and mostly live in the south Indian state of Tamil Nadu.

There are other distinct groups in the island, notably the Ceylonese Moors, numbering nearly a million.

At independence in 1948, Ceylon was untypical of Third World countries, having a comparatively high standard of living, with a rudimentary welfare state, mass literacy, and universal suffrage since 1931. Nevertheless it was economically underdeveloped and heavily dependent on the three plantation crops — rubber, tea and coconuts.

Most of the land was owner-cultivated. The ruling class was heavily anglicised — British in speech and education.

Independence was granted, not won. The newly formed United National Party, then a broad coalition, took control. It projected itself as bourgeois, liberal and secular. Its first government contained both representatives of the Tamil Ceylon Indian Congress and Solomon Bandaranaike, who brought the Sinhala Moho Sobha into the UNP.

English was the language that bridged the Sinhala/Tamil gap and was used by the ruling class. Ceylonese nationality was defined as embracing all the inhabitants of the island — except that the great majority of the 'Indian' Tamils — those whose ancestors had arrived in

the 19th century — were disenfranchised, deprived of civil rights, and declared stateless.

Sinhalese chauvinism was to destroy even the limited secular and non-communal character left to the Ceylonese state after this savage act.

It began as a ferment among the Sinhalese rural intelligentsia — village schoolmasters and Buddhist religious leaders. They wanted their religion and culture to have first place in the state, and to define Ceylonese nationality in terms of their own communal identity — language, religion, culture, history — excluding all the Tamils.

They were alienated from all the existing political parties. The Ceylonese historian De Silva puts it like this: "The Left was just as unsympathetic as the UNP leadership to the religious, linguistic, and cultural aspirations of the Buddhist activists... It was to (their) deep sense of grievance, (their) social and economic discontent, and (their) resentment at being neglected that the SFLP turned..."

Solomon Bandaranaike split off from the UNP in 1951 and formed the Sri Lanka Freedom Party. Exclusively Sinhalese, it became the prime vehicle for Sinhalese chauvinism. In parallel the Tamil Federal Party broke from the Ceylon Indian Congress, asserting that the Tamils were a nation.

The SLFP won the 1956 general election and immediately brought in a bill to make Sinhala the only state language. After tremendous riots, full implementation of the bill was delayed until January 1961.

The Tamil Federal Party had also done well in the election. Its 1956 convention spelled out its programme: autonomy for the northern and eastern provinces under a federal constitution, parity for the Sinhala and Tamil languages, and civil rights for the Tamil plantation workers.

In 1957 Bandaranaike negotiated a compromise with the TFP.



Tamil was to be one of the languages for administration in the north and east; Sinhalese settlement there was to be restricted; and there was to be a devolution of power to regional councils, as a concession to federalism.

When this was made public, in July 1957, there was such an uproar of Sinhalese protests and demonstrations — monks killed themselves on Bandaranaike's lawn — that Bandaranaike abrogated it.

De Silva writes: "Although the Buddhist movement was generally hostile to Marxist ideology, it had no strong opposition to the adoption of a socialist profile. Since plantation enterprises, nascent industry and the island's trade were dominated by foreign capitalists, and the minorities (including the Christian) were disproportionately influential within the indigenous capitalist class, Buddhist pressure groups viewed socialism as a means of redressing the balance in favour of the majority group."

Every extension of state control over trade and industry could be justified on the grounds that it helped to curtail the influence of foreigners and the minorities. The Sinhalese Buddhist section of the capitalist class was not averse to socialism so long as its own economic interests were not affected.

The result was that the SLFP has been able to reconcile a commitment to socialism with an advancing of the interests of a section of the indigenous capitalist class — namely its Sinhalese Buddhist section."

The SLFP dominated populist 'lower-orders' politics, with this mixture of communal chauvinism, cross-class 'socialism', and 'anti-imperialism'.

The rise of the SLFP affected the working class party in Ceylon was a Trotskyist party, the LSSP, which also led a powerful trade union federation. They had led general strikes in 1947 and 1953, and had representation in Parliament.

The other working class party was the Communist Party.

The LSSP at first championed the Tamils. One of the main reasons why the 'liberal' UNP government disenfranchised the Tamil plantation workers in 1948 was the influence the LSSP had among them.

Based on the working class of Colombo and the coastal towns, the LSSP was however outflanked by the SLFP in the rural areas. In the mid-'50s the LSSP began to accommodate to the rising tide of chauvinism. Both the CP and the LSSP negotiated a no-contest election pact with the SLFP in late 1955, and again in 1960.

In June 1964 the LSSP joined in a coalition government for six months with the populist party of Sinhalese chauvinism. This

coalition, in October 1964, agreed with the Indian government on compulsory 'repatriation' of 525,000 Indians together with their 'natural increase', over a 15 year period. The agreement included a promise to give another 300,000 Tamils citizenship — by 1983. The measure was specifically directed against the working class Tamils.

The coalition fell in December 1964, and a UNP/Tamil Federal Party coalition took its place. When this government began to talk of 'ethnic reconciliation', the SLFP, the LSSP and the CP responded by whipping up a mass racist agitation against the Tamils and 'their' government.

"The opposition unleashed a sustained barrage of racist propaganda in which the SLFP, as the unabashed advocate of Sinhalese Buddhist domination of the Sri Lankan polity, was joined by the CP and the LSSP. The left wing leadership demonstrated all the ardour of recent converts in espousing a cause which they had once spurned."

The UNP/TFP government provoked riots when it legislated on the basis of the 1957 Bandaranaike/TFP agreement, in favour of 'reasonable use' of Tamil. An attempt to bring in another plank of the 1957 agreement — district councils 'under the control and direction of the central government' — had to be abandoned, so strong was Sinhalese opposition.

In 1970 a 'united front' of the SLFP (led since 1959 by Solomon Bandaranaike's widow, Sirimavo Bandaranaike), the LSSP, and the CP, came to power. It was a 'left government' poisoned by communalism.

It nationalised the plantations in 1975 and, in a series of state-capitalist measures, put the state effectively in control of trade and industry. Thoroughly anti working class, it also cut the food subsidies and savagely repressed the 1971 JVP rising of Sinhalese youth disillusioned

with the three ruling parties.

With a new constitution, in 1972, Buddhism in effect became the state religion, despite Hindu Tamil protests; Sinhalese was enshrined anew as the state language; Ceylon became Sri Lanka.

The renegade Trotskyists of the LSSP might claim that with measures like the nationalisations they had carried out much of their programme. But it was at the cost of disrupting the working class movement, and allying with a chauvinist petty-bourgeois populist party. Nothing stable could be gained in this short-sighted way.

Inevitably the government's communalism fuelled Tamil separatism. The TFP agitated for a separate state. A Tamil youth movement grew up, paralleling the JVP.

In 1974 the united front negotiated a deal to grant citizenship to some hundreds of thousands of the plantation-worker Tamils. But the point had already been reached at which such concessions would be too little, too late. In 1977 the most serious clashes for two decades occurred in Jaffna, the Tamil capital.

Also in 1977, the UNP made a spectacular comeback. It initiated a real 'counter-revolution', and a capitalist success story on the basis of repression of the working class.

A strong presidential system was introduced, modelled on France and the US. Economically, the government took Singapore and Hong Kong as its models, turning away from economic nationalism and making tax concessions and grants to attract foreign capital. Results: an average 6% growth rate in the worst year of world slump, and a drop in unemployment from about one quarter of the workforce to 15%.

Some concessions were made to the Tamils in a new constitution in 1978. A limited status was granted to the Tamil language. The stateless 'Indian' Tamils have been given civil rights, and one of their leaders has joined the government. But too late: the Tamil United Liberation Front, representing the 'indigenous' Tamils, has remained adamantly distinct, demanding a Tamil State ('Eelam').

Serious guerilla activity led last May to the fourth state of emergency since 1977. The Tamil North has been effectively under military rule; troops have had the right to shoot to kill and then bury the dead without judicial interference, if they get the permission of the Defence Secretary.

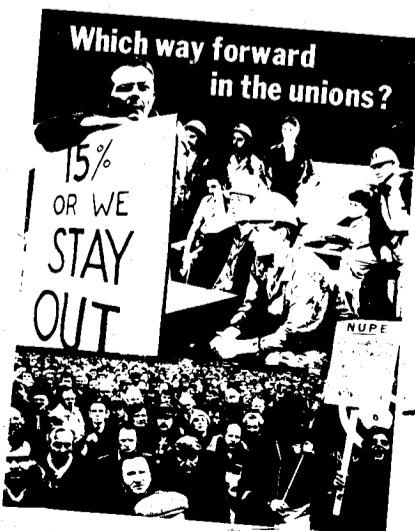
It was against this background that the Tamil guerilla killing of 13 soldiers sparked mass pogroms.

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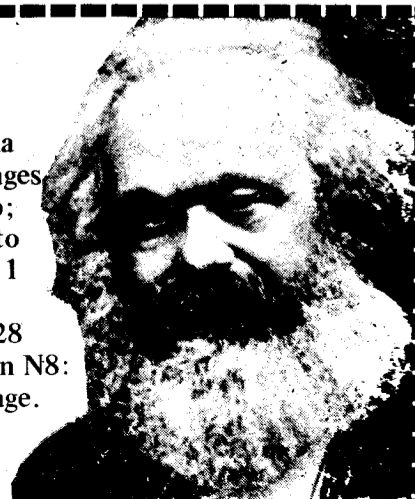
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BOOKS

Critique of the Gotha Programme, 30p; Wages, price and profit, 40p; Communist Manifesto 60p; Capital volume 1 £3.95. Available c/o Socialist Organiser, 28 Middle Lane, London N8; add money for postage.

by MARX



Socialist ORGANISER

Where we stand

*Organise the left to beat back the Tories' attacks! No to attacks on union rights; defend the picket line; no state interference in our unions! No to any wage curbs. Labour must support all struggles for better living standards and conditions.

*Wage rises should at the very least keep up with price increases. For a price index calculated by working class organisations, as the basis for clauses in all wage agreements to provide automatic monthly rises in line with the true cost of living for the working class. The same inflation-proofing should apply to state benefits, grants and pensions.

*Fight for improvements in the social services, and against cuts. Protection for those services against inflation by automatic inflation-proofing of expenditure. For occupations and supporting strike action to defend jobs and services.

*End unemployment. Cut hours, not jobs. Fight for a 35 hour week and an end to overtime. Demand work-sharing without loss of pay. Organise the unemployed - campaign for a programme of useful public works to create new jobs for the unemployed.

*Defend all jobs! Open the books of those firms that threaten closure or redundancies, along with those of their suppliers and bankers, to elected trade union committees. For occupation and blocking action to halt the closures. For nationalisation without compensation under workers' management.

*Make the bosses pay, not the working class. Millions for hospitals, not a penny for 'defence'! Nationalise the banks and financial institutions, without compensation. End the interest burden on council housing and other public services.

*Freeze rent and rates.
*Scrap all immigration controls. Race is not a problem: racism is. The labour movement must mobilise to drive the fascists off the streets. Purge racists from positions in the labour movement. Organise full support for black self-defence. Build workers' defence squads.

*The capitalist police are an enemy for the working class. Support all demands to weaken them as a bosses' striking force: dissolution of special squads (SPG, Special Branch, MI5, etc), public accountability, etc.

*Free abortion on demand. Women's equal right to work and full equality for women. Defend and extend free state nursery and childcare provision.

*Against attacks on gays by the state: abolish all laws which discriminate against lesbians and gay men; for the right of the gay community to organise and affirm their stand publicly.

*The Irish people - as a whole - should have the right to determine their own future. Get the British troops out now! Repeal the Prevention of Terrorism Act. Political status for Irish Republican prisoners as a matter of urgency.

*The black working people of South Africa should get full support from the British labour movement for their strikes, struggles and armed combat against the white supremacist regime. South African goods and services should be blacked.

*It is essential to achieve the fullest democracy in the labour movement. Automatic reselection of MPs during each Parliament and the election by annual conference of party leaders. Annual election of all trade union officials, who should be paid the average for the trade.

*The chaos, waste, human suffering and misery of capitalism now - in Britain and throughout the world - show the urgent need to establish rational, democratic, human control over the economy, to make the decisive sectors of industry social property, under workers' control. The strength of the labour movement lies in the rank and file. Our perspective must be working class action to raze the capitalist system down to its foundations, and to put a working class socialist alternative in its place - rather than having our representatives run the system and waiting for crumbs from the tables of the bankers and bosses.

Agenda

Binlids and Barricades. A 75-panel exhibition on women and the war in Ireland, produced by the Armagh Co-ordinating Committee. Available for hire from the Armagh Cmtee., 374, Grays Inn Rd., London WC1.

Leggin' it for peace East London Youth CND March, 17/18 September, from Kelvedon Hatch Civil Defence HQ to London Fields, Hackney. For details contact E. London YCND, 39, Albion Road, London E17.

THE Polish Solidarity Committee [Glasgow]: working conference in Glasgow 17/18 September. Proposed sessions include: 'Democratic forms of social organisation in Czechoslovakia 1968 and Poland 1980-1'; 'The peace movements in Eastern Europe'; and 'Developing solidarity with the people of Eastern Europe'. Contact Gordon Morgan as soon as possible at: 59, Durward Avenue, Glasgow G41 [041-649 8958]

OXFORD Claimants Defence Committee one day conference Saturday September 3rd at East Oxford Community Centre, Princes St., Oxford. Discuss the 'Operation Major' [Sept. 82] ruthless police & DHSS swoop on homeless & unemployed and subsequent events. Fee only £1.50, less unwaged. Contact CDC, c/o 44b, Princes St., Oxford.

National Abortion Campaign conference, October 1-2. For details contact NAC, 374, Grays Inn Rd., London WC1. 01-278 0153.

Release Nelson Mandela! Victory to the ANC! Weekly picket of South Africa House, Trafalgar Square, 5.30-7.30 Fridays. Called by City Anti-Apartheid Group.

CONFERENCE

How to fight the Tories

September 17

September 17, 10.30am-5pm
University of London Union
Malet Street, WC1

Open to delegates and observers from all labour movement bodies.

Credentials (including discussion papers) £2.50 (employed), £1.50 (unemployed).

Platform and workshop speakers include: Jeremy Corbyn MP; Reg Race, Joy Hurcombe (Labour CND)*; Vai Dunn (Manchester Labour councillor)*; Andrea Campbell (COHSE Group 81)*; Colin Talbot (POEU Broad Left)*. *In a personal capacity. Workshop discussions, coupled with the showing of videos, will cover a wide range of topics and current struggles, and enable everyone present to contribute in debate on policies for the way forward. CRECHE FACILITIES WILL BE AVAILABLE ALL DAY

Where to find Socialist Organiser

SCOTLAND

Glasgow. Next meeting Thursday August 11, 7.30, Club Room, bottom of Block 45, Stirlingsauld Place, Gorbals (opposite Citizens Theatre. 'Redundancies in the shipyards'. SO is sold at Maryhill dole (Tuesday mornings) and Rutherglen shopping arcade (Friday lunch-time).

Edinburgh. Next meeting Monday August 8, 7.30, Ruskin House, Windsor St. Business meeting. Contact Dave, 229 4591. SO is sold at Muirhouse (Saturday 10.30-12) and the First of May Bookshop, Candlemaker Row.

NORTH-WEST

Rochdale. Next meeting Monday August 8, 8pm at the Castle Inn, Manchester Rd. 'CND'.

Manchester. Contact: 273 6654. SO is sold at Grass Roots Books, Newton St, Piccadilly.

Stockport. Meetings every Sunday, 7.30pm: phone 429 6359 (38 Broadhurst St) for details. SO is sold at Stockport market every Saturday, 11 to 12.30.

Wirral. Next meeting Thursday August 11, 8pm at the Labour Club, Church Rd, Seacombe. 'Nuclear Disarmament and Socialism'. Contact: Lol Duffy, 3 St James Court, Victoria Rd, Wallasey.

Liverpool. Contact 733 6663. SO is sold at Progressive Books, Berry St, and at News from Nowhere, Whitechapel.

Hyndburn. Contact Accrington 395753.

Stoke. Next meeting: 'The Labour Movement after the Election'. Date to be fixed. Contact: Paul Barnett, 151 Broadway, Meir (328198).

YORKSHIRE AND NORTH-EAST

Huddersfield. Contact Alan Brooke, 59 Magdale, Honley, Huddersfield HD7 2LX.

Next Socialist Organiser delegate meeting: Saturday September 3, in Birmingham.

Socialist Organiser Annual General Meeting: Sunday October 30, 10.30-5, County Hall, London SE1.

National Socialist Organiser day-school. Saturday October 29, in London.

Read all about us!



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Durham. SO is sold at the Community Co-op, New Elvet. Contact Andy, 64088.

Leeds. SO is sold at Books and Corner Books, Woodhouse Lane. Contact Garth, 623322.

Sheffield. Next meeting Monday August 8, 7.30 at the Bull and Oak, The Wickler. 'Socialism as an alternative'. SO is sold outside Boots in Fargate (Saturday 12-1) and at the Independent Bookshop, Glossop Rd. Contact Rob, 589307.

Hull. Meets every Wednesday 8pm. Details from SO sellers. Childcare available.

Halifax. Contact 52156. SO is sold at Halifax Wholefood, Gibbet St, and at Tower Books, Hebden Bridge.

York. Contact 796027. SO is sold at Coney St on Saturday mornings, at the Community Bookshop, outside the dole office most mornings, and at the University on Friday mornings.

Harrogate. Contact Mark Osborn, 17 South Park Road (879408).

WALES AND WEST

Cardiff. Contact 492988.

Bristol. Contact c/o 28 Middle Lane.

Taunton. Contact c/o 28 Middle Lane.

MIDLANDS

Birmingham. No meeting in August. SO is sold at the Other Bookshop, Digbeth High St.

Coventry. Next meeting Sunday August 7, 7.30pm at the Rose & Woodbine, Stony Stanton Rd. 'Fighting the Tory Youth Training Scheme'. SO is sold at the Wedge Co-op, High St. Contact Keith White, 75623.

Leicester. Next meeting Sunday August 14, 3pm at the Socialist Centre, High St. 'Socialism and the Women's Movement'. SO is sold at Blackthorn Books, High St. Contact Phil, 857908.

Northampton. Next meeting Tuesday August 9, 7.30, see sellers for venue. 'How to fight unemployment'.

Nottingham. Meets every Thursday evening, 7.30 at the International Community Centre. SO is sold outside the Victoria Centre (Saturday 11 to 1) and at the Mushroom Bookshop, Heathcote St. Contact Pete Radcliff, 585640.

SOUTH

Oxford. SO is sold at the Cornmarket (Saturday 11 to 1) and outside Tesco, Cowley Rd, Friday 5 to 7. Also at EOA Books, Cowley Rd.

Basingstoke. Business meeting Thursday August 12, 7.30 at Chute House. SO is sold at 'Good News' in London Street.

LONDON

North-West London. Next meeting Monday August 25, 7.30, for venue phone Mick, 624 1931. 'The Way Forward for the Labour Movement'.

Hackney. Contact Andrew Hornung, 76 Carysfort Rd, London N16.

Haringey. Contact 802 0771 or 348 5941.

Hounslow. SO is sold outside All Saints Church, Hounslow High St, Saturdays 10.30 to 12. Contact Chris, 898 6961.

Islington. Next meeting Sunday August 14, 7pm at Caxton House, St John's Way. Business meeting. Contact Nik, 278 1341.

Southwark/Lambeth. Off to YS summer camp, no meeting in first week of August. Next educational, Sunday August 14, 7.30pm, phone Ian at 670 3279 for venue. 'Stalinism'.

South East London. Next meeting Tuesday August 9, 8pm at 8 Harvard Rd, SE13. Business meeting. Contact Siu Ming, 691 1141.

Orpington. Contact c/o South East London.

Putney. Next meeting Tuesday August 9, 8pm. 'Organising the Left'. Monday August 22, 8pm, debate with Militant. For venues phone Gerry, 789 7587.

Tower Hamlets. Next meeting Monday August 15, 7pm, phone Susan, 377 1328, for venue. Business 7pm, discussion on Iran 7.30pm.

LONDON CUTS conference organised by the Southwark Campaign Working Party: Sunday November 6, at County Hall, London SE1. Contact: Southwark Campaign Working Party, Town Hall, Peckham Rd, SE5.

SO is sold at the following London bookshops: Collets, Central Books, The Other Bookshop, Bookmarks, Bookplace (Peckham Rd, SE15), Kilburn Books, and Reading Matters (Wood Green Shopping Centre).

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By Alan Thornhill

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Smokers face 'low tar' con trick

NO serious scientific opinion still resists the evidence that tobacco-smoking causes ill health on a colossal scale. Even the tobacco companies implicitly agree, boosting first filter-tipped fags, then 'Low Tar' and now 'Ultra-Low Tar' ciggies.

The case against tobacco presents the government with a dilemma. They are supposed to have our interests at heart (particularly our health), but they also reap an enormous tax harvest on tobacco sales, which neither Tory nor Labour governments have been keen to lose. In addition, tobacco firms are strong supporters of the Tories.

Question: How can governments solve this dilemma?

Answer: By promoting 'safer' cigarettes — the Low Tar brands.

Supplementary Question: Are Low Tar cigarettes really safer?

Readers can probably guess the answer to this question, but let's look at the evidence.

Firstly, what are the Tar Ratings and how are they arrived at?

Both in the US and Britain, official bodies (the Federal Trade Commission [FTC] and the Government Chemist) test cigarettes, using a standard smoking machine.

This takes a puff of 35 cubic centimetres of smoke (about a mouthful) in 2 seconds, once a minute. The smoke goes through a filter which collects the tar. When the cigarette has been smoked down to a standard butt, the amount of tar is measured. Nicotine content can also be measured,

SCIENCE

By Les Hearn

if desired.

According to the amount of tar collected, cigarette brands are classified as High, Middle or Low Tar and the brands are ranked in the Tar Tables.

Over the last decade or so, tobacco companies have switched from Higher to Lower tar tobacco, a move supported in Britain by the Independent Scientific Committee of Smoking and Health (ISCSH). The ISCSH preferred to use the industry's advertising machinery to switch people to 'safer' cigarettes than to try to get people to stop smoking.

The switch to Lower tar would perhaps have cut the health risks if people smoked like machines. Unfortunately, they don't! They take different length puffs, hold the filter further in or out of their mouths, breathe in more or less vigorously. Already, there is evidence that people smoke more of a Lower tar cigarette to compensate for the milder taste and lesser effect.

Despite the propaganda about 'safer' cigarettes and the more and more ludicrous lengths the industry is going to get its products across, fewer people are still smoking. In Britain, non-smokers are a majority in all social groups, while there is an even higher

proportion of non-smokers in the US.

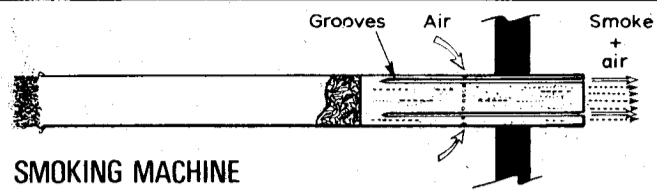
But the tobacco companies are fighting back. Brown & Williamson, British-American Tobacco's US subsidiary, have just spent \$150 million launching 'Barclay', the '99% Tar Free' cigarette. FTC tests on the famous smoking machine gave 'Barclay' a rating comfortably at the bottom of the Tar Tables. 'Barclay' features a unique ventilated filter, the 'ACTRON' filter (see illustration).

The smoker finds that the smoke is diluted with air entering through holes in the filter and passing through grooves to the mouth. Or rather, this is what the smoking machine finds! Because smokers touch the filters with their lips and fingers, the grooves are often inadvertently squashed or the airholes blocked.

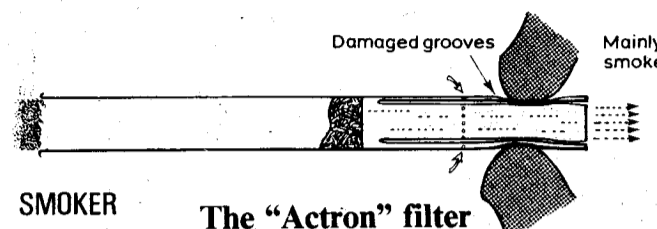
Tests show that in the real smoking situation, smokers may inhale 7 times or more the claimed amount of tar from 'Barclay'.

As a result, Brown & Williamson have been accused of deliberately using a gimmick to hoodwink government testers and face a court action in the US for making false claims.

In the face of the unreliability



SMOKING MACHINE



SMOKER

The "Actron" filter

The "Actron" filter
Air enters the grooves in the filter and dilutes the cigarette smoke. But smokers tend to crush the grooves, stopping the air getting in. Result: machine detects 1 milligramme of tar per cigarette. Smoker breathes up to 7 milligrammes of tar per cigarette.

of the government smoking machines, researchers have developed machines which can be programmed to behave more like real smokers. Most tobacco firms now possess these — BAT's one is called the 'Human Smoking Behavioural Recorder'. Made in Britain, it costs about £20000. Unfortunately, neither the DHSS or the Government Chemist have got one yet.

Using such modified machines, researchers have shown that a Low Tar cigarette such as John Player King Size Ultra Mild can be converted by the smoker's behaviour

into a High Tar cigarette.

Meanwhile, BAT's won't say if they are planning to introduce the 'Barclay' into Britain.

Further Health Risks of Smoking:

•• Researchers in Atlanta (Center for Disease Control and Emory University School of Medicine) report that, from a study of 374 women, moderate smokers have a 3.6 times greater chance of getting cervical cancer than non-smoking women, while heavy smokers have a 13 times greater chance. (All information from New Scientist.)

Racism and the medical elite

From: Mark S. Ponnampalam, MBBS (Lond), FRCS (Eng), FRCS (Edin), FRCS (Can), FICS.

I am a certified and highly qualified surgeon now living in Harpenden. I have been persistently discriminated against on account of my race, and finally been refused employment. I am currently holding the post of General Practitioner Trainee, in a perfectly ludicrous situation, akin to that of a Queen's Counsel who, for political reasons is obliged, late in life, to go back and become a solicitor's clerk.

Rate of pay

The DHSS has refused to pay me at the rate I am entitled to, and again has refused to give the reasons for their decision.

It is my impression that the Medical Establishment, despite their protestations to the contrary, are not pre-

pared to accept a black who is not also content to play the stereotype. A study over the years of the system for appointing permanent staff to the medical side of the NHS leads one to the following conclusions:

1. Coloured doctors do get appointed to the permanent grades in the NHS, generally in the less popular specialities and by a process of downward drifting and retro-evolution.

2. A system of token integration, patronage, and token appointments operates, leading sometimes to the situation where an unqualified, but acceptable stereotype coloured person is appointed.

Goldmine

The privatisation of Medicine makes a Senior (i.e. Consultant) post in the NHS a virtual goldmine to those intent on commercialising medicine and the closely knit Establishment are determined to keep all the profits.

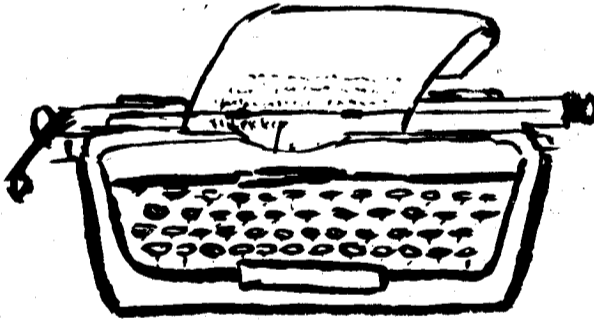
In and, the treatment meted out to Overseas doctors in this country is one of the black-

est and most disgraceful episodes in the history of Medicine. For several years after the war, doctors from the Indian Subcontinent were the workhorses of the NHS, especially in District Hospitals, and in the Midlands and the North.

Their standards were often criticised as they worked hard and long and largely unsupervised, in order that their Consultants could sleep undisturbed at night and have time for golfing, yachting, and private patients, not necessarily in that order.

Yours sincerely,
Mark Ponnampalam.

Writeback



Send letters to Socialist Organiser, 28 Middle Lane, London N8. No longer than 400 words please: longer letters are liable to be cut.

Labour and CND

NOW IS the time to decide on just how far you, as an individual are prepared to go to preserve this planet. As socialists we do not like living in a capitalist society, but are we willing to face the fact that we will have to counter not only hostility to unilateral nuclear disarmament, but also greatly intensified hostility to socialism?

The opposition will come from the expected quarters — the Tories, the media, the City of London, the established church and the USA.

It will also come, increasingly, from Liberals and the SDP. This hostility must be expected and we must be ready to counter it with determination. We need to ensure that our Labour Party leadership is prepared to fight these odds. During the election it is sometimes hard to tell.

Do not let a Liberal or a Social Democrat tell you, or the press, that they want unilateral nuclear disarmament — they do not see the issue as essential, they see it as a 'good idea' on a par with stopping dogs fouling the pavements. Unless a CND supporter voted Labour, that voter was not truly committed to unilateral nuclear disarmament. They were, and are, more interested in and attached to their comfortable way of life and they are afraid to face any major change. We must take on board the only alternatives to an all-out battle for socialist unilateral nuclear disarmament, and they are bleak.

1. Give up thoughts of a socialist Britain and comfort ourselves that Alliance politics may be better than Thatcherism.
2. Back away from the whole

issue and gain back some support from the media, which will allow a more favourable coverage of other parts of Labour's Programme. This allows the establishment at large to put the red flag back to half mast.

Both alternatives leave us as vulnerable to nuclear attack as possible, and both leave us heavily in debt to USA finance.

We must get across the idea that only by taking unilateral nuclear disarmament as part of a full socialist programme can unilateral nuclear disarmament be achieved, and this can open the door to European Nuclear Disarmament as it closes the door to American domination in Europe. We have the deck stacked against us, we do not need to discover again that our leaders are unsure of their sense of direction.

DAFLINCOLN

Left Press

EEC

By Martin Thomas

WHILE much of the Labour left has moved away from calling for 'Britain out of the EEC', the policy still has some last-ditch defenders. The latest Socialist Action carries a centre-page feature by John Ross.

The point, according to John Ross, is that the logic of the EEC is towards a military Euro-power of capitalism, 'armed to the teeth'. Thus we should be for 'Britain out of the EEC' as we are for 'Britain out of NATO'.

Instead of discussing the actual issue of the EEC, Ross is here discussing something else instead to prop up his position. Straight negation will do as our attitude to a military link-up like NATO — but the EEC, whatever Ross's speculations, is an economic unit. On the development of monopolies, we do not demand their break-up, but we fight for workers' control and socialism. Against new technology, likewise, we propose not old technology but workers' control.

On the same principle, our answer to the EEC's (limited, feeble) integration of European capitalism is not to say 'back to the nation state', but to fight for Europe-wide workers' unity.

Ross's article denounces support for the EEC, but does not even mention the alternative attitude of neither support for the EEC, nor 'Britain out', but workers' unity. Perhaps he is unfamiliar with this third position? Not at all; and thereby hangs another tale.

A subsidiary article in SA traces the twists and turns of mainstream Labour on the EEC question. It says nothing about the record of the current represented today by Socialist Action. Yet that current has switched its line (each time without political accounting) three times in recent years.

Ernest Mandel, a leading international co-thinker of Socialist Action, published the English edition of his book 'Europe versus America?' in 1970. He wrote: 'The reader should not deduce that it is in the interest of the European working class to put a brake on the interpenetration of European capitalism... it would anyway be utopian...'

Then the IMG (as it then was) switched to opposing British entry to the EEC. Around 1972 — under the auspices of none other than John Ross — it switched back again. A year or so later, it came over to its present 'Britain out' stance.

Now comes the cruel twist. Having 'theorised' the 'Britain out' stance, the IMG/Socialist Action is more stuck to it than the Labour leftists who went for it on 'common sense' grounds. Socialist Action are left as the last defenders of the nationalist fortress, vainly hoping that their little red pennants will outshadow the huge Union Jack fluttering overhead.

FOOTNOTE: The Socialist Action feature also contains a short piece by Davy Jones attacking Socialist Organiser. We voted with the right wing in Islington South Labour Party to 'support the EEC', he says.

But the resolution was not to 'support the EEC'; it declared that the call for withdrawal is an 'empty gesture', and advocated a Europe-wide socialist policy instead. The proposer, and most of those who voted for it, were left-wingers.

Anyway, 'staying with the Left' makes sense tactically and organisationally, but not as a rule to decide basic political positions. Marxists should look after themselves.

HARD TIMES

From Pluto Press: an analysis of capitalism in crisis from regular Socialist Organiser contributor Bob Sutcliffe. £2.50 from bookshops, or (with 50p post and packing) from Pluto, The Works, 105a Tottenham Avenue, London N15.

Occupations a vital tactic Workers' control in the fight to save hospitals

HEALTH Authorities are weighted in favour of the wealthy and the ruling class — Norman Fowler sees to that. However, in several districts in London there is a real possibility of the DHA's rejecting the cuts — if only the Labour party representatives on the DHA's would vote against.

Labour party activists should get the GMCs to adopt a position that members of the party on authorities must oppose closures which are made for economic reasons.

In Wandsworth recently two women labour party members voted for the closure of the South London.

Workers will constantly be putting their jobs on the line in fighting the cuts and closures. Any action will be in contravention of the Tebbit legislation. Workers will be fighting managers, their trade union leaders and often the police.

Risks

They risk massive fines and imprisonment. The very least the Labour party and trade union members on the district health authorities can do is vote against closure.

Yet at meeting after meeting we hear them saying that they must stick to the cash limits (because Norman Fowler says so) and they must make the cuts. Let the Tories make their own cuts. Labour should be defending the working class.

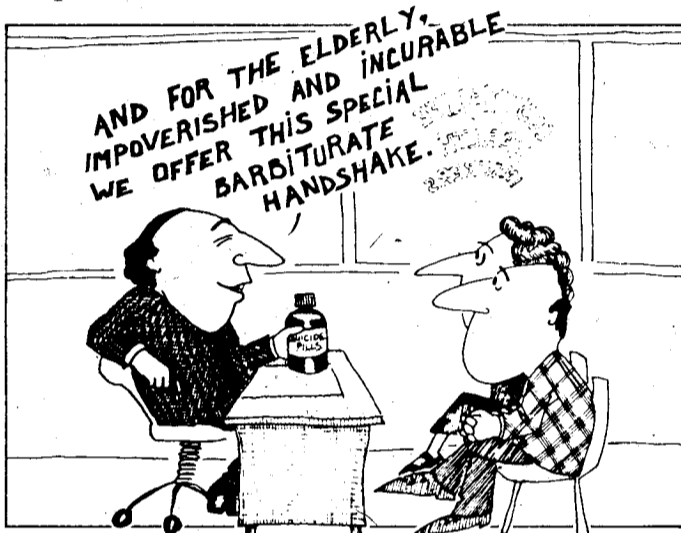
District Health Authorities should not be allowed to make their cuts in a quiet room with only a few people there. Members of the public are allowed into the meetings. Many people do not know this.

Make sure that there are a lot of people at the meetings where the cuts are being discussed. You are technically not allowed to speak; but why should a totally unelected and unaccountable body be able to ruin the health of the community in silence?

Disruption of DHA meetings has proved valuable in the past and shows the administrators that they will not have an easy time trying to close the hospital.

But the real way to win and to save hospitals is by united industrial action. There

JANE GOSS completes her two-part 'how to fight hospital closures' briefing with a look at the art of occupation and the fight for workers' control in the NHS



JOHN HARRIS

have been several militant hospital occupations since 1977.

Cynics argue that they have not saved the hospital and are therefore not worth the problems involved.

The EGA closure was postponed for three years through an occupation. St. Benedict's occupation was ten months long and was only broken by massive police force and private ambulances. Every fight to save a hospital makes it harder to close another one.

Every occupation involves the issue of workers control.

Decisions

Suddenly the workers find that they are making the decisions about how the hospital will run. They are in control of their working environment — for the first time.

The hospital usually runs smoother during occupations. The patient/worker relationships are much better, with patients cooperating in trying to keep the hospital open. In geriatric hospitals like St. Benedict's many of the long stay patients were actively involved in the occupation, taking their place on the picket rota.

Occupations essentially involve the workers declaring that they will not participate in the closure of the hospital and that they will actively oppose it.

Many workers do not know exactly what an occupation involves. Does it mean they will not get paid? Do they have to sleep at the hospital? What about their families? Will they be sacked? Should management be banned?

The best thing to do is to call a mass meeting at the hospital and to invite a speaker who has experiences of occupations.

Unlike industry, during NHS occupations the workers continue to get paid. This is a very important advantage. As long as there are patients in a hospital the District is required by law to ensure their treatment. You cannot be locked out or lose pay.

It usually does not require sleeping in although if you take over a room of office for an occupation base it might be necessary to have someone there all the time.

Occupations do put stress on the workers and their families. It is good to get the family involved in picketing and petitioning, etc.

In some cases management is banned. This is a difficult question and depends on the strength of the occupation and the size of the hospital. A good rule from the beginning is to ban any senior managers who do not normally come to the hospital.

Careers

It is best to ban management completely at some stage. They may be polite and pretend that they really do not want the hospital to close, but their real sympathy is with their careers. Don't trust them.

A regular picket is necessary to prevent the removal



of equipment and patients, and to keep track of who is coming and going. Most areas have law centres who will give advice on legal rights etc and it is good to involve them from the beginning.

It is true that an occupation cannot win on its own. It needs the support of the community but particularly it needs the support of other trade unionists in the area.

Because of management's 'divide and rule' tactics and because the trade union officials are hostile to occupations there has not been the necessary level of supporting strike action in other hospitals and in other sectors.

During the St. Benedict's

occupation the workers committee went around to all the hospitals speaking at meetings and asking for supporting strike action. Many of the stewards and members were prepared to come out if the officials had approved the action. The officials did not move.

They will be less likely to move know with the Tebbit laws the rank and file must be convinced to come out on strike whether or not it is official. Administrators will be less likely to act in a heavy-handed way if they know that there will be district wide strike action in support of the threatened hospital.

United against privatisation

THERE was a meeting of Public Sector unions in Coventry last Wednesday called by Coventry Trades Council on the initiative of the local branch of the POEU. The meeting issued an appeal for a Broad Alliance of unions to mount a rank and file campaign against privatisation and cuts in services.

30 union activists attended with representatives from POEU, UCW, NUPE, FBU, NALGO, CPSA, NUR, T&G. Reports from workplaces detailed the way government cuts are effecting services and preparing the ground for privatisation.

One meeting felt that in many areas the message was not getting across to the memberships, that this government was not only selling off public assets and cutting services to line the pockets of its friends in big business, but also intent on destroying union structures

that protect jobs and conditions.

Therefore, the Trades Council will have to act as a clearing house for information, getting literature into the workplaces and organising speakers to address meetings.

Emergency

HACKNEY Health Emergency is just one of a number of London campaigns which have sprung up during the last year to coordinate the fightback against cuts and closures.

The campaign has held open meetings throughout Hackney and Shoreditch; and plans are already well underway for a day of action. When the DHA meet on September 26 to decide the fate of the hospitals after the so-called 'consultative period'.

September 26 is probably one of the most significant fightbacks that will take place since Thatcher's election.

Hived-off workers fight back

MOBILE Gardening workers employed by Pritchards Industrial Services Ltd (the firm who took the contract from direct labour) are in their second week of strike action for a living wage and decent working conditions. They are NUPE members.

On Monday July 18, Pritchards imposed a piecework system on the workforce which in some cases would have only amounted to £35 for 10 days work!

The existing conditions are squalid and Victorian. They have no mess room, no clothing issue, no paid holidays, and no paid sick pay scheme.

Pritchards have been fined severely by Wandsworth Council for failing to fulfil the gardening contract; they are seeking to pass these fines on in the form of massive wage cuts.

The strike may be a long one, the potential market for privatisation is enormous, but the contractors can only make money by screwing down the wages and conditions of their workers.

Messages of support and donations to NUPE, c/o Dave Benlow, NUPE Secretary, Junction Resource Centre, 248-50 Lavender Hill, SW11. Make cheques out to NUPE, and indicate that they are for the Pritchards Strike Fund.

The Tories' plans for the decimation of the NHS can be wrecked. The labour movement has thwarted governments before, and it is strong enough to do it again.

The NHS has the sympathy of nearly every worker in Britain. The strength of feeling was shown during the dispute in 1982. That strength must be harnessed to save the NHS and to stop the Tory destruction of the welfare state.

Saving hospitals is not easy. But we have learned a lot in the past struggles and we can win with united action.

S&K strike


TWENTY-THREE Asian workers at Sandhar and Kang's wholesale warehouse in Birmingham are out on strike to defend their union organisation.

Back in June 1982 these workers won recognition for the T&GWU, considerable improvement in their sweat-shop conditions, and minor improvements in their very low pay levels. That took a month long strike, and the workers are prepared to stay out at least as long this time, to defend their hard-won gains.

The dispute was sparked by management's decision to sell off the dispatch department to one Milovan Popowick, who just happens to be married to the accountant at S&K's Coventry branch. The sale of the dispatch department means that the senior T&GWU shop steward and one other union member will no longer be S&K employees.

'We are not cattle to be sold to the highest bidder,' say the strikers' placards.

Send donations, etc., to: S&K Strike fund, T&GWU, 211, Broad St., Birmingham 15.



Labour Campaign for Gay Rights

fighting in the Labour movement for lesbian and gay male liberation

To join or affiliate, write to Chris Richardson, 21 Devonshire Promenade, Lenton, Nottingham NG7 2DS. £5 for individuals, or for affiliated organisations, per 1000 members. £2 for low-waged individuals. £1 for unwaged. Add 50p if you want the special issue of Gay Socialist.

Wafer-thin wages Support Carousel strikers

by Stan Crooke

SINCE Monday, 25th July, workers at the Carousel Wafers factory in the East End of Glasgow have been on strike for union recognition.

Carousel makes ice cream wafers, cones, cartons, etc. Working conditions at Carousel are appalling.

For a 40 hour week, take home pay is £37.00. Those under 18 take home just £32.00. There is a 10 minute tea break in the morning, a half four for lunch, and no break at all in the afternoon.

As far as Alexandro Sacomando, the factory's owner, is concerned, the Health and Safety Acts may as well not exist: in winter the temperature in the factory is below the legal minimum and in summer above the maximum.

Machinery is run without machine guards, causing a series of accidents. After one YOPer got caught up in a machine and another lost the ends of her fingers, even the MSC decided that things were getting out of hand and stopped sending YOP trainees to Carousel last year.

In winter the toilets freeze up and the workers are given a bucket and a bottle of Dettol. The toilets don't get fixed — you just wait till they defrost.

To achieve better working conditions, the nine shopfloor workers joined a union, the TGWU, at the beginning of the year. Sacomando refused to recognise the union.

So last Monday, the workers, all of them youths, walked out on strike to win union recognition. 'We want a union in — TGWU — If you stand with us, you're okay — But if you don't you're a black-leg', reads one of the banners outside of the factory gates.

Some of the part-timers have also struck in support. The delivery drivers struck on the Monday but returned to work the next day.

The strikers received the traditional threatening letters from their employer, saying that they would all be sacked for breach of contract if they did not return to work by the

Wednesday (27th July). None of them did so. The next day they were sent their P45s.

Sacomando has been interviewing replacements to scab on the strikers. Although the scabs can be quickly given the basic training, they will need a long time before mastering the knack of running the machines at the speed demanded and still having ten fingers left at the end of the day.

Sacomando is in no mood for compromises. He has told the strikers that he would rather see the factory burnt down than re-employ them.

The TGWU has declared the dispute official.

One of the local full-time officials is against organising mass pickets as it would be in breach of Tebbit's anti-union legislation. But the second full-timer has declared himself in favour of it.

It is vital that this dispute does not end up like a similar one at Glencroft Knitwear in Glasgow the year before last. There, the women on strike for union recognition were left isolated on the picket lines for three months whilst nothing was done about organising effective picketing and blacking.

To avoid the stalemate and defeat suffered by the Glencroft strikers, active support needs to be built in the broader labour and trade union movement, irrespective of what Tebbit's anti-union laws allow or don't allow.



"These YTS kids work hard enough — but we have problems disposing of the bodies at the end"

Greenings strikers: Have the will to fight!

Anna: Why do you think the strike has been so solid?

Arthur: Because the organisation was very good inside the factory for some years. The stewards have put a lot of work in, and we had a record of helping others in struggle, contributing to strike funds, going on demos, etc. This has built an awareness over the years on the shop floor.

For example, we were the only factory in the area that stopped on May 14 1980. We were very isolated, really. People were laughing at us. But it educated our membership.

We came out on strike several times during the NHS dispute, joined the demonstrations, and had a nurse in to speak to a mass meeting in the canteen. Of course a lot of people that we supported remember it, and have helped us now.

At the last mass meeting, three weeks ago, out of 300 only 9 voted against continuing. People have definitely become more determined.

For a lot of people going on

Anna Lunts spoke to Arthur Conheny, convenor at Greenings in Warrington, and other strikers

ployers on July 29. Our proposals for ending the dispute were:

- reinstatement of all workers
- agreement on work-sharing,
- the use of redeployment as outlined in our existing agreement, and

• cooperation on further voluntary redundancies if necessary.

The company ignored our proposals and put forward their own

- re-engagement of all workers, including the 24 made redundant, to jobs and areas of the company's choice,

• Re-employment would be on the company's new terms and conditions as outlined in their letter dated May 12 — that is, the loss of service, holidays, subsidies, negotiating machinery, etc.

The trade unions have never ruled out redeployment. But to preserve our basic rights it must be on a mutually agreed basis.

They want to impose a new and different form of redeployment on every one of us, and not just on the 24 who were to be made redundant.

The company's redeployment will mean no job security, no discussion or agreement by trade union representatives — just plain bosses' dictatorship.

So determined are the company to impose these new conditions that they have threatened closure if we won't return to work on conditions that put us at the mercy of middle managers and foremen. There is no way this is acceptable to us.

We think these are just threats, and if we stand our ground and slog it out with them we can win.

Donations/messages to: Greenings JSSC, c/o Len Blood, 26 St John St, Newton-le-Willows, Merseyside.



TROOPS OUT NOW!

Join the Labour Committee on Ireland.
BM Box 5355, London WC1N 3XX

Library staff under attack

By Stephen Corbishley

WITH the end of the CPSA strike against the use of Staff Inspections to force through cuts, management and CPSA came to a truce.

Management claimed that no cuts were intended, and agreed to provide the necessary information to the unions that would allow independent monitoring of this claim.

It is clear however that with the onset of new Tory cuts, that the use of Staff Inspections or any other weapon to carry out Thatcher's purge of Civil Service jobs, will have to be fought.

And only 2 weeks after the ending of the British Library strike, the Council of Civil Service Unions came out with the line that 'something needed to be done' about the Tories use of Staff Inspections.

The only solution put forward in a circular by Ellis, Deputy GS of CPSA was to say that where cuts are 'plain to see, they will need to consider in consultation with the members involved and union headquarters whether non-cooperation with the staff inspection could be a practical and effective response.'

However, in the British Library the management offensive against CPSA has now taken a new turn. Shortly after issuing suspension

letters to the CPSA members who had refused to obey management instructions to co-operate with SIs, management also brought disciplinary charges against the 2 branch officers of CPSA — Secretary and Chairperson.

The charges are that we 'were responsible for circulating a bulletin urging members to vote Labour'. This, they claim, is against the disciplinary code.

Apart from an unknown individual in a Department of Environment branch of SCPS the chair and Secretary of CPSA are the only 2 CPSA officers to be disciplined for activity in the General Election.

However, the charge is more serious because they are being charged and disciplined as officers of the union.

The hearing is expected to be in September, or may be earlier. CPSA at the moment is giving backing, but clearly the attack is on the rights of trade unionists and trade union lay officials to organise, particularly in the Civil Service trade union area.

A campaign has been started and leaflets outlining the case and material detailing the charges and the offending document are available from CPSA British Library, Room 125, Sri Holborn, Southampton Buildings WC1.

Scrap the bosses!

Stop the Bomb!

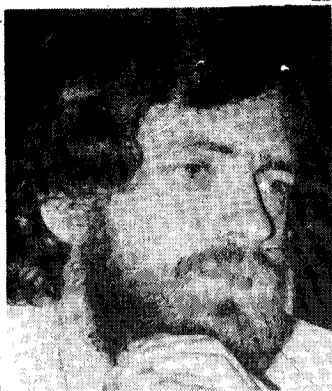
A Class Fighter pamphlet

10p

10p plus postage from
214 Sickert Court,
London N1 2SY.

Campaign

- or bust!



By Jeremy Corbyn MP

THE TWISTS and turns of the leadership debate and campaign are in danger of becoming a referendum on policy. In the Channel 4 debate the four contenders were supposed to be showing the Labour public what their ideals were and how they would fight for the Party policy.

In the case of Hattersley and Shore we had an amazing series of 'new' policy initiatives which, coming so soon after the election, would have had Houdini puzzled.

But in Kinnock's case he seemed to be set on the path of a continued witch-hunt against socialists in the Party and thus trying to make his leadership one of appeasement of the media who have consistently tried to denigrate activists of the Party.

We seem to be entering a strange paradox that the Trade Unions are turning to the left (NUR, POEU) yet we are being told by some of the leadership contenders that the only way forward for the Party is some form of 'accommodation' to win back votes lost to the SDP or Tories.

It must be brought home to everyone in the Party that we did very seriously lose support on June 9, and that we did not pick up support where we should have done, but that the way forward is not to retreat to the right, but consider the alternatives.

Four million are out of work now, for many of them there is no prospect of any work; school leavers suffer indignities that were not even surpassed in the thirties; and living standards are being continuously depressed. The problem for the Labour Party is not to describe the problems that are faced, or even to express solidarity with those suffering, it is to lead a way forward.

The debate around the election results so far has been a bit shallow and has not really questioned the role that the Party has taken in campaigning since 1981, or what plans there are for the future.

The Tories can be defeated, they are not invincible, they represent class privilege, greed — and poverty for the masses, and they are not in the least bit perturbed by whatever is said on the Labour benches in the House of Commons; but they would be very alarmed if they were faced daily with industrial strife that was then articulated on the benches opposite.

Since the election the Campaign Group of MPs has grown in size and activity, with weekly meetings and sharp discussions on the main disputes on the horizon.

There has also been an advance in extending links with the movement outside Parliament. Meetings have now been called for between the Campaign Group and the Broad Lefts Organising Committee, and then between them and the organised left in the CLPs.

Privatisation of British Telecommunications is actually at the cornerstone of the defence we have to mount.

Thousands of jobs are at stake in the most blatant Government handover to private enterprise since Ronald Reagan started to sell the Federal Lands. The POEU is well organised and prepared, but they need the maximum possible support from the Party.

It is the job of every Party member to join the campaign by contacting the local POEU branches and forming the local campaigns. The Health Service dispute suffered from inertia at the TUC level, this battle must be strong at the base.

The only future for the Party is for the Parliamentary Party to leave the portals of Westminster and get out and fight in the community, in a way that it never has before. The Campaign Group have started and shown their determination; we now need a leadership that will do the same.

FUND

Our total for July was £681.45 — £318.55 short of our £1000 target. We can't afford to repeat that shortfall. We're asking all groups to draw up a three-month schedule of fund-raising between now and October 31, and to start getting their plans into operation now.

One of the groups that showed a blank on fund-raising in July — Basingstoke — has told us that it is planning a 'car boot' sale in August. What about the others?

Islington is planning a further jumble sale, and a sponsored cycle ride through the Lea Valley Park on August 21.

No space this week to publish the full tally for July: it will appear next time.

Thanks to: Neil Cobbett £2, Oxford SO supporters £25, Brent £33.91, York £10 (Carolyn & Dave, £5, Richard Bayley £5), Tom Cashman £5, Sheffield supporters £20, Gerry Byrne £50, Cheung Siu Ming £50, Lambeth supporters £1.50 donation and £20 social, Harrogate £3, John MacDonald £10, London supporters £46.89, Hackney social £20, Islington social £12, Glasgow extra paper sales £40, Stoke extra paper sales £20, Birmingham social £20, Godfrey Webster and Lynn Gregory £30, Phil Hardy £25.

Send donations to: The Treasurer, 214 Sickert Court, London N1 2SY. Cheques payable to Socialist Organiser.

Socialist ORGANISER



Polish miners: British workers should support their struggle for wages and conditions

Scargill and Solidarity

Dear Friends,

I could not agree more with your editorial regarding the need for Mr. Arthur Scargill to "come clean" on the issue of "Solidarność" and the Soviet bloc in general.

The continuous repression of Polish workers and — specifically — miners certainly should be the subject of an energetic protest action. Yet, while going out of his way to defend trade union rights in Britain, Mr Scargill is noticeably silent on the issue of Poland.

Slavery

Unfortunately, he and people like him are willing to "buy" any justification given by General Jaruzelski — something they would never accept from Mrs Thatcher. How else could he remain totally indifferent to the virtual slavery in "militarised" pits, where leaving one's job carries the penalty of a three-year prison sentence, or it can be treated as desertion, in which case the penalty is death.

The management, however, is free to sack workers at will or force them to work six or even seven days a week. Disobeying a superior's instruction means the same as refusing to carry out an order.

The only change that the much-heralded lifting of martial law has brought is that control of the mines has shifted from military commander General Piotrowski to the Minister of the mining industry... General

Piotrowski. The old restrictions remain in force.

The list of crimes committed by the military commissars in the mining region of Silesia is almost endless: causing a grave ecological threat to the whole area because of wasteful exploitation, a biological threat to the population and, most of all, the notorious mining disasters.

From January to September 1982, in the first nine months of martial law, 162 miners are known to have died in Polish collieries. By comparison, between 1 January and 12 December 1981, when "Solidarność" was still a legal organisation, not a single miner died — the first such happy occurrence since the communist party came to power!

Miners

Now, even if one was to dismiss such statistics as being caused by "natural hazards", what about the killing of miners at the "Wujek" colliery at the beginning of martial law? Is there really any justification for that?

Brother Scargill, if you want us to treat you as a real working-class leader and not just a pretender, these are the questions you have to answer first — and remember that it is not only Polish workers who have the right to demand an answer.

In 1973-4, during the "winter of discontent", there was an attempt

to break the NUM strike by importing cheap coal from Poland, and the communist authorities were more than willing to sell it. There may well come a time when

you need the solidarity of Polish workers!

Yours sincerely,
Marek Garztecki
Spokesman, Solidarność Working Group

Adams boosts fight for withdrawal

OUR VISIT is part of the process of normalising relationships between us and those in Britain who suffer under and resist the policies of the same government and the same ruling class responsible for the denial of national rights to the Irish people". Newly-elected Sinn Fein MP for West Belfast Gerry Adams told a 300-strong meeting in Finsbury Town Hall last Wednesday, July 27.

Adams, and Joe Austin of Belfast Sinn Fein, had been invited by a number of individuals and organisations, including Ken Livingstone, Steve Bundred, and the Labour Committee on Ireland. When he tried to make a similar visit last December, Gerry Adams was prevented from coming under the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

As well as the Finsbury meeting (organised by the Islington Labour Parties), Gerry Adams met Labour MPs and members of the GLC and London Labour councillors.

Hysteria

Adams' visit is an indication that there is a growing section of Labour Party members who are willing to stand up to press hysteria and be openly identified with the struggle for a united Ireland and British withdrawal. As Adams put it, "The acid test of commitment to socialism in Britain and Ireland is to be found in one's attitudes to the issue of Irish self-determination".

At the same time, the growing links are a reflection of the shifts that have taken place in the political approach of Sinn Fein. For many years Republicans tended to write off the British labour movement on the basis of the activities of Rees, Mason, Cannon and their ilk.

Links

Gerry Adams was at pains to stress the socialist and secular side of Republicanism.

The links between the Labour left and the Republican movement are an indication that support for British withdrawal is emerging from the ghetto it has been in for so long in the British Labour Party.

Next issue

Because of the holiday period the next issue of Socialist Organiser will be on August 18, featuring articles on the Japanese car industry, an interview with Tony Benn, plus regular national and international coverage.