

# A Socialist ACTION

Sabra and Shatila Anniversary Committee

**MARCH • RALLY • DEMONSTRATION**

**SOLIDARITY WITH THE PALESTINIAN STRUGGLE**

Saturday 17 September, 1.15pm, Embankment

# US and British troops out of Lebanon

THE UNITED STATES, Great Britain, Italy and France are at war in Lebanon. The decision to send 2000 extra US troops, the growing casualties among 'peace-keeping' forces and the decision to evacuate British citizens from Beirut all point to the fact that alongside the forces of President Gemayel the armies of the Western powers are at war with the

lightly-armed Druze and Shi'ite Islamic militias.

Hundreds of people have been killed in the fighting over the last two weeks. US shore and naval batteries have shelled the militias of the Lebanese left.

British Buccaneer jets, fully armed, have flown over from Cyprus to back-up British positions in the city,

with the explicit aim of intimidating the militias.

Both Thatcher and Reagan deny that they are involved in a war. For Reagan the reason is obvious. If he admitted that the US forces were engaged in hostilities this would give American Congress the right to recall or endorse the US forces, mission.

But the American people are increasingly alarmed by the involvement of American troops. A recent Gallup poll in *Newsweek* magazine shows that a clear majority of the American people are in favour of withdrawal.

In Britain there has as yet been no such public alarm as to British involvement.

This is partly due to the currently small scale of British involvement but also because there has been no sufficiently vigorous condemnation from the labour movement of the supportive role which the British government is giving the US military adventure.

This weekend sees a demonstration in London to

mark the anniversary of the ghastly Sabra-Shatila massacre of Palestinians by right wing Christian militia. It should be a reminder that imperialism and Zionism hold no answers to the Lebanese crisis.

Only the withdrawal of imperialist and Israeli troops from the country, the release of political prisoners and the granting of the Palestinian demand for their own democratic secular state can begin to open up the way for peace in the Middle East.

But two further points have to be understood by the British labour movement.

The first is that the state of Israel is a racist state, whose very basis lies in the denial of democratic and social rights to Arab people and that far from playing any progressive role, will be further Sabra/-Shatilas if it is allowed to.

The second is that British imperialism is incapable of playing a peace-keeping role whether in Ireland or West Beirut. For these reasons we say:-

- ★ Reagan and Thatcher out of Lebanon
- ★ No to Israeli aggression!
- ★ Self-determination for the Palestinian people!
- 'Peacekeepers' prepare for war — see page 5.

# NO MORE MASSACRES!





# Socialist ACTION

## Arthur Scargill and Solidarity

Arthur Scargill's letter to the WRP paper *News Line* on the Polish free trade union Solidarity has opened him up to a massive press onslaught. This press campaign is utterly cynical. The Fleet Street gang couldn't give a fig about the fate of the Polish workers — they are only concerned with trying to destroy the left leadership of the NUM and the trade unions in general. Any class conscious worker should understand that.

Nonetheless Scargill's views expressed in the *News Line* letter are profoundly

wrong, and represent misconceptions about Solidarity which are widespread inside the British labour movement. They are a gift to the capitalist press, which wants to paint the left as hypocritical — defending freedom in countries like El Salvador, but completely oblivious to repression in Eastern Europe.

Scargill in his letter to *News Line* says that he is 'utterly opposed' to the Solidarity organisation because it is more than a trade union and opposed to socialism. This is an adaptation to Stalinist views.

The underground Solidarity steering committee earlier

this year published a programmatic manifesto which puts forward its objective of a 'self-managed republic'. They argue against 'altering the balance of forces in Europe' — that is against taking Poland into the capitalist camp.

There is nothing in Solidarity's aims incompatible with socialism, but there is something in those aims incompatible with bureaucratic rule.

In a press statement last week Scargill accuses the Polish government of acting in a 'clumsy, savage and brutal way' against the Polish people and Solidarity. But that method of operation cannot be divorced from the domination of Poland, and the rest of the Eastern European states, by a privileged bureaucracy.

It is no answer to people who demand condemnation of the brutality of the bureaucracy to say 'why don't you condemn imperialist slaughter in El Salvador'. Of course socialists should say that, but they should not disarm themselves by lending one iota of credence to the lies and slanders of the Polish bureaucrats, who didn't hesitate to slaughter miners in Silesia when they resisted the Jaruzelski coup.

Arthur Scargill does a

disservice to the left and undermines his own position in the NUM when he appears to sanction the Stalinist lies about the Polish workers.

There is another aspect of this affair — the role of the Workers Revolutionary Party. Those familiar with this organisation will know that it is the demented sectarian remnant of what was once a Trotskyist organisation. Its behaviour on this issue shows it.

Scargill wrote them a letter in June, but they held back its publication until the TUC so that it can help the general chorus of Arthur Scargill-bashing which they knew would be going on in the press. Could anything be more despicable from an organisation which claims to be socialist.

The WRP must have known the real anti-socialist content of the witch hunt against Scargill on this question. But they chose, through the timing of the publication of the letter, to provide the capitalist press with the ammunition to rubbish Scargill. Such behaviour is the equivalent of strike breaking and scabbing. Its perpetrators have no place within the ranks of the labour movement.

## Clause Four to back Hattersley?

CLAUSE FOUR is a grouping of Labour Party members who have made their presence felt in the NUS and in left wing Labour bodies like CLPD. In a recent discussion article 26 supporters of Clause Four argue that they should back Hattersley rather than Michael Meacher for the Deputy Leadership of the Labour Party.

By any stretch of the imagination this is an extraordinary stance for socialists to take. Hattersley is, as a chair of Labour Solidarity, quite openly a candidate of the right wing. In response to a recent letter from a constituency party, he savagely attacked party policy on nuclear disarmament, the EEC and incomes policy.

Nonetheless the Clause Four supporters' position is an interesting insight into the way the 'right of the left' is developing. Here we publish selected extracts of the Clause Four discussion article.

'MICHAEL MEACHER is the "left" candidate for Deputy. His campaign focuses opposition against the right and makes an emotional appeal to the Labour Left which is significantly not being made by Neil Kinnock. In this way, the knee-jerk left-right strife that brought the party such bad publicity (even among its supporters) is maintained.

'For many on the romantic/adventurist left, Hattersley-Meacher presents an opportunity to rerun Healey-Benn. No lessons appear to have been learnt...

'At this time of crisis for the party we should be emphasising our common purpose, rather than highlighting points of difference. The logic of seeing the Party as being made up of incompatible elements is to welcome a further and more extensive split. This is surely the road to oblivion for socialist and working class politics in Britain...

'We do not "bump" people simply because they are "right wing". The Labour Party is not a (pure or sullied) socialist

says will be almost totally ignored by his supporters.

'In the Guardian article (by Meacher — eds) he talks about the need to put the "talk of politics of betrayal" behind us. The most enthusiastic Meacher groupies, *Tribune*, greeted the election defeat with a centre page story, "The Guilty Men", while the paper's correspondence columns have carried letters demanding the inclusion of Michael Foot among the alleged guilty ones and calling for an NEC inquiry into 'sabotage' of the election campaign by the right.

'Sadly, these do not appear to be isolated views and are promulgated by precisely those people the Meacher campaign will mobilise. It is surely the job of an organisation like Clause Four to recognise this and confront these nonsensical views.

'If we take Roy Hattersley, we must be clear that his politics are not wholly taken up with careerism or attacking party policy. Far from it. He is deeply committed to the development of many of our most neglected initiatives, and where he does criticise policy he does so cogently and coherently...

'Within the party a victory for Meacher would strengthen those elements of the Bennite and far left who we believe will be an obstacle to any attempt to save the Labour Party as a serious force in British politics...



Youth CND organised a successful lobby of the TUC despite the CND leadership's attempts to call it off

## Campaign ATOM defends rights of CND activists

CAMPAIGN ATOM, the Oxford CND, discussed press allegations of left wing subversion at its 8 September council meeting. The attitude of Campaign ATOM to this is of particular interest, since the press accusations have centred on the role of Oxford YCND. The following resolution was passed unanimously by the 40 delegates present.

'CAMPAIGN ATOM, the Oxford Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, dissociates itself from recent press reports alleging "left wing infiltration" and "moles" in CND.'

'CND is a broad based movement campaigning for nuclear disarmament. As such we welcome into membership all those who support our minimum demands, principally unilateral nuclear disarmament by Britain, regardless of their views on other issues. CND is not aligned to any political

party and we welcome into membership members from all political parties and movements such as trade unions, churches, womens organisations etc.

'We recognise and support the right of members to have views on other topics. All members of CND have equal rights to decide on CND policy, and stand for office, free from intimidation.

'We condemn the attack in the media on the right of socialists to be active in CND and recognise that this is part of an at-

tack on CND and the mass movement for nuclear disarmament as a whole.

'We call on the leadership of national CND (the Executive, Council and Conference) to endorse such a statement. This statement to be published in the Campaign ATOM bulletin and presented to the local press, *Sanity*, *Radiator* (Southern Regional CND journal), *Peace News*, *Morning Star*, *New Statesman*, *Tribune*, *Socialist Action* and the CND executive.

Photo: JOHN HARRIS



# Campaign for political rights at work

## Appeal against political victimisation and vetting

'We are deeply concerned that the recent dismissal by British Leyland at Cowley of workers for their political views is merely one example of increasing victimisation of workers who are considered radical or socialist. In our view an employer is not entitled to censor ideas or penalise normal trade union activity.'

'The press statement of the Cowley story was gravely disturbing in assuming guilt where none was proven. Yet few voices were heard in criticism. This is a new McCarthyite tendency to condemn people by association and, taken with the activity of organisations like the Economic League, it is a tendency which ought to be reversed. We would welcome your support in forming a committee to counter this tendency and to give support to those who are victimised at work for their political convictions.'

## Oxford Party backs national appeal

Oxford East Labour Party has unanimously endorsed a national appeal for action against political discrimination at work.

Its General Management Committee voted to back the appeal on Monday 12 September. The statement was signed by 12 Oxford Labour councillors, including the Parliamentary Prospective Candidate for Oxford East Labour Party, Andrew Smith.

Key figures at last week's Trade Union Congress also endorsed the statement. These included Alex Kitson, the Transport and General Workers' Union assistant general secretary and a member of the Labour Party National Executive Committee.

Below we publish the text of the appeal and the list of initial signatories. The appeal's instigators aim to establish a campaign around it in the near future, when full details of its activities will be released to the public.

To ensure that the campaign is established and gets off to a flying start, we ask our readers to collect signatures and money on the widest possible basis. Appeal forms, and other information, can be obtained from ALEX LYON, 23 LARKHILL RISE, LONDON SW14.

Initial signatories, all in personal capacity.

Alex Kitson, Assistant General Secretary TGWU  
Terry Marsland, General Secretary Tobacco Workers Union  
Geoffrey Drain, General Secretary NALGO



Alan Sapper, General Secretary ACTT  
Jim Slater, General Secretary National Union of Seamen  
Jimmy Knapp, General Secretary National Union of Railwaymen  
Ken Cameron, General Secretary Fire Brigades Union  
Jack Collins, Kent area NUM  
Morris Jones, President Yorkshire NUM

Ken Barlow, Midland Region UCATT

Eric Heffer MP  
Jo Richardson MP  
Martin Flannery MP  
Tony Banks MP  
Jeremy Corbyn MP  
Harriet Harman MP  
Dennis Canavan MP  
Ron Brown MP  
Ken Livingstone, leader GLC

Richard Balfe MEP  
Mabel Goldwin, Southwark councillor  
Peter Troy, Southwark councillor  
Penny Newell, Chair Peckham CLP  
Alex Lyon  
Les Huckfield  
Jeremy Hawthorn, Sec Peckham CLP  
Lloyd Trott, Treasurer Peckham CLP  
James Curran, editor New Socialist  
Glenys Thornton, secretary Political Committee Royal Arsenal Cooperative Society  
Anstey Rice, Southwark Black Peoples Alliance  
Peter Carter, Industrial Organiser, Communist Party



Six thousand people marched through London last weekend through pouring rain to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the Chilean Coup. Speakers denounced the tottering Pinochet government while others said it in costume (above).



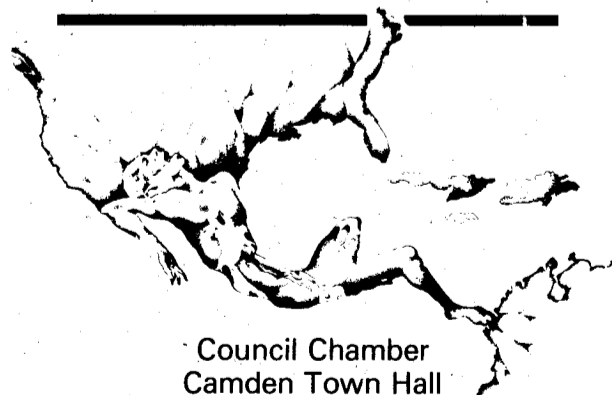
Jo Richardson MP



Jeremy Corbyn MP

Prof. Sheila Allen  
Prof. Hilary Rose, Bradford University  
Prof. Steven Rose, Open University  
Prof. Stuart Hall, Open University  
Sue O'Sullivan, Spare Rib  
Helen John, Greenham Peace Camp  
Robin Blackburn, editor New Left Review  
Anthony Arblaster  
John Saville  
Anthony Kendall, leader Hackney Council  
Gultekin Bekdemir, executive member of the banned Turkish union DISK, and a leader of the underground Turkish mineworkers union.

## No new Vietnam in Central America



Council Chamber  
Camden Town Hall  
Judd Street,  
London WC1  
Thursday 29th September  
7.30pm

Jeremy Corbyn MP — just back from Nicaragua  
Maria Urbina, Nicaragua Embassy  
Jaime Lopez, FDR/El Salvador  
Silvia Beales, No Intervention in Central America  
Chairperson: Sue Lukes, Chile Solidarity Campaign

North London El Salvador Solidarity Campaign, No Intervention in Central America  
Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign, Hampstead Labour Party, Holborn & St Pancras Labour Party, Socialist Action.

# The leadership elections

**SOCIALIST ACTION** reprints below an article by the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy on why Labour Party members should support Eric Heffer in the leadership contest.

**THE ELECTION** of a new Labour Leader and Deputy Leader is being presented by the media as an American-style personality contest. Many well-meaning Party and trade union members unfortunately also see it in this light.

The real significance of this election, however, is political. The choice of the electoral college, together with the other NEC elections, will probably decide the Party's whole future direction. This is why CLPD is urging all Labour Party members and trade unionists to vote for Eric Heffer.

One of the major factors which contributed to Labour's defeat was the internal party tension produced by the reluctance of the Parliamentary leadership to accept the two reforms which made it more accountable — the mandatory reselection of MPs and the electoral college. The fragile unity which was laboriously constructed during the last few months came too late to have an effect on the election result.

## Danger

This foundation should now be built on. Unfortunately it is in danger from influential minorities within the Party who are trying to re-open the old conflicts, and seek to reverse the Party's democratic gains by blaming them for the election defeat.

Eric Heffer is the only candidate who has called for acceptance of the constitutional changes which have been made. Both Peter Shore and Roy Hattersley support proposals in relation to the electoral college and on mandatory re-selection which would render these reforms ineffective.

Under the banner of one member, one vote they are promoting a system which will undermine the Branches and General Committees of CLPs by using postal ballots in the leadership elections and holding a one off meeting of members in the constituencies to select MPs.

The effects will be to encourage media inter-

ference, to ensure that the process for electing the leadership elevates them above Party policy, and to by-pass the only effective body for monitoring an MP's performance.

## Demand

Neil Kinnock, of course, is not identified with this demand for the reversal of democratic reforms. He has stated that he regards mandatory reselection as something that is here to stay, and presumably he views the electoral college in a similar way. Kinnock's past record on the NEC however, must throw some doubt on the degree of his commitment to democratic reforms.

In 1979 it was his vote in favour of the NEC withdrawing its own constitutional amendment which prevented the Party conference from making a decision which would have transferred the final decision on the manifesto to the NEC. In May 1981 he voted to authorise the shortlist of one, this was an abuse of mandatory reselection.

## Abstention

His abstention in the Deputy Leadership election, and his campaign to persuade fellow MPs to abstain ensured that the NEC was deprived of a majority in favour of democratic reforms and opened the door to the NEC's subsequent interference with the democratic rights of members.

The fundamental basis for Labour Party unity is the agreement to abide by conference decisions. The major policy decisions of the last ten years have been for the Alternative Economic Strategy, unilateral nuclear disarmament, and withdrawal from the Common Market.



Eric Heffer — most in step with the CLPs and unions

Like the rest of us, Eric Heffer undoubtedly does not regard the Party's present position on these issues as the last word. Out of the four leadership candidates, however, he is clearly the candidate most in step with the broad outlook of the majority of CLPs and trade unions.

## Principle

Above all, he is the only one unequivocally committed to the principle that Party conference must have the last word, and that Labour MPs must fight for Labour's policies.

Alongside the acceptance of majority deci-

sions, the fundamental principle of democracy is the right of a minority to campaign for change: Eric Heffer is the only leadership candidate who upholds this right.

The manifestos of Shore and Hattersley call for purges of their opponents, while Kinnock has voted in the Party NEC in favour of almost every step in the victimisation of Militant supporters. Eric Heffer, however, has been absolutely consistent in his public statements that disagreements must be settled by democratic and not Stalinist methods, and that nobody should be expelled

from the Labour Party because of their views.

The most significant aspect of Eric Heffer's courageous stand against a witch hunt is its importance for Labour's future. The Party's overriding need is to face up to the lessons of the last General Election so as to make sure that we win the next one.

## Scapegoats

The approach of the last three Party Leaders has been to search for scapegoats — sometimes the actions of the unions or the CLPs, sometimes the decisions of Party conference, and sometimes

## This is where they stand

Before you vote, discover how the leading candidates voted on the critical issues at the NEC. Although Gwynneth Dunwoody, John Golding and Jo Richardson are not standing, their votes are nevertheless recorded as illustrations of typical responses by different parts of the Party spectrum.

### Key to symbols

- F for
- A against
- O abstention
- \* not on the NEC then

	DUNWOODY	HEFFER	KINNOCK	GOLDING	RICHARDSON
1 No action against Militant (Dec 80)	* F	F	F	A	F
2 Oppose 'shortlist' of one (May 81)	* F	A	A	A	F
3 For trade union rights for Youth Opportunity Trainees (July 81)	* F	—	A	F	
4 Support NEC commitment to 'remove nuclear weapons from Britain' (July 81)	* F	F	A	F	
5 Endorse Peter Tatchell (Dec 81)	A	F	A	A	F
6 No enquiry into Militant (Dec 81)	A	F	A	A	F
7 Endorse Pat Wall (Feb 82)	A	F	F	A	F
8 Immediate ceasefire in the Falklands (May 82)	A	O	A	A	F
9 Keep the commitment to 'unilateral disarmament' in Labour's Programme 1982 (May 1982)	A	F	F	A	F
10 Reject Militant Tendency Report (June 82)	A	F	A	A	F
11 Keep the commitment to nationalise clearing banks in NEC statement to conference (July 82)	A	F	A	A	F
12 NEC should not oppose conference amendments calling for removal of NEC's arbitrary powers over pressure groups and calling for impartial conditions for the operation of pressure groups (Sept 82)	A	F	A	A	F
13 Total opposition to incomes policy and support for guaranteed minimum wage (Sept 82)	A	F	A	—	F
14 Keep Benn, not Golding, as Chair of Home Policy Committee (Nov 82)	A	F	O	A	F
15 Carry out 1981 conference decision to allow CLPs to carry out a full re-selection in the event of boundary changes (Feb 82)	A	F	—	A	F
16 Against expelling Militant Editorial Board (Feb 83)	A	F	A	A	F

Photo: GM COOKSON

the fringe groups, whose real influence is, of course, negligible.

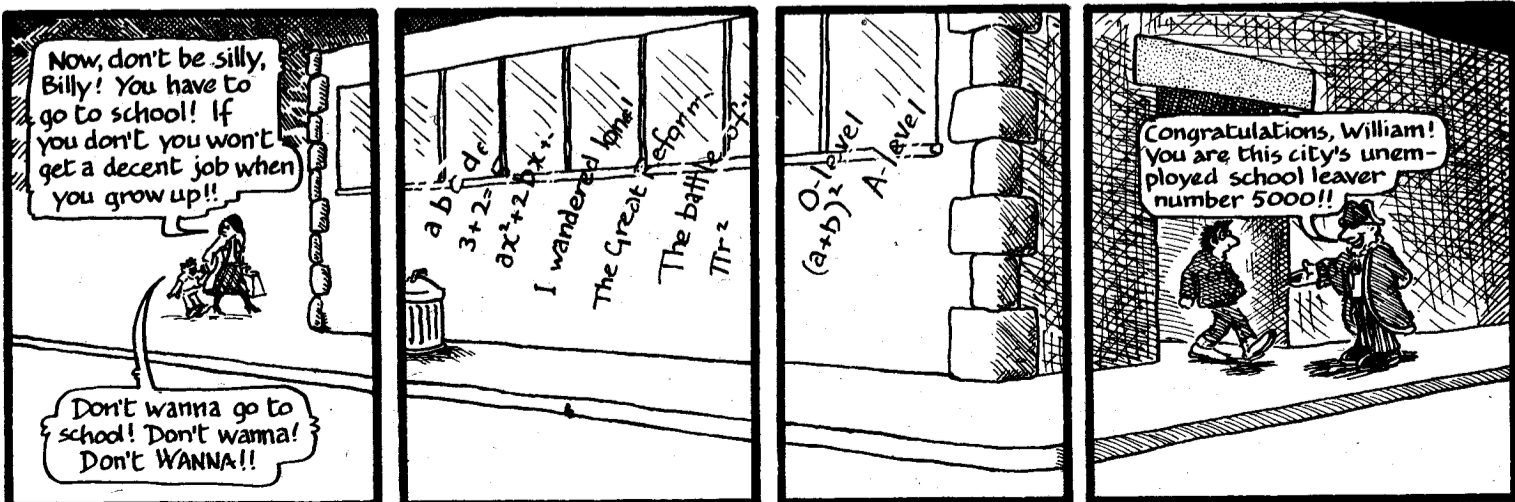
Eric Heffer is the one candidate whose record shows a wholehearted commitment to Labour as a mass party which campaigns outside as well as inside Parliament for working people.

He is the one candidate certain to resist the pressures for precisely the public displays of disunity which played such a large part in the election defeat.

Eric Heffer is the one candidate who can be relied on not to sacrifice socialism and democracy in the process of the searching reappraisals that must be faced.

## A PIECE OF THE ACTION

BY CORMAC #24 9/83



# Help Heffer!

CAMPAIGN material and details of meetings are available from Jim Callaghan MP (Middleton), House of Commons, London SW1. Donations are welcome to cover the costs of printing, postage and necessary travel. Please send cheques to the above address, payable to Jim Callaghan MP (Middleton).



# Lebanon 'peace keepers' prepare for war

REPEATEDLY over the past week, British, American and French soldiers of the international 'peace keeping' force in Lebanon have come under fire. The US soldiers, at least, have returned that fire.

Two thousand extra US marines have been despatched to the Mediterranean, while an American aircraft carrier has bombarded Druze militias in the Chouf mountains. The scene is being set for intervention in force by the Western armies.

There is not the slightest doubt that any Western intervention will be to defend the Phalangists — the right wing Christian militias — against their left wing and nationalist Muslim opponents.

The immediate crisis has been caused by the withdrawal of the Israeli army from its forward positions to a new line based on the Awali River, thus leaving a military vacuum. The Lebanese government army, the Phalangists, the Druze militias and the Shi'ite Muslim 'Amal' militia, have all rushed in to fill the void.

Right from the time that they received the patronage of the French in the last century, the

Lebanese Christians have looked to the Western imperialist powers for support. Generally the wealthiest section of the community, the Maronite Christians have fought to maintain their position against the more populous Druze and Muslims.

The predominant force among the Druze people is the 'Progressive Socialist Party' of Walid Jumblatt. Their militias have been engaged in fierce battles in the Chouf mountains south of Beirut against the Christian militias — battles which they seem for the time being to be winning.

The conflict between the two communities in the early 1970s was complicated by the arrival in Lebanon of the main fighting forces of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, driven out of Jordan by King Hussein in 1970. They became the natural allies of the Lebanese left.

In the civil war which developed in 1975-6, the



Women mourning after the massacres at Sabra and Shatila

Palestinians and Lebanese left came close to overrunning the Phalangists, but were stopped by the Syrian army — the so-called 'Arab peace keeping force'.

The Syrians had no love of the Phalangists, but were equally opposed to a strong leftist-nationalist and Palestinian presence on their borders.

The Syrian-policed stalemate between the two forces was broken by last year's Israeli invasion. Seeking to deal a permanent blow to the Palestinians, the Israelis moved into West Beirut to defeat the nationalist and left wing guerillas as well.

Temporarily the Maronite Christians saw the Israelis as their allies. After all, the Israelis were battering their most bitter foes. With Israeli support the Phalangist leader, Bashir Gemayel, was installed as President.

But all the evidence is that the Israelis were playing a double game. At one

level they appeared to be backing formation of a strong and centralised Lebanese state, dominated by the Phalangists and friendly to Israel. That certainly was the project of the United States.

By Paul Lawson

But many in the Israeli leadership argued that any type of strong Lebanese state was against Israel's interest. The best way to maintain Israeli dominance in the region was to give limited backing to the Phalangists, occupy the southern part of Lebanon directly — but allow Lebanon to become de facto divided into warring statelets dominated by different groupings.

In any case continued Israeli occupation of a large part of Lebanon had become politically unacceptable, given the large number of casualties which the Israeli army of occupation was sustaining. The latter strategy has

in reality become the Israeli project following their withdrawal to the Awali river.

The problem is that what's temporarily good for Israel is not necessarily what's best for the United States. Reagan and company still seem wedded to the idea of a Lebanon dominated by the Phalangists. Victories by the Jumblatt militias would probably allow the return of many more Palestinian fighters, and in their minds contribute to the further destabilisation of the region. That's where the marines come in.

The international peace keeping force has one brief, not to defend and support the central Lebanese government. This government is now in reality a Phalangist government. Its writ runs only in East Beirut and the area immediately surrounding the city.

To establish itself na-

## New protests in Chile

RIOTING swept the working class areas of Chile on Thursday 8 September in a new day of national protest against the Pinochet regime. At least four people were killed and dozens were injured by police gunfire.

Several people were killed in separate incidents when police raided homes and were engaged in shoot outs by suspected member of the MIR (Movement of the Revolutionary Left).

During the day there were large demonstrations in many towns, including Santiago, Valdivia and Concepcion. These demonstrations by and large passed off without incident.

In the evening however thousands of people turned out banging pots and pans, and police opened fire on demonstrators. The demonstrators were also fired on from cars by people in plain clothes — obviously off duty policemen or supporters of the extreme right wing.

In the evening demonstrations more than 600 people were detained by the police. During the afternoon 350 law students demonstrated in the Santiago law courts in support of the copper workers leader, Rodolfo Seguel, failed for allegedly insulting Pinochet in an article published in a Mexican magazine.

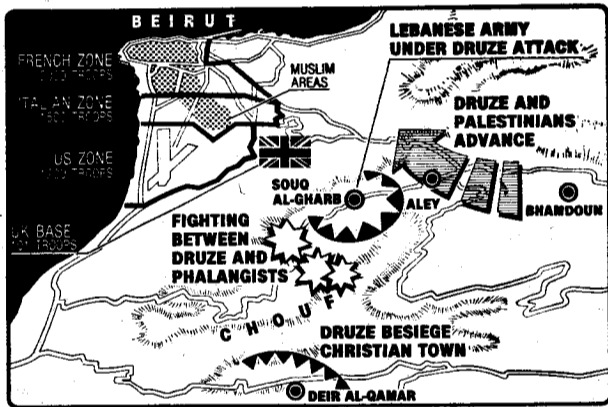
tionally it needs to militarily defeat the Druze, Shi'ite and other Arab nationalist and left wing forces. This task it is evidently incapable of accomplishing on its own.

If the Americans reinforce their contingent in Beirut and get deeply involved in the fighting, then the presence of British, French and Italian troops will be of inestimable diplomatic value as a cover. Just as they did in

Korea, the US will present the whole venture as an act of upholding international law — approved by the international community.

Socialists in Britain should start a campaign for withdrawal of the British peace keeping force. The experience of Ireland shows us only too well how those sent by imperialism to 'keep the peace' are the advanced guard of its counter-revolutionary strike force.

Sabra and Shatila First Anniversary Committee  
**DEMONSTRATION**  
**Embankment**  
**sat 17th sept 1.15pm**  
**ISRAEL OUT OF LEBANON!**



## Air attack launched on Nicaragua

FOR two days running last week rebel plans based in Honduras launched air attacks against Nicaragua. On Thursday two light planes attacked the airport at Managua, and machine gunned and rocketed an area of the city. On the same day, contras blew up Nicaragua's only dock for unloading crude oil at Puerto Sandino.

One of the two planes was brought down by anti-aircraft fire and crashed killing both the pilot and co-pilot, later identified as Nicaraguan exiles.

Both the air raid and the sabotage of the oil installation were claimed by the Democratic Revolutionary Front in Honduras.

Last Friday jet fighters (US-made T-38s) fired rockets at oil storage tanks at the port of Corinto, 50 miles West of Managua. Reports differed as to the damage done, some saying the rockets landed in the sea, others that four oil storage tanks were damaged.

Ominously, the Nicaraguan foreign minister Miguel D'Escoto

indicated on Friday that an air and sea battle was taking place between Nicaraguan and Honduran forces in the Laguna de Bismona, off the Honduran and Nicaraguan coasts.

This escalation of the attacks on Nicaragua continues, according to the international *Herald Tribune* after CIA officials had expressed disappointment that the rebels had not made significant military inroads in Nicaragua.

Clearly the launching of air attacks from Honduran territory is an act of war by Honduras. The CIA has decided to step up its attacks on Nicaragua, and the situation is drifting inexorably towards war:



## Attack on Greenham women

IT'S getting impossible these days to read a newspaper (present company excepted) or watch the news on TV without screaming loudly. The media seem to be on a right wing rampage even more than usual.

Here is an example of objective reporting from the illustrious *Daily Express* (take note especially of the last four words):

'A group of normally peaceful citizens decided to take the law into their own hands late last night with a hit-and-run raid on the Greenham Com-

mon women's peace camp.

'Wearing wigs and boiler suits the "vigilantes" — businessmen, housewives and young couples — launched themselves into the tatty tented complex armed with all the revolting refuse they could lay their hands on including maggots.

'The raid began at 11pm when three carloads of vigilantes ripped tents out of the ground and flung sackloads of maggots, offal and farm manure over the site.

'In just two minutes the vigilantes were back in their cars to vanish into the night. There were no police on the scene, and no violence occurred.'

## Is the Pope real?

LAST WEEK the Pope, speaking to a posse of American bishops, denounced homosexuality, premarital sex, artificial birth control, abortion and women priests.

The question has to be asked: 'Is the Pope real?'

Anyway, you can judge for yourself. Here is what the Pontiff actually said:

'The compassionate bishop will proclaim the incompatibility of premarital sex and homosexual activity with God's plan for human love.'

'The bishop must give proof of his pastoral ability and leadership by withdrawing all support from individuals or groups who in the name of progress, justice or compassion ... promote the ordination of women to the priesthood.'

'The bishop is called

upon to oppose any and all discrimination of women by reasons of sex ... The Church's teaching on the exclusion of women from priestly ordination is extraneous to the issue of discrimination.'

Answer on a postcard, please, to this column and the funniest reply will win a copy of the new book *Greenham Women Everywhere*. (Positive discrimination will, of course, apply).



As the TUC discusses women's rights, Len Murray demonstrates an advanced consciousness of the issues

Photo: JOHN HARRIS



# TUC shows the need for new minority movement

LAST WEEK'S TUC was greeted by the capitalist media with something akin to euphoria. They welcomed the light and sound of Chapple as he came to the fore and set the pace for Murray and the other right-wing leaders.

They read the writing on the TUC's wall which spelt out talks with Tebbit, loosening of the links with the Labour Party and recognition of the 'democratically elected government' which means no political strikes against anti-union legislation.

They relished the humilia-

tion of the left whose policies clearly offer no way forward against the Tory attacks. The left has not just let Murray and company off the hook, but allowed them to strengthen their grip on the TUC.

A stop has to be put to this process which threatens the whole future of the labour movement. This week PAT HICKEY examines the role of both right and left inside the TUC and stresses the need for the building of a new Minority Movement, whilst BOB PENNINGTON takes a look at the old Minority Movement.



Photo: GM COOKSON

health unions conducted the most militant struggles



Did Frank thump him? Or did the 'left' just politely roll over when Chapple spoke?

## Chapple shows the way

FOR THE TORY press the 115th annual Trades Union Congress was as almost as joyous an occasion as the mole-hunt two weeks earlier.

Alongside weighty editorials welcoming the 'new mood of realism' were jubilant headlines glorying in the defeat of the left. The *Times* carried an article entitled 'The Beginning of the End of the Unions?'.

The question mark at the end was well-advised. Although the outlook for the unions — and the working class — is grimmer than at any time since 1945, the ruling class in Britain still has a long way to go before it can achieve its aim of breaking the back of organised labour. But the signs are ominous.

There is certainly no room for complacency on the left about the situation. The 1983 Congress marked the biggest political shift in the TUC since the left leadership of Jones and Scanlon emerged in the late '60s to replace the right wing dominance of Carron and company. Then the shift took place in the context of the long boom, of growing shop floor strength, and the burgeoning of the stop stewards' organisations.

This present shift however is in the context of a worsening economic crisis, of a new round of attacks on the unions and the welfare state, a dramatic weakening of the shop stewards organisations, particularly in heavy industry, and a catastrophic decline in the fortunes of the Labour Party.

When Thatcher came to power in 1979 trade union membership stood at the record level of 12.2 million, or 52 per cent of the working population. Today the figures are about 10 million, or just below 50 per cent of the working population. It is in the major manual unions that the decline is most marked. The Transport and General Workers Union has dropped from over 2 million in 1979 to 1.5 million; the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers from 1.2 million to under 1 million — a paying membership of 850,000. In engineering, the number of shop stewards has about halved. By contrast, National and Local Government Officers Association and National Union of Public Employees have made small gains. As a result about 4 million of the TUC's 10.5 million are the white-collar and public sector unions.

Given the depths of the recession such figures are not surprising. But they could not in themselves account for the rightward move at this TUC. Much more important are the political defeats suffered by the labour movement since 1979, above all the inability of the Labour leadership to take on the Tories. It is an old adage that oppositions don't win elections, governments lose them. This certainly applies to the left in the TUC.

Their failure to campaign for clear socialist policies, their silence in the face of the right's attacks on socialists in the Labour Party, and their refusal to support struggles against the Tories — as with the health workers, the train drivers, and British Leyland led to Labour's debacle on 6 June.

By Pat Hickey

The Tory press, and the right wing on the TUC try to attribute these defeats to some fundamental and irreversible process going on in the working population of Britain. They point to the rise of new technology, the growth of the service and banking and insurance sectors as evidence that the trade unions have 'to adjust to the last quarter of the 20th century'.

Such assertions are rubbish. They must be firmly rejected by socialists. Unions such as NUPE and NALGO organise some of the poorest paid and most oppressed sectors of the population in Britain. And the health unions conducted the most militant struggles that happened in 1982.

Even trade unions such as BIFU — which covers banking, insurance and finance — are remarkable not for being based on a new elite section of the working class, but for the fact even in such traditionally privileged areas workers have found necessary to organise to defend their interests. The Civil and Public Servants Association is not based on pin-striped civil servants but on low paid clerks and typists etc.

These changes in the social composition of the TUC membership are not some sudden new development discovered by a guru of the right in 1983. They have been going on for decades and have been speeded up by the crisis. True traditional industries

have been declining. At the same time however new areas have been proletarianised — as Marx predicted they would.

Tory Britain has not brought forth a new aristocracy of labour embracing the bulk of the working class. In fact with four million unemployed it has done the opposite. The issue is not a sociological one, but is one that demands political answers. The problem is not the membership. The problem is the leadership. And particularly that section of the leadership which claims to lead the left.

Throughout the life of the last Tory government they refused to organise the forces at the base of the movement who were prepared to take on the government. They made no attempt to organise the ranks, for example, against the TUC's sell-out of the train-drivers. They failed to build on the potential of the health workers dispute.

In the run-up to this TUC they accepted, by their silence, the framework of the right wing. This framework focussed on Labour's election defeat, and the undoubted shift to the right in the working class. The conclusion from this was not the need to put forward socialist policies and campaign for them in the unions, but the '... need for a major reassessment of the TUC's policies and role'. What this will mean was made clear during Congress.

### Talks

It will be talks with Tebbit about anti-union legislation, opposition to political strikes, dropping unilateralism, opposition to secondary industrial action, and acceptance of the weakening of links with the Labour Party.

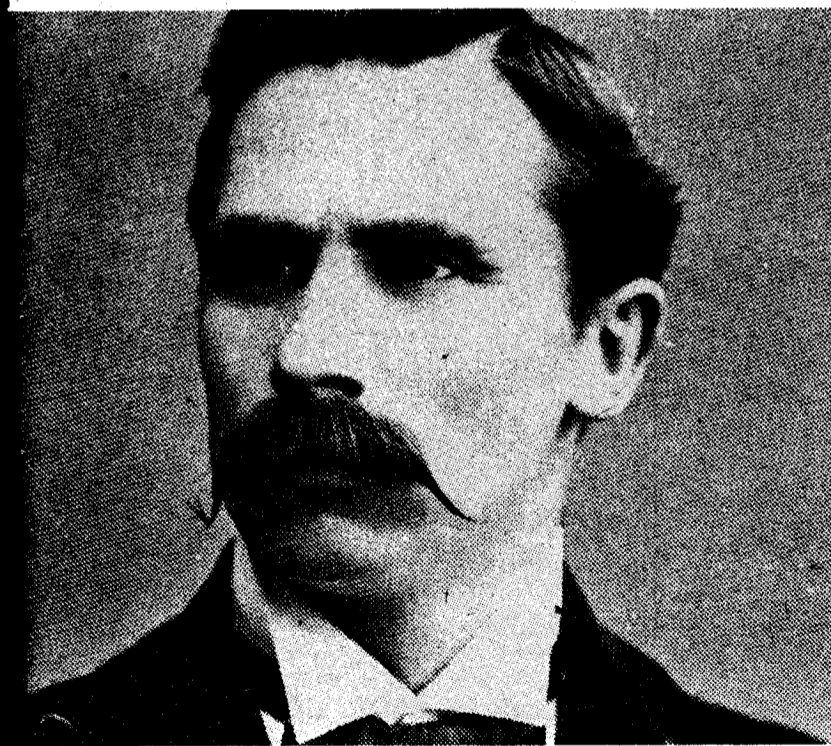
So in a situation where the Tories are engaged in the most serious attacks on the working class for 50 years, the TUC General Council will be swimming with the stream of ruling class reaction.

This will be in the hope that they can do a deal with Tebbit. But this policy will only serve to further demoralise the working class. It will reinforce the myth of Tory invincibility. It will drive even more workers into the hands of the Alliance and even the Tories. And it still will not satisfy the bosses.





## for Murray



m Mann

Chapple and his allies on the General Council have already made it clear that they regard the Social Democrat/Liberal Alliance as a useful ally to a left-dominated Labour Party. And amidst all the hullabaloo about the ocean airliner and Scargill's stance on solidarity there was a deafening silence on the question of Tebbit's attack on the political levy.

### Confident

The right wing are getting much more confident. They know that nearly a third of the unions in the TUC are affiliated to the Labour Party. They see this as a base for their policies of talking to 'the democratically elected government' and eventually opening up links with the SDP. If they succeed in breaking the trade unions' links with the Labour Party this would deal a blow to the interests of the working class. It would undermine its independence and help to deliver sections of the workers' movement into the hands of the bourgeois parties.

This danger can be fought only by the most vigorous opposition to the cowardly positions adopted at this TUC. The practices of the left trade union leaders of the past five years have been shown to be woefully inadequate. An opposition which relies on increasingly unlikely sectoral responses, or even worse, which confines its fight to the committee rooms of the TUC, will not be able to mobilise the 30 per cent of the working class which voted Labour at the last election.

The task for the left in the coming period will be to organise at every level from the General Council to the shop and office floor. It will be to build support for every struggle against the Tories — in defence of the welfare state against privatisation and against unemployment.

It will mean a political battle with the right across the labour movement, whose sharpest political expression will be in the Labour Party. The lessons of last week's defeats is the need for a new Minority Movement. This must be the watchword of the left in the next few years.

IN 1922/23 the British Communist Party had just about got itself organised. But by then the slump had set in.

Unemployment was rife. In industry the working class had suffered a series of major set-backs.

In 1921 'Black Friday' had meant that the much vaunted Triple Alliance of miners, rail and steelworkers had given in to the Tory government and in 1922 the employers lock out had inflicted a big blow on the engineering workers who during the war years had been in the vanguard of the workers' struggles. The war-time shop stewards' movement lay in ruins and the possibilities inside the unions looked very bleak indeed.

For the infant Communist Party the most important question was what to do next. Certainly there was no talk of leaving the TUC and forming new unions. In fact they adopted the slogan: 'Stop the retreat — Back to the unions.'

Wherever they could, they set up rank-and-file organisations inside the unions — which one right-wing leader derisively dubbed as 'minority movements'. These gained their first base among miners, engineers and transport workers. They argued for trades councils to be based on the workshops and therefore be more representative than bodies simply based on trade union branches.

### Influence

They also aimed for trades councils to be represented at the Trades Union Congress to bring workshop influence into its decisions.

In 1924 the first annual conference of the National Minority Movement was held with 200,000 workers represented. It called for the setting up of factory committees which would be a step towards industrial unionism and for making the local trades councils into centres of genuine working class leadership.

The Minority Movement also wanted the TUC General Council to be given more powers so that it could act as a general staff of labour.

The Minority Movement did not suffer from the half-baked illusion that the people who led the TUC could be

transformed into 'revolutionaries of action'. It made no bones about the fact that 'when the employing class realise the General Council is really the head of the trade union movement much more capitalist "influence" will be brought to bear on it ...'

But they explained, 'we of the Minority Movement desire a General Council which will bring into being a bold and audacious General Staff of the trade union movement.' Their way of stopping the General Council 'becoming a machine of the capitalists' and becoming 'a workers' General Staff' was by 'developing a revolutionary class consciousness amongst the trade union membership.'

Finally they emphasised that they had to alter 'the constitution of the General Council so as 'to ensure that those elected thereon would have the closest contact with the members'.

By Bob Pennington

The Minority Movement thus placed itself right to the forefront of the struggle to build the trade unions on democratic and accountable lines and at the same time to invest the union leadership with real power.

Throughout 1924 by its association with a number of strikes the Minority Movement gained in prestige and extended its influence. The Minority Movement had a basic strategy which was to build a fighting leadership on a series of limited demands to replace the right.

They knew that the crisis of leadership inside the unions could not simply be solved by winning people one by one to the Communist Party. They understood that they had to work with left-reformist leaders who did have the confidence of thousands of workers.

Failing to do that and just saying join the Communist Party was not the route to victory, but was the path to defeat and disaster.

As the *Communist Review* explained in 1932 '... at the beginning of the National Minority Movement considerable time and energy had to be expended to fight down the belief that there was no room for a movement dealing with immediate and "narrow" economic issues ... and that such an organisation would stand in front of

and hide the party from the workers.'

This fight against propagandism was necessary if a genuine mass movement was going to be built inside the trade unions and in which the Communist Party could win by its policies and examples thousands and thousands of workers with reformist views.

The crucial question was its relationship with the left reformist leaders in the bureaucracy. If it had failed to work with these leaders then it would have remained ineffective. After all they commanded the support of hundreds of thousands of workers, whereas the Communist Party had a following of a few thousand even if you included its sympathisers.

But at all times it had to avoid providing a left cover for these leaders. Unfortunately it fell into the latter trap. In 1925 as a new wave of working class militancy was sweeping the country and the scene was being set for the General Strike of 1926. In Russia the newly established Stalinist regime had its eyes fixed on the trade union lefts of the TUC. Stalin wanted to use the Anglo-Russian Trade Union Committee as a means of establishing *detente* with British imperialism. The policy of peaceful co-existence was about to bear fruit.

### Pressure

Under pressure from Stalin's Comintern the Communist Party at the very height of the National Minority Movement's power began to soft-peddle their criticism of the TUC 'lefts' like Purcell and Hicks. In the General Strike the following year the 'lefts' in obedient collusion with the right sold out the miners. The workers' movement suffered an appalling defeat.

From then on the National Minority Movement went into a decline. But it still stands as a testimony in its earlier days of how Marxists should work inside the unions. It started in a period of downturn with the aim of democratising the unions, and of making them into organisations that fought for the working class.

It recognised that the Communist Party would have to build a mass resistance involving reformist leaders and reformist workers to replace the right-wing union leaders.



White collar workers had begun to organise even before the turn of the century



# “THE ACTION INTERVIEW”

**JOSEFINA PAREDES** is a 23 year old shop assistant from San Salvador. In 1980, as an active trade unionist, she was arrested, tortured and held without trial for 2½ years.

In May this year she was ‘amnestied’. She talked to a Socialist Action correspondent in Mexico about her experience.

**What were the trade union activities you were involved in, and for which you were arrested?**

I worked in a large store in San Salvador. There was a union operating in the store that was affiliated to the FENASTRAS trade union federation.

I joined it to try and get better conditions for us workers. Our wages were very low, the facilities were awful and they treated us very badly.

I worked actively to try and get our demands met, and became one of the leaders of the union in the store. That’s why I began to be seen as a danger to the boss’s interests, and that’s why I was later arrested.

**How were you arrested?**

I was leaving home one morning in December 1980. When I’d got two blocks down the road I suddenly found myself surrounded by soldiers of the 1st Infantry Brigade.

From that moment the violence was pretty well constant. They grabbed hold of me violently and told me they were taking me away because I’d got mixed up in ‘stupidities’.

They hit me in the face, tied my thumbs together with a cord and blindfolded my eyes.

Then they put me up against a wall and, cocking their rifles, said they might as well kill me there and then. All this happened in full view of the passers-by.

A bit later, they shoved me towards a pick-up truck, threw me in the back and drove off. I didn’t know where to.

On the way they started manhandling me and talking obscenities about my body. They even pulled my trousers down. When I tried to resist they told me to ‘keep quiet, you bitch, because you’re in our hands now’.

We arrived at the San Carlos barracks, although I didn’t yet know that’s where I was.

I was taken to a small room with a bed, a school-desk and a man’s blood-stained clothes in it. Here they changed the cord around my thumbs for hand-cuffs, with my hands behind my back, and I remained blindfolded.

I stayed like that for the five days I was there. I was questioned constantly, day and night, by interrogators who continually threatened to kill me, insulted me, and hit me when I didn’t give satisfactory answers to their questions, or refused to admit the things they accused me of.

The would say things like ‘where do you want us to leave your body?’.

or ‘how would you like us to kill you?’, and so on. They pulled my ears and breasts, grabbed my hair and beat my head hard against the desk between questions.

Also as a form of punishment they sexually abused me in the most disgusting way and threatened to do it again if I didn’t give good answers. During these five days they gave me nothing to eat, only on one occasion they brought me a tortilla with some substance on it — I couldn’t tell what it was because I was still blindfolded.

I took one bite but couldn’t get the stuff down my throat. I felt completely humiliated, they degraded you as a human being so much.

After that I was moved to the National Police barracks, where I was threatened and interrogated from the beginning. They said, ‘here you’re really going to tell us what your involvement was, we’re really going to get the truth out of you, we’ve got just the methods for you’.

I spent three days of questioning there, during which time they didn’t let me rest for a moment, one interrogator after another, until I was totally exhausted.

In these barracks too, torture and psychological warfare were the methods used to extract statements. They ran the blade of a machete across my neck and said they were going to lop my head off and chop me to pieces.

They put a pistol to my head and said that at 12 that night they were going to take me out and kill me — and they did do a simulation, taking me out to a car and switching it on. But the motor wouldn’t start so they said they’d have to do it the next day.

Then they took me to a cell with dreadful conditions, damp, with no bed and rotting food all over the place.

I stayed there three months. After that I was transferred to Ilopango Women’s Prison where our conditions weren’t much better.

There were many restrictions and deprivations, but one thing which hit us hardest was the complete legal neglect we suffered.

In my case, I spent two and a half years there without ever being told the reason for my arrest.

**How did you come to be released?**

I was released on the 24 May 1983, ‘benefiting’ from the amnesty decree. I had no warning, they just told me I was free and had to leave, although without any documents it was ex-

## ‘How would you like us to kill you?’



*Despite the government amnesty, the right wing death squads continue their murder campaign*

tremely dangerous to be out on the streets.

This amnesty wasn’t a gift from the government but a political manoeuvre to make their human rights image more respectable, so that they could go on receiving economic and military aid from the US and thereby continue their war of extermination against the Salvadorean people.

We political prisoners became a real problem for the Salvadorean government because of all the pressure exerted and demands being made by the different associations, committees and humanitarian institutions seeking our release.

So they came up with this half-measure of an amnesty which doesn’t release all the prisoners — in fact more people are still being arrested. It doesn’t begin to deal with the question of those who have disappeared.

The decrees under which many of us were judged, are totally repressive, illegal and anti-constitutional and they remain in full force.

Decrees 507 and 943, introduced in December 1980, ‘legalise’ the use of statements extracted under duress and without witness.

They allow the police to act as their own prosecution witnesses, allow for 6 months detention without any right to defence — although actually this period is often much longer — and cancel any exemptions for minors, meaning that many political prisoners are just 12 or 13 years old.

**How do you see the situation in El Salvador today?**

At the moment the Salvadorean government and armed forces are facing one of their worst crises with the economy, their own internal decay and their lack of credibility both at home and abroad.

On the other hand, with the increasing advances by the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front, they are beginning to see that they are losing the war.

This means they have to be a bit sharp about looking for a new political project that will let them make a come-back.

That’s why they are pushing this plan of political pacification, which includes the elections, the amnesty, the governmental human rights commission.

These last two are meant to prepare the ground for the main element, the holding of elections, through which they claim to be restoring democracy and a constitutional regime.

In fact the elections would just be used again as a political instrument to try and gain time to defeat the FMLN, and not as a peaceful means of solving the conflict in El Salvador.

They present these ‘democratic’ measures in order to win more support in the US Congress and counteract the FDR-FMLN’s proposal for a dialogue.

But their fundamental aim is to improve internal and external condi-

tions for a future political-military offensive, including more open North American intervention.

This plan is destined to failure. We know these formulae only too well, and they don’t begin to touch the basic causes of the situation we are living through in El Salvador.

Peace can only be achieved in El Salvador through a political solution, beginning with the FDR-FMLN’s proposal for dialogue.

The whole of the political plan of the region shows how much they are a tool in the hands of the Reagan administration.

It’s a manoeuvre by which the Salvadorean government and the US can talk of peace whilst they prepare to deepen the war.

**How do you see international solidarity?**

International solidarity has played an important part in all aspects of the Salvadorean conflict — our own release had a lot to do with international pressure.

As ex-political prisoners we are now worried about the safety of our brothers and sisters who have come out of prison and are still inside the country, because the persecution of ex-prisoners and the population in general is continuing.

The international solidarity movement should continue campaigning for the release of political prisoners, because far from everyone was released with the amnesty.



# Abortion defeat in Ireland

IRELAND HAS taken a firm step backwards into the dark ages. Despite having one of the most repressive anti-abortion laws on the statute books, the recent referendum result gave a majority for the amendment to enshrine the rights of the 'unborn' in the constitution.

Those rights are now 'equal to' the right of life of the mother. What this will mean in practice no-one knows.

But the results weren't quite what the so-called 'pro-life' forces expected when they began their campaign. Nearly half the electorate abstained either out of confusion (many thought a 'yes' vote meant saying yes to abortion!) or because they couldn't bring themselves to vote for or against their church.

By Leonora Lloyd

The Amendment Campaign began as a response to two immediate dangers as seen by the small group of its extreme conservative Catholic founders.

First was the possibility of the 1861 Offences Against the Person Act being declared unconstitutional by the Irish Supreme Court, or by the European Court. Although this possibility was very unlikely in Ireland, this is how abortion became legal in the United States.

The second danger for the anti-abortionists was the setting up of the tiny Women's Right to Choose

Campaign two years ago.

The underlying reasons for the amendment were more serious. A 'pro-life' campaign was started by British members of the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child, frustrated with failure in Britain and supported with large contributions from anti-abortionists in America — much of it in the form of lurid literature. Ireland was seen as a chance to 'light the beacon' for the whole of the West.

Inside Ireland, the Amendment is seen by the right as the first step in a sustained attack on women's rights and against the small but militant women's movement.

The anti-abortionists fought a very dirty campaign, asserting that 'the sponsors of the Anti-Amendment Campaign (AAC) supported abortion and wanted it to be available in Ireland'. In fact, only a minority of the AAC were pro-choice.

They also used posters of a well-developed foetus



Nuns in Dublin on their way to vote in the referendum

(about 12 months!) saying 'Hang in there baby! I'm voting for you on 7 September'. They claimed that the Amendment would not affect current medical practice or that it was in any way sectarian towards the minority of non-Catholics.

The AAC set up committees in every constituency, with hundreds of local meetings and door-to-door canvassing. Most of the popular musicians joined Anti-Amendment Music and gave concerts. The trade union movement on the whole supported the AAC. But there weren't many mass national actions and a proposed Tribunal didn't take place.

## Result

One result of the campaign is that for the first time in Ireland the issue of abortion has been widely discussed. But Ireland's problems will not be solved by the Amendment. Over half the population are under 25, and there will soon be a further population explosion, with consequent mass unemployment and a huge taxation burden. Ireland already has the largest dependant population in Europe.

Problems will intensify for women. Single and deserted mothers are already even worse off than in Britain, and large families will continue to live in tiny two-bedroom houses.

The threats made at the start of the campaign by the anti-abortionists (and later denied) will now be carried out. The IUD and some types of pill will be outlawed as abortive-agents. The Well Women Clinic in Dublin and others who help women to go to England for abortions will be in danger.

Doctors who perform the 500 or so therapeutic abortions each year may now hesitate, worried about the legal consequences, so endangering women's lives. There is even a possibility that women coming to England may be subject to pregnancy tests. At one time contraceptives were confiscated on entry to Ireland, so this is not so far-fetched as it may seem. This, and other measures, could lead to an increase in illegal abortion.

Women were coming to England long before the '67 Abortion Act was passed. During the war, when travel was restricted, women went to inexperienced operators in Ireland, and hospitals

were filled as a result of injuries. Some doctors fear this could happen again.

In the longer term, the Amendment is a barrier to Irish unity. It strengthens the ties between Church and State at a time when medical and feminist pressures are growing for the '67 Act to be extended to cover the North of Ireland.

The response of Sinn Fein was one of the most disappointing aspects of the campaign — they largely ignored it. But some women in Sinn Fein declared their support for the AAC and this should help to open up a discussion within the organisation.

The immediate prospects of attacks on clinics, on contraception and on individual women means that feminists and socialists everywhere must be prepared for a solidarity campaign. Irish feminists need to strengthen their links with the International Contraception, Abortion and Sterilisation Campaign and with other national campaigns for a woman's right to choose.

The Amendment is far from the last word that will be said in Ireland on the subject of abortion.

# NALGO backs deportation demonstration

THE NATIONAL and Local Government Officers association decided at its July national conference to back the struggle of Muhammad Idrish, a Bengali social worker fighting deportation from Britain.

Muhammad is a founder member of NALGO's Bernardos branch who came to Britain in 1976 to study at Bristol university.

He married and lived with his wife for five years, but when the mar-

**NALGO says stop the deportation now!**  
Demonstrate on 8 October!  
Mohammad must stay!

riage broke down he was threatened with deportation, even though he is not legally separated or divorced. He has worked voluntarily in inner city areas of St Pauls, Bristol and Handsworth, Birmingham and has vigorously assisted black and Asian community struggles.

The Home Office claim his marriage was fraudulent, despite evidence to the contrary. Perhaps the real reason for his persecution is his activity for the working class — black, Asian and white.

By Bob Smith (Yardley CLP, and treasurer of M. Idrish Defence Campaign)

With the support of NALGO, Muhammad's defence campaign have called a national demonstration for Saturday 8 October. NALGO are sending coaches from around the country and expect 5000 of their members to attend. The campaign calls on other labour move-

ment and anti-racist activists for support. Unfortunately, despite support from local Labour Party branches, the Labour Party national executive committee has refused to back the demonstration. An emergency resolution will be put to the Labour Party Conference in October condemning this callous disinterest and seeking Labour Party support for the campaign.

● National demonstration — supported by NALGO. Saturday 8 October, Booth Street, Handsworth, Birmingham, 11am. For transport contact your local NALGO branch.

● Fringe meeting at Labour Party conference. Wednesday 5 October, 5.30, Palette Room, Salisbury Hotel, Brighton.

● For details of the campaign contact: Barry Lovejoy, 30 Antrobus Rd, Handsworth, Birmingham 21 or Alope Roy, Bristol (0272) 570534.

# Scottish conference discusses future of abortion campaign

AN IMPORTANT discussion will be taking place at the National Abortion Campaign conference in October around a resolution proposing that NAC begins to take up issues of 'reproductive rights' and doesn't just concentrate on the abortion question.

ANNE KANE, from Pollok CLP, reports on the discussion at the recent Scottish Abortion campaign conference.

At the conference delegates voted unanimously against a resolution to broaden out the issues that NAC campaigns on. Representatives from Preston and Liverpool NAC groups spoke for the resolution, arguing that 'a woman's right to choose' was no longer the radical demand it had been in the late '70s.

They proposed that NAC develop a federated structure, and campaigned around all the problems of fertility control confronting women — such as contraception, child care and so on.

Delegates who spoke against this proposal weren't opposed to campaigning for these rights, but felt that at a time when even limited abortion

rights were coming under increasing attack both nationally and internationally, it was important for

on these broader issues into the existing flexible structure of the abortion campaign.

The political dynamic of the right wing attack on fertility control is first and foremost a threat to remove abortion rights, and it was argued that it would be much harder to build support for a more general campaign in the labour movement.

## National Abortion Campaign national conference

1/2 October in London  
For details contact NAC, 374  
Grays Inn Road, London WC1. Tel.  
01-278 0153.

NAC to concentrate on defending and extending those rights.

It would be possible to set up a more general campaign around reproductive rights outside NAC or to incorporate local activities

Building support for abortion rights in the trade unions and Labour Party has been NAC's strength, and has marked it off from other campaigns of the women's movement. Such support ensured the

demise of the Corrie anti-abortion Bill — the only major victory against the policies of the last Tory government.

The record of Scottish MPs on abortion gives women in Scotland particularly good reason not to want to change NAC as it presently exists. Two out of the last three anti-abortion bills have been proposed by Scottish MPs — the first from Labour MP James White which gave the impetus for NAC's formation.

## Scandalous

Nothing suggests that our present limited rights to abortion are safe. A scandalous 57 per cent of abortions are not done by the National Health Service. Abortion is the only operation available on the NHS which is more commonly performed privately.

At the last election Labour's manifesto backtracked on Conference commitments for a woman's right to choose.

And the 1967 Act has never been accepted in the North of Ireland.

Since the anti-Corrie campaign, NAC groups in Scotland have made determined efforts to build up support inside the Scottish labour movement. The success of these efforts was evident at a picket of a Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child rally in July which had strong labour movement representation.

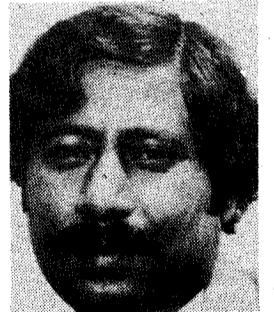
Speaking at the 20,000 strong SPUC rally was John Powell, a US priest, who compared women who have abortions with the perpetrators of the Nazi holocaust.

With such ultra-right views gaining ground, dissolving NAC would open the door to a new anti-abortion bill and would be a gift to SPUC.

While the right wing are focussing their efforts on the issue of abortion, so must we.

● Next week Socialist Action will be publishing views from both sides of the discussion on the future of NAC.

\* Stop deportations now! \*



With the support of NALGO, the **MUHAMMAD IDRISH** Defence Campaign calls on labour movement and anti-racist activists to support a **NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION**

against racist deportation laws from Booth Street, Handsworth **BIRMINGHAM, 11am, SATURDAY 8 OCTOBER**

\* Stop deportations now! \*  
Contact your local NALGO branch for travel details



# DIARY

(These listings are free for all major labour movement and campaign activities. Semi-display advertisements cost 5p per word and must be paid in advance. Send to: Diary, Socialist Action, 328 Upper Street, London N1 2XP to arrive not later than Thursday, one week prior to publication).

- **National Abortion Campaign** conference is on Oct 1-2nd. For details please contact NAC at 374 Grays Inn Road, London WC1. Tel. 01-278 0153.
- **Glasgow Polish Solidarity Ctee** Conference 17/18 September. For details contact Gordon Morgan, 59 Durward Ave, Glasgow 041-649 8958
- **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 East London YCND, Box 5, 136, Kingsland High St, London E8.
- **Stop the witch hunt!** Public meeting Weds 14 Sept, 7.30pm, Abeng Community Centre, Gresham Rd, Brixton. Speakers: Ted Knight (Leader of Lambeth Council); Stuart Holland MP; Graham Norwood (CLR); Dick Evans (Waterloo NUR); Unmesh Desai (Campaign Against the Police Bill) and also from Pritchards, Wandsworth; UCATT; NUT; POEU.
- **Swansea YCND Festival** 24 Sept, St Phillips Community Centre, 1-6pm. Stalls, videos, music, food and workshops. Admission 30p, all welcome. Further info from Gareth Harding, 2 Overland Rd, Mumbles, Swansea, tel. 68660.
- **CND National Demonstration** London, 22 Oct. Details: 01-272 8896.
- **History Workshop 17 Manchester 1983** Industrialisation and after. Manchester Polytechnic, All Saints, Manchester 15. 11-13 November. Registration and enquiries to: History Workshop 17, 47 Albany Road, Manchester 21. Full fee £7, Students and low wage £3.50, unemployed and OAPs free. Cheques payable to 'History Workshop 17'.

- **Gay Young Socialists** next London meeting 18 Sept, 6pm, at Gay's the Word. Discussion on the Police Bill with speaker from Gay London Police Monitoring Group. Future meetings on 'Gays and Central America' and showing of South London GYM video 'Revenge of the teenage perverts'. Further info from Martin Goodsell, 13 Buxton Rd, N19, 263 9484.
- **Lambeth Labour Campaign for Gay Rights** open meeting on Gays & Lambeth Council 23 Sept, 8pm, Lambeth Town Hall.
- **Ireland and the Labour Party Conference** Labour Committee on Ireland public meeting, 19 Sept, 8pm, Venture Community Centre, Warrington Road, London W10 (Ladbroke Grove tube). Speakers: Tony Benn (Kensington), Sheila Healey (Brent), Cllr Pat Smyth (Kensington), Cllr Tony Powell (Fulham) — all conference delegates.
- **Sri Lankan Research & Information Group** will provide speakers on the current situation there for meetings. Write to 9 Grays Inn Buildings, London EC1.
- **Stop US intervention in Central America** — new badge produced by CARILA, 30p each. Available from CARILA 298 Islington Park St, London N1 359 2270, cash with orders.
- **Sinn Fein and Labour** Hornsey & Wood Green LPYS public meeting. Mon 26 Sept, 7.30pm, Stroud Green School, Woodstock Rd, London N4. Speakers: Jeremy Corbyn MP, Sarah Roelofs (LCI) and rep. from 'Veterans against the War'.
- **North Staffs Labour** Against the Witch Hunt public meeting. Fri 23 Sept, 7.30pm, Guildhall, Newcastle-under-Lyme. Speakers include Peter Tatchell & Steph Grant (Cowley 15)
- **Seeing Red — the Press and the Left** public meeting called by West Midlands Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom. Tues 27 Sept, 7.30pm, Digbeth Civic Hall, Birmingham. Speakers Steph Grant, Clare Short MP, Peter Tatchell.
- **Stop the witch hunt!** public meeting Thur 15 Sept, 8pm, Friendly & Trades Club, Northumberland St, Huddersfield. Speakers include Terry Swinbank (AUEW convener) Alan Brooke (Colne Valley CLP) and speaker from Cowley 15.

- **No Intervention in Central America (NICA)** is a broad based coalition of solidarity groups, human rights orgs, aid agencies and political parties. The NICA petition deadline has now been extended to 24 October. Copies of petitions or more details from NICA 20/21 Compton Terrace, London N1 01-226 6747.
- **Stop 'The City'** protest and carnival against financial institutions backing for military spending. 6am-6pm 29 Sept. Meeting points Finsbury Sq, Tower Hill, St Paul's Cathedral steps all day. General Planning meeting 24 Sept, 6pm, 6 Endsleigh St, London WC1. Details 01-809 1346.
- **Back to the Sink?** Discussion of the effects of Tory policies on women. Thur 22 Sept, 7.30pm, The Anchor (upstairs room), Uxbridge Road, West Ealing. Organised by Ealing Socialist Action supporters.
- **Israel out of Lebanon — Victory to PLO!** Demonstration organised by the Palestine Solidarity Campaign. Sat 17 Sept, 1.15pm, Embankment. Rally 3pm in Hyde Park. PSC can be contacted at BM PSA, London WCIN 3XX.
- **Labour Movement Conference on Ireland** — Peace through Democracy. Sat 26 Nov. Speakers include Tony Benn, Ken Livingstone, and Clive Soley.
- **No interference in Grenada, Central & Southern America** Public meeting organised by Kensington Young Socialists. 27 Sept, 7.30pm, The Tabernacle, Powis Sq, London. Speakers from Grenada, Chile, El Salvador, Nicaragua.
- **Against Racism and Racist Attacks!** National march called by Newham 8 Defence Ctee and supported by National Campaign Against the Police Bill. Sat 24 Sept, 1pm, Plashet Park, East Ham, London E6.
- **The Politics of Health in Zimbabwe** Hour long video available for meetings or functions. £10 (payable in advance). Send to Books for South Africa Fund, PO Box 50, London N1.

John Archer invites all who sympathised with and wish to commemorate the work of MARY ARCHER to come to her Memorial Meeting, on Sat 24 Sept in room 152, County Hall, London SE1 at 7.30pm. International speakers. Discussion. No charge for admission. Collection for memorial publishing fund.

Jonathon Hammond, 1942-83  
Ex-President, NUJ  
Labour Movement  
Memorial Meeting  
Wednesday, 28  
September, 8pm, Bishop  
Creighton House, Lillie  
Road, Fulham, London  
SW6

## International FACING 1984

A weekend of socialist debate and discussion on political and economic aspects of the British crisis.

Speakers include: Stuart Holland MP; Ernest Mandel; Unmesh Desai; Joy Hurcombe; Ken Livingstone; Andrew Gamble; John Harrison; Valerie Coultas; Alan Freeman; John Ross.

October 29/30 at Kingsway Princeton College, Sidmouth St, Off Grays Inn Rd, London WC1.

Registration costs £5 for the weekend (but only £4 if you book in advance), 2.50 for one day. Send cheque payable to International to: PO Box 50, London N1.

## Famous faces

THE SUN last week revealed on its front page the psychological implications of Princess Di's loving sketch of Prince Billy.

Shortly to be published in a book called 'Famous Faces', the portrait was supposed to reveal the preparation of the child for a bit of royal sibling rivalry.

It apparently showed him more isolated, mature and independent than a one year old normally is. Taking a look at the 'proud mum's' pencil drawing on Royal Yacht Britannia note paper, we instantly perceived Di's version of the coming year.

The arrogant, scowling infant is fully confident that the Tory attacks on the health ser-

vice will allow private medicine to flourish so that all the care that money can buy will be lavished on him.

The firm set jaws shows contempt for the TUC leaders in their crawling to Tebbit, and looks forward to the purging of the left in the witch hunt being unleashed in the Labour Party.

As we have every interest in unsettling the plans of the ruling class, we set our cartoonist Hill to work in making an entry for the Sun's Royal Baby sketch competition. If she wins the £100 prize will go to the Socialist Action Fund Drive.

Even if she doesn't win, we still need our readers money coming in every week, so don't forget to rush us a cheque today!

## National Newham Eight March

### AGAINST RACISM AND RACIST ATTACKS

### Saturday 24 September

Assemble 1pm at Plashet Park, Plashet Park, East Ham E12 (East Ham tube).

Called by Newham Eight Defence Campaign, supported by National Campaign against the Police Bill.

## MOLES EYE VIEW



### The howling of Sid

I HAD always thought Sid Weighell had had to get out of the NUR general secretary's job because he had been caught with his fingers in the ballot box.

Now writing in the Sunday Telegraph — out of work bureaucrats have to earn a bob or two somewhere — he tells us the real horrifying truth about the NUR and why he was really forced to quit. He reveals that 'the real trouble lay in the 26-strong full-time executive'.

This elected body wouldn't give poor old Sid any peace. Do you know when they didn't agree with him 'they used to demand meetings at the drop of a hat' which is bloody inconvenient if you are trying to keep well in with the rail bosses.

Then there were those awful people from Militant who published a pamphlet proposing 'the re-election of officials at the branches every three years' and they even wanted 'every branch to have a delegate at the annual conference'. Another subversive suggestion they made was to



give 'greater control to the union representatives in the local departmental committees, who would be recalled by the branches at any time'.

Naturally Sid couldn't tolerate things like that. Next thing you know the members would be running the damn union instead of the officials. Sid tirelessly fought all these attacks on democracy but you must admit it's a hell of a burden for a man to carry.

As he was valiantly defending his members, the members kept voting those dreadful lefties on to his executive. It just goes to show that there is no gratitude.

### The reasonable revolutionary

YOU RAVING lefties always thought revolutionaries were bloody-minded people who wanted to overthrow capitalism.

That's nonsense, or so Roy Hattersley thinks. He is going on telly next Monday to tell the great British public what a real 'reasonable revolutionary' is like. On BBC2 in a programme called: *Attlee the Reasonable Revolutionary* he will reveal all about Attlee's revolutionary role.

As the BBC press blurb says he will examine '... the characteristics which gave Attlee's government its distinctive stamp'. It notes one of these was 'the building of Britain's own atomic bomb' — no wonder Roy is dead set against unilateralism. He thinks it would be betraying Clem's revolutionary

legacy.

Maybe Roy won't tell us all about Clem's dabbling in revolutionary politics. Like the time when as Labour prime minister he used British troops to fight the Vietnamese revolution. Then he got involved in the Malayan revolution. But the snag was that it was on the wrong side. He went and sent all those nice people like head-hunters to exterminate the Malaysians who had fought the Japanese when they occupied Malaya, and then had the impudence to fight the Brits when they did the same.

Finally he was such a reasonable revolutionary — just like Roy? — that under his government the arms bill went up and the capitalists never lost a night's sleep. What could be more reasonable than that?

### Cultural shock

THE US retaliation against the Russians over the Spy Plane (?) is so unfair. A cultural embargo means that all we in the west will miss is things like the Bolshoi Ballet.

But the Russians will really miss out. The Americans have punished them by putting a complete ban on classics like *Winds of War*, all Ronnie Reagan's movies and *Dallas*.



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# No piratisation in British Telecom

POEU ENGINEERS dressed as pirates lobbied the TUC Congress in Blackpool to alert other unions to the dangers of privatisation — or 'piratisation' as they call it.

The Congress passed a resolution agreeing to a coordinated response to privatisation across all the nationalised industries.

DENNY FITZPATRICK, a telecom engineer from the London West End branch of the POEU, explains the next steps in the fight against privatisation of British Telecom.

After the TUC we have a special Post Office Engineering Union conference to consider how to organise against Tory plans to privatise the industry. Many engineers are asking 'can we win?'

The resolutions to this special conference reflect this with doubters arguing that there is no point in struggling, so privatisation should be accepted.

Others warn about the threat to jobs, conditions and union organisation and that without a firm fightback the pirates will move in.

To win we need a union leadership determined to take effective action, not just in the POEU but in the whole trade union and labour movement. That's why a public sector alliance against privatisation is crucial.

But it must be a fighting alliance. The Telecom engineers are the front line troops facing the Tory offensive, what they do could give confidence to workers in other industries. They are looking to the generals for a lead.

But the TUC tops are not going to take on the Tories without a push.

In the course of our actions we will need to fight

for a leadership and policies to take on the Tories.

To date our action has been selective, involving mainly London branches. This can lead to isolation. The whole membership needs to be involved in industrial action.

The London City branch resolution to the special conference calls for the public sector unions to join with the POEU in a coordinated national strike against privatisation in spring 1984.

## Across

This is what we should work for from the bottom up and across the unions. The campaign of selected industrial action in British Telecoms should be stepped up with backing for resolutions calling for boycotts of stock-broking firms and major financial and business institutions.

This is the kind of action needed to build a national public sector campaign.

It's no good waiting to see 'the real and visible threat to jobs' before we escalate action, as some POEU leaders argue. By then it may be too late.



Pirate pickets warn against privatisation



NALGO 'put people first campaign' can be put to good use

# NALGO Broad Left takes off!

**THE CONFERENCE against privatisation sponsored by Leeds NALGO marks an important step forward within the union's fight back against privatisation.**

It will also aid the building of the Broad Left on a national scale. The conference arose out of a very successful Broad Left meeting at this year's NALGO conference where over 200 delegates attended.

A national campaign is going to be needed at every level in the union if the Tories privatisation plans are to be stopped. The Leeds conference will discuss the detailed strategy needed at branch, district and national level for the union so that it can win this vital battle in defence of the members' jobs and save the services of the public.

The lack of a national Broad Left in NALGO has been a barrier to organising resistance to the Tory attacks as the national executive is not prepared to

push for militant action. There can't be any fight back against the increasing privatisation of public services unless all sections of NALGO and other public service sector unions get organised to resist it.

The development of links between the shop stewards and the members which then reaches out to the users of services is a must. It offers the only way to involve all the union's members and to win public support. But NALGO can't win this on its own. It will have to build an alliance with other public sector unions which means organising joint shop stewards' committees in the workplaces.

## United

Unless a united response is built then the privatisation proposals will divide the workforce. For some, privatisation will mean bonuses and so-called job security. For others it will mean the dole. Unless unions like NALGO can win the users over to their side in their opposition to privatisation the struggle will be lost.

This means a campaign among the users by use of meetings, leaflets and actions which can win their support. Ultimately the issues will be decided at national level. Unless NALGO and the other unions through their national conferences force their executives to act and go for industrial action privatisation will be carried out.

The experience gained in the 'put people first campaign' must be put to good use in a national campaign to win over the users of public services. The Leeds conference can start this in NALGO. It can provide the basis of a national grouping which can force the executive to act and in many cases make sure that the local struggles have an effective leadership. Socialist Action supporters will be arguing in Leeds for district-based committees to build shop stewards' systems in every branch.

Nobody must be left to fight along. At the very least on a district level solidarity action is needed.

# Witch hunters at British Telecom

A COWLEY-style witch hunt is being prepared by George Jefferson, the Tory appointed chairperson of British Telecom. ANN FIANDER,

a member of the City branch of the POEU, explains.

Jefferson is organising the campaign for privatisation in British Telecom.

He is preparing to divide up the industry into profitable packets and is masterminding the propaganda campaign to win the workforce to accept his schemes.

His tactics include

Sun-style opinion polls, intimidation of the workforce and their families by letters to their homes and a witch hunt of union activists.

The Tories know that they have to smash the unions if they are to privatise BT and reap enormous profits for big business.

So Jefferson wants to follow the tactics of Michael Edwardes in BL. And Edwardes is close at hand to give advice. He is chairperson of the private telecommunications firm Mercury and has recently been appointed to the British Telecom board.

The POEU needs to prepare for an attack on its members' right to organise — such a political witch hunt is designed to disarm and discredit the union.

Our best defence is to publicly oppose all witch hunts, and support the campaign to defend the Cowley BL workers.

The POEU should go on record as a supporter of the national appeal issued by Alex Lyon against political vetting and victimisation in industry.

We need an emergency resolution on this at our next national conference.



Management cartoon in Telecom Today forewarns a witch hunt of the left to weaken opposition to privatisation



# Socialist ACTION

US lies on jumbo exposed

# Reagan fans the winds of war

A NEW campaign of hostility towards the Soviet Union is being orchestrated by the US government. This escalation has brought the threat of world war a step closer.

The new Cold War is part of and seeks to justify a massive increase in military intervention by the USA and their French and British allies around the globe — in Lebanon, Libya, the South Atlantic and most critically in Central America.

The original case for the escalation in international tension — the apparent cold blooded and deliberate shooting down of the Korean civilian jet — has been revealed as a tissue of lies.

The dramatic transcripts of the conversations of the Soviet pilots who conducted the operation against the jet were splashed across the front pages of the world's press and feature as the first item of television and radio news. They have now been corrected — on inside pages and in brief news items.

Even the Pentagon now admits:

● That the Soviet jets *did* fire warning shots to warn the jet — originally strenuously denied by the

US and Japanese military ● That the Russian interceptors *did not* 'stalk the jet for two hours' as originally claimed but had scrambled their jets only 30 minutes before the jet was shot down.

By Steve Potter

● That the fighter pilots had not identified the plane as a civilian air-liner and then cold-bloodedly shot it down, but, as the *Sunday Times* said, that they had shot down an *unidentified* aircraft operating in Soviet air space.

The *Sunday Times* also reported that there was a 'growing conviction' in military, political and aviation circles that the jumbo was 'not in Soviet

air-space by accident'.

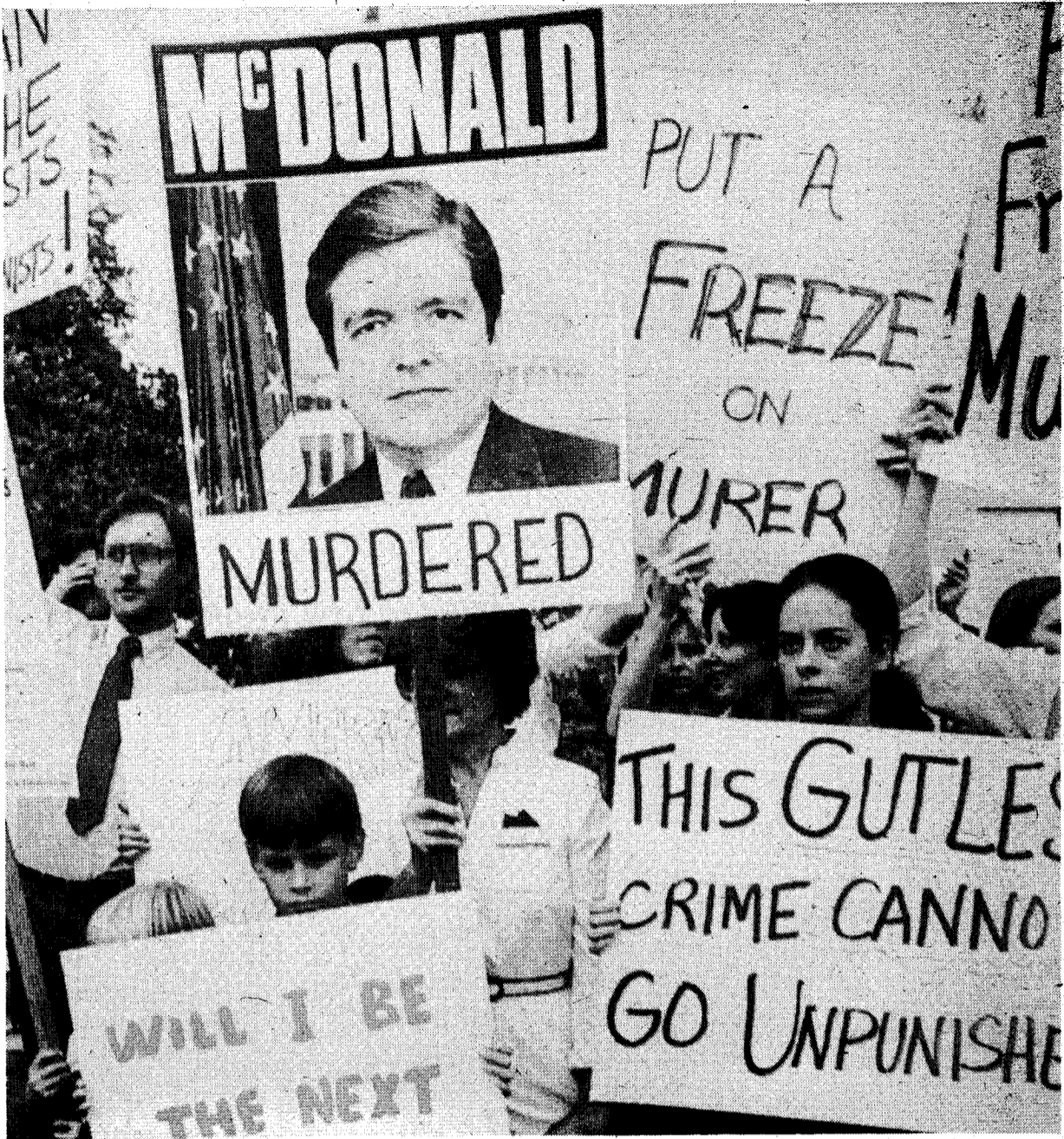
Standing instructions call for Soviet pilots to shoot down such unidentified aircraft. This is in line with Soviet military policy, which is to defend the borders of their state.

This is done by the Soviet rulers in a bureaucratic, brutal and ineffective way as Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, repression in Poland and similar anti-working class action in the past has shown.

But the chief reproach of imperialist circles is not that the Soviet Union defends its borders in a brutal way, but that is an expansionist power, bent on world domination.

It is under this banner that Reagan and Thatcher justify intervention around the world. But unlike the USA, France and Britain the Soviet Union does not send in its armed cohorts to support its allies.

Expansionism and the consequent threat to world peace is the preserve of the imperialist powers.



Anti-communist hysteria in the USA; but a majority oppose intervention in Lebanon

There is evidence too that the main objective of the imperialists is not to punish the Soviet Union.

The British sanction, a cessation of Aeroflot flights for two weeks, will not cause any sleepless nights in Moscow. Likewise supposed Greek intransigence provided a convenient reason for the EEC to issue a mild statement which did not condemn the Soviet Union but merely 'regretted' the tragedy.

There are real differences between the USA and its European allies on what attitude to take to the

Soviet Union, as has been previously revealed by the differing stances on the boycott of the Olympic Games, the Siberian gas pipeline and sanctions after martial law was declared in Poland.

## Unity

But the fundamental unity of purpose that exists between the capitalist powers has been amply demonstrated in the last few weeks with joint imperialist operations in Libya and the Lebanon.

This growing international escalation of war in the third world, designed to keep those countries firmly under the domination of international capital, needs to be matched by the building of movements against such intervention in the major countries responsible.

There already exists a massive reservoir of sympathy for such movements, internationally coordinated through the peace organisations.

Socialists must draw the links between the arms race and campaigns of intervention being waged in

the interest of profit against the struggles of workers and peasants.

The building of the most strenuous opposition to the basing of the missiles in Western Europe hampers Reagan's war drive and therefore helps the fight of all those in the front line against imperialist aggression.

At the same time peace activists have to be shown that peace lies through active opposition to the imperialist intervention in Africa, the Middle East and Central America, and support for those fighting against that intervention.

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Last Tuesday women supporters of Greenham Common marched on Fleet Street to protest at press coverage. About 780 women turned up with placards saying 'The issue is Cruise not Pink Triangles' and referring to 'Peace Women Daub Spy Planes' the placard pointed out that 'All charges have been dropped'. 'Well — What's £250,000 between friends?'

Manchester Town Hall was the scene last weekend for a Greenham meeting to discuss the future of the Women's Peace Movement. See next week's *Socialist Action* for details of coming events or ring the Greenham Office on 01-251 2133.