

A Socialist ACTION

We'll be there on 22 October



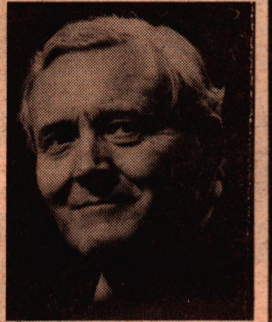
— but where is CND going? See back page

TORIES IN TROUBLE

Labour: keep left for victory



After Labour's conference: interview with Tony Benn page 3



AS THE TORY conference approaches evidence piles up that Thatcher's government is in trouble. Even Tory die-hards are raising questions about the advisability of further privatisation and health cuts, while the Cecil Parkinson scandal is undermining the government's morale.

The root of Thatcher's troubles however is not scandal, but the growing awareness in ruling class circles that the long-heralded economic 'upturn' is not coming — indeed the capitalist crisis is getting worse.

That is why top people's papers like the *Sunday Times* and *Financial Times* are beginning to criticise Thatcher's policies. The Tories' difficulty is Labour's opportunity.

The problem is that the new Labour leadership,

while having the public relations advantage of appearing 'young' and 'dynamic', seems poised to turn the party rightwards. On the key policy issues of unilateral nuclear disarmament, the Common Market and incomes policy a 'new approach' has to be signalled by the Labour NEC document *Campaigning for a Fairer Britain*.

In other words, the Kinnock-Hattersley leadership is working hard to junk these policies.

The argument that Labour must get rid of left wing policies to gain electoral success is short-sighted and dangerous. In the first place, everything points in the direction of *worsening* economic crisis. To meet this Labour needs *more* left wing policies not less. Without the nationalisation of the banks, financial institutions and key monopolies a Labour government will be completely disarmed.

The policy at the last election — that we 'borrow' our way out of economic crisis — convinced very few.

Faced with a media barrage, of course some left wing policies can be made unpopular; being left wing isn't an instant route to popularity. But the question is whether the Party will fight consistently and in a united way to convince a majority for a socialist answer to the crisis.

The lessons of the past, and in particular the 1974-9 Labour government, have to be learned. The idea that 'everything must be subordinate' to scraping a parliamentary majority, irrespective of policies, irrespective of working class support for socialist measures, is bankrupt from beginning to end.

It just prepares the way for new and more vicious Tory governments.

Labour must rebuild and prepare for sweeping the Tories from office. That isn't a question of waiting for elections in 1988, but of moving now to support the large numbers of working people coming into head-on conflict with the Tories.

It means Labour support for the Telecoms engineers in their battle against privatisation; for the health workers fighting against the cuts; for the miners in the fight against pit closures; and for the peace movement in the battle against cruise and Trident.

Only in these struggles will the battle for socialist policies be won.

If the Kinnock-Hattersley idea is to keep quiet about socialism and to do everything to flatter the opinion polls, then it's not a dream ticket but a disaster.

Socialism is not a matter for the next century, but a vital issue for the here and now.

Political power isn't worth having if it means saying 'no' to socialist measures. Nothing less can defend working people from the effects of capitalist crisis. Nothing less will break unemployment and poverty, or defeat the threat of nuclear war.

We should demand nothing less of the new leadership.

MODERN TIMES



It's just like I said — never trust Tory promises!



'The problem is that Hattersley and Kinnock while appearing young and dynamic seem poised to turn the party rightwards.'

Photo: JOHN HARRIS

Photo: JOHN HARRIS

Can Kinnock's 'historic compromise' succeed?

THE EIGHTY-SECOND annual conference of the Labour Party ended last week with the majority of its delegates leaving Brighton filled with optimism. They had overwhelmingly elected Neil Kinnock as a leader pledged to bring unity and electoral victory to the party. They had also seen the majority of the left policies on which the party campaigned reconfirmed and had witnessed a stinging rebuff from the conference to ex-premier Jim Callaghan, who had wished to reverse the party's commitment to unilateral disarmament.

True, there were some worrying aspects which had been indicated by 'hard left' delegates organised around the Labour Briefing bulletin at the conference. They pointed to the expulsion of the Militant editorial board and Tariq Ali from the Party as being in contradiction to the promises of unity. The passing of the NEC document Campaigning for a Fairer Britain, fudging previous policy commitments on withdrawal from the EEC and in relinquishing Polaris missiles unilaterally. But these considerations appeared to be of little significance even to those delegates who considered themselves on the left and who supported Tony Benn in previous years.

The discontent of the hard left delegates could be attributed to sour grapes. Their candidates in the leadership election did worse than was expected. The 'dream ticket' of Kinnock and Hattersley sponsored by the major unions won overwhelmingly.

Eric Heffer the 'hard left' candidate for leader received 6.3 per cent of the vote of the electoral college as compared with 71.3 per cent for Neil Kinnock and 19.3 for Roy Hattersley, although the other candidates of the right

Peter Shore was humiliated with only 3.1 per cent of the vote. Heffer's vote was made up by 34 out of 633 constituency parties and the relatively high number of MP's who voted for him — 29. No unions voted for Heffer.

Minority

However the scale of Heffer's defeat could be excused given the band wagon effect built up around the Kinnock ticket, where policies had little to do with the discussion of the relative merits of the candidate.

Heffer's campaign also suffered from the lack of support from Michael Meacher who, while closer to Heffer on policies, chose to project himself throughout as the natural running mate of Neil Kinnock.

The 'Meacher tactic' was a failure for the left. In the unions Meacher was voted for by none of the unions with over 100,000 membership except the white collar unions TASS and ASTMS.

The executive of the Transport and General Workers Union, who recommended endorsement of Meacher, were

overturned by the union's delegation at conference after energetic lobbying by full time officials.

In the constituencies too Hattersley won an unexpected victory over Meacher

speech from the Party's general secretary Jim Mortimer, were continuous promises that there would not be a wider witch hunt. However such assurances should not be taken at face value.

The reasons for this debacle for the Meacher candidature lay first and foremost with the sabotage of his campaign by the Kinnock camp, who rightly foresaw that the election of Meacher would outrage the right and infuriate the press. The problem is that Meacher's campaign was devoted to building up Kinnock's political authority. Once Kinnock turned against him with a secret and occasionally open campaign the pressure was irresistible and Meacher's campaign collapsed.

This process was felt in the constituencies too, seen by the Meacher camp as their turf. Nearly half of the constituency parties opted for a postal ballot of their membership. They became susceptible to the tremendous campaign for the 'dream ticket' in the press and nearly all voted Hattersley. The left will now fight for the principle of branch balloting with the final decision being taken by mandated general management committee delegates.

Merits

But what the final voting figures did not show was that there was a large minority right throughout the labour movement who supported the cause of the hard left. This minority is only just starting to be organised through certain broad lefts in the unions, through the constituency parties in left and Labour Briefing caucuses. But the size of the left, minority though it is, means that Kinnock will have to be very careful in launching an attack on the policies or membership of the party. Nevertheless this process began at the conference



Can the new 'dynamic duo' save Labour without ditching socialist policies?

Photo: JOHN HARRIS

minutes each to address the conference (15 seconds for every year of his membership of the party as Peter Taafe said) the Militant editorial board were summarily ejected from the party followed by Tariq Ali. Notable though, in an unsure

Kinnock obviously feels that the tremendous convulsion that would go through the Party if a major witch hunt was carried through would be counter-productive in the initial stages of his office.

There is however every sign that he intends to take on the far left politically and ideologically through his team of Labour Coordinating Committee aides, summoning up Eric Hobsbawm when necessary. This is likely to be combined with organisational measures to rob the hard left of its base, including in the NEC and through the possible reorganisation of the Labour Party Young Socialists along the lines of social democratic youth organisations in Scandinavia.

This presages the sort of project that Kinnock aims to carry through with the Labour Party. In his keynote speech as leader he pointed to the example of Spanish, French, Portuguese and Greek socialist parties. He said that these parties had built themselves from nothing to become the parties they were today. He proposed that the Labour Party should emulate them, starting from a much stronger position as the only mass party in the British working class.

But the problem of building such parties is not just an organisational question. Kinnock knows that for the Labour Party to take power again it must not only rebuild a mass electoral base around issues like defence of the NHS, it must also make itself amenable to the capitalist class.

This 'historic compromise' means, despite pledges to the contrary, that the Labour Party must drop the central policy commitments that so enraged ruling class opinion in the last general election — in particular unilateralism and withdrawal from the EEC.

Forced

It is when the left resists this evacuation that Kinnock will be forced to resort to the methods of the witch hunt to deal with it. This may not be very long.

The Party has to confront the issue of the EEC, in a more definite fashion in order to be able to make an impact on the EEC elections in May where Labour presently runs a danger of coming third.

Likewise the contradiction between the policy passed by the conference fully committing itself to unilateralism and the retreat in the Fairer Britain document will have to be resolved in the lead-up to next year's conference. The trade union conferences will be the crucible for the debate.

The debate about policies will again begin to point up the polarisation in the Party leadership

ject. The problem will become more urgent as the position of the Thatcher government weakens.

Even without the Parkinson scandal, the prospects for the Tories look drear. Unemployment and inflation will worsen over the next year. Public spending is still rising, dictating either the virtual decimation of the health services or a vast increase in taxation, both electorally unpopular.

Economic catastrophe will loom even larger as the gradual reduction of North Sea oil revenues becomes a political factor.

Under these circumstances, the fall of Thatcher is not the remote prospect that it appeared to many observers on the morrow of her huge election victory. The ruling class is therefore desperate that an alternative be found to replace the Tories if necessary.

Kinnock and the new Labour leadership have not yet demonstrated themselves sufficiently reliable to be trusted in power.

Coalition

For this reason the idea of a Tory-Alliance coalition without Thatcher, or a Labour/Alliance coalition has been canvassed by editorial opinion in journals like the Economist.

It is the latter option too which is being openly advocated by the right wing of the TUC, the latest evidence being the adherence of Frank Chapple and Gavin Hard as trade union sponsors for the Alliance campaign for proportional representation

In the next years the battle lines between the right and the left will increasingly and explicitly turn on this question.

The evolution of the Kinnock leadership will depend on the extent that the anti-coalition forces are able to inflict defeats on the right at all levels in the labour movement.

Organise

In order to do that the left must organise. It must organise to discuss out the lessons of the crisis of the Bennite left since the compromises made with the right at Bishop Stortford. It must organise to make sure that no more witch hunts are perpetrated. It must organise to fight for the policies necessary to deal with the economic crisis — particularly the vital necessity to take over the banks and North Sea Oil.

It must organise the links between the Labour Party and the trade unions. It must organise to commit Kinnock to the pledges he has made at the conference.

If it does all this then the left will increasingly begin to win over those who have supported Kinnock as the best way of getting Thatcher out.

By rebuilding itself and basing itself on the struggles against the Thatcher government the left can therefore not only begin to put itself back on the road in the fight for the leadership in the labour movement, but start to give a political direction and alternative to those who will be fighting the Tories.

The meaning of Labour's conference

Interview with Tony Benn

At this conference, on many of the votes, the union block vote seems to have been further away from the constituency delegates' vote than for some time. Did you detect this and what do you think it represents?

I don't know if that's so, but I'm in favour of all conference votes being recorded because I think that conference will never be really effective until at trade union conferences people can come along and say 'why did the union vote for this, and why didn't we vote for that'. This year we are recording votes for NEC elections which will be highly significant.

I think there is a genuine desire for unity in the Party as a whole. I think that some of the trade unions possibly feel by voting for certain policies they may be contributing to unity, and they desperately want to see the Thatcher government out. And if there is a shift from the past, then I think that is possibly the explanation.

The vote for Eric Heffer, just over six per cent of the electoral college, obviously reflected the fact that the left was split in the leadership election and was probably a disappointment to many people on the left. Do you not think that the left should have backed him in the leadership fight earlier and more vigorously — in the way that it backed Michael Meacher for the deputy leadership?

Well I think probably, but not being in parliament I was not involved in any of the stages of nominating. But as far as I was concerned when he invited me to go and speak for him on his platform I went.

The election did provide in Eric Heffer's candidature a genuine choice for people and some constituencies took it — and I think that it's very important that elections should be around political choices and not just about individuals. So I think that it was an important candidature.

Whether his vote could have improved if other actions had been taken I can't really say, because I wasn't directly involved in the planning of his campaign.

If you had a vote as an MP, you would have voted for Eric Heffer? Rather than Neil Kinnock?

Certainly. I made that absolutely clear. I did vote for him, but I voted for him as a delegate for Kensington, but a vote I thought was correct.

Did you think that it was surprising that Michael Meacher voted for Neil Kinnock?

Well I'm not going to comment on what other people did.

In the speech you made to conference you referred to the Labour Party programme as a 'minimum programme'. The document which has been presented to the conference, Campaigning for a Fairer Britain seems like a minimum version of a minimum programme....

No I don't see it like that at all. The campaigning document says that we re-affirm the policies which we put forward to the electorate, so it actually confirms the manifesto.

But of course the position is wholly different. The manifesto is drawn from Labour's Programme for Britain 1982, and therefore what we've actually got now with the Manifesto replaced by a defeat, is that we're

back to Labour's Programme 1982.

The little campaign document we produced this time is only just because we thought it right to say something to the Party at this year's conference. But it doesn't in any way erode or shift the Labour Programme 1982

But don't you think that the way the document is written and the stress which it gives to policy is indicative that some people want to change policy, for example in the way opposition to the EEC is replaced with a section entitled 'a socialist voice in Europe'?

Well we've never doubted that. I've always been in favour of a socialist voice in Europe, my objection to the Treaty of Rome is that it silences a socialist voice in Europe.

I think you're nit-picking, which is understandable given the position you take, instead of looking at the real thing. What's happened this week is overwhelming re-affirmation of our basic position.

Now we haven't actually had a debate on the EEC because our first job now is to fight the European elections, in order to see that the Labour vote and the Labour campaign on the ECC is on unemployment and is about non-nuclear defence strategy, it's about the whole range of policy and that is our priority.

But the Treaty of Rome is a major obstacle to the united Europe I want, a united socialist Europe of self-governing states.

And nothing that's been said or done can alter that; but of course there are people who were always pro-Common Market and in the aftermath of an election everyone should be able to speak their minds.

Sure, but it's not just on the Common Market but on other things. There are aspects of policy which you talked about yesterday, for example party policy on jobs, the 35-hour week, which should be in the forefront of the programme — which don't appear....



Tony Benn

But there was a resolution which was passed this week which re-affirms that....

...and again on unilateral disarmament, although this conference re-affirmed it, the document has the

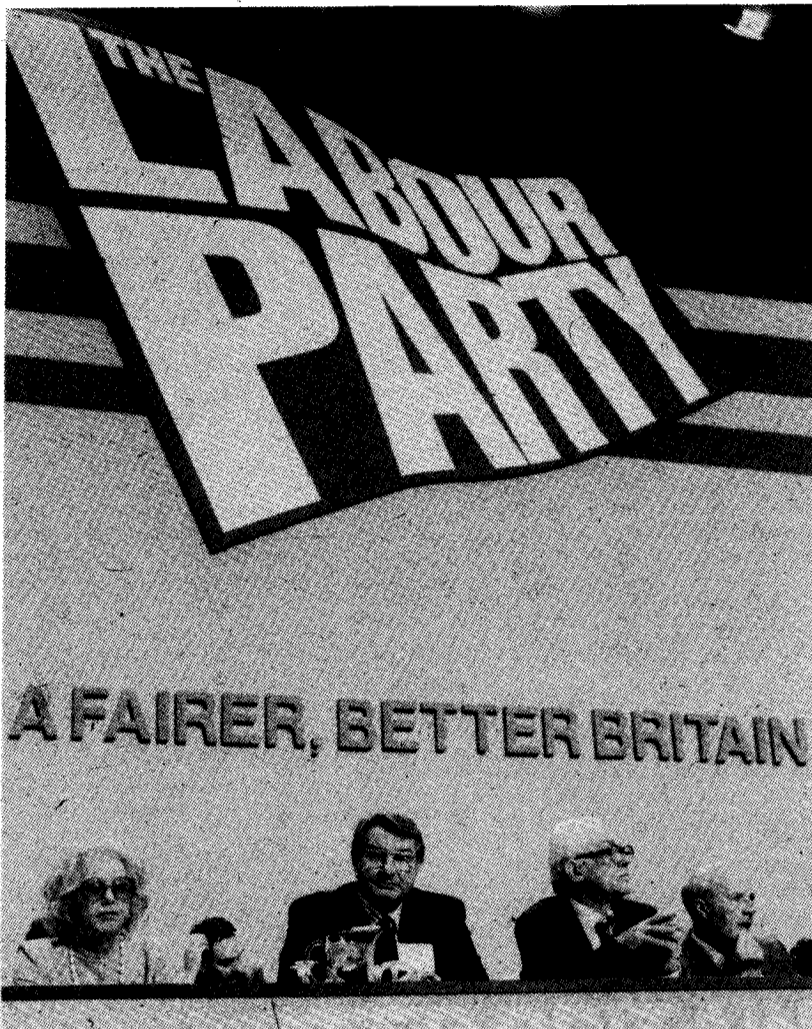


Photo: JOHN HARRIS

Interview with Tony Benn

most minimum version of it.

I don't think so. It says a non-nuclear defence strategy, a nuclear free Europe and an end to foreign bases.

But it doesn't say get rid of Polaris.

It does, it says 'a non-nuclear defence strategy'.

Polaris.

I know what you think, that there's a betrayal here, let's warn people about a betrayal there — but you underestimate. The really important thing that's happened here this week is the re-affirmation of our position. And whatever may be in the campaign document, it was written by the office to reflect a general desire to put something before conference.

It isn't a major document, it's never been through the Home Policy committee and went only once to the National Executive and was dealt with in half an hour.

But it neither replaces nor amends Labour's programme. Even the old executive, which was very right wing, voted against asking the TGWU to remit their unilateralist resolution. So come on, get out of your gloom.

It's not a question of being gloomy, it's question of trying to see what the trend of direction is. What is your view of the conference decision to confirm the expulsion of the editors of Militant?

I think that's a mistake. I've been opposed to it from the beginning.

Does it not disappoint you that the new leadership which the conference and the party is being asked to unify around explicitly support this expulsion?

Well the views of individuals have been known from the beginning. I think it's a mistake, and in the end it will all change.

I was there when Michael Foot was expelled from the PLP and when Nye Bevan was expelled from the PLP, and when my predecessor as Bristol MP Stafford Cripps was expelled from the Party — in the end these things are put right.

Well you have confidence that it will be put right. But don't you recognise that there is a fear in some sections of the party that these expulsions are not an aberration, but the prelude to something more extensive?

There will be those who favour it. I don't think it will happen.

What's your general view of the attitude that socialists inside the party, should take to the leadership?

It's a leadership elected by a system we campaigned very hard to create. The Rank and File Mobilising Committee fought very hard to get an electoral college. We got the electoral college, we used it, we got a leadership and I think the party should accept that in the same way as it accepts the vote of the conference on political matters.

This year's conference has built confidence, I think we've confirmed the policies, we've used the new machinery which is now beyond argument — nobody's ever going to suggest now that we change the electoral college — and I think that all the work that went in, which was very necessary over the last four years, has produced results which are in conformity with the wishes of the Labour Party as reflected at the conference.

If we hadn't done all these things we might very well be faced with David Owen just about to be elected to the leadership of the Labour Party by Labour MPs, including the SDP defectors, and the Labour Party would have shifted towards the SDP. Indeed the SDP as such might not have appeared.

So I think it's a very considerable achievement, and I think it would be foolish of people who were engaged in the campaigns for the democratic changes and for the policy changes, as soon as they've occurred, to go around nit-picking and say it's all a disaster, it's all a failure, we're all going to be expelled. I fear it's the pessimistic line that Socialist Action takes. I don't know why you do it.

Well we do it because we think that there are people in the Party, in the leadership of the Party, who have seen over the past few years a strong trend to the left with which you above all people have been associated, and who want to stop, and say it's gone too far.

And the fact that in the present leadership, among others, were people who refused to vote for you in the deputy leadership campaign, who signified they were doing this as part of trying to stop the left. And we fear they may be starting this process of moving to the right.

But there's been a right and a left of the Party for years. But if you really want to know where the Party is now, in a nutshell, compare the ovation given to Michael Foot at the end of his speech, when it was in some ways the old Michael Foot, and the reception given to Jim Callaghan. After all, three years ago he was at this conference as leader of the party.

And if you can't look at that and see what's happened to the Labour Party, you're missing a very important thing. Of course there are people who wish it had never happened and would like to push it back. The fact is that they are a minority now, and the reforms we made in policy and organisation are well established. Don't be surprised if you discover people in the Party who want to push things back. The difference is that once they were in a majority and now they are in a minority, I think a permanent minority.

Interview by Phil Hearse

IRELAND UNFREE

Setback at Labour conference

IT WAS inconceivable that attacks on left policies spurred on by 'dream' leaders would leave intact Labour's Irish policy. Confused though last year's position had been with its notion of getting a united Ireland without upsetting the Loyalists, the reversal was decisive.

Preparations for the debate were good. One thousand people attended the fringe meeting with Gerry Adams. Compositing brought out three clear policy options for conference. Two were Labour Committee on Ireland-sponsored proposals. One made plain the need to break the veto exercised by the Unionists over proposals for a united Ireland.

The other suggested Labour should stop backing the sham Northern Ireland Assembly set up by the Tories and debilitated by Sinn Fein's electoral results. Instead, it said, we should start talking about withdrawal.

Coming to the rostrum from the ranks of the constituencies, Tony Benn moved the main resolution with well-ordered reason. He stressed that the war was Britain's responsibility and that the reactionary Loyalist veto should be rejected. He commented favourably on the dialogue with Sinn Fein and rounded on those trade union leaders who capitulate to the pressure of the Loyalists inside their own ranks, blocking progress on the Irish question.

Sheila Healey from Brent East, seconding the motion, showed how successive governments, unable to produce political solutions, resorted to repression and threats. She described the sexual harassment of women in Armagh.

Despite the good start, the rambling succession of speakers to the platform underlined the failure of the left to adopt the cause of Ireland as its own. The third resolution, born from a deal between the Militant and the Labour Representation Committee (LRC), called for Labour to end the 'racist' ban on recruiting from the Six Counties.

This Orange lobby brought havoc to the pat formulae of the left. A letter written from Michael Foot's office in reply to a Belfast application to join the party was read out. In it Foot avoided all the issues and claimed that Labour would organise in the North were it not for the financial crisis of the party. This is nonsense.

As Clive Soley argued in the *New Labour and Ireland* magazine Labour has no business in the North — through its troops, or through its constituencies. But the Transport and General Workers Union was poised on the brink of supporting this resolution. The LRC, from a position of irrelevancy, now has big backers. They say they are overwhelmed by new support.

Of course, the Labour Party would make no impression at all on the nationalist community where young voters are being won to the arguments of Sinn Fein.

A new Northern Ireland Labour Party, if it ever got off the ground, would be a new Orange party.

The danger in the argument is to suggest the future of the Labour Party is endangered by its support for a United Ireland. If we are to avoid a return to the worst bipartisanship, this question must be settled in the next year.

Lies! Lies! Lies!

Wythenshawe replies

AFTER WAITING for four days to take Wythenshawe CLP's case Chair Sam McCluskie dragooned the Labour conference into recording a 'no' vote against reference back of the NEC report dealing with its suspension of the party.

The moral victory is ours. Russell Tuck of the NEC conceded an open Annual General Meeting on 4 November — a meeting which we are convinced will vindicate us.

The strength of our case was proved by the fact that the right wing did not dare to call for a card vote. They knew union after union had been convinced of our case after hearing our arguments.

By Alf Home, Wythenshawe CLP Chair

But conference was misled by one of the most scandalous pieces of falsification it has ever heard. Russell Tuck's speech contained four clear lies.

Lie number one: 'Wythenshawe refused to meet the NEC prior to its suspension'.

The truth: The CLP was never invited to meet the NEC until after it was suspended. The meeting on 15 April to which Tuck referred was between the ward party, the district party and the region to discuss problems of ward selection — a procedure in which the *district* and not the *constituency* officiates. The constituency was not involved and did not attend because it wasn't invited.

Lie number two: The officers suspended agent Joe Paine on no pay.

The truth: Joe was suspended on full pay. The NEC's own interim report says so!

Lie number three: 'The party refused to respect the freezing date of 15 November for application of the 12 month rule on selection.'

The truth: In fact the freeze advised by David Hughes, National Agent was 1 December. Only subsequently, without any written notification, did Joe Paine, the Wythenshawe agent, propose 15 November. Moreover the freeze date was changed after shortlisting took place.

Lie number four: The party's AGM was out of order 'because a number of trade union delegates complained that they were not notified of the meeting.'

The truth: Only one delegate complained: Pat Jones of USDAW. Pat was not an accredited GMC delegate and his delegation form was received four days after the AGM. He himself publicly admitted this.

In consequence of these outrageous lies, which we could have easily refuted had we been allowed to address conference, the rights of any CLP which seeks to run its affairs without arbitrary NEC interference remains in doubt.

Help us by:
 ● Getting out the facts. Ensure you report these facts to your ward, constituency or union and invite Wythenshawe speakers.

● Send letters of protest to the NEC demanding our reinstatement and publication of the full facts of the case.

● Support our appeal for a national conference to discuss the problems arising from our case.

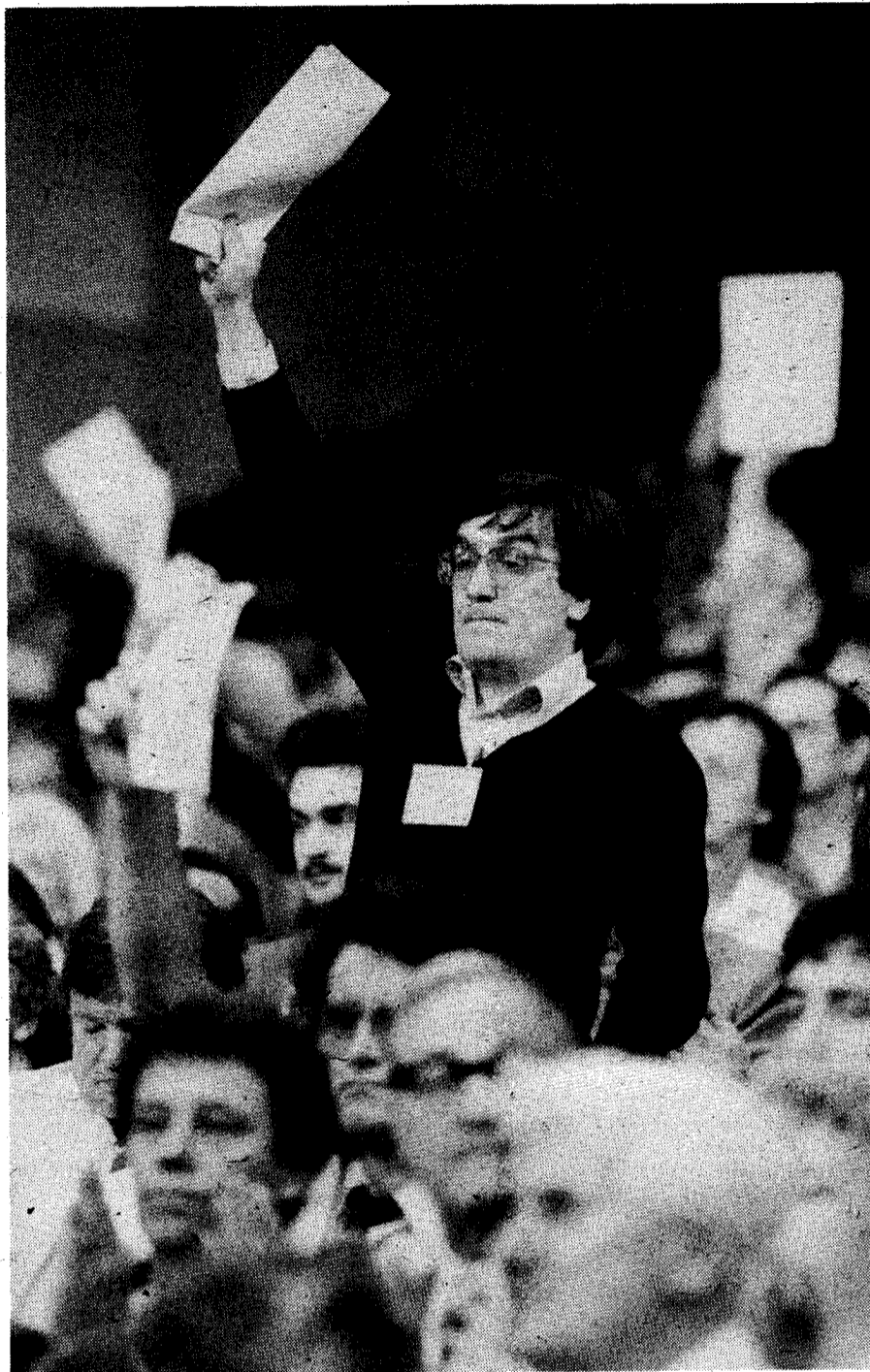
● Help us financially. Send donations and messages of support to: Alf Home, chair, Wythenshawe CLP, 39 Mullacre Road, Benchill, Manchester 22.

(From Labour Briefing conference bulletin.)

First issue of the national supplement. 20p.

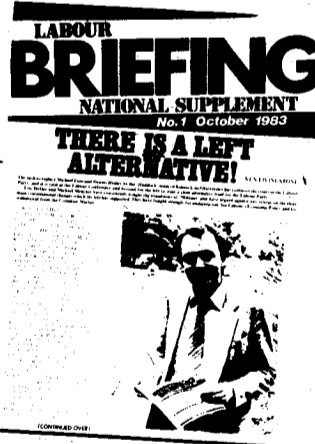
Contributions on the witch hunt, LP women's conference, local councils, Central America, Turkey, Ireland and much more.

Copies from 23 Leghorn Rd, London NW10.



A delegate tries to catch the eye of McCluskie at Labour Party conference

Photo: JOHN HARRIS



Support Labour Briefing

A NEW FACTOR in the organisation of the left at this year's conference was an open conference bulletin produced by *National Labour Briefing* and sponsored by a series of campaigns and pressure groups.

Briefing so effective is the fact that it is based on and under the control of its readers. Its editorial board meets monthly and delegates from local labour lefts, affiliated campaigns and *Briefing* groups can attend and vote.

In this way *Briefing* is able to act as a genuine organiser of the rank and file left wing within the Party. The success of its bulletin at conference reflected this fact.

For example, *Briefing's* was the only slate to be elected in the CLP's section of the NEC election. It was the clearest voice for unity — defence of socialist policies and opposition to the witch hunt.

Following the conference *Briefing* can play a decisive role in stimulating the necessary debate on where the left goes from here and organising a network of left caucuses throughout the country.

● *Labour Briefing's* next editorial meeting will be on Sunday 23 October, at 11am, County Hall, London.

By Redmond O'Neill

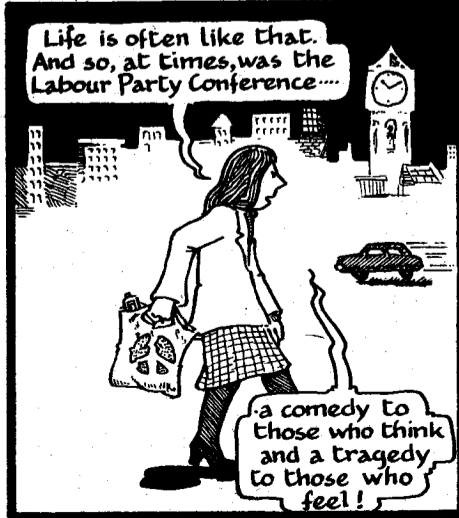
Over the week of conference this bulletin established the ability of *National Labour Briefing* to act as an open forum of ideas and as an organiser on the left of the Party.

The bulletin carried articles and statements by campaigns like CLPD's Women's Action committee, Labour CND, Labour Committee on Ireland, Labour Against the Witch Hunt and many others.

It published debates involving individuals like Tony Benn, Ken Livingstone, David Blunkett and dozens of CLP and trade union delegates. What makes Labour

a piece of the Action

by Cormac



Labour conference ignores women's demands

YET AGAIN, this year's Labour Party conference chose to ignore and deride the demands of women members for more democracy in the Party. In fact the women's demands were minimal.

They were embodied in three composite resolutions calling for the Labour Women's Conference to elect women's places on the NEC; for a rules conference to draw up proper rules for the women's conference so that it can no longer be ignored; and for at least five resolutions to go forward from women's conference to national conference — again hardly an excessive amount of time to ask for. All the more outrageous then that these resolutions were so resoundingly defeated.

Anne Davis, in opposing all the demands for the NEC, made a speech full of gestures towards women — even going so far as to offer a polite reprimand to Chair Sam McCluskie for addressing women delegates as 'girlie'. But for the most part though she was engaged in tipping her forelock to the men on the NEC.

She claimed that: 'Although we have the correct policies we are seen as a Party dominated by men'. There are two inaccuracies in this. First, the

Labour Party did not fight the election on clear policies about women. On abortion, for example, the manifesto reneged on conference policy for abortion on request.

By Judith Arkwright (Islington North CLP delegate)

Second, how can anyone bemoan the male domination of the Party with sincerity and then so rigorously oppose any steps which try to give women the facility to break down this male domination?

You may be wondering why the opposition to such minimal demands was so emphatic. Many male delegates revealed their attitudes in the debate itself by talking and groaning very loudly when a woman speaker tried to point this out. One begins to wonder whether the Labour and trade union leaders will ever learn.

If the leadership of the labour movement would

take a clear stand for women's liberation we could begin to break down sexist attitudes and dangerous divisions between men and women in the movement.

TGWU and the NUM supported this resolution — now we have to fight for them to be bolder in the future and back women all the way.

We have to take the

to the mass of women who are joining unions at twice the rate of men and organise them to challenge their leadership and bring their strength to bear in the Labour Party.

Women are getting their foot in the door. The CLPD Women's Action Committee must turn its attention to organising women at the base of the Labour Party itself and in the unions — at present it has very few local affiliations and activists compared to its national impact.

In the unions we need to draw up model resolutions, organise fringe meetings at conferences and promote rank and file organisation for women.

In addition, women in the party must fight for the right policies on women. Women want power in Party but not power in a vacuum — only our political demands and campaigning energy will really mobilise women in action. And this is the



Cartoon: LIZ MACKLE (from NALGO pamphlet 'Watch your language' — see Male Order below)

Women were ignored

Below we reproduce extracts from a speech by ANNE CROWDER of Nottingham East CLP to the Labour Party conference. She put the case for the policies for women's rights in the Party. (From Labour Briefing conference bulletin).

'WE HAVE heard much rhetoric about the need for the Party to win back the support of the working class.

'We have applauded speeches that have called for socialist policies. The louder you shout, the louder the applause you can get.

'Well, comrades, in the Party there are people who are shouting louder than most others but are being ignored and prevented from pushing forward the policies that they have decided are vital for them. They are women.

'This is despite the fact that women make up 52 per cent of the population. Despite the fact that we have been the ones to bear the brunt of capitalism and despite the fact that women have turned to the Labour Party to support them.

'The activity of women has enriched the labour movement and encouraged other women to become more active. But when we get near to winning the demands which will make a difference for women — when men will have to clear out of the way to let forward women representing and accountable to the rank and file women — then out come the old arguments, out come the old hostilities, playing on the backwardness which socialists should have thrown off and rejected centuries ago.

'I don't think this resolution will be carried. The present NEC is hostile to women's demands in action, and the block votes will be against us. But I ask the trade union leaders who are against change in favour of women: how far did you consult with your women membership?

'Don't pretend you've got something good to say on this platform, unless you are prepared to stop standing in our way and let women decide what is important to women. Let women decide what changes they seek, and let women carry them out, whilst remaining accountable to women at the grassroots.'

Women's Action Committee

(From Labour Briefing conference bulletin).

'AS PREDICTED conference voted against women. But we almost won the composite calling for a rules conference for the women's organisation. This in itself is a tremendous step forward for women in the Party.

'The WAC has been consistently calling for the women's organisation to be democratised along the lines of the rest of the Party. We need your help if we are to continue this pressure and win.

'If you can help in our campaign, contact: Ann Pettifor, 39 Caldervale Road, London SW4.'

A step was made towards this in the vote for the resolution for a rules conference which was defeated by only a narrow majority of 3,660,000 to 3,134,000. Unions like the

fight into the unions, especially unions like the NUR and the POEU which have a left leadership but whose position on women has not gone forward at all. We must look



Reductionism run riot

LARGE Americans with lots of cash have always been willing to pay vast sums for any treatment which claims to reduce their weight.

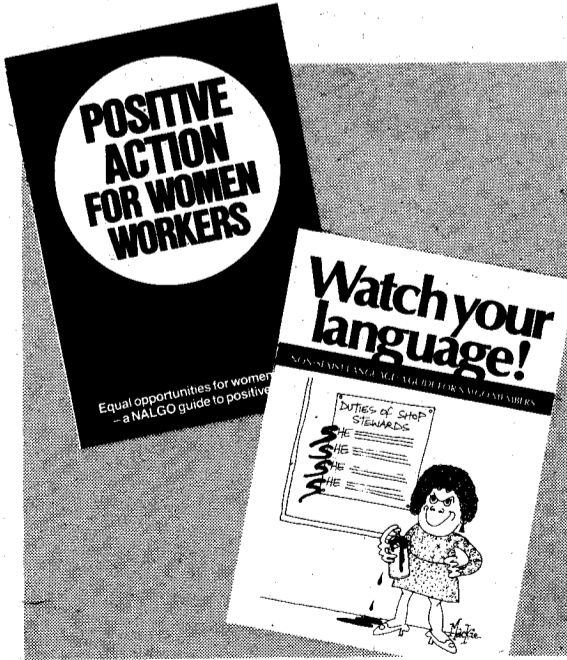
Now the crude method of simply cutting large chunks of fat with a scalpel has been superseded by new technology in the form of 'suction lipectomy'.

This entails inserting a tube attached to a pump into the area to be reduced, and literally sucking out unwanted fat. Up to half a stone can be excavated in one session — British

surgeons are calling it the slurp technique.

Plastic surgeons in the US can't wait to get their hands on the equipment and the £500 to £2500 fees for the operation. Cosmetic slimming merchants are clear about their target — 'women with disproportionately large hips, thighs, buttocks, and abdomens.'

Unfortunately, suction lipectomy does have its limitations on the world market, and isn't thought to have much of a future in the third world.



WATCH your language! and Positive Action for women workers are two pamphlets recently produced by the white collar union NALGO. They have also produced pamphlets on sexual harassment, abortion, child care and organising for equal opportunities in the union. All are available free from the Publicity Department, NALGO, 1 Mabledon Place, London WC1H 9AJ.

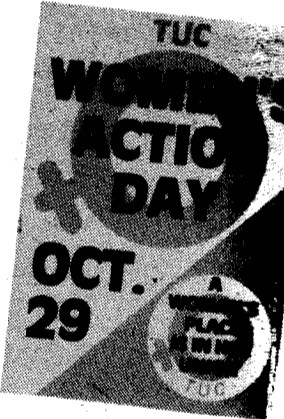
Competition

NO ENTRIES were received to Male Order's recent competition to write the funniest reply to the question 'Is the Pope real?' — couldn't you make up your minds?

Anyway, this time I've made it a bit easier and will simply award the prize to the funniest entry sent to the column before the end of October.

Your limit is 300 words and the prize the newly published book *Greenham Women Everywhere* by Alice Cook and Gwyn Kirk (Pluto Press, £3.50).

Compiled by HILARY DRIVER. Send contributions to 'Male Order' Socialist Action, 328 Upper Street, London N1 2XP to arrive not later than Thursday a week prior to publication.



Eurosocialist Kinnock?

WHEN Neil Kinnock was crowned Labour leader last week, he took red roses from his wife's bouquet and held them aloft — surely not an accidental gesture. For the red rose in a fist is the symbol of Europe's socialist parties, and Kinnock made explicit reference to their success in his acceptance speech in Brighton. What are the politics of the Eurosocialists, and how does Kinnock intend to imitate them?

The place to start is with Francois Mitterrand, current President of France, and par excellence the founder of 'Eurosocialism'. When the general strike of 1968 occurred in France, the Communist Party was easily the dominant party of the French working class.

The Socialists, at that time organised in the SFIO (French Section of the Socialist International) were by comparison a grouplet. In the 1969 presidential election they were crushed by both the Gaullists and Communists, receiving only 5 per cent of the vote.

But the traumatic events of 1968 had radicalised a whole generation, and the vast majority looked first to the mass parties of the working class rather than the far left groups.

Mitterrand saw his opportunity to rebuild the Socialist Party. The first thing he realised was that to gain a mass base, to break with the SFIO's image of a staid party of parliamentary manoeuvre, the Socialist Party had to be built as a left wing party.

By Paul Lawson

Mitterrand took the socialists into the alliance with the Communists, the *Union de la Gauche*, and helped to elaborate the *Programme Commun* of the alliance. Through this alliance, the Socialists built themselves, but on a very particular political line. The Socialists went simultaneously to the right and the left of the Communists. On certain crucial issues — the economy, defence, NATO — they adopted a political line well to the right of the Communists.

But on social questions such as democratic rights, reform of the archaic and centralised state apparatus, self management in industry, they adopted a line to the left of the Communists. The leftist demagogy of Mitterrand on democratic rights was beautifully illustrated when the Trotskyist Ligue Communiste was banned in 1973. While the Communist Party held aloof, Mitterrand rushed to be photographed with the handcuffed Ligue leaders.

Mitterrand's project amounted to this: while certain crucial guarantees had to be given to the bourgeoisie, to convince it that the SP remained a potential party of government, leftist demagogy could be used to build the SP's base.

In the mid-1970s the theme of 'libertarian socialism' could be used by the French, Greek and Spanish Socialist Parties against their Communist Party rivals, weighed down by the burden of a Stalinist past and residual links with Moscow.

Only in Italy could this project not succeed, because the Italian Communist Party moved to occupy any political space that could otherwise have been used by the social democrats.

The extent of the left wing demagogy of the Eurosocialists could be gauged by the statements of the leader of the Greek PASOK, Papandreu. He described the EEC as 'a club of multinational monopolies' and NATO as 'the military suppressive machine — the state — of multinational capital'.

When Franco died in Spain in 1975 the now-legalised Socialist Party held mass rallies with red flags, clen-



Kinnock will use radical phraseology in imitation of his 'Eurosocialist' colleagues

ched fists and renditions of the *Internationale*. Only three years later, after having outmanoeuvred the Communist Party, did SP leader Felipe Gonzalez move to drop the word 'Marxism' from the party's constitution and repress his left wing.

The manoeuvres of the Eurosocialists in the 1970s however did not change the fundamental nature of these parties — the fact that they were after all social democratic parties, tied to administering the bourgeois state apparatus, ultimately loyal to the capitalist system.

The proof of the pudding is in the eating. By 1982 PASOK and the French and Spanish CPs had all attained state power. All of them moved rapidly to the right.

Mitterrand's government did carry through a number of democratic reforms. It decentralised government administration, it abolished the death penalty, it granted an extra week's paid holiday for all. But faced with the major questions of national and international politics, it adopted solutions acceptable to the ruling class.

Internationally, Mitterrand has played an exceptionally reactionary

role, supporting the French *force de frappe*, sending French troops to Lebanon and Chad, and becoming part of the international anti-Moscow crusade. At home he has imposed stringent austerity.

Gonzalez's government is at least as right wing as the German SPD government of Helmut Schmidt. And the PASOK leaders have gone back on all their anti-NATO and anti-EEC demagogy.

Example

If Kinnock really wants to follow the example of the European socialists, and all the signs are that he does, then the formula is very simple — go right and left simultaneously.

To get the Labour Party into a situation where it can be part of a governmental team sanctioned by the bourgeoisie, Kinnock has to dump left wing policies on the EEC, disarmament and incomes policy. But he's got three or four years to do it, and changing the line on the EEC is virtually already accomplished.

But he also has to *rebuild* the Labour Party. On all kinds of social

questions — democratic rights, the police, fighting the health service cuts, defence of local government, trade unions rights — Kinnock can afford a leftist stance in the short term.

By pulling into his team of advisors the erstwhile lefts from the Labour Co-ordinating Committee, he will be well briefed on these issues. Doubtless he will clean up his act on women's rights.

No suspicions about his future intentions, or his willingness to lead Labour towards coalition with the Alliance at the next election, should make us think that he represents a return of the right wing.

Eurosocialism has another deeper meaning. In this period of accelerated economic crisis and deeper international economic competition, increased European economic and military integration is a rational response towards defending European capitalism against its US and Japanese rivals. Towards this end, Britain staying in the Common Market is absolutely fundamental.

All the Eurosocialist parties are now pro-EEC. Eurosocialism means defending European imperialism: basing economic and foreign policy

on this option rather than an antiquated Atlantic alliance.

The Eurosocialist analogy is of course a limited one. The British labour movement has no mass Stalinist party to compete with social democracy. The trade unions are affiliated to the mass party of the working class, thus there is a limited percentage in trying to build a party on the issues which attract intellectuals and 'middle' layers in society. Most of all, the project is difficult in a party which already has a powerful and entrenched left wing.

Imperialism

But its fundamentals — support for European imperialism, going right and left simultaneously, trying to incorporate a section of the left — can be applied. But in case anyone thinks that this heralds a new socialist dawn, they should look closely at the European experience, especially of Mitterrand and Gonzalez.

These governments are social democratic governments of austerity, cold war, the Common Market and working class demoralisation. A warning to us all.

Thatcher and friends

THIS WEEK AT Blackpool the Tories meet in conference. Thatcher fresh from her June election victory will get a rapturous reception from the rank and file.

But in the more astute circles of the ruling class there is just a little less euphoria and complacency. The British bourgeoisie is nothing if it is not hard-headed and realistic. They are just a little worried that over the years the Tory Party has been losing ground and between 1964 and 1979 lost four elections out of five.

Some of the ruling class think it is not a bad idea to hedge their bets and this means giving a nod and a wink to the SDP/Liberal Alliance.

In this article which is based on the last two chapters of the book *Thatcher and friends* by JOHN ROSS we look at what has been happening to the Tory Party and why the SDP/Liberal Alliance has got friends in high places.

DESPITE ITS LARGE parliamentary majority the Tory Party is in decline. From 1886 onwards the Tories won the largest share of the vote in 12 out of 13 general elections.

After crushing the general strike and marginalising the trade union movement in the thirties, they built such mass support that their votes in the 1931 and 1935 elections are easily the largest ever recorded in Britain under any electoral system. For nearly 78 years up to 1964 the Tories were virtually continuously in office.

Then after 1964 a new Conservative crisis set in. For 11½ out of the next 15 years they were in opposition. They lost four out of five general elections.

Weakness

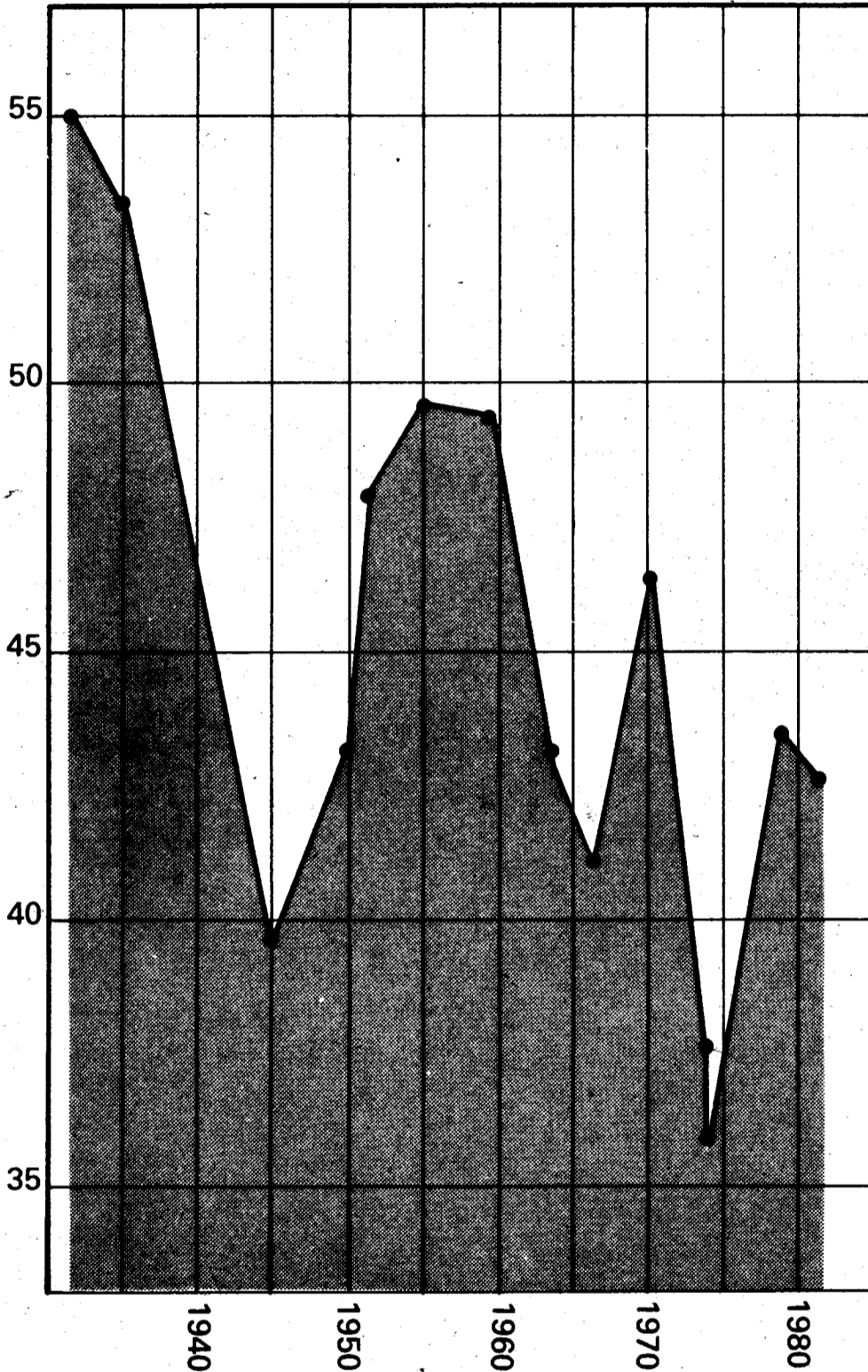
Thatcher came forward with the task of halting this slide. She has brilliantly utilised Labour's weakness and the undemocratic nature of the British electoral system but she has still not been able to halt her party's decline.

Despite getting more seats than in the last parliament the Tory vote this year still slithered downwards. Her vote on 6 June 1983 was the lowest real vote ever recorded by a Tory premier. In the last election the Tories got 42 per cent of the votes, compared to 44 per cent in 1979 and 53 per cent in 1935 (see table for detailed breakdown of votes since 1935).

In Scotland the Tory vote has slumped by 22 per cent since 1935. The Labour Party is in deep crisis, but the revival of Toryism under Thatcher should not blind us to the fact that the Conservative Party is in decay. The attempt to rebuild a mass popular Conservative Party in the post-war years has essentially failed — a failure which inevitably calls into question the entire form of the party system in which the Conservatives were born.

The days when the Tory Party could integrate the political fabric of British society in an immense party political domination are over. The rise and decline of the Conservative Party, and of the modern British party system is a product of the rise and decline of British imperialism itself. The immense complex of economic and social forces which made up classical British imperialism are breaking down.

To attempt to get over that, British capitalism must abandon the old economic formulas created in the 1840s and link itself to new rising forces — in



Tory percentage of the vote since 1931

particular, to the powerful European capitalism of the EEC. This entire reorganisation of the mechanisms of the British economy needs a complete change in the party system.

It is only possible to outline what such a new party system will be. It would as far as the ruling class is concerned consist of a Gaullist-type Tory Party, the creation of the SDP/Liberal 'pro-EEC' Party and the creation of a reformist Socialist Party as opposed to the Labour Party. Over the last 30 years British politics has been about the struggle of that new party system to bring itself into existence.

Its aim, naturally, is to forestall any socialist alternative to the long-drawn-out decline of the Conservative Party and the economic and social mechanisms that created it. By the 1960s and 70s the economic contradictions of the old imperialist system were imploding into British society. New political and economic formulas were beginning to be required.

The results were the 'retreat from the Empire', the decision to enter the EEC and that period from 1964 to 1979

when the Tories lost four general elections out of five. This was when the social alliances of the Tories began to break down. In October 1974 the Conservative vote fell to the lowest level for 115 years. Heath campaigned for a 'national' and not even a specifically Tory government.

Strategies

In society as a whole it was a period of disturbance and conflict, with the activity of the anti-Vietnam movement, student upheavals and in the 1970s the largest trade union struggles since the general strike. In the Labour Party a new left wing emerged led by Tony Benn. British capitalism had not faced such problems for 50 years and they showed the weakening of the old mechanisms through which the Tories had carried out their political strategies. Now the most important thing for the British ruling class is how to put a stop to these processes.

Whilst Labour's vote has been declining the Conservatives have proved incapable of gaining support from it

and thus stopping their own electoral decline. Large sections of the working class have not shown themselves as deeply attached to Labour in the way many assumed. But the working class historically has shown itself to be opposed to the Tory Party. *Anti-Toryism*, not support for Labour is the most profound and widest of all traditions in the British working class movement.

This is why the Tory Party has no mechanisms for institutionalising its links with sections of the working class breaking with Labour. Between 1979 and 1983 Thatcher inflicted tremendous defeats on the Labour Party but she could not succeed in winning votes for the Conservatives. In fact 700,000 fewer people voted Tory in 1983 than in 1979.

Had Thatcher re-created mass support for the Conservative Party, had she succeeded in reversing 50 years of Tory decline, had the Conservative Party now found some mechanism to integrate in its support the skilled workers and others breaking from Labour, there would be no need for British capitalism to reorganise its political system. British capitalism

could rest content today, with what it enjoyed in the years between the wars — a mass authentically popular Conservative Party.

Thatcher's defeat of Labour is not enough to create political stability. The old system of rule still continues declining. That is why the levels of support of each party in 1983 formed part of such a coherent long-term pattern of development. It is also why the pressures for a fundamental reorganisation of the political system have not been overcome.

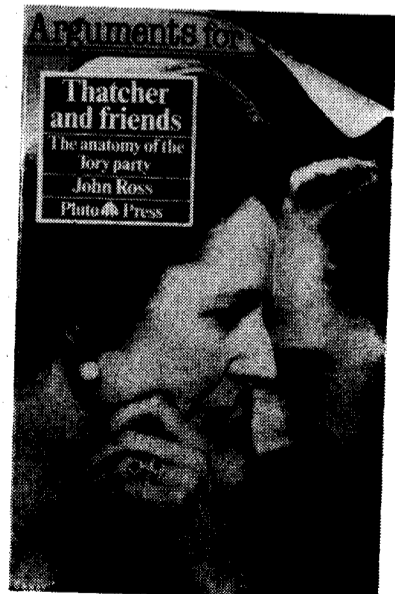
The emergence of the Social Democracy/Liberal Alliance bears testimony to the fact that important sections of the ruling class recognise that Thatcherism alone is not sufficient. Nothing could be more naive than the view that the Alliance is the political expression of the 'middle class'. At its foundation the Alliance was supported by John Harvey Jones (chair of ICI), Clive Lindley (ICI group), Claude Wilson (Rothchilds), Edmund Dell (ex-Labour cabinet minister and now a merchant banker), the chief executive of the SDP was Bernard Doyle, former head of Booker McConnell.

On 24 January the *Guardian* noted that 'The SDP is planning a £250,000 advertising campaign with money donated, it is believed, by Mr David Sainsbury of the supermarket family.' Earlier Lord Sainsbury another backer of the SDP launch had noted that 'we are simply offering a more stable environment for business'. Of the major firms with annual reports prior to the election, Thorn, EMI and Marks and Spencer had donated funds to the SDP/Liberal Alliance. In 1981 Thorn, EMI, ICL, Marks and Spencer, Sainsburys along with Booker McConnell were among the 100 companies with the largest turnover.

Minority

The ruling class see in the SDP/Liberal Alliance as a way of cutting into the Labour vote and later perhaps into the labour movement, in a way that the Conservatives are clearly unable to do. It has the potential to fracture Labour's support into its two historical components — that part which was authentically pro-Labour and that which is primarily anti-Tory. That discerning voice of the interests of the ruling class, the *Financial Times* said: 'In a more representative voting system, the Alliance could emerge tomorrow as the main alternative to Mrs Thatcher, which we would count as a strong gain.' The ruling class will not succeed in their objective of making the Alliance the 'second' party.

But by building up the Alliance, and winning over the traditional anti-Tory vote of sections of the working class they hope to create a situation whereby if the Tory vote slumps even further and they cannot win an election outright, a bloc of the SDP/Liberal Alliance and the Tories could make Labour a permanent minority party.



Thatcher and friends — The anatomy of the Tory Party by JOHN ROSS
Published by Pluto Press, £2.50.

THE ACTION INTERVIEW

Interview with **LUIS JALANDONI** *International representative of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines*

Can you explain the background of the killing of Aquino, the leader of the bourgeois opposition party in the Philippines, the United Nationalist Democratic Organisation?

All evidence points to the responsibility of the Marcos government. At the time Aquino returned to the Philippines, there was a convergence of factors which we in the National Democratic Front believe brought about the assassination.

First was the advance of the armed resistance and the struggle of the New People's Army. There were 300 tactical offensives from March 1982 to February 1983.

The second factor was the advance of the open mass movement with the spread of mass protest actions in many cities — of students, teachers, peasants, workers, media and church people. This had the effect of exposing the brutalities of the military and the economic crises of the regime.

The third factor was the polarisation of the moderate opposition towards the left.

This economic crisis fuelled widespread, often spontaneous economic struggles. Marcos feared that Aquino could unite the moderate opposition. The possibility existed that, with a cooperation of the revolutionary left and the moderate opposition, Marcos could lose the elections in May 1984. This was too much for Marcos and Aquino was assassinated.

Can you say something about United States' stakes in the Philippines?

Admiral Robert Long, the US commander in chief for the Pacific describes this much more powerfully than I can.

I will read you something from a statement he gave to a foreign affairs subcommittee. 'The starting point of any discussion concerning the strategic value of the US military facilities in the Philippines must be the examination of US interests in the Asia-Pacific region. As you know this region is of vital economic importance to the United States.

'Our trade last year continued to outpace that of any other region, both in terms of its total dollar value — some \$136 billion — and as a percentage of all US foreign trade — 30 per cent. These figures do not include the additional \$160 billion of oil which transited the Indian and Pacific oceans last year en route to world markets.

'For these reasons, the Asia-Pacific region represents our *single largest* economic area of interest and it continues to grow in importance each year ...

'As our economic and political interests increase, so must our interest in its security ... The Philippines sits astride the vital sea and air lanes of the Western Pacific and the gateways to the Indian Ocean. It is in close proximity to Soviet installations in Vietnam.

'US forces in the Philippines are ideally positioned to give US maximum flexibility in that part of the world'. The Clark airbase and the Subic naval base in the Philippines are the largest bases outside the United States itself.

US backed regimes in places like Nicaragua and Iran have been toppled by mass mobilisations. Do you think the Reagan administration are concerned about the instability of the Marcos regime?

Of course. In June this year a senior US aid was quoted as saying that political instability in the Philippines will endanger access to vital military bases.

He said the US embassy is making contacts with the moderate opposition. He explained that this did not mean the destabilisation of the Marcos regime, that the regime was entering its twilight.

He said 'We don't want to find



Students from the Philippines University demonstrate after Aquino's assassination



'We are in an era of revolutionary upheavals throughout the world'

Luis Jalandoni

ourselves in the same dilemma as we did in Iran'.

Since Iran and Nicaragua, the policy of the United States has been more strongly to link with the moderate opposition in order to have an authority in case a regime in power become so unpopular that it is toppled.

But if they try to do this in the Philippines other factors come into play. There is the revolutionary movement that grows in strength and works painstakingly to win over this moderate opposition.

There is a regime which is brutal and desperate and will not make concessions to the opposition. Through its greed it is even taking over the economic interests of others.

To grant concessions in terms of political power would endanger Marcos himself. So the US has found that its reserve force of alternatives is thinning out.

The official position of the moderate opposition is to boycott the comedy of the elections. The murder of Aquino is the death knell of any parliamentary means.

The dilemma of the US is they see a slim chance of getting the election through. If Marcos cannot gain more credibility through seemingly 'fair' elections and if the regime cannot hold the ground against militant demonstrations, the US may make some other choice.

UNIDO has called demonstrations against the Marcos regime, has this strengthened their support?

UNIDO has grown in some strength of course. They are mobilising in cooperation with the revolutionary forces. Their growing strength is to be seen in the reality that they are mobilising for popular causes, like the resignation of Marcos.

The NDF see this as positive, we

want to encourage all these other forces to mobilise as a mass so that it will be difficult for the Marcos regime to pinpoint who are the NDF supporters.

Do you see similarities with Nicaragua where bourgeois forces joined the opposition to the US backed regime and where, in the words of Sandino, only the workers and peasants go all the way.

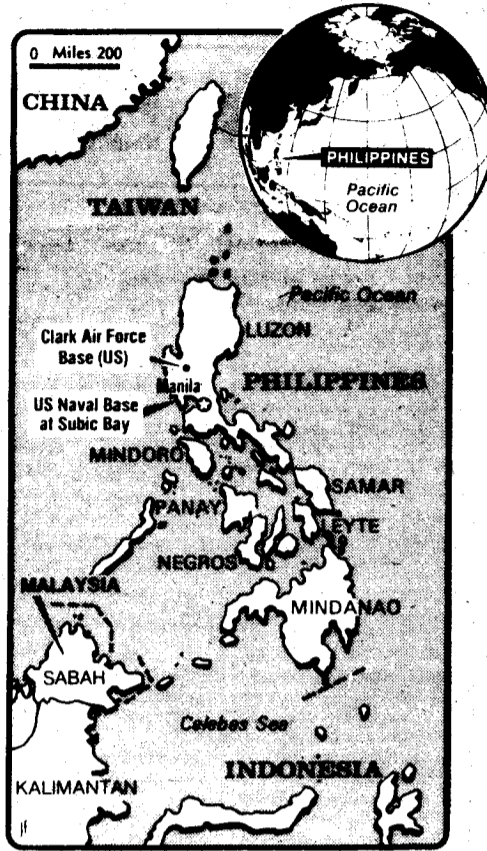
There are similarities. The revolutionary forces have the principal strength. They are the strongest builders of the opposition. Therefore we are able to develop this kind of cooperation with the moderate opposition without compromising basic principles and interests of the peasants.

So the programme of revolutionary land reform, elimination of exploitation of the peasants and abolition of landlordism are not given up. The interests of the workers will not be sacrificed.

From a position of strength we are able to negotiate for cooperation with the other sectors, including the business sector who would agree to campaign for civil disobedience for the resignation of Marcos, an end to US support for the regime and the release of political prisoners.

The present situation calls for broadening of unity. It would be unwise of the NDF to say to the moderate opposition, don't get the credit now, we are the ones mobilising. We say to them, continue mobilising. This will help us topple this dictator and any political tyranny that may take its place.

Eventually we expect it to lead to genuine independence, a revolutionary people's coalition government, an economy without exploitation of peasants and workers. It will be a specifically Filipino type of



material sent to the Philippines in English, Spanish and French on the different aspects — the combination of mass mobilisation with the armed struggle, the combination of political struggle and armed struggle, the combination of the open peasant movement with the peasant war and the guerilla warfare with armed city partisan warfare.

We have to work together. This is vital for the future, not only during the struggle but also later.

We have rich natural resources and we hope that we won't have to get into the financial system dominated by the United States. We can have mutually beneficial trade with progressive movements who win.

Do the people mobilising against Marcos look to the NDF for leadership?

Very much so because of the political education, the programme and organisation of the NDF.

Eight organisations make up the NDF. There is the underground organisation working among teachers. Then there is the health association which works among doctors and nurses. They provide medical care to the guerillas and training to peasants in alternative health programmes and also organise in their own sector. Then we have the student and youth organisation. Then of course the workers in the revolutionary workers' movement and the revolutionary peasants' movement. Then the Christians for National Liberation and the Communist Party of the Philippines.

Are you optimistic for the future?

Oh yes! It is an optimism based on a confidence we can win. But the sacrifices will be tremendous.

I talked to one peasant, who had been fighting under the old leadership (of the PKP, the old Communist Party) when the programme was wrong and there were many mistakes.

He is now fighting with the NDF and New Peoples' Army. He said, 'Before, we used to carry heavy packs and we were walking, walking. We did not know what was in the packs and we did not know where we were going.'

'Now we are also walking and carrying heavy packs, but we know what is in the packs, it is precious gold, and we know where we are going.'

So there is a conviction. There is continuing education, analysis from the grass roots to the top. There is a confidence that US imperialism and the regime can be defeated.

Maybe in an earlier time the US could decimate the people. But today they cannot destroy the Salvadorean or Filipino people. We are in a different era.

It is an era where there are revolutionary upheavals throughout the world and even revolutionary struggles in the heartlands of capitalism.

The US thought they could break the will of the people with superior force. This is where they made their mistake because they cannot break the will of the people.

The international struggle will be an integral and enriching part of the revolutionary theory that is being developed and created by workers and revolutionary peoples at this time. This was not really there in 1945.

The tendency of the old communist party, the PKP, was to celebrate their victories and not to prepare for the counter attack of the enemy. When they were defeated, instead of looking at their errors, they started to blame the people.

This PKP leadership refused to listen to the criticisms of marxist militants who were coming out in 1961 and were organising mass mobilisations against US bases and the US intervention in Vietnam. In December 1968 the young militants decided to set up their own organisation, the re-established Communist Party, the Communist Party of the Philippines.

Today the PKP organisations are recognised and they send them abroad to Prague and other places. But it is not a political force anymore because it has collaborated with the Marcos regime.

socialist economy. In between, there will be many steps. There will be the immediate danger of barefaced military rule.

The revolutionary movement in the rural areas is now spread over 39 guerilla fronts, in 56 provinces with the support of about 10 million people. It cannot be crushed any longer. The revolutionary movement in the urban centres is broader and the fight can grow stronger.

But of course we will have to go through difficulties until we are able to gain more victories and set up a provisional revolutionary government, which will be the transition to nationwide victory. In between there lurks the danger of US intervention.

So for us the international work for diplomatic support, as well as international solidarity from the people becomes crucial.

The comrades in El Salvador are able to deflect large scale intervention and Nicaragua has been successful also. The Latin American struggles against intervention will be of tremendous assistance to us. If we could share networks, contacts, organisations and analysis then we may be able to deflect US intervention in one of its key bastions and so contribute to the weakening of US intervention in other areas.

We are just beginning a closer dialogue. I have just talked to the comrades of the FMLN-FDR of El Salvador here in Britain and in Germany. I have talked to the African National Congress.

Do you think there are lessons to be learnt from the way the Nicaraguan government and the El Salvador movement use mass mobilisations against imperialism?

In various fields of struggle we can learn from each other — international diplomacy, mass mobilisation, guerilla warfare. We want lots of

Tony Banks' vote

BEFORE RUSHING into print to demand of Tony Banks an explanation as to why he voted for Kinnock as opposed to Heffer in the Labour leadership election, Socialist Action should check the facts.

This would have revealed that far from voting centre-right off his own bat, as your piece implies, he was mandated by the full Newham North West GC to vote Kinnock-Meacher.

What is more Tony had made it clear from the start of the leadership campaign that he supported Heffer. However in Newham, after fighting hard to rid the party of the lies of Reg Prentice and Arthur Lewis, Tony is as aware as the rest of the Labour voters and party workers that the fundamental reason for democratic re-selection was to ensure that MPs follow the party line. He requested a mandate.

It was at precisely this stage that the centre-right Kinnock supporters revealed their true colours and proposed that we 'leave it up to Tony'. This was crushed and

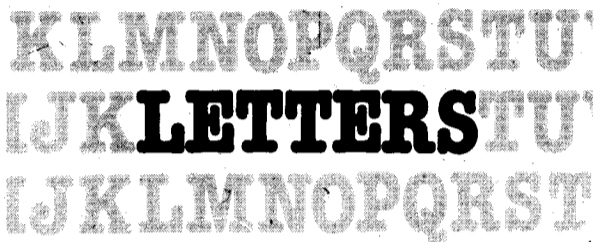


Tony Banks joins the GLC fares protest

procedure to mandate adopted. This did not give the result that we on the left wanted, but to ditch mandation for temporary gain

would have been another victory for the centre-right.

P. SIKORSKI, London E13.



The Cause of Ireland

THE MAKERS of the above programme would like to publicise the fact that the film *The Cause of Ireland*, as transmitted on Monday night at 11.00pm, was not the original film as edited by Platform Films, but a shorter version, cut at the request of Channel Four Television, who informed us that the following four sections of the film contravened the Independent Broadcasting Authority's Television programme guidelines:

1. A sequence of shots inside the country house of a master of the hunt in Northern Ireland, followed by a fox-hunting scene.

2. Two sections of an interview with a representative of the Confederation of British Industry in Belfast.

3. The section of commentary: 'For, while the firepower of Republicanism is usually aimed at the security-forces or public representatives of the British state, Loyalist violence has been directed indiscriminately at the Catholic community.'

4. The section of

commentary: 'Those Protestants who have been trained in the Ulster Defence Regiment or the R.U.C. would remain a real threat to Catholics in the North of Ireland. (in the event of a British withdrawal).'

CHRIS REEVES, JOHN UNDERHAY Platform Films

Write to us!

This is your page. Send us your comments, criticisms or even congratulations. But please be brief — letters over 300 words will be cut. Write to: Letters, Socialist Action, 328 Upper Street, London N1 2XP. (Tel: 01-359 8180)

American City

THE SACKING of the Cowley workers reminded me of the strikes in Minneapolis in the thirties. One of the strike leaders was a bloke called Vincent Dunne. A book describing the strikes called *American City* by Charles Rumford Walker tells about Dunne's union activity and his work on the coal yards.

From 1921 on VR Dunne earned his living in the coal yards in Minneapolis. He had gone to work for the De Laitre Dixon Coal Company and stuck with them for twelve years. He shovelled coal, drove a truck, became weigh-master, dispatcher and for a time superintendent. All these years he spoke publicly, wrote for his party's press — the Communist Party — and gave a substantial part of his earnings to the revolutionary party to which he belonged. Why wasn't he fired from the De Laitre Dixon Company for being a Communist? ... the De Laitres were millionaires several times over from lumber holdings. Ray Dunne they liked personally and found

him a highly intelligent weigh-master. Lecturing him repeatedly on his radical views, they nonetheless refused to fire him when he spoke at street meetings and attended plenums of the Communist Party. A streak of Tory radicalism made them despise the idea of firing a man for his political views — they respected Dunne and found him a more than competent employee, even offered him stock, though VR Dunne turned them down. Instead, he worked as hard as he could to organise a rank and file revolt — in their own way the De Laitres respected him for that too. Finally, in 1933 the coal company entered into a business arrangement with Fuel Distributors, a Ford owned corporation. VR Dunne was transferred to the new concern. For several weeks the Ford manager tried to make up his mind to fire his Communist weigh-master who had come to him with the OK of the De Laitre Dixons. First he asked him to 'resign'. It was such a unique episode that I believe it deserves a

place in the record. 'Is it because of my work?' Ray asked his boss. 'No, No. The work is alright — you know that Dunne.'

'Do I get on alright with the men?'

'Of course relations with the men are fine.'

'Well what is it?'

Believe it or not, the Ford manager was embarrassed. He put off the firing until another day. But after all, it was too much for a Ford company to harbour a trade unionist who at the moment was organising the coal heavers of Minneapolis under his nose and was a Communist to boot. VR Dunne spoke publicly at an anti Fascist rally. A week later the manager gave him his last pay cheque.'

This is a wonderful book, but unfortunately quite unobtainable as it was published in New York in 1937! SA readers should contact their local library and see if it can uncover some copies.

CHARLIE VAN GELDEREN, London.

Art of the Avant-Garde in Russia

THE ROYAL ACADEMY in London is notorious for being Britain's most reactionary artistic institution. Nevertheless, the Academy will host (until 13 November) a major exhibition of revolutionary art. Entitled 'Art of the Avant-Garde in Russia', the exhibition is a collection of paintings, drawings and illustrated books from the October 1917 Revolution and its aftermath.

The Russian avant-garde was never a single unified movement, more a bewildering variety of 'isms': Constructivism, Futurism, Suprematism, to name only a few. What linked these groups was the spirit of revolution. In part, the avant-garde was an artistic rebellion.

Epitomising this is one of the exhibition's major pieces, Olga Rozanova's extraordinary slashing green stripe on a white background — a dramatic swipe at the pictorial conventions of the day. And, as the exhibition shows, the bulk of the avant-garde's work was in this abstract, non-representational vein, concerned to decomplicate or simplify art through a focus on questions of form and colour.

But the avant-garde was more than a rebellion against the artistic conventions of the day. In 1917 avant-garde artists embraced the proletarian revolution and placed their art at its service. Revolutionary artists like El Lissitzky tirelessly produced propaganda in defence of the embryonic workers'

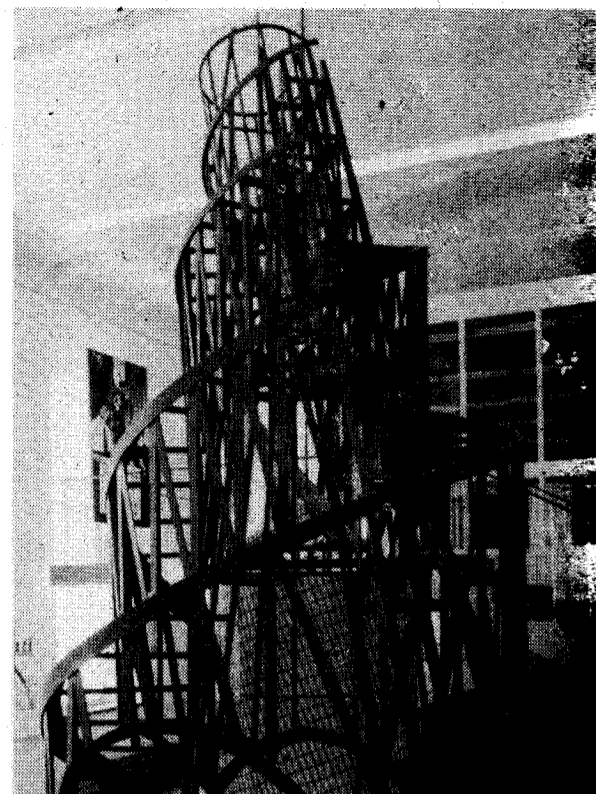
state. Avant-garde artists rejected the notion of the artist as an independent, aloof observer producing art for the rich elite who could afford it.

Instead, the revolutionary artists of the avant-garde saw themselves as workers engaged in the production of art for the masses, and an art which also had 'use value'. This synthesis of art and function is well represented in the exhibition with, among other things, the futurist geometric clothes and theatre designs of Exter and Popova, and architectural sketches by Klucis. There is also an interesting selection of illustrated books by such major artists as Mayakovsky.

By Jon E Lewis

Under Lenin and Trotsky's guidance the freedom of artistic expression. This was genuinely possible in a society where art was freed from the demands and control of a ruling group. But the rise of Stalinism in the late 1920s meant the reversal of the Revolution and the restoration of a ruling strata. Art was once more brought under the control of the rulers. Where capitalism achieves such control through money and patronage, Stalinism used political repression. The revolutionary artists of the avant-garde were hounded and imprisoned, and their art locked away in the vaults of the state museums.

In place of the innovative and experimental art of the avant-garde, Stalin enforced the sterile dogma of Socialist



Tatlin's 'Monument for the Third International'

Realism. This consisted of little more than an endless array of portraits of bureaucrats and state farms, confirming and glorifying Stalin's tyrannical rule. By 1930, the brilliant flowering of Russian avant-garde art was dead.

One man, George Costakis, owns all the 300 or so works in the exhibition (and this is only a fragment of his total collection). Although Costakis has played an important part in rescuing Russian avant-garde art from the obscurity to which it was condemned by Stalin, it is a scandal that art originally produced for Soviet workers should now belong to one

man, and hang on the walls of the Royal Academy for the gratification of the culture vultures of the bourgeoisie.

However, the exhibition still remains a remarkable tribute to the boundless creativity unleashed by the world's first socialist revolution. Interestingly, the Russian avant-garde is the only art movement known where women played an equal role. For anyone interested in art or the history of the Russian Revolution, this exhibition is essential viewing.

* Art of the Avant-Garde in Russia at the Royal Academy, Piccadilly, London W1. Daily 10am-6pm. Finishes November 13.

Video for peace

AS PART of its peace year, the Greater London Council is lending out for free a video containing two 30 minute films, *If You Love This Planet*, by Helen Caldicott and *Protest and Survive*, by Schools Against the Bomb.

If You Love This Planet is a lecture given by Dr Caldicott to a United States audience, with some US propaganda from the 1940's inserted.

By Paul Highfield

So we see a youthful Reagan asking when he can get at 'the Japs'. The answer came when 'the mighty wonder' of the atom bomb is used to obliterate two cities.

The latest atom bombs are each four times as powerful as all the bombs dropped in the Second World War. Dr Caldicott's lecture deals mainly with the horrific consequences of such a war, which she believes is quite likely in the near future — although she doesn't give any political reasons why.

She demolishes the official line that life will carry on normally for millions after a nuclear war. Medical estimates are that 90 per cent of all people in the US and Canada will die within 30 days.

Those left will either die of sunburn, as most of the ozone layer will be destroyed, starvation as all the crops will be scorched,

fallout, grief, plague or typhoid. Can you imagine, she asks, a world without architecture, music, literature and history?

She is less clear about what to do to prevent such a catastrophe. She urges demonstrations but concentrates on changing individuals' opinions and lives by harnessing their emotions of tenderness and love.

So she cannot explain why the US is escalating the arms race against the background of world recession and revolutions in the Third World.

Still the video contains lots of useful information, especially for those new to the whole nuclear issue.

The Schools Against the Bomb video is highly effective — including clips from *The War Game* — interviews with 'experts' and school students, as well as anti-nuclear music, it covers the failure of disarmament talks to date; the threat of cruise missiles to the USSR; the fact that a nuclear war will almost certainly be fought here in Europe, not in the US or USSR; and the Tories' intentions for local authority planning to prepare for nuclear war.



CND protest at 1983 Labour Party Conference

It exposes these plans as ridiculous and it includes a chilling interview with the controller for Humberside. He has the power over the police and army during and after a nuclear war. He even has control over who to have shot for taking food to stay alive.

The video steers clear of blaming the US for escalating the arms race and that makes it difficult for head teachers to ban it from schools on the grounds that it is 'unbalanced'.

It does adopt a unilateral position and urges school students to join Schools Against the Bomb or Youth CND, to organise and demonstrate.

It's a pity there are so few young women doing interviews and that they are all white and I can't see why they include David Owen in their interviews with 'experts'.

But having said all that, it's still excellent material and will have a great impact when teachers and YCND take it to schools and colleges.

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.)

- **Exhibition on plastic bullets** at Islington libraries: Central 3-15 Oct; Archway 17-29 Oct; Essex Rd 31 Oct-12 Nov; Manor Gdns 14-26 Nov; Finsbury 28 Nov-10 Dec. Organised by Islington TOM with Islington Council.
- **Marx and Feminism.** A talk by Selma James to commemorate the centenary of Marx's death. Mon 24 Oct, 7.30pm, North London Poly, Room 08, Ladbroke Hse, Highbury Grove N5. Wheelchair accessible. Further details: 01-837 7509.

- **Central America: Nobody's Backyard.** Programme of meetings organised by North London Central America Group, Tuesdays at 7.30pm, Hampden Community Centre, 150 Ossulston St, NW1. £5 for full course or £1 per meeting (£2/50p unwaged). 25 Oct 'Seeds of Revolution' film on Honduras; 1 Nov film 'Nicaragua — a Dangerous Example?'; 8 Nov Central America and the peace movement; 15 Nov Liberation Theology. Option for the poor; 22 Nov 'The First Casualty' & 'Ballots & Bullets'; 29 Nov Viva Centro America! Further info Duncan Green 01-359 3976.
- **Peace on Trial in Turkey.** Meeting in solidarity with Turkish Peace Association. Speakers: Dr Mehmet Ali Dikerdem (Campaign for Defence of TPA), Joy Hurcombe (sec Labour CND), Cahit Baylau (Exec member Bank-sen), Brian Griffith (Chair TU CND). Fri 14 Oct, 7.30pm, Transport Hse, Bristol. Org by Bristol CND TU group.
- **London Peace Day** organised by the GLC, Sat 22 Oct. In Jubilee Gdns

- starting 11am, music from Carol Grimes and the Crocodiles, Breakfast Band, Mainsqueeze, The Guest Stars, Teresa Trull & Barbara Higsbie, High Jinx and Jah Warrior. Plus New Variety from Cast, puppets and beer tent. All events free.
- Peace day concert at 8pm at The Ace, Town Hall Parade, Brixton with Edwin Starr, Geno Washington & the Mo Jo Kings, Super Karla. £4/£2 concession: box office 01-737 2886.
- **West London Labour Committee on Ireland** Inaugural meeting and report from LP Conf. Open to all West Londoners wishing to join. Mon 17 Oct, 7.30pm, Malvern Arms, Bevington Rd, W10 (Ladbroke Grove tube).
- **Nicaraguan community politics in action** Public meeting with two reps from the Sandinista Defence Cttees. Fri 14 Oct, 7pm, Camden Town Hall, Euston Rd. Organised by NSC 01-359 8982.
- **The Caribbean and Central America** Public meeting called by Brent South & East Labour Parties. Speakers: Jeremy Corbyn MP, James

- Dunkerley, Debbie Delange, Jenny Pearce and Billy Taylor. Thur 20 Oct, 7.30pm, Harlesden Methodist Church Hall, Tavistock Road, NW10.
- **CND National Demonstration** London, 22 Oct, 11am, Victoria Embankment. For details of local transport phone CND national office 01-263-0977.
- **Week of Action on Namibia** Thur 27 Oct-Wed 2 Nov. Includes march and rally in London on 29 Oct; Benefit dance 29 Oct Islington Town Hall with The Republic & Supercombo. Details of these & other events from NSC, PO Box 16, London NW5.
- **TUC Women's Action Day** 'A woman's place is in her union', 29 Oct. For details of events contact your union, TUC region or write TUC, Congress Hse, Gt Russell St, London WC1, 01-636 4030.

- **Anti-Privatisation Newsletter** produced by Public Service Action. Fourth issue out now includes material on council house sales, failures by private contractors, and on privatisation of the NHS, British Rail, British Gas etc. 30p each from SCAT Publications, 27 Clerkenwell Close, London EC1, 01-253 3627.
- **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.
- **Labour Movement Conference on Ireland** — Peace through Democracy. Sat 26 Nov. Speakers include Tony Benn, Ken Livingstone, and Clive Soley.



Stockport Messenger strike continues

CONTRARY to a previous SA report, the dispute at the *Stockport Messenger* has not been settled. It has been going on for 13 weeks with six National Graphical Association members still out on official strike. Members of the journalists union did return to work after a court injunction, but when picketing was escalated, 7 of the 18 NUJ members refused to cross picket lines. This will lead to further attacks on the unions under Tebbit's law. On Friday 7 October an NGA full time officer was hauled into the courts for contempt. The NGA had contacted local advertisers to request they boycott the paper, despite a court order banning such action. (John Cutts)

Chloride strike sack threat

STRIKING workers at the Chloride Power Storage Works in Swinton Manchester have been threatened with the sack. Letters sent by management to the 560 workers last Friday said that unless their strike ended and they returned to work on Wednesday this week they would be fired. This is the latest of a series of intimidating letters aimed at ending the dispute. The only result has been to further increase the workers' resolve to win. Twenty-four hour pickets are being stepped up and support has been pledged from the rest of the Chloride group should any workers be sacked. Management's reply to the workers' wage claim was the introduction of a productivity scheme which the unions fear will lead to a new wave of redundancies, a real fear considering over 2000 workers used to be employed at Chloride. The strikers are members of the Transport and General Workers Union. Messages of support and donations to: 6/153 Branch Dispute Fund, c/o R. Butcher, 8 Ethel Ave, Pendlebury, Salford, Lancs. (Tony Pertill)



RED MOLE T-SHIRTS, red on yellow. £2.75 or only £2.15 each for orders of 10 or more (includes post). State size: S/M/L. From The other Printshop, 75 Piccadilly, Manchester 1.

● **Glasgow Labour Campaign for Gay Rights** meeting, Thur 13 Oct, 7.30pm, AUEW Hall, West Regent Street, Glasgow.

● **Southwark CND week of action**, 15-22 Oct. Many events (see above) including rally Tue 18 Oct at North Peckham Civic Centre, Old Kent Rd, 8pm; free films at the Ace cinema, Peckham High St from 6.30pm, Fri 21 Oct; Feeder march for national demo with float & steel band starts 9.30am on Camberwell Green on 22 Oct.

International

A weekend of socialist debate and discussion

FACING 1984: THE SOCIALIST ALTERNATIVE

Saturday 29 October

- **British politics: facing 1984**
Andrew Gamble, Doreen Massey, John Ross, Barry Hindess
- **Rebuilding the Labour Party**
Ken Livingstone, Vladimir Derer, Jude Woodward
- **Democratising the unions**
Kate Holman, speakers from union broad lefts
- **Struggle for black rights**
Jenny Bourne, Unmesh Desai
- **Socialist economic policy and the AES**
John Harrison, Hilary Wainwright

Sunday 30 October

- **Economic strategy for European Labour**
Ernest Mandel, Stuart Holland MP, John Palmer
- **Socialist foreign policy**
Joy Hurcombe, Alan Freeman
- **Women and family policy**
Judith Arkwright, Mica Nava

Other sessions include: *Tariq Ali* on Pakistan; Devolution; Ireland.

● **Rally on Sunday, 3.30pm: Building socialism in the '80s**
Jeremy Corbyn MP, Ernest Mandel, Stephanie Grant

Sat 29 & Sun 30 October
Kingsway Princeton College, Sidmouth street, off Grays Inn Road, London WC1 (Kings Cross tube)

Just £5 for the whole weekend, or £4 if booked in advance. £2.50 for one day only. Send cheques/POs payable to 'International' c/o PO Box 50, London N1 2XP. Creche facilities available by prior request.

Oct. 22

Where will you be?

11 A.M. SATURDAY OCTOBER 22
VICTORIA EMBANKMENT LONDON... BE THERE.

01-263-0977

NO CHURSE - NO TRIDENT - FREEZE THE ARMS RACE - NUCLEAR WEAPONS ARE NO DEFENCE

● **El Salvador Solidarity national raffle:** 1st prize Holiday in Cuba; 2nd prize Video Recorder; 3rd prize Barrel of beer. Tickets £2.50 for book of five from ELSSOC, 29 Islington Park St, London N1. Draw takes place 21 October.

● **Midland anti-racist conference**, Sat 29 Oct, 11-4pm, Digbeth Civic Hall, Birmingham. Organised by Birmingham Campaign Against Racism and Fascism, c/o Trades Council, 191 Corporation St. Speakers include Prem Singh, Avtar Johal, Muhammad Idrish and Clare Short MP.

MAU MAU FREEDOM FIGHTERS DAY

PERFORMING:
LINTON EWEST JOHNSON Dub Ecet
YABAFQUE Chilean Music Group
THE AFRICAN LEAVEN
KENYAN SINGERS

Thursday October 20, 1983
7.00 pm
THE AFRICA CENTRE, 38 King St. WC2
£1. & 50p unwaged

Organised by Committee for the Release of Political Prisoners & Trade Unionists, 27 Clerkenwell Close, London EC1, 01-253 3627

Socialist ACTION

Join the fight for socialism

If you want more information about Socialist Action or to be put in touch with local supporters send this form to Socialist Action, 328 Upper Street, London N1.

Name

Address

..... Tel

Age Union/CLP (if any)

Luton crumbles

VAUXHALL WORKERS at Ellesmere Port's works canteen last week were offered a pudding called 'Luton crumble'. But many of the workers, including a substantial minority at Luton, weren't amused by the results of their short-lived strike.

The company moved but an inch and the union leaderships involved obligingly ran a mile to pick up and deliver the new offer.

The original claim for £25 across the board, plus shorter working hours, longer holidays and upgrading of lower paid workers conveniently melted away as the bosses offered a status-quo on the length of time of the agreement and an additional 0.05 per cent on the original offer.

Why did the Vauxhall workers, who looked strong and set for a lengthy battle, give in at the eleventh hour?

It isn't adequate simply to lay the blame on the union bureaucracy. But without downplaying their abdication of leadership, and in some instances — like Duffy — their downright sabotage, we have to look further afield at some of the other factors influencing the vote.

The total number of workers employed in the motor vehicle manufacturing industry has declined by nearly half in the last four years through redundancies — from 457,500 in June 1979 to 289,300 in June this year.

Throughout this period another massive decline has taken place, this time in the militancy of the rapidly dwindling workforces. Just to take

the example of Vauxhall, in 1979, 27 per cent of working hours were lost through disputes compared to an almost negligible number this year, even taking into account the recent strike.

By Hilary Driver

Recently, manufacturing industry has seen a relative upturn in profits, after a long period where manual workers in the car industry have suffered from a real decline in wages, and from productivity deals resulting in reductions in staffing levels, speed-ups and job losses.

To cap it off, the Tories were re-elected this summer with a pledge to break the power of the unions and prevent 'unrealistic' wage rises.

All this can hardly add up to the creation of an atmosphere of confidence and combativity among car workers.

The Vauxhall strike was a product of the revitalised fortunes of the company, with workers trying to claw back some of their losses of recent years. But the political

tone set by the general election and the gallop to the right of the TUC, combined with the steady erosion of union organisation and militancy, meant that the majority of Vauxhall workers were ready to settle for the 7.75 per cent deal.

For all these reasons the fact and the outcome of the Vauxhall strike cannot be taken as an indicator of likely developments in the coming autumn wages round.

Already Ford workers have put in for a 15 per cent flat rate increase, while at British Leyland they are due only 5 per cent — the second half of their two-year deal. It seems more and more likely that the miners will settle for 5-6 per cent, the NCB having made what they declare to be a 'first and final offer' which in practice means about 3.8 per cent for miners in average earnings.

Fight

For the rest of the public sector, it's possible that the fire fighters will be the first to break through Thatcher's 3 per cent cash limit on pay.

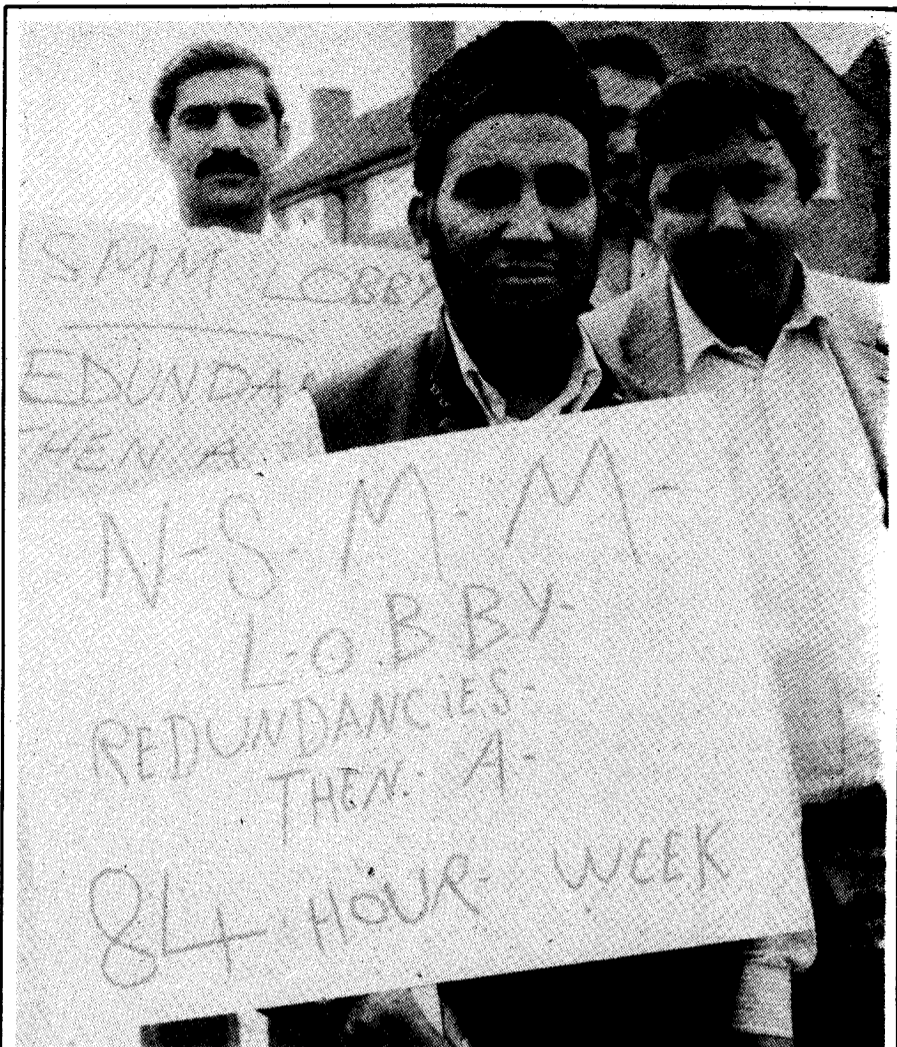
Today there are more issues facing trade unionists than solely the size of their wage packet. Privatisation, cuts, short-time working, redundancies and anti-union legislation are just some that spring to mind.

A fight around pay can no longer be successful in the long term unless combined with a fight to defend services, jobs and the unions. This also involves a political offensive, to confront head on the widely accepted Tory fallacies that it is all for the common good if workers tighten their belts and accept with open arms the principles of the 'free market' economy.

The necessity of a joint trade union-Labour Party campaign for a plan which fights the Tories and puts the cost of the crisis onto the employers and the state should be the aim of both the left in the unions and the Labour Party.

Within such a framework, fights like Vauxhall can be given a political focus. The first step towards realising such joint trade union and Labour Party action must be taken by the left wing of the labour movement organising around such a plan.

Next year's Labour Party and TUC Congresses must see the left on the offensive around such policies instead of retreating before the union leaders who engineered the Vauxhall sell-out.



Asian workers on a mass picket of the GM Plastics factory in Redditch near Birmingham. The mass picket was called to protest against the sackings of nine workers whose only crime was to join a trade union — the National Society of Motor Mechanics. Donations and messages of support to J. Langford, Sandwell District Secretary NSMM, 70 Lionel Street, Birmingham B3 1JG.



Marylebone workers picket Thatcher last May

Save Marylebone!

THE SAVE Marylebone Campaign lobbied the Special General Meeting of the National Union of Railwaymen last week.

We lobbied for support to stop the closure of Marylebone station and collected signatures endorsing the aims of the campaign.

The signatures included a number of leading trade unionists, such as Jimmy Knapp, general secretary of the NUR, Ray Buckton, general secretary of the train drivers' union ASLEF, and Mick McGahey, president of the Scottish National Union of Miners.

The Save Marylebone Campaign is a joint rail union initiative at local level. The campaign co-ordinating committee is calling on the newly formed Federation of Railway Unions to spearhead a national campaign against cuts and closures.

We want to be part of that national fight, while receiving full backing

from the Federation for all the initiatives we take to save jobs at Marylebone.

The campaign was launched at a public meeting held this July and organised by NUR and ASLEF branches in the Marylebone area.

Since then we have started a campaign bulletin, held a workplace meeting, and a Save Marylebone Campaign meeting.

By an NUR member

This was attended by delegates from a number of depots — British Rail and London Transport — the Post Office Engineering Union, Labour councillors and a passenger from the Standard Commuter Club. The meeting showed strong support for the campaign, backed by concrete proposals for action.

However the going still then was not always easy. The co-ordinating committee had already argued long and hard against planning application for housing on the

Marylebone site.

This proposal came from the local tenants' and residents' federation, and had the support of some Labour councillors.

We explained that for us, the fight for jobs, services and housing is all one. The labour movement must be united in its opposition to Tory attacks. If public transport is threatened, then we defend it wholeheartedly.

We cannot defend Marylebone, while at the same time suggesting an alternative use for the site. The unions and Labour councillors must stand firm together on this and every other question where the Tories attempt to divide and rule.

The Campaign has now won the support of the tenants' and residents' federation and has received a generous donation from them. The federation and Labour councillors are helping set up a campaign among local residents, to put the case for railway services and jobs in the area.

The fight for

Marylebone is one of many to come. Railworkers at nearby Willesden have started a campaign to stop the closures of the freightliner depot, and delegates from Marylebone and Willesden attend each other's meetings.

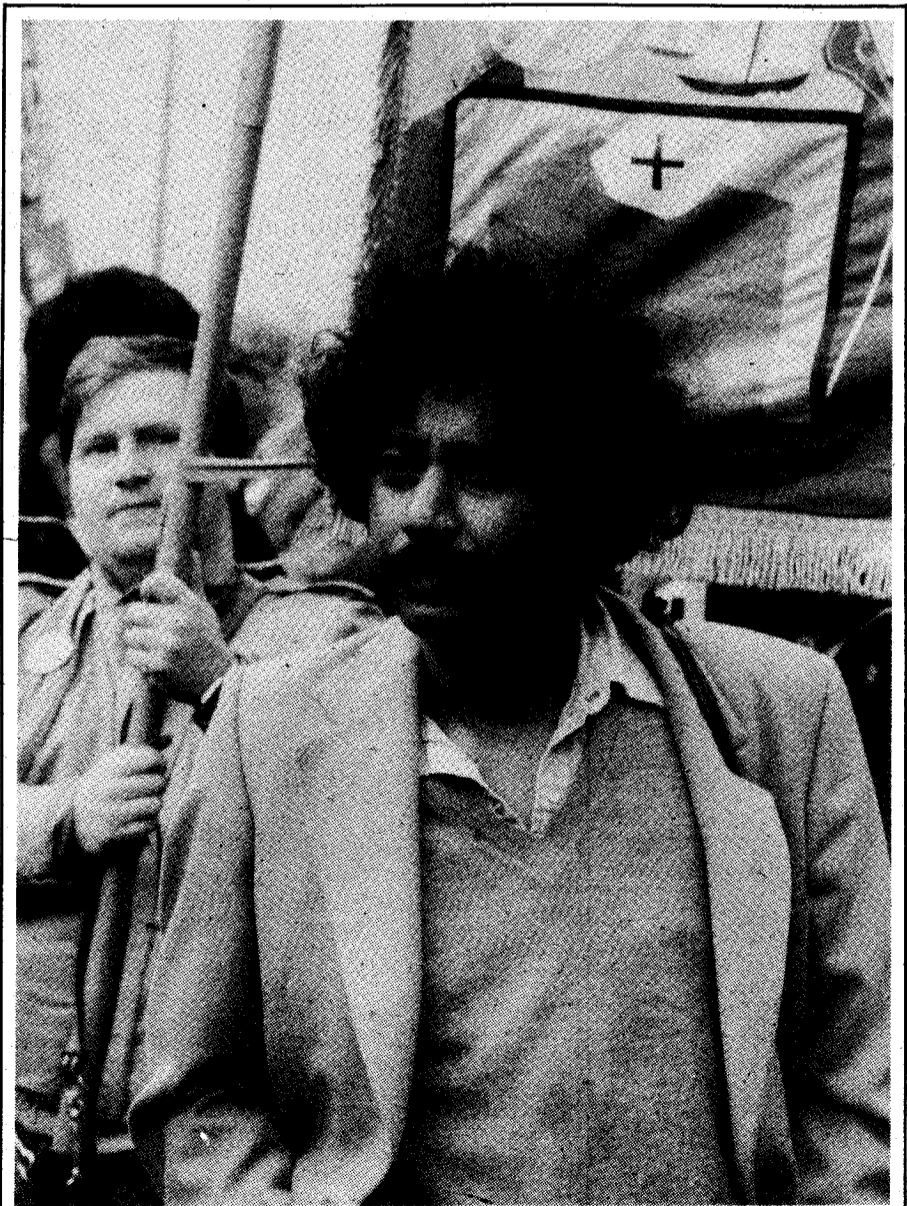
The Marylebone co-ordinating committee includes a delegate from Paddington NUR. They will be our closest allies if there is any sign of working our trains into Paddington station.

This is the level of solidarity we want — joint action between railworkers against Tory attempts to smash the railways.

We will not be lulled by the 'five year plan' which is Serpell Part 1, not the whole story.

We will not be deceived by the tactic of carefully timed leaks to the press, to test the response — followed by a refusal to confirm the 'rumour'.

We are preparing for a long hard battle, and we are ready to join forces with all other workers fighting to defend jobs and public services.



Muhammad Idrish on a demonstration in Birmingham protesting against his threatened deportation. The demonstration, backed by Muhammad's union the National and Local Government Officers Association, achieved magnificent support with 2000 people attending.

Photo: JOHN HARRIS

Photo: JOHN HARRIS

Photo: GM COOKSON

A SOCIALIST ACTION

TELECOM ENGINEERS FIGHT MASS LOCKOUT

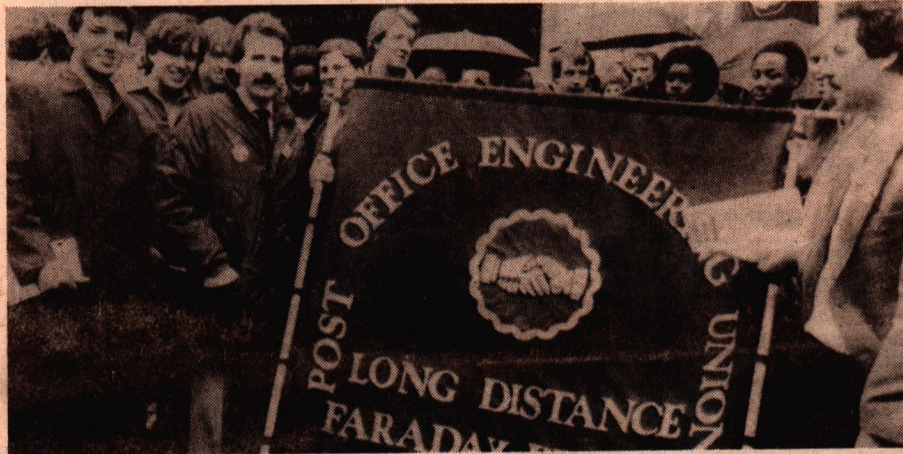


Photo: NEWSLINE

THE TORY government is orchestrating a systematic attack on the Post Office Engineering Union membership in British Telecoms. The union is counter-attacking through its campaign against privatisation of the industry and the planned private business telecommunications network Project Mercury.

Last Monday 2500 workers in the London region were locked out, including 400 from the London North Central Internal (LNCI) branch and 1400 from the International exchanges.

The lock-out came after management responded to a union work to rule in the international exchanges by carrying out a take-over on Saturday night and physically ejecting the workers.

The stepping up of hostilities started on Wednesday 5 October. Project Mercury manage-

ment issued a writ against the union under Tebbit's 1982 Employment Act to stop action against Mercury and its financial underwriters Barclay's Bank, BP and Cable and Wireless. The action could result in the union being fined up to £250,000.

By a POEU member

BT management's action against workers in the international exchanges came after the work to rule had led to 50 per cent of in-

ternational circuits being out of service. At one site police were also involved in the operation.

Supervisors were dragged from their beds to carry out POEUs members' work on pain of dismissal. Management will now be trying to force the locked-out members to give undertakings of 'normal working'.

The Broad-Left led union is determined to stand firm in the face of this attack. Union members locked-out have been promised full union support including their wages being paid.

Given these management tactics little store can be put by the promises (!) of industry minister Cecil Parkinson of job security and indexed pensions for the present BT staff.

We'll be there on 22 October

IN LESS than three weeks from now demonstrations will take place all over Europe in opposition to NATO's plans to site cruise, Pershing and Trident missiles in Britain, Italy, West Germany and Holland.

It now seems clear that the Americans are unwilling to make any real concessions in their planned escalation of nuclear weapons through the Geneva talks. The only voices that will be raised in protest will be those in the streets.

This means that building support in Britain for the 22 October demonstration must unite every socialist, trade unionist, Labour Party member and peace activist in the next few weeks.

Despite a massive media campaign against the peace movement in Britain the Labour Party conference last week re-affirmed the case for unilateralism.

Ron Todd for the Transport and General Workers Union was explicit in his summing up. 'There is no winner in a nuclear war. We have to get rid of Polaris, refuse to have cruise and Trident and get rid of all nuclear bases in the lifetime of the next Parliament'.

When James Callaghan mounted the rostrum to defend himself against Gavin Strang, who had criticised him for his defence of Polaris and other nuclear weapons in the general election, a wave of anger swept through the conference floor.

Both Duffy and Callaghan had a hard time getting the attention of the conference for their multilateralist views and their resolution 396 was heavily defeated. The vote for unilateralism actually increased.

But the NEC allowed Denis Healey to introduce the debate and both he and Alex Kitson stuck to the views expressed in the NEC statement that Polaris must be put into the disarmament talks and that a non-nuclear defence policy had to be Labour's campaigning theme.

By Valerie Coultas

This was a clear fudge and a continuation of the ambiguities of Labour's disastrous disarmament policy in the general election.

Neil Kinnock wasn't able to persuade the T&G to remit but we have to start organising now to defend unilateralism at next year's conference. Denis Healey has already announced his intention of getting the trade union conference to reverse this year's decision.

The best start for such a campaign is to build for the 22 October in the trade unions and the CLP's and to ensure that labour movement banners are present.

The European elections will provide another forum to put the case for unilateralism and a nuclear-free Europe.

But elections and demonstrations are not the



only forum available.

On 5 October one and a half million trade unionists answered the call from the West German trade union federation for a five minute warning strike and walked out of their factories to protest against their government's support for NATO's plans.

CND should be answering the Tory government with a similar strategy. Shell shocked by the general election defeat the CND leaders are trying to switch CND to a 'freeze' campaign to line up with the 'new consensus' they say has been established.

This is a political concession to the Tories and

the right wing's lateralism because gestures that what government does the missiles is dependent on negotiations with governments. This tracking on CND and unilateralist strategy combined with a referendum have a bold campaign the trade unions to arguments for job bombs.

Trade union Labour Party members and CND activists have power now to the Tories if we choose it.

Bring your banner 22 October, show what you think about plans for your nuclear annihilation.

Other unions are being asked to back our stand. Telecoms unions abroad are being asked to boycott the exchanges concerned. Forty per cent of BT's profits last year came from international business.

The government has decided on a showdown because of the effectiveness of the POEU campaign. But the leadership of the union is no longer the passive transmission belt for management decisions that it used to be and the powerful Central London branches are fighting all the way. Action against Mercury and against privatisation will be maintained.

Debate

At the same time a debate is opening up in the union about how to bring both campaigns to a successful conclusion. Central to this is the restoration of the weekly levy of the whole union membership to back the action to meet the costs of the present action. A national overtime ban must now be on the agenda too.

Jock Campbell of the London City branch says, 'It is essential that the whole of the trade union movement is involved in this struggle and supports it in every possible way.'

To this end the London POEU branches, with official support, are organising a conference of all public sector unions under threat of privatisation to begin coordinating that fight back in the absence of any lead from the TUC.



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