

A Socialist ACTION

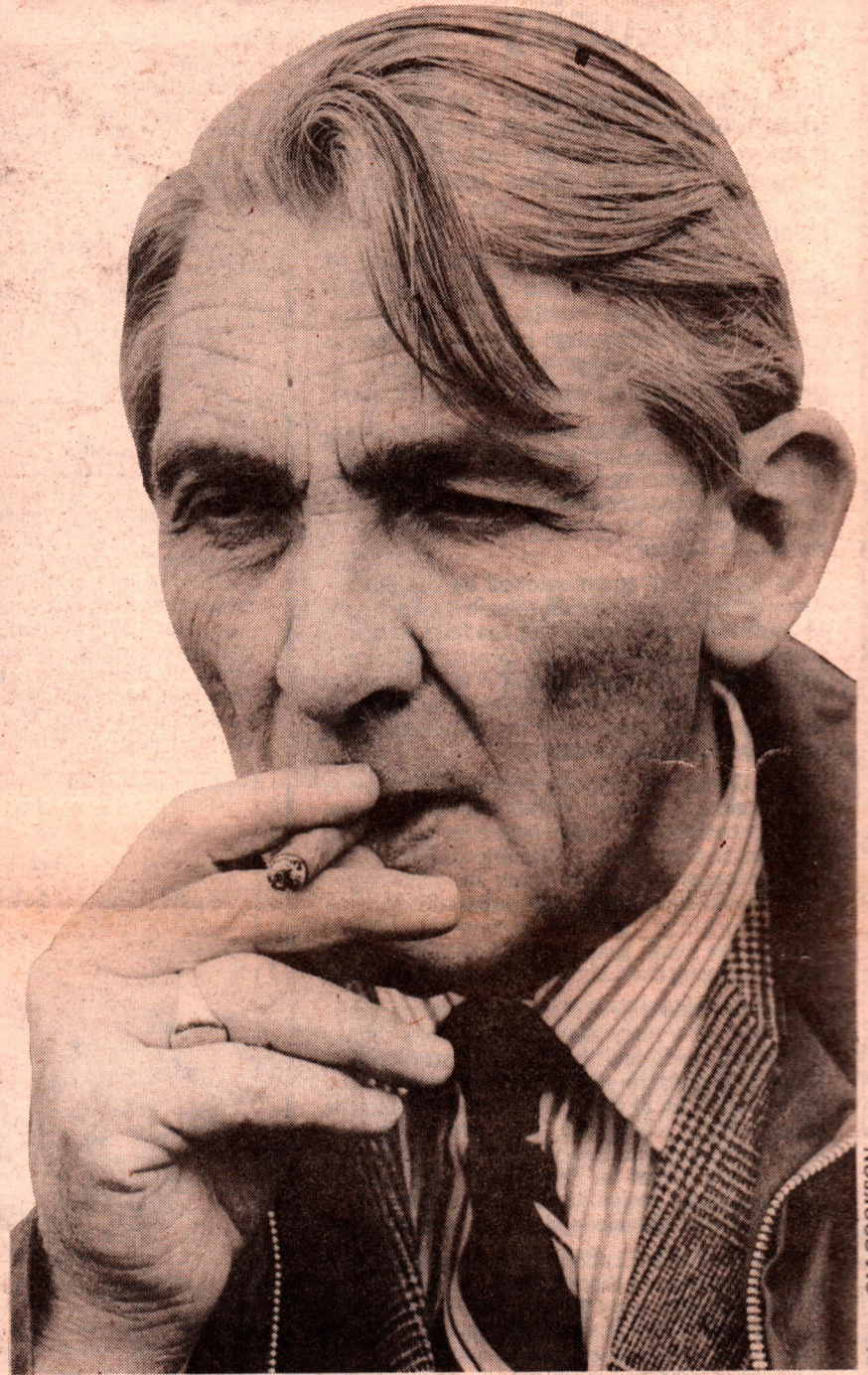
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This is the last issue of Socialist Action before Xmas. Next issue 6 January



NGA BETRAYED!

BLACK MONDAY. That is how 12 December is going to be remembered in the history of the trade union movement.

The general secretary of the TUC — Murray the scab — has openly sabotaged the decision of the TUC employment committee. Alastair Graham, Alan Tuffin, Len Murray and the right wing of the TUC General Council appeared on television every five minutes to denounce the NGA strike. Less than twelve hours later the NGA National Council called off Wednesday's 24 hour printing strike.

The result is the greatest

defeat of the trade union movement for fifty years. There should be no illusions on that.

The Stockport Messenger was no ordinary struggle. It had become the spearhead of Thatcher's attempt to ram through the greatest anti-trade union laws since the 1920s. Eddie Shah is just the first of a series of employers queuing up to smash the print unions.

The trade union movement is now faced with a daily barrage of writs and fines which have shown that the Tebbit laws give the courts virtually unlimited powers to prevent industrial action.

The laws giving the trade unions immunities for industrial action are in practice simply becoming a dead letter. By remaining within the law the TUC is incapable of even defending the existence of trade unionism.

Just take the High Court decision on the NUJ and TBF printers. A publisher and printer under the same roof, with the same managing director, are declared to be legally separate and any common action between their workers to be illegal.

In Robert Maxwell's BPPC printers have been ordered not to

take solidarity action with each other even although they are printing the same magazine. No common action of the working class movement is possible under these circumstances.

Yet these are the laws which Murray and the TUC say must be carried out. They have been put into practice by chopping down the NGA.

The reality is clear. If the line of the TUC majority is put into practice different sections of the trade unions are going to be defeated one by one. A TUC General Council on this line is becoming one for the disorganisa-

tion and defeat of the trade union movement.

That vote at the TUC employment committee should be marked well. Every single person who voted not to support the NGA is a saboteur of the trade union movement. They must go. The trade unions have to be defended at every level from the rank and file to the TUC General Council.

The fightback has to start now. It is not a sectarian fight to divide the movement. It is a fight for its existence.

● After the NGA sell out — see page 3.

Photo: JOHN HARRIS

Photo: GM COOKSON

Socialist ACTION

NGA: Labour's missed opportunity

THE NGA's struggle with Tebbit's anti-trade union laws obviously deserved the support of every trade unionist and Labour supporter. For the Labour leadership, it was an important test — one which they failed abysmally.

Not only has it been an opportunity to strike a body blow at the Tories and support workers' basic rights, but also an excellent opportunity for Labour to regain lost ground amongst trade unionists in general, and skilled workers in particular.

Even from the point of view of Labour's electoral support, the failure of Kinnock and Hattersley to champion the NGA is self-defeating. And this is from a leadership which is supposed to be 'realistic' in winning back better paid workers to Labour.

A special poll commissioned by the *Sunday Times* after the mass picket revealed 44 per cent of trade unionists supporting the NGA and only 34 per cent supporting Shah. Given that the poll was taken in the aftermath of a furious media slander campaign about 'picket-line violence', the 44 per cent support for the NGA is surprisingly high in a passive poll.

Nevertheless, Kinnock confined himself to condemning Tory laws, rather than giving open support to the NGA, while Hattersley insisted on the need to obey the law. With the support of the Labour leadership, trade union support for the NGA would have increased substantially, and the opportunity taken to strengthen Labour Party-trade union links. Kinnock and Hattersley are sabotaging the Labour Party not building it.

The ultimate defeat of the NGA, which is certain, will be a body blow at the whole labour movement, including the Labour Party itself. If Kinnock and Hattersley think that the weakening and division of the trade unions will aid the Labour Party electorally, they are living in a make-believe world. Every victory for the Tebbit laws, every defeat for the unions, strengthens and boosts the Tories. It will have a sure repercussion in the European elections and beyond.

And what about Labour Party support among the NGA members themselves? Labour lost out in both the 1979 and 1983 elections among skilled workers — for example in the print trade, where half a million workers are employed, 56 per cent of NGA members opt out of paying the political levy to the Labour Party. The union in general casts its vote for the right wing at the TUC and Labour Party conference.

Here was an ideal opportunity to show the majority of NGA members who don't even pay the political levy which party stood by them, which party represented their interests. But no, the new 'dynamic' Labour leadership lost another opportunity to extend the party's support and stood passively by.

The NGA however is only part of a pattern. Roy Hattersley is showing a sure instinct for not winning support among higher paid skilled workers by insisting on the need for incomes policy under the next Labour government.

At the last election Labour won only 39 per cent of trade unionists' votes. While public sector and lower paid workers voted over 40 per cent for Labour, the vote of skilled workers was down below 30 per cent for the Labour Party.

Labour can only win back trade unionists' support by showing in practice that it will not introduce incomes policy and by fighting for trade union rights. As Kinnock and Hattersley have evidently learned nothing from the past they are doomed to repeat the old mistakes.

Editor: ALAN FREEMAN
Published weekly except two weeks in August and the last week of December.
Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent Socialist Action's views. These are expressed in editorials.

NGA retreats

THE ROAD to disaster started when the NGA National Council ended the mass picket at Warrington and called only a one day national strike.

A one day national NGA strike was never going to win the dispute with Shah. Nor were a series of one day strikes.

The NGA was up against the entire ruling class. Not just against a small newspaper owner in a north country town.

One day actions by themselves were seen as threatening another large chunk of the NGA's £10 million funds without the possibility of winning. The Newspaper Publishers Association, the Newspaper Society and the Federation of Master Printers were given the green light to bleed the NGA dry. That is just what they threatened to do.

By Bob Smith (Birmingham NGA)

A one day strike also gave an ideal opening for the TUC right wing to sabotage the action.

Joe Wade rightly said in his statement on Saturday that 'We recognise and accept that we cannot win this dispute on our own, but we have now got to demonstrate to the rest of the trade union move-

ment that we are prepared to take this kind of action'.

But the TUC, and more importantly the rank and file of the trade union movement, was only going to be drawn into fully backing the NGA if the union took the kind of action that could actually win.

Elements of the TUC leadership like Terry Duffy and Len Murray were never going to get to grips with a principled dispute over six workers. They sell out thousands every day.

An indefinite all out stoppage by the NGA members employed by the Newspaper Publishers Association, the Newspaper Society and the Federation of Master Printers was the only way to win.

It was the only way to campaign to get the POEU to cut off Shah's com-



Photo: MORNING STAR

United action could have won the dispute

munications. The only way to fight to get gas, electricity and water workers to cut off Shah's supplies. The only way to get mass pickets organised at the stores that advertise in Shah's papers.

Only an all out strike could have pulled in all the unions that supported the NGA at the TUC on Monday. Only an all out strike

could have won over the rank and file of the other unions.

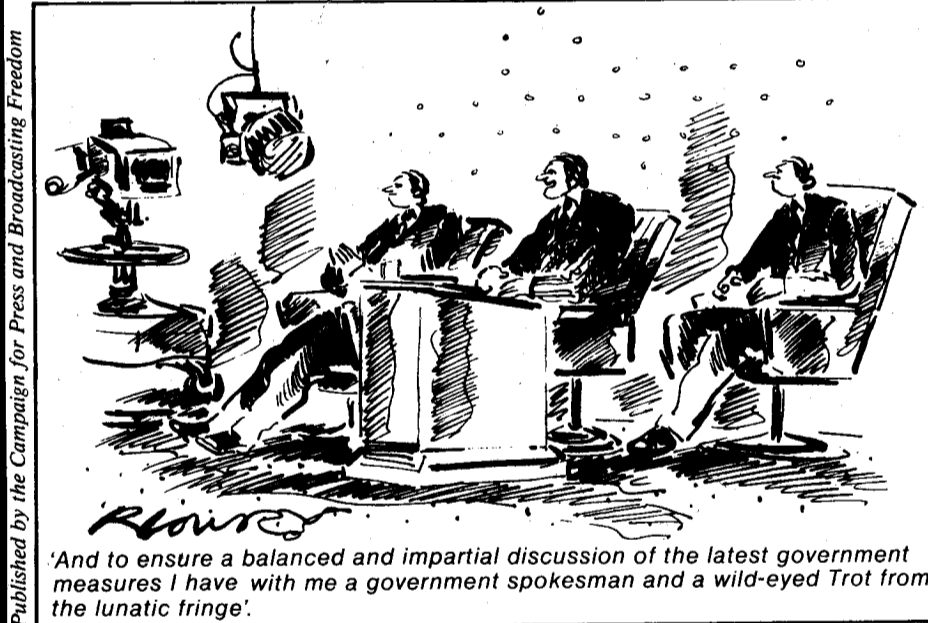
The National Council in not calling an all out strike thought it was stepping away from total confrontation. But the courts confronted the NGA anyway.

Next time the lessons have got to be learned. The offensive against the print

unions is going to go on. We are going to have to meet it with an all out strike sooner or later.

And that strike is not going to be legal. But without it the union will be crushed.

That's the lesson that's got to be drawn from the dreadful events of Monday and Tuesday.



Published by the Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom

'And to ensure a balanced and impartial discussion of the latest government measures I have with me a government spokesman and a wild-eyed Trot from the lunatic fringe'.

Unions under the hammer

TWO court decision handed down last week are even more stunning in their legal implications for the trade union movement than the Stockport Messenger dispute.

The NUJ for five years has had an official dispute with the firm of T Bailey Foreman in Nottingham. This followed the sack of 28 NUJ members and their replacement with non-union journalists.

T Bailey Foreman has the same premises, address, telephone number and managing director as the firm of TBF Printers. It is a purely legal separation which exists in dozens of printer/publishers.

But the High Court — under Sir John Donaldson — has ruled that T Bailey

Foreman and TBF Printers are 'separate legal entities'. Therefore any action the NUJ takes against TBF Printers in pursuing its dispute with T Bailey Foreman is illegal.

The legal implications of this are simply staggering. For legal, tax and accounting reasons innumerable companies divide themselves up into many legally separate firms. Others frequently change their legal status.

Under the new court ruling even workers in the same factory and office can be acting illegally if they strike together. For they will be acting against different 'separate legal entities'.

The same situation is created by the well publicised court decision against SOGAT 82. The union has been ordered to stop the action being taken by its members in three

British Printing and Communication Corporation plants. This was taken in solidarity with SOGAT members at another plant in the same company. The action was ruled illegal despite the fact that all the union members were printing the same magazine — the *Radio Times*.

The ruling against SOGAT makes solidarity action even within the same company illegal.

The aim of these court decisions is clear. Thatcher has often expressed her admiration for the Japanese 'company union' system where a union is not allowed to organise outside its own firm. With solidarity both impractical and illegal the Japanese employers rule the roost unhindered.

Donaldson and the court are taking their orders from on high.

The publishers and the courts

THE NEWSPAPER Publishers Association and the Newspaper Society announced on Monday that they were taking out court writs against the NGA 'with sorrow'. That they had been 'forced into it'.

These statements are hypocritical lies. The print employers were already preparing to try to smash the NGA long before the dispute with Eddie Shah.

Preparations for busting the NGA in the local newspaper industry started immediately following the 1980 printing strike. Then the NGA called its members on provincial and local newspapers out on strike for two weeks. Only around 80 of the 1100 local newspapers were able to print.

Since then the Newspaper Society — which employs around 11,000 NGA members — has been running 'Project Breakthrough'. This consists of employers installing and training staff for the new direct-input computer technology.

The Wolverhampton Express and Star and Portsmouth and Sunderland Newspapers are among the local newspaper groups which are believed to be actively considering locking out their NGA members and solidarity

going ahead with introducing the new technology.

The Newspaper Society now claims that the number of local papers which would be able to print during an NGA strike would be 'substantial'. John Barrons, general manager of Westminster Press — which publishes 10 dailies, 40 weeklies, and 30 weekly free newspapers — boasted, 'On the basis of past performance we would expect to publish quite a number of newspapers. I think it is generally accepted there should be a major effort to do so.' More than 150 local newspapers were announced on Monday to be preparing to go to press despite the NGA strike call.

The other weapon being used is simply to copy Shah and smash the NGA through a whole series of court writs. As Norman Walker, the head of industrial relations of the Newspaper Society put it, 'Several of our members would clearly consider going to the courts in the event of industrial action.'

The Newspaper Society on Monday decided to 'encourage' 262 newspaper members to take out writs against the NGA. They were and are determined to destroy the union. The retreat from a national strike, the TUC's sabotage of the NGA, now threatens every union in the printing industry.

After the sell out

WHEN NEIL Kinnock and Roy Hattersley were elected leader and deputy leader of the Labour Party it was called the 'dream ticket'. It has taken only three months for the dream to become a nightmare.

The NGA dispute is simple to understand. It is over the basic right of a trade union to exist — the very issue on which the Labour Party was created in the first place. Yet Neil Kinnock, Roy Hattersley, Len Murray and the entire right wing leadership of the labour movement have actively sabotaged this elementary struggle.

It is true the NGA made a disastrous error in calling off the mass picket. Moreover it was a tactic doomed from the start, to go for a one day strike in a situation where only an all out indefinite stoppage could win.

But that is not where the main responsibility for the defeat lies. The root of the disaster lies in the actions of Murray, Duffy, Basnett and the right wing of the TUC General Council. It was the same with the ASLEF dispute and the healthworkers. Everything the TUC leadership touches turns to dross.

The last few weeks should have dispelled any illusion that the trade union movement can live with the Tebbit laws. The ruling class and the Tory government know full well that to make British capitalism profitable again trade union power must be crushed. They are going for the kill.

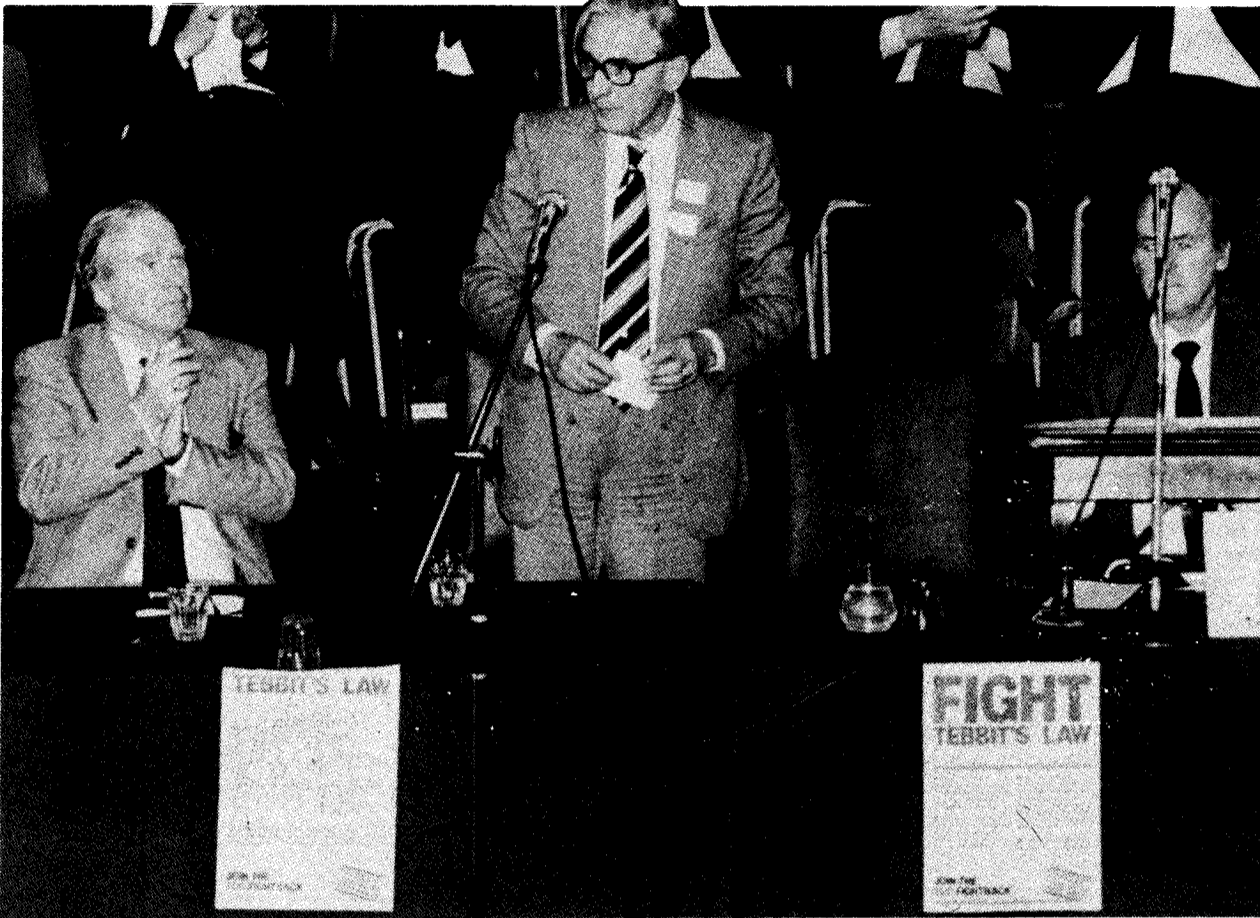
Yes, the NGA leadership feared being totally crushed. But the NGA will be crushed if there is not a fight. It will be a crushing defeat for one of the oldest and most powerful trade unions in Britain.

And if the NGA can be defeated, imagine what the ruling class has in store for the NUPE's, the NALGO's, the white collar public service unions.

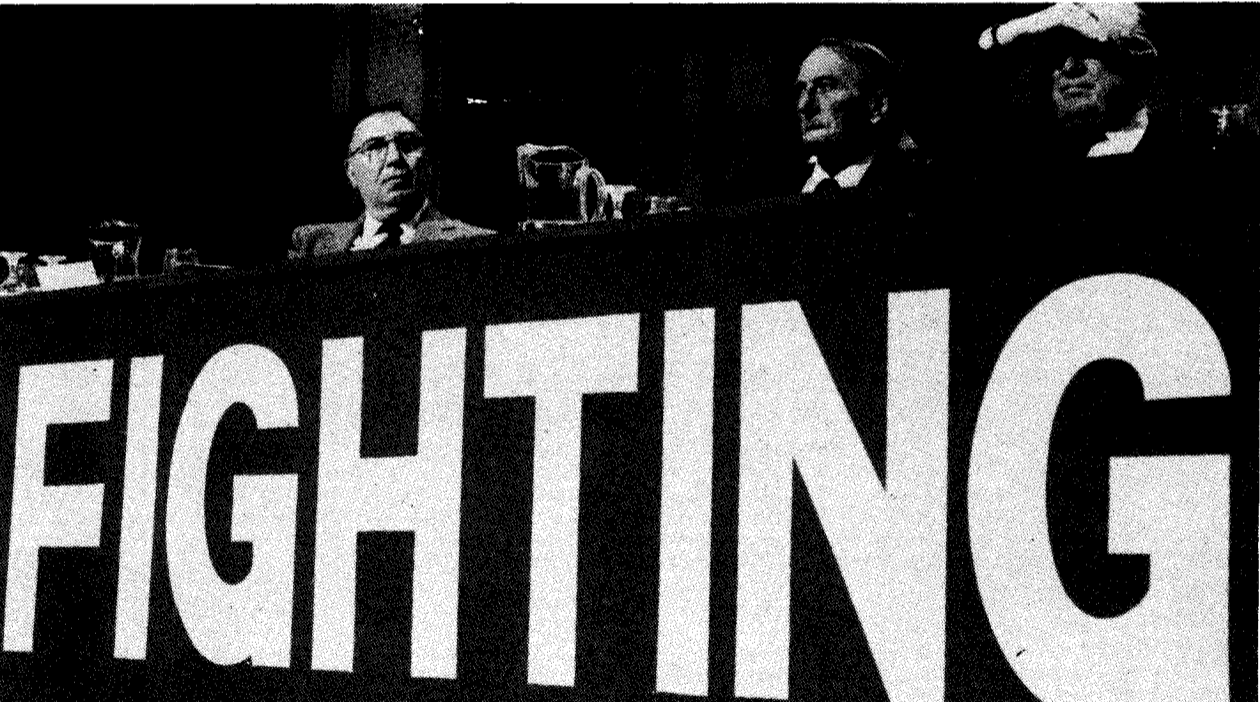
Don't imagine their right wing policies are going to save them. The NGA voted straight down the line with the right wing in the Labour Party. It supported Hattersley and the right wing trade union slate for the NEC. It voted for the very people who have now stabbed it in the back.

And there is no way it is going to stop there. The next target in private industry is already spelt out by the government. It is demolishing the closed shop.

Trade union membership has already fallen by 2½ million in five years. If defeat follows defeat, as unemployment takes its toll, the trade unions are going to take a continual pounding. The clear aim of the British capitalist class is to reduce the trade union down to only five or six million members — only half their strength of ten years ago.



Someone who isn't going to fight Tebbit's laws



You must be joking

Maybe the trade union leaders will be able to hide in their plush offices, but the working class has nowhere to hide. Unless a fightback begins the future is grim for working people. And it will be the Labour Party as well, together with the unions, which goes down to defeat.

What makes these policies even more criminal is that the working class movement and its supporters are not demobilised. The demonstrations against the bomb are the largest mass demonstrations for 50 years. At Fords a majority of the plants might have voted for the last wage settlement but a clear majority of the workers voted for a strike. If a lead was coming out of the TUC and the unions the NGA could have won.

But the problem is that this type of lead is not coming.

The right wing is vigorous and active. Murray, Graham, Tuffin

and Duffy kept up a constant barrage on the television attacking the NGA action. Moss Evans, Scargill and Ken Cameron were nowhere to be seen. There was no call from them for massive support for the NGA. They have not even demanded the removal of Len Murray — the first TUC general secretary in history to openly defy the decisions of TUC committees. A man whose politics make previous TUC general secretaries look like raving Bolsheviks.

It's true that the fightback must start on the shop floor. Rebuilding the shop stewards committee strength and building up combine committees is vital. But it will not in itself be enough. As long as the right wing leadership holds the top positions in the union movement it is going to be able to sabotage every action that comes from below. Trade union left leaders who are not rooted in

organisations built on the rank and file are going to find themselves helpless against the type of sabotage the TUC general council is now capable of.

What is needed is a new and powerful Minority Movement which will challenge the right wing at every level in the labour movement. The Broad Lefts in the unions must be built and extended. Kinnock and Hattersley's line has to be challenged in the Labour Party. Because the right wing is openly sabotaging the movement. It is not merely incapable of winning advance for working people. It is utterly incapable of defending the most basic rights of the labour movement itself.

This fightback is going to be a long and arduous struggle. There are going to be no quick and easy solutions. But without it enormous defeats are staring us in the face.

How they voted:

Votes at the TUC Employment Committee:

For the NGA:
Moss Evans (TGWU)
Walter Greendale (TGWU)
Ken Gill (TASS)
Alan Sapper (ACTT)
John Morton (Musicians)
Clive Jenkins (ASTMS)
Muriel Turner (ASTMS)
Joe Wade (NGA)
Lil Stevens (NUPE)

Against the NGA:
Ken Baker (GMBATU)
Pat Turner (GMBATU)
Tony Christopher (IRSF)
Ada Maddocks (NALGO)
Roy Grantham (APEX)
Eric Hammond (EEPTU)
Gerry Russell (AUEW)

Solidarity — the way to win

BEFORE the NGA leadership's climbdown, solidarity action was building up countrywide. We publish a selection of accounts sent to *Socialist Action* to show what the TUC and NGA could have built on.

SOGAT

The print union SOGAT '82 issued blacking instructions to its members for the day of the 14 December NGA strike call. SOGAT '82 circulars told members in provincial newspapers:

- not to cross NGA picket lines
- to refuse to handle copy or printing plates prepared by non-NGA members.

These moves would have sabotaged many of the attempts by local newspaper owners to break the NGA strike

East London

HACKNEY North and Hackney Central Labour Parties invited the secretary of the London region of the NGA to be guest speaker at a public meeting against privatisation of British Telecom.

On 8 December Leyton Labour Party held a public meeting on the theme 'defend the NGA, defend the unions', and a similar meeting was organised by Newham North West CLP.

Constituency trade union liaison officers mobilised a delegation from Fords, railworkers and transport union members to join the mass Warrington picket.

The coordinating committee of trade union liaison officers for East London CLP's had plans for four more meetings, for NGA speakers to tour workplaces and union meetings and for delegations to attend future pickets.

Birmingham

THE NGA branch, the Trades Council and the Unemployed Workers Association organised coaches for the Warrington picket and demonstration.

10,000 copies of a special broadsheet were published by the trade union resource centre. Solidarity meetings were held every Monday at 5.30 in the trade union resource centre.

Social events featuring Reggae, folk and rock were organised for after Xmas and a special fund established to pay the fines of those arrested on the pickets.

Photo: JOHN HARRIS

Photo: JOHN HARRIS

IRELAND UNFREE

People's Democracy in conference

JAMES CONNOLLY was the great thinker of the Irish working class. It was he who put pen to paper and proved in an Irish context what Lenin was saying in Russia about the connection between the struggle for national independence and socialism.

He organised and armed trade unionists into the Irish Citizen's Army, and in alliance with the Irish Republican Brotherhood launched the insurrection which has gone down in history as the Easter Rising. The strengths of Connolly's tradition has informed subsequent generations of Irish freedom fighters.

But his greatest failing was an uncertainty about what instrument could fight for and lead the process of revolutionary change — the need to create a revolutionary party of Irish workers.

Seventy years later, Ireland is partitioned. One half is under military occupation by the British. The other is mortgaged to the hilt to the imperialist powers. Revolutionaries are therefore still working on the same problem.

The recent conference of People's Democracy, the organisation born out of the civil rights struggles of the late 60's, now the Irish section of the Trotskyist Fourth International is no exception.

Crises of dramatic proportions loom in the Southern workers' organisations whilst the left advance inside the republican movement is continuing. The need to fuse these developments into a force that can sweep away British occupation and the legacy of imperialism whilst creating a democratic socialist republic in a united Ireland is a pressing task.

Some delegates were in favour of abandoning the fight to build an independent working class party and wanted to join Sinn Fein, but the overwhelming majority opted for a strengthening of revolutionary marxist influence as the best way of aiding the progressive evolution of the left.

It has already been proved that quite small organisations like PD can have a dramatic effect on the struggle. It was PD that pushed for the H-block campaign to adopt a united front approach and pioneered the standing of anti-imperialist candidates in elections to broaden the struggle. It was the two PD councillors McNulty and O'Hare who thrashed Gerry Fitt and Paddy Devlin at the polls, making clear to all the value of this tactic.

On international questions and women's oppression, PD has campaigned for a number of years to good effect. The next period will however be the most testing. It must now combine the struggle for unity in action with all forces willing to struggle and point the direction of that struggle towards the creation of a mass party that is both anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist. PD rejected arguments to centre its efforts to build a 'national liberation front'.

It resolved to continue to discuss and work toward the building of a genuine anti-imperialist workers party that can lead all sectors of the oppressed. That means working with both the left in Sinn Fein and workers who reject the pro-capitalist policies of their existing parties. At the two day conference conducted in a highly democratic fashion — where all currents of opinion had the right to organise in tendencies and factions — other discussions involved rooting PD more clearly in the workers movement, stepping up their organisation amongst the youth, and elaborating next steps in fighting for women's liberation after the Anti-Abortion Amendment.

For a small organisation with a big job to do, we send PD our best wishes for success in the year ahead.

Lebanon

War without end



Israeli battle tank in Beirut

SINCE the 1975-6 civil war, Lebanon has been in an unending spiral of violence, which has claimed tens of thousands of victims and devastated the capital Beirut. Lebanon's unhappy fate has derived from its position as the northern neighbour of Israel. The various powers fighting to dominate the Middle East, and in particular the United States and Israel, have attempted to use the strife between the religious communities in Lebanon to divide and rule.

While Israel has repeatedly intervened to protect its northern border and to try to impose a 'friendly' government, Syria has forged a constantly changing system of alliances to ensure its position as the dominant power in the country.

Today Israel and the United States are fighting to control the south of the country and to impose the authority of the right wing Gemayel government on the north and central zones. To do that, they need to throw out the Syrian army and defeat the forces in alliance with Syria — the Druze Muslims and the Shi'ite fundamentalists, Amal.

By Phil Hearse

To begin to make sense of the myriad factions and their objectives, it is necessary to know an outline of the confessional structure of the state. The Maronite Christian community has been at loggerheads with the Muslim communities since the Middle Ages. But in the 19th Century under the protection of the French occupiers the Maronites became the privileged rulers. In 1943 a National Pact was signed which distributed the governmental posts between the different religious communities. While groups like the Sunni Muslim

bankers and traders were given a share of power, the Maronite Christian bourgeoisie retained its position as the ruling group.

The post-war history of the Lebanon has been the history of the break down of the National Pact. The rise of Arab nationalism in the region fuelled the revolt of the Muslim poor, particularly those from the most numerous religious group, the Shi'ites.

The internal strife in Lebanon, in which the revolt of the oppressed took the form of a conflict between religious communities, was further complicated by the arrival in the late 1960s and early 1970s of the large Palestinian community. The Palestinian fighters became the natural allies of the nationalist and left wing Muslim forces, and the enemies of the Maronite Christian rulers.

The Lebanese left alliance came close to defeating the Maronites in the civil war, but their victory was prevented by the intervention of the 'Arab peace

keeping force' — the Syrian army. Syria's president Assad opposed the formation of a left-nationalist state in Lebanon. While his soldiers remained the dominant force in the country, the Palestinian guerrillas maintained considerable freedom of movement and organisation.

The 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon aimed to destroy the PLO as a political factor in Middle East politics. So long as the PLO maintained a powerful army, the overwhelming majority of Palestinians in the territories occupied by Israel looked to the PLO as their political leadership. Moreover, the PLO had been recognised as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people by governments all over the world. But without its armed forces, the diplomatic and political weight of the PLO would be crushed.

Plebian

To ensure the defeat of the Palestinians and their expulsion from Lebanon, Israel tried to ensure the creation of a strong Lebanese state under the dominance of the Christian Phalange — the party established by Pierre Gemayel in 1936, modelled on the fascists.

The Israelis installed Pierre Gemayel's son Bashir as president. But Bashir was not primarily a representative of the wealthy Christian traders and bankers, but the leader of the 'Lebanese Forces' — the ruthless Phalangist gunmen responsible for thousands of atrocities against the Muslim and Palestinian communities. Bashir, a firm ally of Israel, had his base in the plebian Maronite youth.

Bashir's assassination, probably by the Syrians, changed the situation. The new president, his brother Amin, is much closer to the richer circles of the Maronite bourgeoisie. Instead of his brother's straight-forward policy of 'smash the Palestinians, smash the Muslims' he adopted a more subtle policy. In effect, he tried to restore the National Pact of 1943, to reintegrate the Sunni and Druze hierarchies into the state apparatus and present himself as 'the president of all the Lebanese'.

At the same time he pushed ahead with the anti-Palestinian campaign. Since the horrifying massacres at Sabra and Shatila thousands of Palestinians have been assassinated or imprisoned by the Phalangists and Lebanese army.

For a period Amin's policy had some success. Conservative Muslim leaders became genuinely hopeful of the possibility of establishing social peace — at the expense of the Palestinians and the working class of all religions.

But Amin's policy was blown apart by the 'Lebanese Forces', especially the followers of Fadi Frem. Frem, the faithful follower of Bashir Gemayel, had a straightforward philosophy — there are 'victors and vanquished'. The 'vanquished' (Muslims and Palestinians) should be thrown out. To that aim, Frem launched attacks on the Druze in the Chouf mountains and waged a war of terror against Shi'ite and Sunni Muslims alike.

Israel itself in late 1982 and early 1983 became concerned about the consequences of a strong and independent Lebanon. Its soldier refused to intervene in the fighting between the Lebanese Forces and Druze militias, even giving tacit assistance to the Druze.

Finally, Syria began to see the possibility of being frozen out of a new National Pact, and intervened vigorously to aid the Druze and Shi'ites — the better to control them. At

the same time, Syrian president Assad intervened in the dispute in the PLO.

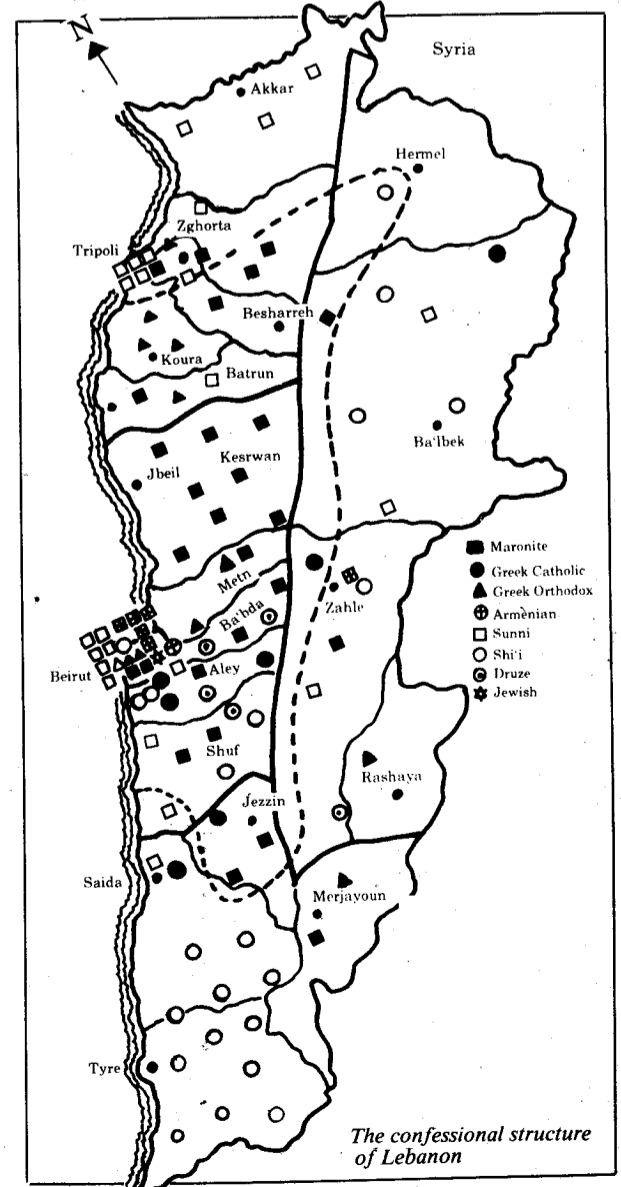
The objectives of the Israeli invasion have not been completely achieved. While the PLO has been struck a devastating blow, a friendly state in Lebanon has not been created. Syria has skillfully maintained its position by its patronage of the anti-Phalangist opposition. The predominantly Shi'ite south of the country is now completely under Israeli control.

For the Israelis and the United States the fundamental problem remains the strength of the Syrian-dominated anti-Gemayel alliance. The only permanent solution is the expulsion of the 30,000 Syrian troops. The danger in the situation is that Israel's premier Shamir and Reagan may decide to go for broke — to launch an all-out war against the Syrians.

For the workers and peasants of Lebanon, and for the harassed Palestinian community, the outlook is grim. The organisations outside the control of Syria, of which the Communist Party and the Organisation of Communist Action are the main parties, have been weakened by the exodus of many of their Shi'ite supporters to Amal. The anti-Israeli, anti-Gemayel forces remained dominated by bourgeois and petty bourgeois nationalism, and in the steely embrace of Syrian 'support'. The prospect remains war without end.



Portrait of Amin Gemayel in Christian area



The confessional structure of Lebanon

EEC summit:

The bandits fall out

THE ATHENS SUMMIT has brought the Common Market to the edge of its greatest ever crisis. West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl warned that 'a Europe divided and exhausted by renewed nationalism will exert no influence in the world and can become a plaything of foreign interests'.

Thatcher has presented herself as a British de Gaulle fighting for a huge budget rebate and against the wastefulness of the Common Agricultural Policy.

JOHN ROSS looks at the issues behind the squabbling of Britain, West Germany, France and the other EEC powers.

As they come across in the newspapers, the rows at the Athens summit seem obscure. They hinge on budget rebates, the Common Agricultural Policy, butter mountains, milk lakes, and the entry of Spain and Portugal into the Common Market. These are not the types of issues socialists often deal with. They seem trivial questions to provoke such a big crisis.

But once the basis of the EEC is understood, all the different questions fall into place and their significance is obvious.

The core of the EEC is its economic mechanisms, which are designed to wage a competitive struggle with the United States. While the rhetoric of the West European powers is almost always directed against the Soviet Union

all their practical economic decisions are aimed against the USA.

At the Athens summit, one of the chief proposals discussed was a French plan to raise extra revenue by putting a tax on the \$5 billion a year EEC soya bean imports from the United States. Simultaneously France has been stepping up its natural gas imports from the USSR. West Germany meantime has been granting new trade credits to East Germany.

Reasons

The reasons for the EEC versus United States conflict is simple. The Soviet Union and Eastern Europe do not represent an economic threat to the Common Market. Soviet and East European goods are of such low quality that they cannot hope to compete with those of

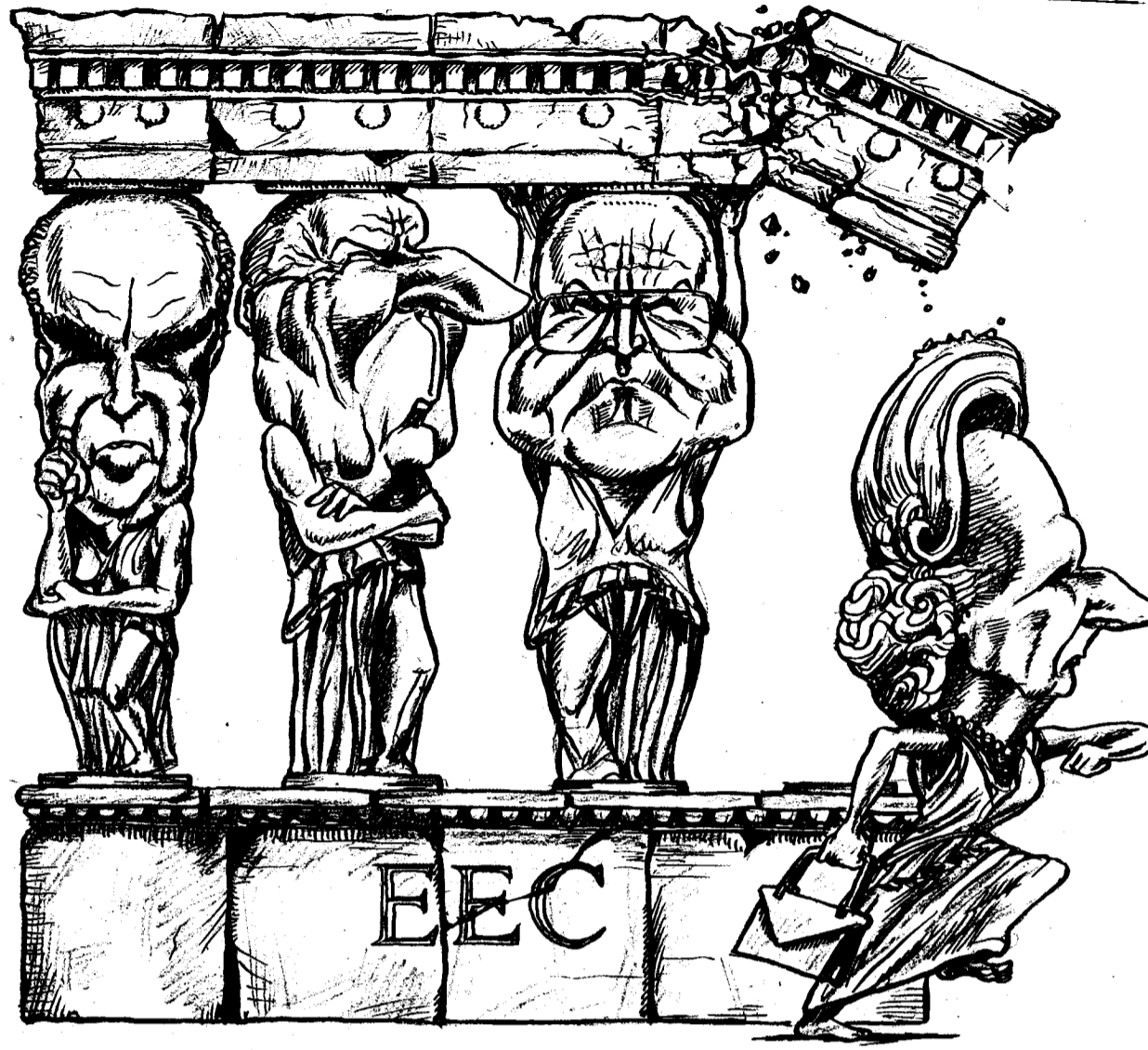
West Germany, France, Italy or Britain. A few marginal cases of 'dumping' of Italian-designed, Soviet-produced cars are easily dealt with by the EEC.

Economically Eastern Europe only really affects the EEC as a valuable source of raw materials and a small additional market. Last year's huge row between the United States and the Common Market over the Siberia to Western Europe gas pipeline for example was about the EEC's determination to maintain its access to East European fuel and raw material supplies. This policy towards Eastern Europe is bitterly opposed by the United States which would like to sell the oil and materials to Western Europe itself.

Soviet

The Soviet Union is only viewed by the EEC states as a military threat. This is dealt with by the NATO alliance and through building up British, French and West German nuclear and conventional armed forces. Mitterand's government in France for example has stepped up its imports of oil and gas from Eastern Europe. But it still rants on about the USSR military threat. The United States, on the other hand, is a direct day-by-day economic threat to Western Europe.

After the Second



World War the United States dominated what is now the EEC countries by its export of industrial goods. By 1950 the US was exporting more than four times as many manufactured goods as West Germany. In manufacturing trade, Western Europe was able to hit back during the 1950s and 1960s. The US share of world exports

of manufactured goods was halved between 1950 and 1979.

Meanwhile the manufactured exports of West Germany tripled. By the end of the 1970s, West Germany was exporting more manufactured goods than the United States. By 1980 the productivity of West German manufacturing was only 25 per cent

lower than that of the United States, whereas in 1970 it had been almost 50 per cent lower.

The success of Western Europe in many sectors of manufacturing industry has meant that there have been few clashes between the EEC states over industrial policy. The only exceptions are in a few declining industries such

as steel. The real crises have come in those areas — high technology industries, finance, fuel, raw materials and agriculture — in which the EEC cannot compete with the United States.

This is why the Athens summit exploded around apparently obscure questions such as butter mountains and budget rebates.

Bust up in Athens

THE PROBLEM for the EEC states in co-ordinating their policies is that each has different interests. In particular each is hit differently by competition from the United States.

● BRITAIN is specialising as a supplier of energy and raw materials to the EEC. Oil, natural gas, electricity supply and coal mining now account for over 10 per cent of the British economy — far more than any other European state. Britain also has a very efficient farming sector. The level of productivity of British agriculture is one third higher than France and more than double that of West Germany.

Britain has fairly similar interests to the United States. It favours high world prices of oil. Its efficient farming sector can compete quite well without the Common Agricultural Policy. Because Britain is moving out of large sectors of manufacturing industry, it is sceptical about things like the European Airbus.

● FRANCE is more or less the opposite to Britain. Its economy is based on manufacturing industry and agriculture. It has virtually no raw material or fuel supplies. France therefore wants tough measures to reduce the world oil prices.

It has tried to boost European industrial integration around the Airbus project and the pro-

duction of the Arienne rocket. It wanted to build a 'European' electronics industry by the nationalised French firm Thomson taking over the West German electronics giant Grundig.

Sector

French agriculture is far less efficient than British farming. It can't survive American competition. France is consequently a defender of the subsidies in the EEC Common Agricultural Policy. Because it fears competition from Spanish and Portuguese agriculture, France is hesitant on Spain and Portugal joining the EEC.

The directly contradictory interests over agriculture, oil prices and industrial policy make Britain and France traditional antagonists in the EEC.

● WEST GERMANY is the great industrial power of the EEC. Its manufacturing industry is over twice as large as Britain's and is almost twice as productive. West Germany has only a small agricultural sector and does not want to build it up — German industry plus French farming was the original formula on

which the EEC was set up.

West Germany would like Spain and Portugal to come into the EEC as they would provide a market for her industrial goods and supply agricultural products. For a long time West Germany was prepared to subsidise French farming as a way of maintaining the unity of the EEC.

But recently West German industry has been decisively overtaken by Japan and, in fields such as electronics, by the United States. West Germany therefore wants to free resources to modernise its industry by cutting its subsidies to French farming via the Common Agricultural Policy.

West Germany is also hostile to British policy on oil prices. Its industry would benefit greatly from a lower price of world oil — which Britain opposes. Britain also refuses to supply oil to the EEC at subsidised rates.

West Germany considers Britain is benefitting from its privileged position as the sole EEC state with major oil reserves and is unsympathetic to British demands to make a lower contribution to the Common Market budget.

It is these differing interests of the EEC powers which led to the bitter exchanges and chaos at the Athens summit.



A song and dance at the Athens summit



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WHO OWNS FLEET STREET



The s of thi to co

THE NEXT 12 months are likely to bring immense changes in the British newspaper industry — the long-term implications of which can only be guessed at. Underlying these changes, indeed the very reason for them, is money. Money in huge quantities.

The source of this new found wealth is at 85 Fleet Street, which is the head office of Reuters. The international news agency, set up by an emigre German in 1851, has suddenly become profitable on a vast scale — thanks to its business and financial information service. Over the past decade this has grown from being a sideline to the main news gathering operation to become the dominant part of the business.

Last year the agency chalked up £30 million profit. This year it is likely to be almost double.

Profits on such a scale make newspaper proprietors' eyes glisten and their palms sweaty. Greed — pure, unalloyed greed — takes over. Which is where Lords Rothermere and Matthews and others enter the scene.

Reuters is a trust, the shares in which are owned by the members of the Newspaper Publishers' Association, the Newspaper Society and their opposite numbers in Australia and New Zealand. The trust was set up during the war, the proprietors nobly accepting responsibility for the agency rather than see it nationalised. Now, 40 years on and with the prospect of cashing in on Reuters' profits, the trustees are planning to turn the news agency into a public company.

Bonanza

Reuters is said to be worth between £1,000m and £1,500m on the stock market because of the prospect of endless bonanza profits.

Even allowing for the lower figure, Express Newspapers' shareholding in Reuters would be worth £120 million on the open market. Rothermere's *Daily Mail* group has a similar stake, with Murdoch on about £90m and Mirror Group Newspapers on £80m.

It is this £80m windfall which Reed International, the *Mirror's* parent company, has its beady eye on. If Reuter shares are publicly quoted, the value of Reed shares will jump accordingly. When that happens, it will become more profitable for Reed to sell their controlling interest in Mirror Group Newspapers than to hang on to it.

When Reed pulls out, of course, there is no knowing who will step in.

FLEET STREET is the sharp end of the struggle in the print industry. Its workers are the shock troops of the NGA. Its employers pour out anti-union propaganda every day of the week. It faces one of the greatest threats from the new technology. But who owns Britain's newspaper giants?

The number of newspapers has shrunk steadily since the 1920s. As a result, people are more dependent on the national press for their daily paper and they have virtually no choice left as to the local daily they buy.

The national papers that have disappeared have tended to be those on the left, notably the *Daily Herald* and the *News Chronicle*.

This means the national press is more conservative than it was with less representation of labour movement views. Not surprisingly, many people find their views are not adequately reflected in the major nationals.

Total circulation in the two major press sectors — national dailies and national Sundays — is heavily controlled by three concerns: News Corporation (Robert Murdoch's Australian holding company), Reed International, and Fleet Holdings.

Together they account for 75 per cent of all the national dailies sold and 85 per cent of all the national Sundays. Rupert Murdoch's company alone controls almost a third of the circulation in both sectors.

This is not a new situation. Britain has had a highly concentrated national press since the last war.

In addition to controlling the national press, companies who publish major national dailies or Sundays also have a significant degree of control over the regional and local press.

The leading national chains have increased their share of circulation in the regional press since 1947, with a particularly marked increase among the local weeklies, traditionally the most diversely controlled.

Control

At present, the two largest publishers of weekly titles are both national publishers as well: S Pearson & Son and Reed International.

The national concerns are also strongly represented in the market for regional dailies. Three of the 10 best selling titles are controlled directly by companies which publish nationals: Reed, Associated Newspapers and Fleet Holdings.

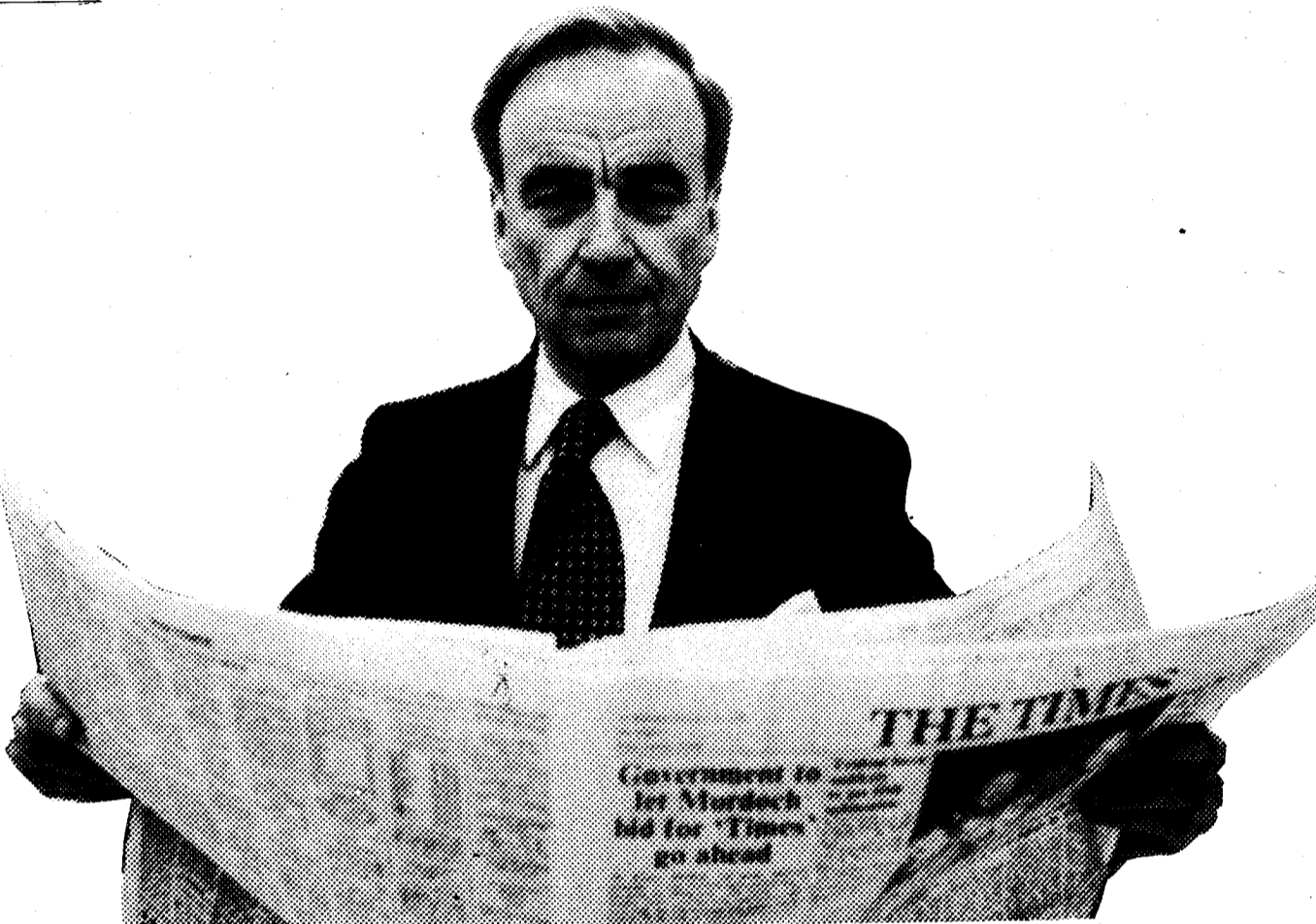
Two others are published by concerns with connections to national publishers: BPM Holdings (in which S Pearson holds a 38 per cent stake in the ordinary shares) and Fleet Holdings.

Fleet Holdings, which controls the Express group of papers, was demerged from the Trafalgar House shipping and property conglomerate in 1982. Trafalgar House does not have a direct stake in the new company but there are still close links.

The shares in Fleet Holdings were distributed on the basis of one for every four Trafalgar shares investors held, so there is a good deal of overlap in the ownership of the companies.

In addition, one of the two founders of Trafalgar, Lord Matthews, is installed as chairman of Fleet Holdings for five years.

The national press companies' in-



Rupert Murdoch

terests in the regional and weekly press is part of a wider pattern of diversification whereby companies extend their range of interests from their original base to other areas of activity. This process produces conglomerates — companies with a collection of interests in a wide range of activities.

The large newspaper publishers show a marked tendency towards conglomeration. Several also have significant interests in a range of other key media sectors.

The best example is S Pearson, which controls the *Financial Times* and the largest chain of weekly papers in the country. Pearson's other media interests include magazines — *The Banker*, *Apollo* and a 50 per cent stake in *The Economist* — and books: Longmans, Penguin (the largest paperback firm in the country) and Ladybird books, the world's biggest publisher of children's books.

Cinema

In audio-visual industries, Pearson has a 25 per cent stake in Yorkshire Television, a leading role in the Goldcrest films and television partnership which is producing films for cinema and video release.

Goldcrest helped to put together the financial package for *Chariots of Fire* and is partner with the Indian government in Sir Richard Attenborough's box office hit *Ghandi*.

Pearson also operates Fintel, which provides business news and financial information for the Prestel system run by British Telecom. BPM Holdings, in which Pearson has a significant stake, is also a major information provider on Prestel through its Viewtel 202 system which provides a national news and sports service.

In addition, Pearson has important interests in general leisure, through its control of Madame Tussauds, the Lon-



Lord Matthews

don Planetarium, Chessington Zoo, Warwick Castle, and Wookey Hole.

Nor does Pearson's interests stop at the media. It also has stakes in a variety of key financial and industrial sectors. It controls Lazard Brothers, the merchant bank.

It controls the Doulton tableware and glass group; Fairey Holdings, the engineering group, which makes nuclear and defence equipment.

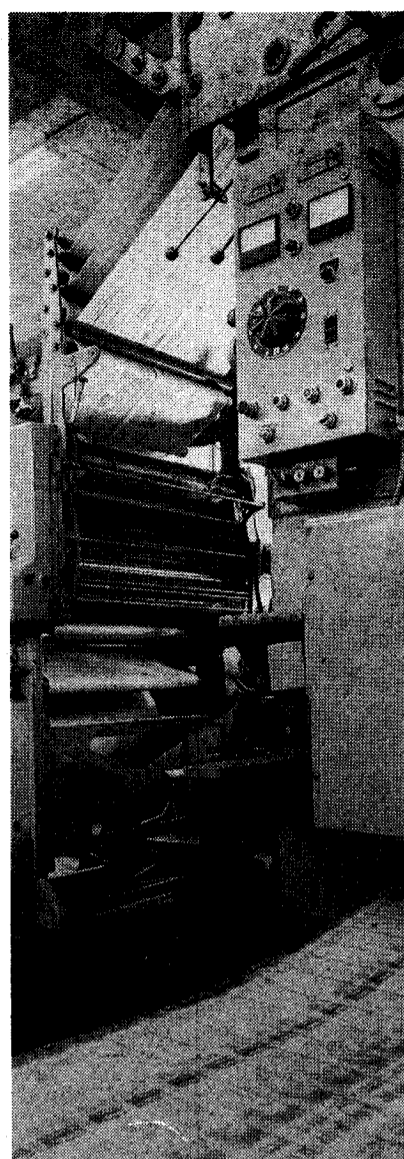
It has a controlling interest in London Merchant Securities, a leading investment group. It also has significant

stakes in the American oil company Ashland, and control of the Blackwell Land Co which has extensive interests in fruit and nut growing in California.

This illustrates another key feature of the present generation of press conglomerates: they are international in their operations. They are either based in Britain and operate across the globe or they are overseas companies whose British interests are only part of their total operation, for example Murdoch's News Corporation and the Thomson International.



Postcard: Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom



Shape things to come

The printing giants

PARTLY BECAUSE of the immense variety of its products and partly because of its wide geographical spread, printing is an extremely diverse industry. All but the smallest community in Britain has a printer of some sort to service its needs.

At the same time, specialised sectors of the trade — traditionally based in the larger cities — have found improved freight transport and other communications, as well as rising city property and labour costs, an important impetus to move out.

Since the war, a large section of printing production has steadily moved away from central London in particular, while new centres of printing have grown throughout the rest of the country. Nowadays, there are specialised magazine printers in Inverness and Carlisle, book printers in Worcester and Exeter, colour printers in Norwich and typesetters in Elgin — all of whom can run an office in London, an express freight service and can benefit from substantially lower wage rates than the

metropolitan centres.

Despite its diversity, however, the printing industry remains dominated by a relatively small number of large groups and companies. And it is the large, manufacturing printers which account for the lion's share of turnover, output and employment.

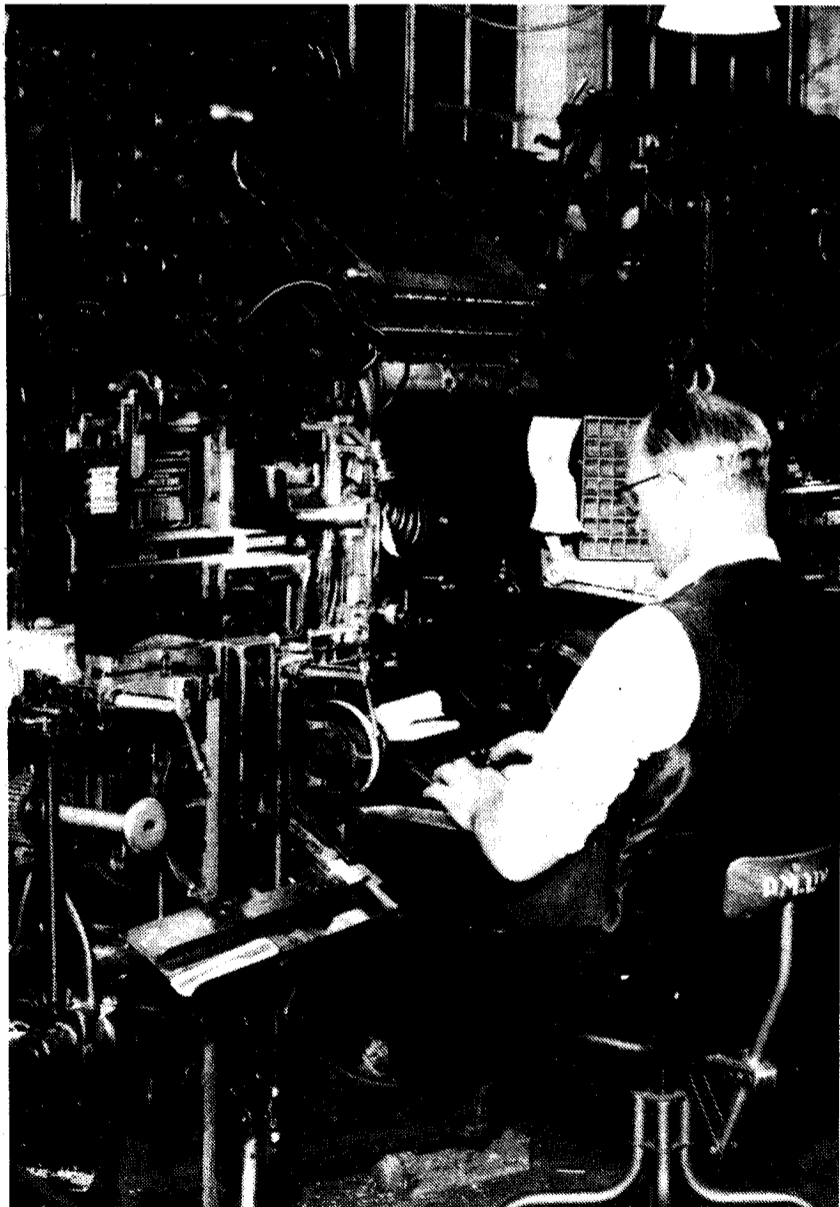
Over 50 per cent of companies still have less than ten employees, but although they make up a large part of what most people would recognise as the printing trade, they in fact only employ 5 per cent of all workers covered by the Printing and Publishing Industries Training Board.

The 80 largest establishments, on the other hand, employ nearly one third of the entire industry workforce. The vast number of small printshops is therefore dwarfed by the huge manufacturing printers who specialise in cornflake packets, paperbacks or colour magazines. The *Sunday Times* colour supplement and the *TV Times*, for example, are printed by the British Printing and Communications Corporation in half a dozen plants spread around the country — contracts together worth £17 million a year.



'The printing giants' is from Alan Marshall's *Changing the Word*. Published by Comedia, 9 Poland Street, London W1. (£3.50).

New technology challenges the unions



What is certain, however, is that assurances and protestations by Reed management that the *Daily Mirror's* traditional support for the labour movement will be maintained is nonsense. The Stock Exchange is no respecter of such empty promises.

Many of those inside the labour movement do not think much of the *Mirror's* brand of 'support' as it is. Nonetheless, if the *Mirror* goes the way of the *Sun*, *Express*, *Mail* etc., the Labour Party will find the next general election even harder to fight. The *Mirror's* commitment to socialism has, in recent years, worn a bit thin, but it was

important politically.

With Fleet Street — and Newspaper Society — managements scrambling to get their hands on the golden eggs being laid by Reuters, the next few months are likely to bring about the biggest upheaval in newspaper publishing for many years. The economic, industrial and political consequences can only be guessed at, though it is a fair bet that press freedom will not be hit.

The Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom's first aim — to challenge the myth that only private ownership provides genuine freedom, diversity or access — is as relevant as ever.



THE OFFENSIVE of the print owners against the NGA has at its root the attempt to bring in the new, computer based, typesetting technology which will eliminate a large part of the industry's workforce.

Under the traditional system copy is written by journalists, sub-edited and then taken to the linotype machine operators — generally NGA members. The linotype operators then set the copy in the form of metal plates with the letters cast in metal.

These plates, or a relief cast made from the plates, are then inked on the machine for the printing process itself.

The new computer photosetting techniques type material into a computer via a keyboard attached to a visual display unit (VDU). In principle there is no reason why a journalist

should not dispense with paper altogether, typing the story straight into the typesetting machine.

By Joe Clasky

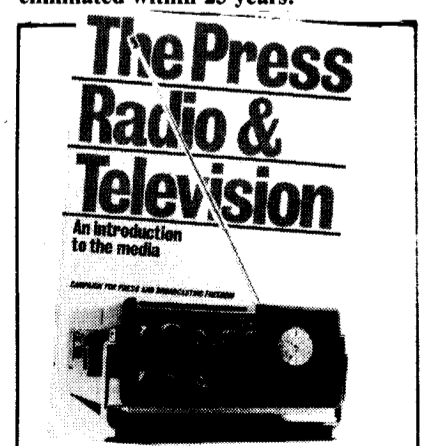
The news copy can then be rerun through the VDU for sub-editing and correction. The corrected copy can, at the push of a button, be transferred to photo-sensitive paper and run out of the type-setting machine.

This copy is then laid out in pages, a photographic plate made, ready for printing on an offset litho machine.

The introduction of this technology therefore eliminates a whole layer of the traditional printing industry — the compositors who operate the linotype machines, plate makers, and engravers. The introduction of more advanced offset litho printing machines threatens

machine minders as well. An example of this is management plans for the *Sun*. Rupert Murdoch has prepared a completely new and automated printing plant to print the *Sun* in Wapping — and when the move takes place hundreds, perhaps thousands, of jobs will be lost.

The new technology therefore threatens the loss of literally tens of thousands of jobs. In the first nine months of 1981 alone, 10,000 jobs were lost. It is estimated that 50 per cent of the 500,000 jobs in printing will be eliminated within 25 years.



'Who Owns Fleet Street' is from *The Press, Radio and Television* (£1.80). 'The shape of things to come' is from *Free Press* (20p).

Both are published by The Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom, 9 Poland Street, London W1. Headlines for the articles are by Socialist Action.

MOLES EYE VIEW



Tarzan and the nukes

DID TARZAN get a fair crack of the whip from IBA? Socialist Action asked Michael Heseltine what he thought.

Certainly not. I should have had the two hours that they gave to showing *The Day After*. Someone could then have had five minutes to sum up the film.

You must realise this film is nothing more than an attempt to scare people off from having a

nuclear war. If it succeeds people will just refuse to die for their country. Then what will happen to them all?

Do you think that people are just a little bit worried about Maggie's mate going it alone in Grenada and the Lebanon and think he might start firing off the cruise missiles in Britain without consulting anybody?

Look, there's a very simple explanation why Ronnie didn't let us know about Grenada. He intended ringing us

but he had forgotten to take his phone credit card into work with him that day. Do you know he asked everyone of his advisors for some change but nobody, just nobody, had the right money for a Washington to London call.

In the Lebanon peace-keeping operation where his planes and ships 'zapped' those Palestinians he did try and ring but the line was engaged. After that he got so excited with all that action he just clean forgot. Ronnie is only human, he can't remember everything in fact he doesn't remember much at all.

However, he had given Maggie and me a very personal assurance about cruise. He's told us that immediately they are on their way to Russia he will let us know. You can't get fairer than that. This absolutely guarantees we

can go straight into a shelter.

So all of us can get into shelters and be safe?

Well, not exactly all of us. People like the cabinet, the military chiefs, important civil servants, top policemen, chaps like Sir John Donaldson — I reckon the government owes him a few favours — and yes probably Eddie Shah as well.

What they must appreciate is that they will be fried for a noble cause and their sacrifice will save us so that we can go to somewhere like America where we can re-start the fight for the preservation of Christian values.

That's the kind of balanced view *The Day After* should have put across not all this hysterical nonsense about the threat to human life.

Tribune's Pink Panther

Chris Mullins' *Tribune* has come a cropper in its first venture into the world of secret agents. His spies have reported to Control that 'Socialist League member Sarah Roelofs' with other SL 'boys and girls' planned to occupy Tribune's office because it refused to print an interview with Sinn Fein women.

Dear me, why didn't Chris use the phone and check his sources, it's a good habit for journalists to get into. Even our run down network has established Sarah left the now disbanded IMG three years ago!

But no doubt some of those witch hunters at Walworth Road will be only too keen to take advantage of Chris' stupid gaff.

SOVIET SPIES INFILTRATE WARRINGTON!

Socialist Action has got the reactions of a number of prominent people to the above. The *Sun* had a banner headline saying 'Exclusive Russkis invade Warrington' true to form this was the day after the *Daily Mirror* carried the above advert for vodka.

It went on to report 'red spies are feeding vodka to drink-crazed pickets.' Len Murray meanwhile appealed for calm and suggested to cool the situation it should be referred to ACAS. Roy Hattersley

and Neil Kinnock said it had nothing to do with the Labour Party and they 'were against unlawful extra-parliamentary action' whether it was committed by Britain or Russians.

Eddie Shah says he will probably take an injunction out against the Kremlin. Michael Heseltine insisted this proved that Britain needed a nuclear deterrent and he favoured a pre-emptive strike on the Warrington picket line.

DIARY

(These listings are free for all major labour movement and campaign activities — up to maximum of 50 words. 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).

International

- **The Politics of Health in Zimbabwe** Hour long video available for meetings or functions. £10 (payable in advance). Send to Books for South Africa Fund, PO Box 50, London N1.
- **Sri Lankan Research & Information Group** will provide speakers on the current situation there for meetings. Write to 9 Grays Inn Buildings, London EC1.
- **No Intervention in Central America (NICA)** is a broad based coalition of solidarity groups, human rights orgs, aid agencies and political parties. More details from NICA 20/21 Compton Terrace, London N1 01-226 6747.
- **From War in the Third World to the Third World War** — new pamphlet published by El Salvador Solidarity Campaign, 50p. Order from ELSSOC, 29 Islington Park St, London N1 01-359 3976. ELSSOC have also produced a 1984 calendar showing scenes from life in the liberated zones, £3 from same address.
- **Central America and the Caribbean** A series of open educationals with videos and speakers at Peckham Labour Club, Lansbury House, 41 Camberwell Grove, London SE5: 10 Jan Guatemala; 17

- Jan Honduras; 24 Jan El Salvador; 31 Jan Grenada; 7 Feb Evening of Central American culture. Admission £1/UB40 free. Organised by Sth London Central American Group, contact Edwin 01-733 7706 for details.
- **Reagan's war plans in Central America & the Caribbean** Sth West London Socialist Action forum, 8pm, Wed 21 Dec at Clapham Community Project, Venn St, SW4 (Clapham Cmmn tube). Further details from Carol 01-359 8371.
- **The Popular Politics and Culture of Chile, Kenya, Philippines** Public meeting, 16 December, Friends House, Euston Rd. 7pm

Lesbian & Gay Liberation

- **Gay NUR group** just forming. For details of inaugural meeting write to Gay NUR c/o 119 Southwyck Hse, Coldharbour Lane, London SW9.
- **Nottingham Labour Campaign for Gay Rights** meets monthly. Next meeting 21 Dec, 8pm, Salutation Inn, Maid Marion Way. Details: Chris Richardson, 21 Devonshire Promenade, Lenton 0602 780124.
- **London Labour Campaign for Gay Rights** new office at 39 Chippenham Rd, W9 2AH 01-286 9692, open Tues-Thurs 11am-7pm. (Westbourne Grove tube. Bad access, help available).
- **Why Labour shouldn't backtrack on Lesbian and gay rights** Islington Labour Briefing meeting with Peter Tatchell, Fri 16 Dec, 7.45pm, Rm 5, Islington Town Hall, Upper St, N1. 16 Dec, 7.45pm. Followed by London Briefing Xmas social at 3 Davenant Rd, N19 (off Holloway Rd), £1.50.

Civil Rights

- **Campaign against the Police Bill National march and rally** Sat 21 Jan, Brockwell Park, London.

- Details of these and other events from NCAPB, 50 Rectory Rd, London N16 01-249 8334.
- **Newham 8 Defence Campaign** National picket, 16 Dec, Old Bailey, 9.30 am to 1 pm.
- **Gays Against the Police Bill** Public meeting to organise opposition among lesbians and gay men, 19 Dec, 7pm, County Hall, London SE1. Information from Gays Against the Police Bill, c/o Galop, 01 278 6215.

Miscellaneous

- **Films at work** — a series of films at Jacksons Lane Community Centre, 271 Archway Rd, London N6. 19 Dec Days of Hope. All start at 7.30pm, £1.50/80p UB40.

Anti-cuts campaigns

- **London Health Service Campaign.** 34 Dalston Lane, London E8 3AZ 01-249 8086.
- **Hayes Cottage Hospital Occupation Ctee,** Grange Rd, Hayes, Middx 01-573 5593.

London Labour Briefing Christmas Fund-Raising Social

Friday December 16, 8pm till late
3 Davenant Rd, N19 (off Holloway Road)
£1.50, includes food please bring a bottle

Celebrate 25th anniversary of the Cuban revolution

East London Socialist Action New Year's Eve social Sat Dec 31, 7.30pm-midnight.
Buffet, bar and disco. £4/£2 unwaged. For tickets phone Trina 01-519 0037.



Greenham tactic not enough

SOCIALIST ACTION is quite correctly involved in the current debate in CND. However the centre-spread article in issue 35 failed in my view to emphasise clearly enough that the 'Greenham tactic' of 'spontaneous direct action' cannot by itself defeat the war drive.

No-one can fail to admire the determination and heroism of the Greenham women. However, their objective impact at present is to accelerate CND's drift away from an orientation to the organised workers' movement.

It is not sectarian to argue the socialist case for CND — it may well be unpopular.

In the enthusiasm of

KLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

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'direct action' movements we must not lose sight of the lessons of CND's own history — which Socialist Action has done so well in uncovering — that without winning the support of the labour movement it will ultimately flounder.

MIKE HOLBROOK, Co. Durham

Invisible assets

CAN anyone explain how a supplementary benefit claimant can fill in the gap between 'money you have coming in' and 'supplementary benefit', in order to make the total in the 'money you need' column?*

Surely an admission from the Department of Health and Social Security that claimants will never be able to make ends meet!

DAF LINCOLN, Somerset

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.

Need more money?

Supplementary benefit is the difference between what you need and the money you have coming in.

can get it even if you have savings of £1,000

your own home

paid national pensions.

*Section of the DHSS leaflet SBI, issued in November '83.

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)

Greenham:

A focus for action

ANNE KANE is an activist in the Glasgow Women for Peace group. She explains the importance of the women's peace movement to all socialists — men and women — and takes issue with those sections of the left who argue against supporting the Greenham women.

With the arrival of cruise at Greenham, the women's peace movement is yet again leading the fight against the missiles. While CND's leadership dithered over the freeze, women from Greenham and all over Britain organised to cut down the fence and reclaim the base on 29 October, took Reagan to court on 9 November, and held a huge 'Sound Around Greenham' on 11 December.

The Greenham women have shown that is not necessary to water down aims to get mass support. The support of thousands of activists in the trade unions, the women's movement, and the Labour Party is what CND should also be building on, up and down the country — rather than trying to woo the SDP electorate with half-hearted, impractical demands.

These Greenham actions are only the latest ones in a year which has seen the women's peace movement push cruise and disarmament right to the front of British politics. From last December's embracing the base, through the 24 May International Women's Day of Disarmament, to the July blockade, women have made Defence Secretary Heseltine sit up and take note.

They continue to show that Heseltine cannot just scare off the Greenham camp. For the second time this year, the government has had to prepare a propaganda offensive, demanding television space to present its own case more persuasively than the media has done to date. Thanks to Greenham, 'Ministers seem to be worried at their failure to persuade the public that CND has lost the argument' (*Guardian* 5 December).

But socialists in Britain have had diverse, and often disappointingly negative, responses to this huge and

militant movement of women. While Greenham women have been leading the fight in the real world, the Socialist Workers Party has been preoccupied with attacking the movement for 'excluding men'.

Militant supporters in the Labour Party have at best ignored, and at worst scorned, the Greenham women. (Presumably, for not understanding the central importance of the top 200 monopolies!) This conflicts with the response of the mass of trade unionists who have actively supported the women's peace movement: from the Timex strikers earlier this year, to national support from unions like NALGO, NUPE and the Fire Brigades Union.

The women's peace movement has pushed unilateralism inside the labour movement, putting the bureaucracy on the spot by demanding action, not just resolutions. But parts of the left have dodged the main issues, to concentrate on attacking Greenham.

Divisive

What is at the root of this hostility? Is it true that the women's peace movement is divisive, or has no relationship to 'real' working class struggles? Do we reinforce stereotypical views of women, and do we lack a class analysis of the war drive?

Beneath these attacks lie a deep-rooted sectarianism towards autonomous movements, especially autonomous movements of women. In addition, *Militant* derides CND as a whole. The arrival of cruise got a brief mention on page two of that week's issue!

Feminists will find nothing new in the claim that they are being divisive. The forbears of today's left sectarians, in the Social Democratic Federation and in the Labour Party, turned against the mass movement of women who campaigned for their right to vote in exactly the same way. Such critics would do better to judge the women's peace movement on what it has achieved.

What unites the left critics in their hostility is a failure to understand the relationship between women's oppression in capitalist society and their

leading role in the fight against imperialist wars. Some may ask what this has to do with the issue of the missiles.

The war drive is linked to an economic system — capitalism — which is in crisis. Consequently, it lays ever-greater economic and social demands on the working classes of capitalist countries. Women's oppression is rooted in the family. We are expected to be the unpaid and unrecognised providers of the system's social needs — by being housewife, mother and nurse.

Austerity

This means women pay the social cost of capitalism's austerity drive in a more direct way than men. The less overt appeal to militarism which capitalism makes to women goes along with this sexual division of labour and the oppression of women in the home.

It is this understanding which explains women's leading role, not just in the fight against the missiles, but in previous anti-war movements. What would left sectarians have said, for example, of the mass movement of women in Britain who organised against the First World War?

At the height of the anti-labour legislation and of industrial conscription, the Women's Peace Crusade led a demonstration of 12,000 through Glasgow, in July 1917, to protest against the war and send greetings to the workers of the February revolution in Russia. This was led by socialists like Agnes Dollan and Helen Crawford, who were integral to the suffragette movement and the Glasgow rent strikes. Would left critics also say that this movement was reactionary because it was in the name of women?

Militant

It is precisely women's economic and social position, not biology or innate pacifism, which explains their leading, militant role in anti-war movements, as well as in revolutionary struggles from the Russian Revolution to present day El



The mass of trade unionists have actively supported the women's peace movement

Salvador. It is neither reactionary nor particularly relevant, that some women perceive their role in terms of being a mother.

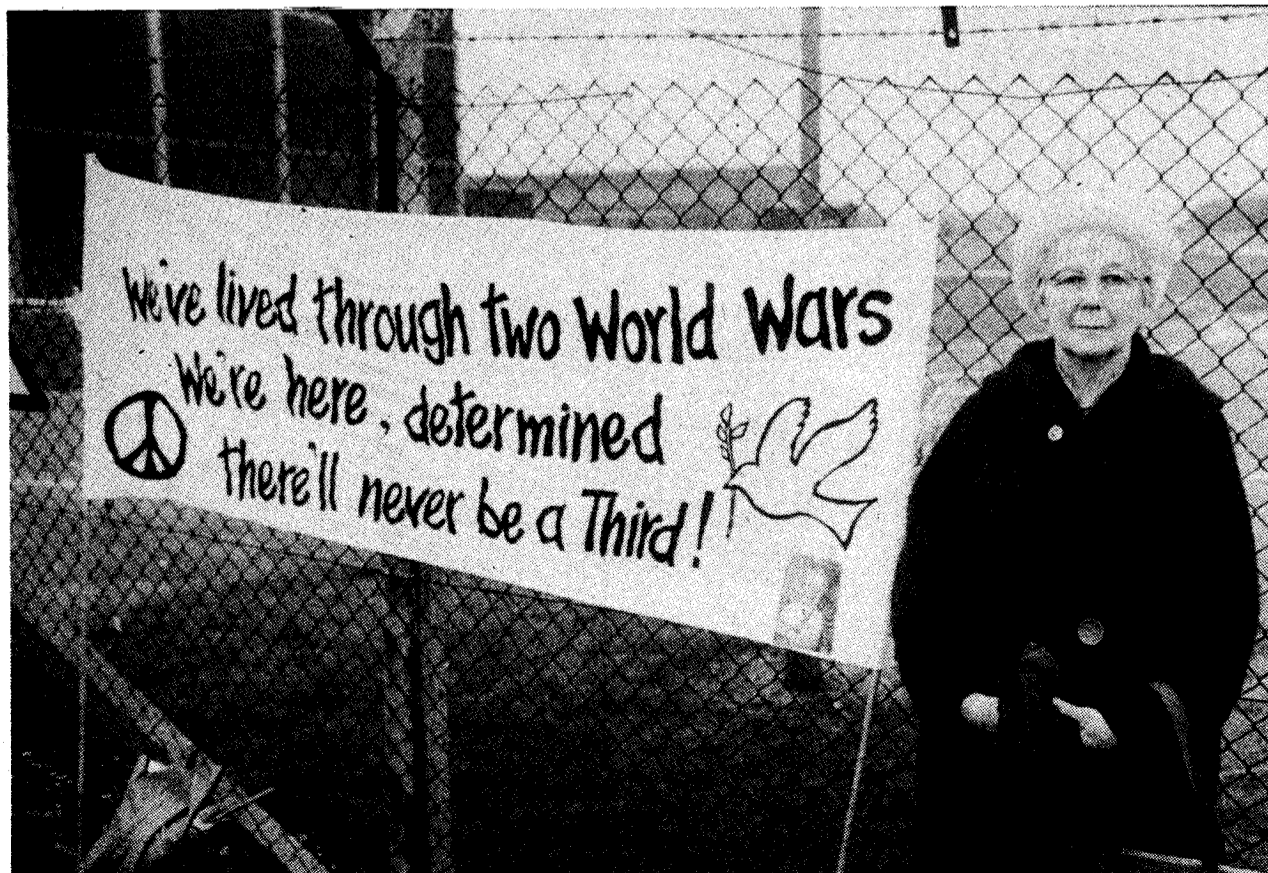
It's just not good enough for socialists to point to nappies or children's pictures pinned on the fence at Greenham and snap 'reinforcing stereotypes'. As socialists, our analysis must go beyond the statements and actions of individuals, to the material basis of political currents, and to what they achieve objectively.

Women who support Greenham share an opposition to a society which can afford cruise missiles but expects them to carry the burden of public sector cuts. This is hardly a reactionary understanding! Our responsibility is to unite behind Greenham as

a symbol of continuing resolve to fight cruise, and as a focus for those activists who see the need to step up that fight now.

● Start organising now for the mass women's demonstration at Holy Loch, on Saturday 21 January, 1984. Further information is available from Glasgow Women's Centre on 041-221 1177.

● Following the successful Faslane women's demonstration on 6 March this year, moves are afoot to make International Women's Day 1984 (8 March; nearest weekend is Sat 10/Sun 11) a Women Against the Missiles day of action. Start now by putting resolutions of support for this through your trade union branch.



Women have always played a leading role in anti-war movements

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After conference: Step up the action in '84

DESPITE HESELTINE'S attempts to discredit and demobilise the anti-missiles movement, support for CND is still growing. At an eve-of-conference rally, Bruce Kent said CND's membership had grown by 3,000 in the last three weeks alone. The arrival of cruise has seen anti-missiles action stepped up, not its widely-predicted collapse.

In this context, CND's annual conference set the tone for the year ahead. Unity was the leadership's chosen theme. 'CND is a coalition of different forces,' said Bruce Kent, 'all fighting for their different corners. But there's nothing more important than this organisation as a

whole.' He's right. But his version of unity — 'reach out to everybody wherever they are' through the freeze-as-a-first-step policy — did not match the mood of the conference. On almost every issue, this step-by-step strategy for the campaign was rejected

by the delegates' desire for more mass action. Throughout, the leading role of the Greenham women was recognised.

Debate

Fearing that a freeze campaign would deprioritise and confuse the essential aim of mass action to scrap the missiles, the freeze policy adopted by the leadership was thrown out. Calls for anti-cruise action to be stepped up, and for labour movement action — including effective industrial action — were carried with a big majority.

Last year, despite a call from conference for labour movement action, neither CND's leadership nor the TUC or Labour party leaders acted on their policy pledges. This year must be different. In the words of the ASTMS delegate who supported the resolution: 'CND has to be identified with all those people who are threatened by the Tory government. With the support of the unions, we'll build a movement of millions which will achieve peace in our lifetime.'

Individual actions by trade unionists are already taking place: like the action by Rolls Royce workers in Scotland against Trident; and the Greenwich NALGO action against civil defence plans. But the need is to

Labour and Trade Union CND must join forces in a united struggle. Despite Labour CND's temporary demise, this is still possible. The election of LCND Secretary Joy Hurcombe as one of CND's four Vice Chairs, and the reference back (rather than defeat) of the emergency resolution on Labour CND, show that activists do not necessarily share the Executive's view against specialist sections taking a strong line on unilateralism. It is still possible for Labour CND to re-emerge as a mass action oriented specialist section.

By Carol Turner

The international aspect of the anti-missiles movement figured prominently at conference, reflecting the importance attached to the 22 October actions throughout Europe. Speaking at the Friday rally, the German peace movement representative explained their intention was to hold a referendum on the missiles during the Euro-elections, and called on other campaigns to do likewise. This idea came up during the cruise debate, where one generalise these actions throughout the labour movement. resolution called for the Euro-elections to be a major focus for Europe-wide action.

CND's first wave in the

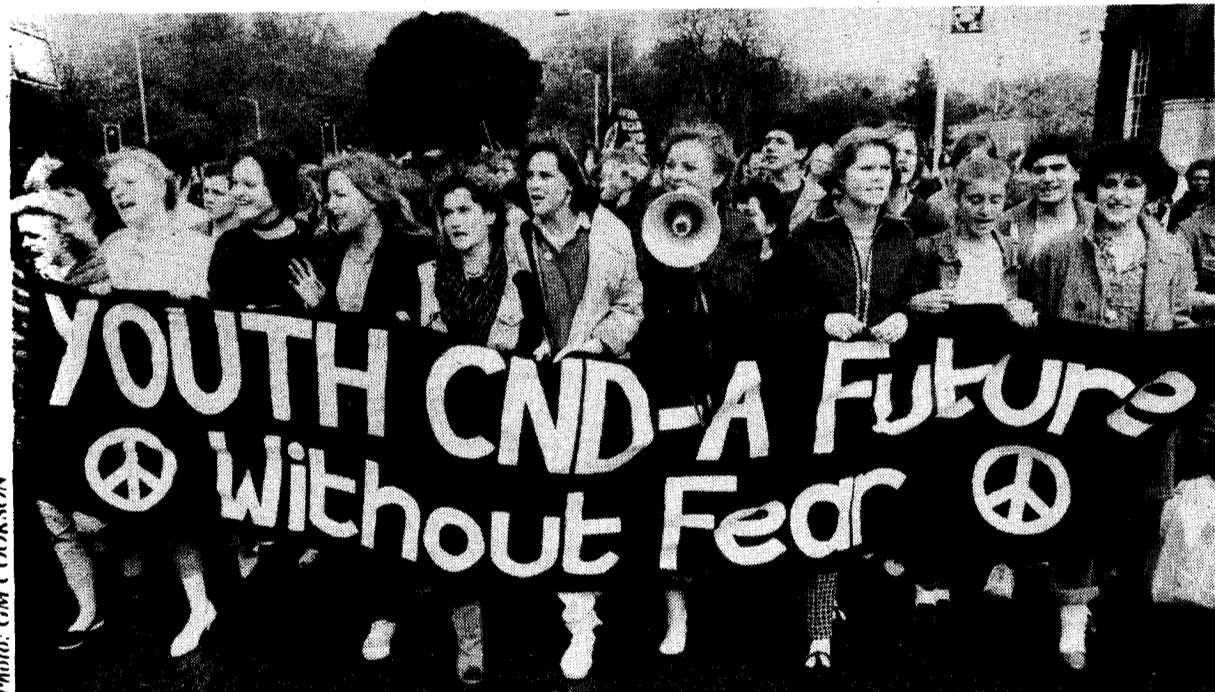
1960s floundered on *detente* and the test ban treaty. The 'step-by-step' approach espoused by the then-leadership of CND cut through building mass action against the atom bomb, and through generalising that action internationally. The second generation peace movement has a solid advantage over its forerunners because of the existence of a growing peace movement in West Europe and America, which is fuelled by President Reagan's overt aggression in the Middle East and in Central America and the Caribbean.

This creates a climate in which it is increasingly possible for millions of people to see that a real threat exists of nuclear war now. This brings more and more people into activity against the missiles.

View

It was this mood which was reflected in CND conference decisions. All the signs are that the international peace movement will step up anti-missiles actions in 1984.

CND now has the policies to link up with this, and to build mass action in Britain founded on labour movement support. It's up to all activists to keep the pressure on Goodwin Street and to put those words into practice.



Youth on the march at last May's YCND carnival at Brockwell Park

YCND GAGGED

CND ANNUAL conference took two resolutions on the future of Youth CND: one deploring the dissolution of the elected youth committee and the ad hoc appointment of another, the other proposing a new structure for the youth section. The latter, passed overwhelmingly by a less-than-youthful conference, tries to consign YCND to a tame future under the thumb of its parent.

Its annual meeting will decide only campaigning activity — not policy — and its elected committee will be strictly subordinate to CND's National Council. The crime it committed? Supporting the 'No More Chiles' demonstration in September. Hardly heinous, if you consider that Reagan's war drive in Central America and the Middle East is the thing most likely — in the here and now — to take the world over the nuclear

brink.

The real threat to CND's peace was made clear by Dan Smith's speech for the Executive. 'There are supporters of the newspaper *Revolution*,' he said, 'operating in YCND, who have different aims of those of CND.' And he went on to quote from a document CND claim to have, urging *Revolution* supporters to build an anti-imperialist wing of CND to fight the Stalinist and pacifist leadership.

Now wouldn't it be convenient if the youth were all of one mind, and that mind accorded with its dyed-in-the-step-by-step-approach of its parent? If the 75 youth who attended the youth caucus at conference are anything to go by, this is not the case.

No doubt the youth attending the 1984 annual meeting in London on the weekend of 18/19 February will say so in no uncertain terms. It's clear that whatever the manoeuvres of the parent, the militant voice of youth will remain.

The Day After

By Bob Pennington

YOU CAN guarantee a nuclear war will be much worse than anything shown in *The Day After*. Professor Myers said after the programme a nuclear war between the big powers would probably mean the deaths of two billion people and 'conceivably the end of the species'.

But more horrific or not, the film scared the daylight out of me. OK the plot was abysmal and the characters had the vitality of cardboard. It came out of the same stables as *Dallas* and all those other weary American soap operas.

Who cared about that when the action started? Then triteness was transformed into frightening horror. Being frazzled seems a fate too horrible to think about. *The Day After* showed that when the great mushroom cloud goes up there is a fate worse than immediate death. It's called survival.

Could anything be more dreadful than slowly disintegrating as the sores eat away your flesh and your hair falls out. If *The Day After* did nothing else but show a glimmer of what a nuclear war holds in store for us, then it did a great job.

I just hope it frightened enough of those 15 million viewers into realising how right the women of Greenham Common are. If so, then I reckon it was worth my nightmares on Saturday night.



Battersea firefighters return cruise to sender and donate an hours pay for peace



Build Trade Union CND in 1984

Trade Union CND launched its first issue of *Trade Union CND News* at the CND conference through a successful fringe meeting with an NGA speaker. Referring to the labour movement resolution which urged CND to promote 'effective industrial action against work connected with nuclear weapons', he said that CND could find itself in a similar position to the print unions. Tebbit's legislation will affect CND's activities too, he pointed out.

Trade Union CND's AGM takes place on Saturday 25 February 1984. All affiliated unions are invited to send resolutions by 10 January 1984. TUCND can be contacted at 11, Goodwin St, London N4. Bulk orders of the bulletin (at 3p per copy) are available from this address.

Trade union action against the missiles

Rolls Royce, Hillington

WORKERS at Rolls Royce Hillington (Glasgow) threatened to black work on Trident at their plant — and won. Against a background of over 2,000 redundancies at the factory in the last few years, and a threat by management that a further 1,000 were in the pipeline if this action went ahead, the shop stewards committee recommendation for blacking was agreed by a two to one majority at works meetings. And management have backed off.

The Trident contract was to have been a small one, but the carrot offered by management was the promise of more work in the future. The action of the Rolls Royce workers shows it is possible to stop the missiles if you're determined enough.

Greenwich NALGO

GREENWICH COUNCIL'S community work team held a one-day strike last week to protest the siting of cruise missiles in Britain, supported by their NALGO branch.

Thirty people turned up on 1 December to picket Woolwich Arsenal, and distributed CND leaflets at the nearby market. The workers decided that actions speak louder than resolutions when it comes to opposing the missiles.

POEU Broad Left

Defeat for waverers

THE ANGER of Post Office Engineering Union members found voice last weekend, when a special meeting of the POEU Broad Left voted 77-23 to remove from its slate the four Broad Left National Executive Council members who voted to call off industrial action against Mercury. Their votes gave a majority to the NEC's right wing, and led to the recent conference decision not to fight the injunction.

As many speakers pointed out, this has meant the National Graphical Association now stands alone in fighting Tebbit's anti-union laws. The meeting sent a message of support to the NGA, and called on all POEU branches to do likewise. The next NEC

meeting will be considering a similar resolution.

The result of the Broad Left vote surprised many supporters. Such a decision has never been taken before. In previous years, debates on election slates have centred on whether or not to include non-

Broad Left people, and attempts to mandate NEC members have always floundered.

This time, arguments against deleting the four names found little favour. Scapegoating and witch-hunting were the main threats used against the decision. But they cut no ice against the fact that the NEC had fallen at the first fence because of the four waverers.

'We have fought a long time in our branches to change the leadership of this union,' said speaker after speaker. 'How can

we go back this time round and argue to support such people?' Many speakers pointed out that, regardless of the slate, their branch members would not be re-nominating the four next year.

By Carol Turner

The decision to call off the Mercury action has led directly to an ignominious defeat for the action against privatisation. Already, half of the 2,000-odd engineers have returned to work. The rest

will follow this week, under an agreement which allows management to retain the new technology introduced during the lockout, and to redeploy the engineers at will.

Important lessons have been learned by Broad Left supporters. The question of selective action as a winning strategy has been settled. The Broad Left decision represents a big step forward. In future there will be a clearer understanding among militants of the meaning of electing a slate committed to carrying out a fighting programme for the union.

52 arrests at NALGO lobby

ON 7 DECEMBER 15000 NALGO members went on strike and attempted to lobby their employers in support of the residential social workers claim for parity with other local government workers. Their right to lobby the negotiations was denied by a massive police presence. 52 residential social workers were arrested, and will appear at Horseferry Road magistrates court on 4 January. MONICA HURST and DAVE DRAYCOTT from Newham NALGO explained what happened to Socialist Action.

The strike was called to coincide with the meeting with the national local authority employers. After 5 years the employers still refuse to negotiate on the claim. The aim of the demonstration was to influence the employers with a show of strength, but NALGO nationally immediately backed down when the police banned the lobby from Belgravia Square on the grounds that there was no room for such a large gathering.

With over 1500 members on all out strike several branches were determined the lobby should take place. In the

absence of strong national stewarding, local stewards were arrested and rank and file members bundled back into the march.

The next stage of the dispute is a ballot being conducted among residential social workers for escalation of the dispute into 'social hours' only — 9am to 5pm — working by residential workers. With much of the work in residential homes done in the early morning and evening, it would amount to a virtual all-out strike.

The NALGO leadership must be forced to respond by a campaign for further escalation to an all-



15000 NALGO members on last Wednesday's demonstration

out strike by residential workers and other NALGO members. Without support from the rest of NALGO, the social workers can be isolated and more easily defeated.

Although Labour Party branches and constituencies have given support to the residential social workers, most Labour authorities have kept their heads down or been openly hostile. This is incredibly short sighted. If this dispute is successful it can only strengthen the local authorities' fight against privatisation and the cuts.

● The 52 arrested will appear at Horseferry Road magistrates court at 10am on 4 January. Support for the picket outside is welcomed.

Welsh Grunwick

SINCE AUGUST, 60 mainly women workers have been picketing the Lefray toy factory at Aberbeeg in South Wales. They were locked out after a one-day strike for trade union recognition. The increasingly bitter dispute has divided the community and even families as scabs have gone on working.

public meeting last Thursday Ferry Thomas, vice-president of the South Wales NUM pledges the full support of the miners. The women from Lefray will be grateful for any messages of support or financial contributions. Above all they want supporters to join the pickets.

The workers, members of the IGWU, have called mass pickets leading to police violence and a number of arrests. At a

Contact: Carol Howells, senior shop steward, c/o IGWU, Transport House, Cardiff Rd., Newport, Gwent.

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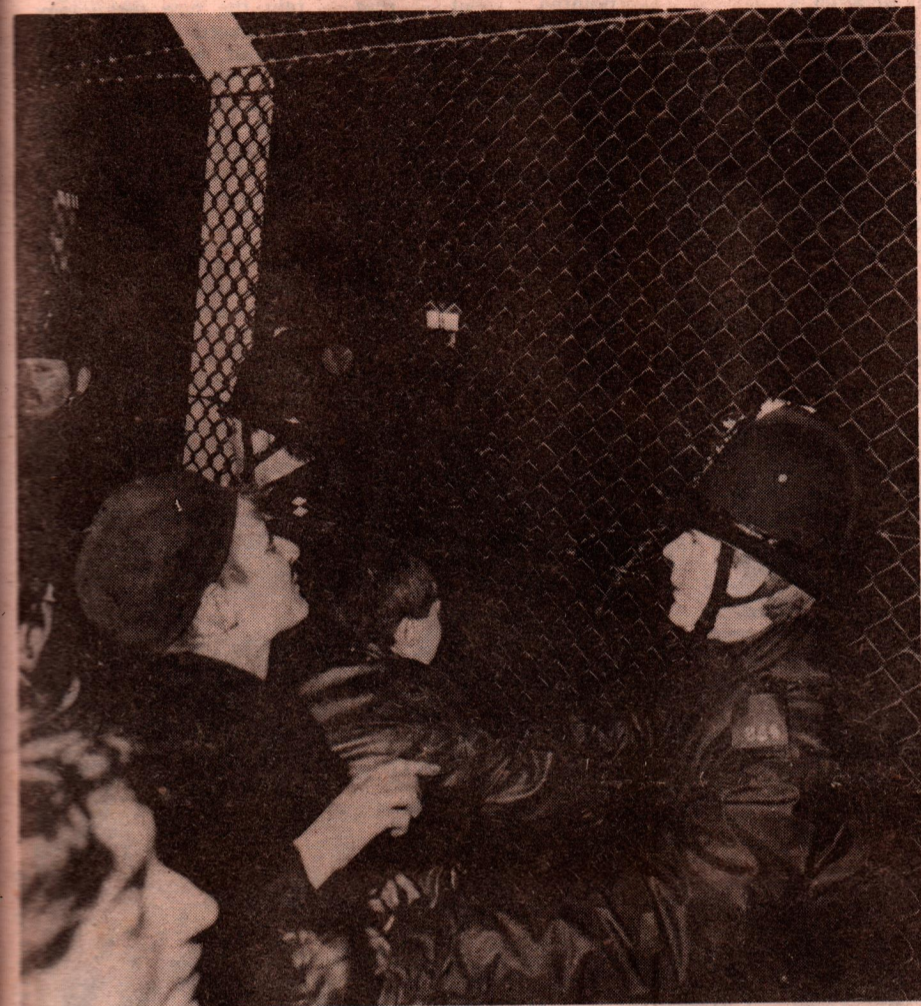
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A PIECE OF THE ACTION

by Cormac

A Socialist ACTION

30,000 sound at Greenham



Photos: BRENDA PRINCE and PAM ISHERWOOD (Format)

Reflections on Greenham By Sue Laker

WE ARRIVED at the main gate of USAF Greenham Common, having passed hundreds of coaches from all over Britain. At the camp thousands of women were preparing to sound around Greenham. Walking round the perimeter, the changes since last December's action seemed startling. Row after row of barbed wire, more police and new army presence are the visible reminders of the arrival of the cruise missiles. But we were also walking across wire cut down from older fences. The mood of the women was stronger and more determined

than ever. On every hour the noise of pots and pans, whistles, musical instruments and voices echoed around Greenham. At the main entrance I joined a crowd of women outside the gate. Candles were lit and mirrors held up, as it began to get dark. Wool was passed round, creating a massive human web. The atmosphere became more militant. Word went round: 'be as noisy as possible'. The scenes of women bringing down the fence, while the police and army watched helplessly, was inspiring.

Tories throw out Sex Equality Bill

SEXUAL equality must be subordinated to the needs of the employing class. That was the Victorian answer given by the Tories to Jo Richardson, Labour MP for Barking and Labour's new spokesperson for women's rights, when she moved her private members Bill in the Commons on Friday. The vote was 118 for and 191 against.

The Bill's intention was to simplify existing equality legislation by combining the Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination Acts into one and to sharpen up the law in areas where these Acts have been found to be weak. If passed the Bill would have:

- allowed part-time workers to claim a pro-rata rate of pay with full-time workers
- outlawed sexual harassment and discrimination against homosexuals at work
- given fathers the right to paternity leave
- introduced stronger

measures for positive action at school and at work

- ended discrimination against women in occupational pension schemes
- outlawed discrimination against women in excluding them from private clubs.

By Valerie Coultas

Jo pointed out that her supporters were not limited to committed feminists, she had also won the backing of the Women's Institute for these measures. After a detailed explanation of the measures

of the Bill, she ended attacking the ridiculous prejudices that fuelled discrimination against women in our society. Some men, she said, felt that women should not be allowed on snooker tables because they would rip up the cloth. How absurd this suggestion was when you compared it to the clumsiness of men in the home. 'How many times have I had to wipe up beer rings or tea-cup rings in my own home just because men find it impossible to use a mat?' she asked to a barrage of laughter.

But Tory Minister Alan Clarke's reply for the government wasn't so amusing. After a patronising introduction he embarked on a nit-picking reply that highlighted legal minutiae that could easily have been ironed out in the committee stage. Then he

just managed to mention that he didn't agree with positive discrimination on the grounds of sex — 'merit' should decide employment policy. And besides, the Bill was impractical because employers would not be able to afford it....

Nutshell

Put in a nutshell, the Tories' opposition to the Bill is that they are against women's equality in principle and it would cost too much anyway.

If you ever had any doubts that Margaret Thatcher's election as prime minister was not an advance for women, the massed ranks of Tories in the 'no' lobby should dispel your illusions once and for all!

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