

A Socialist ACTION

1984: Labour's crucial year

1984 is going to be the most decisive year faced by the Labour movement for a very long time indeed. 1983 was a year of major ruling class victories. Labour suffered a crushing defeat in the June election. The trade union movement suffered a humiliating rout over the NGA dispute. The political initiative and offensive passed clearly and decisively into the hands of the employers and government.

Thatcher's aim in 1984 is to try to transform that into a thorough going organisational defeat of the Labour movement. To use the Tebbit ballot on political funds of unions to smash trade union affiliation to the Labour Party. To use the votes on closed shops to cut hundreds of thousands out of trade union membership in the next five years. To dismantle whole sections of local government controlled by the Labour Party. To use the elections for the European Parliament to try to impose a new humiliating defeat on Labour.

This is by far the greatest assault on the Labour movement for fifty years. If the Thatcher government were to succeed in what it aims for — which is in all seriousness in the next two years to remove perhaps half the trade unions from affiliation to the Labour Party, to eliminate half the closed shops in Britain, and to crush effective local government — then we can forget about effective gains being made in any other field.

There is going to be no successful anti-nuclear movement if Labour and the unions are defeated. No victory in the struggle for women's liberation if the trade union movement is savaged. No effective barriers against racism if Labour is crushed. The fight for every single progressive cause in 1984 is completely and inextricably bound up with the defence of the organised labour movement against one of the greatest assaults every launched on it. Defeating that attack is the number one priority in Britain this year.

For if that struggle is successful the end of 1984 can look very different to its beginning.

For more people than ever before will find out in 1984 that Thatcherism and capitalism mean not just mass unemployment and rising poverty but the elimination of major democratic rights, the weakening of the power of ordinary workers to defend themselves against their employer, the destruction of a major part of the most important social gains the working class has made.

Socialism and the Labour Party will not win because they are a good idea. Or because they are morally preferable. But because socialism and the labour movement are the *only* way the great mass of ordinary people — and that is the working class — can defend themselves, their health, their liberty, and finally their lives. That Thatcherism and capitalism represent not liberty and freedom but squalor, tyranny, backwardness and the threat of war.

That lesson may take painfully long to learn. It already has. But when it is absorbed there is no force on earth which is going to save either Margaret Thatcher or the system she represents. It is on that reality that Labour must build.

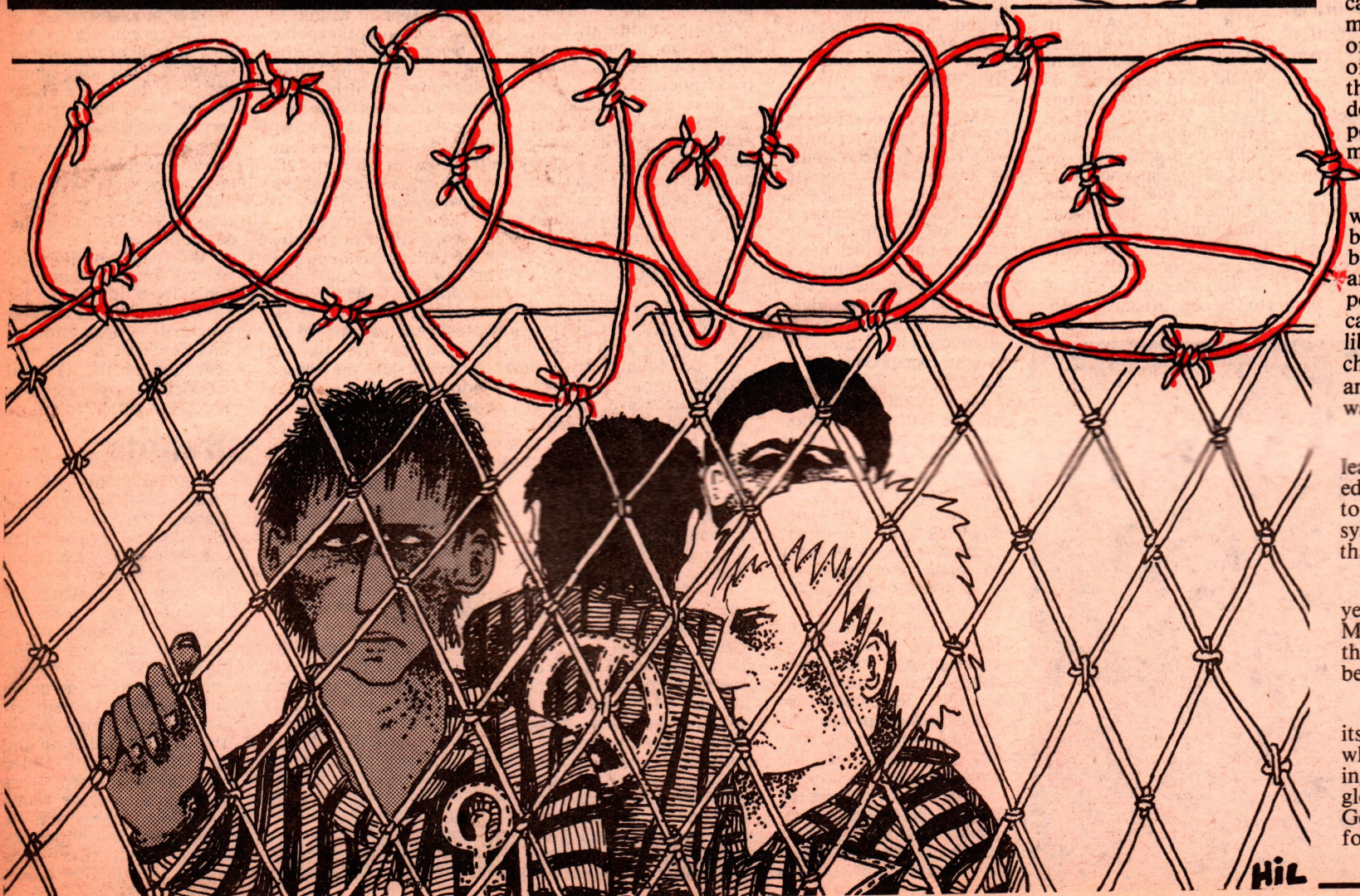
If Labour defends its organisations this year. If it launches the fight back which Len Murray and co. so successfully blocked in the past then George Orwell's 1984 will still be a year to remember.

The year the Labour movement dug itself out of the defeats of 1983. The year when it began to build something resembling a human society in Britain. That struggle, not Thatcherism, is the only way George Orwell's vision is going to be buried for ever.

BIG SISTER IS WATCHING YOU



SAATCHI & SAATCHI 1984



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Tory assault on the unions

1983 saw the worst attacks on the trade unions in Britain since the Second World War. 1984 will see the stakes even higher with two of the most vital issues to have faced the trade unions for fifty years.

The outcome of the ballots on trade union affiliation to the Labour Party, and on the closed shop, will shape the future of trade unionism in Britain for years to come. PAT HICKEY assesses the Tory anti-union drive and the fight back which is needed in 1984.

1983 ended grimly for trade unionists with the defeat of the NGA by the general council of the TUC. The TUC right wing, which had won control at the September Congress, passed its first test with flying colours. In one stroke Murray, Bassett, Duffy, Graham and co. crushed a campaign which had become a major focus in the fight against the Tories for militants all over Britain. They also handed Tebbit's anti-union laws their biggest success to date.

But the sell out of the NGA is only one part of the right wing's declared intention to make 'a major reassessment of the TUC's policies and role'. As Frank Chapple put it in his final address to the TUC Congress, the supposed aim is to 'blunt the attacks made on us ... and strengthen our appeal in the final part of the 20th century.'

The reality however is that the right wing are attempting to impose a totally new model of trade unionism in Britain. It is

modelled on the United States 'non-political business unions'. This course is quite openly advocated by figures such as Chapple and Alistair Graham.

The reality of the right's line is that far from 'strengthening our appeal' its policies are disastrous. In the United States 'non-political unions' have resulted in union membership falling from nearly forty per cent of the workforce following World War II to less than twenty per cent today.

In Britain the background to the right wing's offensive is the serious decline in trade union membership which is now taking place. From a high point of 12.2 million members (52 per cent of the employed workforce) in 1979, union membership has now fallen below 10 million (under 50 per cent of the employed population).

While the background to this decline is mass unemployment the fall is not only accounted for by joblessness.

After the revival of the trade unions during the Second World War trade union membership then stagnated for fifteen years in the 1950s and early 1960s. The big increase in trade union membership as a proportion of the workforce came with the wave of strike struggles after 1968.

This trend of rising strike struggle has now been put into reverse. The number of days lost in strikes in 1983 was the lowest since 1976 — a year of Labour incomes policy. The decline in days lost in strikes was from 29.5 million in 1979 to 12 million in 1980, 4.3 million in 1981, 5.3 million in 1982, and under 4 million in 1983.

Changes

Alongside this decline in trade union membership has gone important changes at the base of the unions. The number of shop stewards in manufacturing has been almost halved from 130,000 to 80,000. The number of full time shop stewards in manufacturing has fallen from 4,000 to 2,000.

Even these figures however understate some of the real features of the decline. In many areas where shop stewards committees exist they have been severely weakened by a combination of manage-

ment repression and an inability to mobilise the members.

As a result an increasing number of trade union members have been unwilling to take shop stewards posts. These now have much reduced effective strength behind them and carry significant dangers of victimisation. This helps explain the decline of shop steward strength and numbers.

The management alternative to effective union organisation has been the growth of Joint Consultative Committees. This process has been seen clearly in the NHS following the defeat last year. A recent survey found the majority of employees in Britain are now in workplaces with some form of 'consultative' body with the employers.

Nevertheless even these present anti-union attacks are still only pushing back the edges of trade unionism. The next stage of the Tory plan is not the 'collaboration' with the TUC which Len Murray is dreaming of, but a policy to really smash large sections of the movement. The two key Tory goals are to break trade union links with the Labour Party and to smash the closed shop. On that basis trade union membership could be cut back by millions. That is the aim of the Tories new union bill.



NGA picket

Photo: MORNING STAR

Tebbit wields the axe

The targets of the new 1983 anti-union assault are clear and interlinked. They are firstly to break the links between the trade unions and the Labour Party — thereby weakening the political protection of the trade unions and wrecking the present finances of the Labour Party. The second goal is to smash the closed shop. The only alternative source of funds to union support that would be offered to the Labour Party — that of state funding of political parties — would be used to establish even greater autonomy of the Parliamentary Labour Party from any form of democratic control.

Right wing dominated 'non-political' trade unions; a Parliamentary Labour Party with finances removing it from control by the Labour Party as a whole — these are the goals of the ruling class reorganisation of the labour movement.

The basis for this Tory

campaign is quite clear. Five major unions already have a majority of members contracting out of the political levy — SOGAT, NGA, ASTMS, COHSE and the ACTT. Other unions with large numbers of members contracting out include TASS, FBU, UCATT and the

Tobacco Workers.

The Tories drew further encouragement from a detailed MORI poll in January 1982 which showed a majority against Labour Party affiliation even in such unions as the TGWU, AUEW, GMBATU, EEPTU, NUR and USDAW. In that MORI poll only NUPE and the NUM would have supported affiliation to the Labour Party. With the trade unions split from their political organisation in the Labour Party the scale of attack that would be mounted on the unions would make anything attempted by the Tebbit laws so far appear small.

It is clear there is going to be no effective cam-

paign on Labour Party affiliation waged by the TUC general council. At the 1983 Congress almost one-third of the TUC was not affiliated to the Labour Party. In the right wing that dominates the General Council at least half of the trade unions involved are non-Labour Party affiliates.

By Pat Hickey

Murray is not directing the TUC to closer links with Labour. He is going in exactly the opposite direction. Murray's declared aim is to pursue a policy of talking 'to any political party which has a chance of forming a government in the future.' Some of the more right wing unions are engaged in discussions with the SDP in the perspective of a future SDP-Liberal-Labour coalition.

The entire orientation to 'non-political' trade unions is directly in line with the proposals of Tebbit, the SDP and the Liberals. If left unchallenged the line of the General Council is going to hand the employers their greatest political victory in fifty years.

The same applies to the second key issue which is coming up — the closed shop. Under the Tebbit laws, by November 1984 the closed shop will only be legal if it is accepted by 80 per cent of the workforce.

On present policies the effect of this even in companies such as BL is likely to be a defeat for the closed shop. The union bureaucracies in a com-

pany such as BL have directly collaborated in destroying working conditions and union organisation.

Productivity drives by the management have increased output in BL from six cars a worker in 1979 to 40 cars a worker in 1983. Working conditions, jobs, and union strength have been cut to ribbons. As the trade union leaders involved have done nothing to protect the BL workers against this type of assault, many employees in a company such as BL will see little relevance in continuing to subscribe to a union if it is not compulsory.

Closed

And if this is the case on the closed shop in a major company such as BL it will be equally true in smaller firms. By supporting successive Labour party incomes policies, and by capitulating to Thatcher's assault since 1979, the union leaderships have eroded the most elementary confidence in the trade unions among many workers. That is the harsh truth.

In industries such as the print, where new technology threatens, the NGA decision by the General Council opens up the way to direct union busting. The Tories' aim is to reduce trade union membership to perhaps only five to six million members — twenty five per cent of the working population. It is the biggest threat the trade unions have faced since the defeat of the General Strike. There is no doubt

that this is a *real* threat in Britain. Not a figment of fevered imagination. It is not something which can be achieved by employers and government tomorrow. But it is something which they are working towards.

That type of assault is going to be quite incapable of being repelled by the type of right wing union leadership which has created the mess in the first place. What the defence of the trade union movement now depends on is the effective organisation of the left wing within it.

Furthermore that left — those forces which really fight for independent and Labour affiliated trade unionism — has to be organised at every level. Attacks such as that on affiliation to the Labour Party, or on the closed shop, cannot just be fought at local level — although the struggle must start there. It demands *national* organisation of those prepared to defend an independent Labour affiliated trade union movement and basing that on local organisation at every level.

Right

This perspective for reversing the whole right wing trend inside the trade unions is today a minority within the trade unions — there is no doubt of that. But the right wing can only be defeated if that minority is organised to lead the fight back against the Tories at every level.

It needs a quite different type of organisation to that which left trade

union leaders have relied on. Arthur Scargill and others have opposed the right wing mainly on the committees in the TUC or their own particular sectors. They have not challenged the right wing across the trade union movement as a whole.

The recent talk by Arthur Scargill of the need to establish a left wing alternative to the right's Trade Unions for a Labour Victory would be welcome if they are put into practice. They would weaken the hold of the right wing and leave less room for figures such as Moss Evans to sit on the fence.

But there is no point in waiting for an initiative to come from the top. The left on the TUC has talked much of its opposition to Thatcher and to the present line of the General Council. *Action* has come much less often.

Ballots

In order to win the ballots on affiliation to the Labour Party and on the closed shop organisation locally and in each union has to start now.

Each constituency Labour Party needs to establish a campaign to win the ballot on affiliation to the Labour Party locally. Every trade union branch, every broad left needs to campaign to win the vote on affiliation and the closed shop. Coupled with the support for every individual struggle which takes place these are the single most important issues facing the trade union and labour movement in 1984.

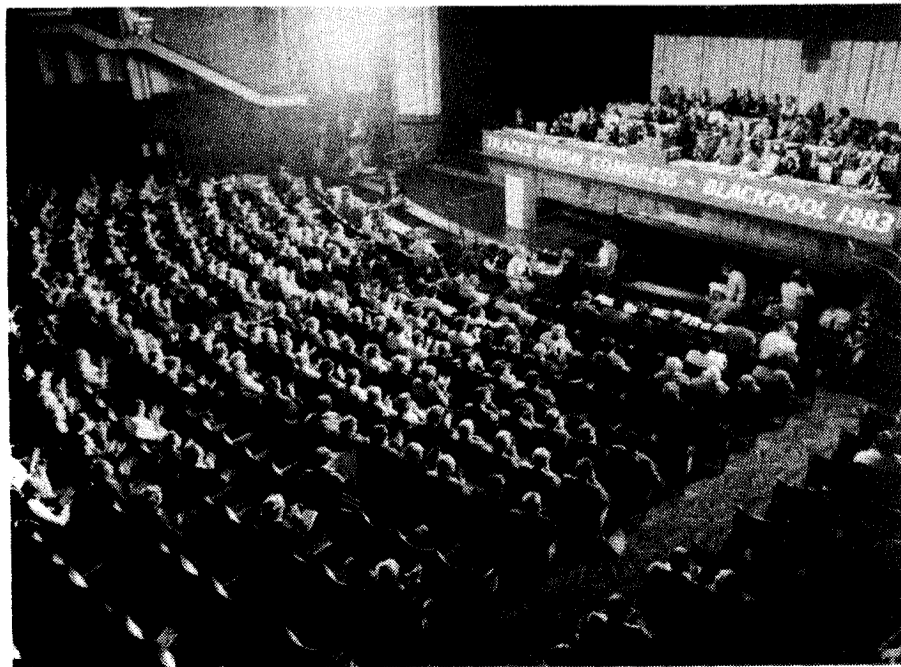


Photo: JOHN HARRIS

Central America



Photo: CHRISTIAN POVEDA (Camerawork)

FMLN fighters

New year victories for Salvador rebels

THE FMLN guerrillas in El Salvador celebrated the new year with two spectacular military victories. First they overran the headquarters of the US-trained 45th Infantry brigade at El Paraiso, 36 miles north of San Salvador. During the attack at least 41 government soldiers, including two army colonels were killed by the insurgents.

Fighting for the army post lasted for 14 hours, and the FMLN captured 200 assault rifles and 40 larger weapons, before burning the base to the ground. Following this attack the rebels destroyed the important half-mile long Cascatlan bridge thus effectively cutting the Pan American highway, isolating hundreds of square miles of the country.

Since the late summer the FMLN in El Salvador has won a series of victories which have seriously undermined the morale of the army. A huge corridor of free movement for the guerrillas has been opened in the north of the country.

The FMLN military offensive follows the collapse of the US planned pacification project in San Vicente province, designed to permanently drive out the guerrillas. The San Vicente project was designed to once and for all demonstrate 'what the army could do'. The failure of the operation, and the FMLN military victories, have created a severe crisis in both the army and government leadership.

Right wing officers sympathetic to the semi-fascist ARENA party have taken control of the army and isolated the pro-American chief of staff Casanova. The army itself has responded with a series of horrifying massacres against the civilian population, and there has been a new upsurge of activity by the right wing death squads. Rumours abound in San Salvador of the possibility of a right wing military coup against the Magana government.

By Paul Lawson

The United States is now faced with a serious dilemma in El Salvador. Short of direct military intervention there is little that the United States can do to prevent the collapse of the regime. The FMLN/FDR on the other hand have their own dilemma — the possibility that a generalised offensive would provoke direct US intervention.

Meanwhile the main US effort in the region continues to be concentrated in trying to overthrow the Sandinistas in Nicaragua. The plan of the

US-backed 'contras' is well known — to capture a major town in Nicaragua to create — an anti-Sandinista 'provisional government'. In the face of this threat the Sandinistas have responded with a series of moves to strengthen Nicaragua militarily, while at the same time strengthening their own political position.

Conscription has been introduced and the popular militias strengthened. The Committees for the Defence of the Revolution (CDRs) have been preparing civilian defence against air attacks. In addition the FSLN leadership has made a number of concessions to the internal opposition, for example releasing prisoners convicted of counter-revolutionary acts and announcing an amnesty for counter-revolutionaries abroad.

As the US presidential election campaign gathers pace, it becomes more difficult for the Reagan team to contemplate an invasion of Nicaragua — the FSLN moves are designed precisely to gain time to make that invasion more difficult.

1984 looks like being a crucial year for Central America. Whatever happens in El Salvador, the crucial question remains whether the Sandinistas will retain power in Nicaragua.

US threat to peace

By Stuart Holland MP

Stuart Holland, shadow spokesperson for overseas development and cooperation, and Donald Anderson, a shadow spokesperson for foreign affairs, have recently returned from an eight-day official Labour Party visit to Nicaragua, El Salvador and Honduras. Below, Stuart records his impressions of the visit.

AFTER A DECADE in which Vietnamisation had become taboo in American politics, Central America — Reagan's backyard — is becoming another Vietnam. Some of the facts are already well-known.

Major

In Honduras, the United States has already undertaken two major manoeuvres — Big Pine One and Two — building airstrips, training local troops and notoriously giving succour and support to the contras in their operation in Nicaragua. These are exercises by occupying forces over which the Honduran government has little or no control.

When we asked the deputy foreign minister and two senior Foreign Office officials if they could confirm that Big Pine Three would be in the Ocotepeque region, bordering El Salvador and Guatemala, they replied: 'We don't know yet, the news was only in the papers yesterday!' The Americans are an occupying power; their ambassador proconsuls and the government a puppet regime.

Picture

In El Salvador the picture is the same, but different. A well-organised popular army or guerrilla force — the FDR/FMLN — can take almost any territory outside the capital and hold it for some of the time. The 25,000-strong Salvadorean army can only deploy 8,000 men to fight, and only 2,000 crack troops — recently cracked themselves by the popular army which last month retook Cacahuatique in the north eastern Morazan province (near where Big Pine Three in neighbouring Honduras is scheduled).

The notorious death squads — frequently soldiers in 'civies' — plus Guernica-style bombing of civilian population, as in Tenancingo in September, are not gaining hearts or minds.

Meanwhile, the FDR/FMLN's policy of returning government troops who surrender through the Red Cross has both increased the army's willingness to lay down

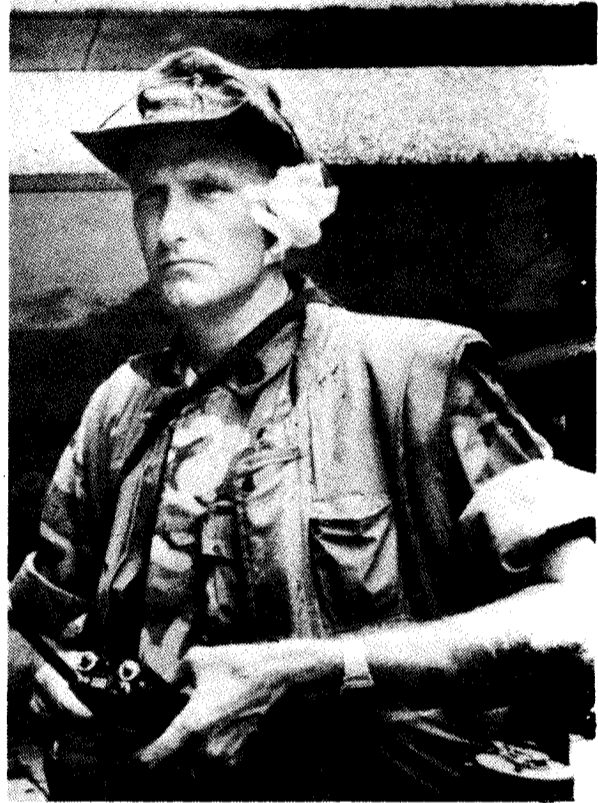
arms and thereby swelled the guerillas' arsenal. The situation is so serious in El Salvador that the Americans may well have to intervene directly with ground troops after the forthcoming elections on 25 March — a second main stage in the Vietnamisation of the region.

The FDR/FMLN at present plan to boycott the elections. Not without reason, when no assurances on physical safety — other than behind bars — can be given to opposition politicians, and when more than 5,400 people have been killed last year alone.

Prospect

It is possible that even President Reagan will balk at the prospect of US troops directly involved in Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua in a pre-election year, and that this may take the pressure off Nicaragua in the near future. The reported CIA evaluation of up to 20,000 US casualties in the event of an invasion of Nicaragua is a more powerful long-term deterrent.

Meanwhile, the commitments recently made by the Sandinistas on the timing of elections, and their proposals to the Contradora states for mutual non-aggression also make it more difficult for the US administration to 'legitimate' a Grenada-style invasion, allegedly designed to restore democracy. It certainly is



US adviser in San Salvador

clear that the American discovery of the importance of human rights, land reform, and democratic elections in Central America was provoked by the Sandinista revolution.

Decade

For decades, the US have neglected such issues with the partial exception of the Carter administration, in most of Latin America. Demanding land reform today in El Salvador, it has no development programme for Honduras and has cut both aid and trade with Nicaragua. Pressing for action to restrain the death

squads, it still subsidises the Salvadorean regime and plans to double military aid to El Salvador.

Obsessed with claims of Soviet-Cuban destabilisation, it will not recognise that the problems of Central America are north-south, not east-west. The US will use any issue — including pressure on human rights or for elections as an instrument of counter-insurgency in the region.

It is the United States which threatens the peace and destabilises the security of the region, and the United States which should be pressured, from Europe as well as the Americas, to withdraw.



FSLN leader Borge talks to Miskito indians

IRELAND UNFREE



The Harrods' bombing

The tragic deaths in London have shaken us all. Human life is irreplaceable. Misery and sorrow goes on. In the West End of London or in West Belfast, bombs, bullets, and the violence of war bring death, mutilation and senseless destruction.

Supporters of the Labour Committee on Ireland are no cheer leaders for the Provisional IRA, but neither are we to be steamrollered by the hypocrisy of pious condemnation.

The Surrey Stockbroker interviewed on television outside Harrods said he thought it was people like him who were to blame because they had not done enough to think about a political solution. The Tory government would do well to consider that.

Bernadette McAliskey said some time ago: 'it doesn't matter at all whether I support the armed struggle. I am just one person. What I say is this, whatever I think, and whether I like it or not, as long as British troops remain in Northern Ireland, and as long as there is no political solution, someone is going to pick up a gun. They are going to do that whether I like it or not, so what I am trying to do is to look and fight in my own way to find that political solution.' The statement by the IRA that neither the shooting in the Republic nor the Harrod's bomb were authorised has increased speculation on an open power struggle inside the Provisionals.

The Sinn Fein Ard Feis (pronounced 'ard-esh') did not indicate the imminence of such a confrontation.

Widely reported as a conference of change the Ard Feis was seen to herald the smooth transfer of power to a new generation of leaders flushed with electoral success who were keen to shed their traditional image and create a popular movement modelled along socialist republican lines.

Adam's address drew political lessons from the struggle. In the North he talked about building upon the 100,000 votes in the Westminster elections to become the majority nationalist party. The military struggle he said, was becoming increasingly political; targets were to be the army of occupation, RUC and UDR. Civilian casualties must be avoided.

He explained the importance of building a socialist republican party throughout Ireland's 32 Counties, and argued that different methods and tactics were necessary if Sinn Fein were to make progress in the South.

Since November, we have seen this approach undermined. In the North, the shooting of a Unionist politician justified by his support for the use of informers, has opened the door to more political assassinations.

In the South, unauthorised shootings of a soldier and Garda in the wake of the Tídey kidnap has led to cynicism about the claim of Sinn Fein not to be planning an extension of the armed struggle.

In Britain the Harrod's bomb sets back our shared goal of strengthening the Livingstone-type dialogue in order to build a withdrawal movement.

Who is in the driving seat of the republican movement will have to be resolved, but Sinn Fein leaders are anxious not to repeat the bloody factional battles of the early 70s.

In the wake of the Harrods bombing there have been renewed calls for the banning of Sinn Fein and the extension of the Prevention of Terrorism Act. A sustained campaign is being waged to make them out to be nothing more than 'terrorists'.

The objective of these campaigns is to make a political dialogue with the nationalist community in the Six Counties impossible. The labour movement faces the difficult job of resisting these pressures for an end to the dialogue.

We have to keep hammering home the point that without a political settlement, without the national rights of the Irish people being granted, and without the withdrawal of British troops, the violence will inevitably continue.

Niall Power, Secretary, LCI (based on an article shortly to appear in the new edition of 'Labour and Ireland'.)

Labour and the law

by Eric Heffer MP

BISHOP Goulburn of New South Wales, Australia, got it about right in his preface to *In Justice Within the Law* — a book by Mr Justice Evatt of the High Court of Australia on the Tolpuddle case, published before the Second World War. He said: 'Courts of law are the instruments by which the dominant opinion finds momentary legal expression.'

That sums up the situation that the NGA and all trade unions find themselves in today. If they take traditional trade union action they have their money and property taken from them, because of two Tory acts of parliament: the so-called Employment Acts of '80 and '82. These two acts are straightforward pieces of class legislation. They are designed to weaken the trade unions in their struggles to defend and improve the conditions of life of working class people.

They are the first acts of parliament in Thatcher's strategy of destroying the unions altogether. Over the years, trade unionists have made serious advances on their wages and conditions of employment. Under Thatcher, the Tories intend to turn the clock back.

There is an old saying, and a true one, that the Tories do not preach the class war they practice it. They are certainly practising it today with a vengeance.

Their present legislation attacks the working class movement on a number of fronts:

- first, the anti-trade union legislation designed first to weaken, and ultimately destroy, the unions
- second, legislation designed to cut the Labour Party's income, making it a less effective propaganda and campaigning force
- third, legislation to abolish some and control other local authorities — this done in the name of freedom
- fourth, legislation to privatise publicly owned industries — thereby wrecking the strength of trade unions in the public sector — and to stop future governments using those industries to rebuild the economy.

The Tories have further plans to make strikes illegal in some public sectors — undoubtedly as the first stage in making all strikes illegal.

What we see developing is a peculiarly British form of top-hatted fascism — whilst not the open,

brutal type of Mussolini or Hitler — which is nevertheless moving in an authoritarian direction. The Thatcherites want to use the full majesty of the present state against the labour movement, thereby by-passing the need for violent street groupings.

Law

We are constantly asked to accept the law. The real question is what kind of law are we asked to accept? I would draw attention to what Victor Feather the then-TUC general secretary said in 1972: 'We have always respected the law of the land, and never refused to accept a judgement of the High Court. But we do not accept this Act is the law of the land. It is part of the political dogma of the Tory Party to shatter the trade union movement in this country.'

Vic Feather, not renowned for a left wing bias, was speaking about the Heath Industrial Relations Act which was the modest forerunner of the present 1980 and 1982 Acts.

The '80 and '82 Acts have been greeted with satisfaction by those who want to weaken and destroy the trade unions. Mr Shah is a hero to them. He reminds me of what a Dorset land-owner Frampton wrote to the Prime Minister at the time of the Tolpuddle martyrs: 'The conviction and prompt execution of the sentence of transportation has given the greatest satisfaction to

all the higher classes, and will, I have no doubt, have a great effect amongst the labourers.'

The courage and dedication of the Tolpuddle martyrs gave the rest of the movement enormous strength. That same strength is unfortunately missing today. Instead of the entire movement rallying to the NGA, we have seen a retreat on the part of some trade union leaders. This adds up to one of the blackest periods in the history of the trade union movement.

In 1972 the TUC threatened a national strike to defend the dockers who were victims of the Industrial Relations Act. The Official Solicitor suddenly appeared like the good fairy, and the dockers were released. If a stand is made, it is remarkable how 'flexible' our capitalist rulers can be.

The Tories have learned by previous experiences. Instead of fines and imprisonment the new legislation gives the right to sequester union funds and property. The present legislation does not create martyrs. It can still be fought by united and determined action using the main weapon that workers organisations have.

Action

We rightly praise and support the workers in Poland for their efforts to develop free and independent trade unions. The British trade union movement should translate that support into action and defend our own rights in this country. Otherwise we shall find we have another type of authoritarian regime where workers rights have been virtually destroyed.

In his book *Fascism and Big Business*, Daniel Guerin says: 'The ...state begins by creating conditions that will permit the slashing of wages. This means the destruction of the labour unions, the end of their representation inside, the factories, the abolition of the right to strike, the nullification of union



Eric Heffer, chairperson of the Labour Party

Photo: GM COOKSON

Statement on the NGA dispute by the Campaign group of MPs

This Group notes with pleasure the support given by the TUC, Len Murray and the Labour leadership to the illegal industrial action undertaken by millions of people in Britain in support of nurses and other health workers. The Group believes that the NGA has the same right to support as the health workers and allies itself with unions such as the TGWU, NUPE, the miners, fire brigade workers and others who have offered such support.

This group upholds the right of every thinking, decent citizen to become involved in civil disobedience, including the defying of injunctions by the courts, in support of basic freedoms and in opposition to authoritarian measures passed by this Government.

This Group also pledges its active support to any industrial action, picketing and other action, that the NGA may decide to call for.

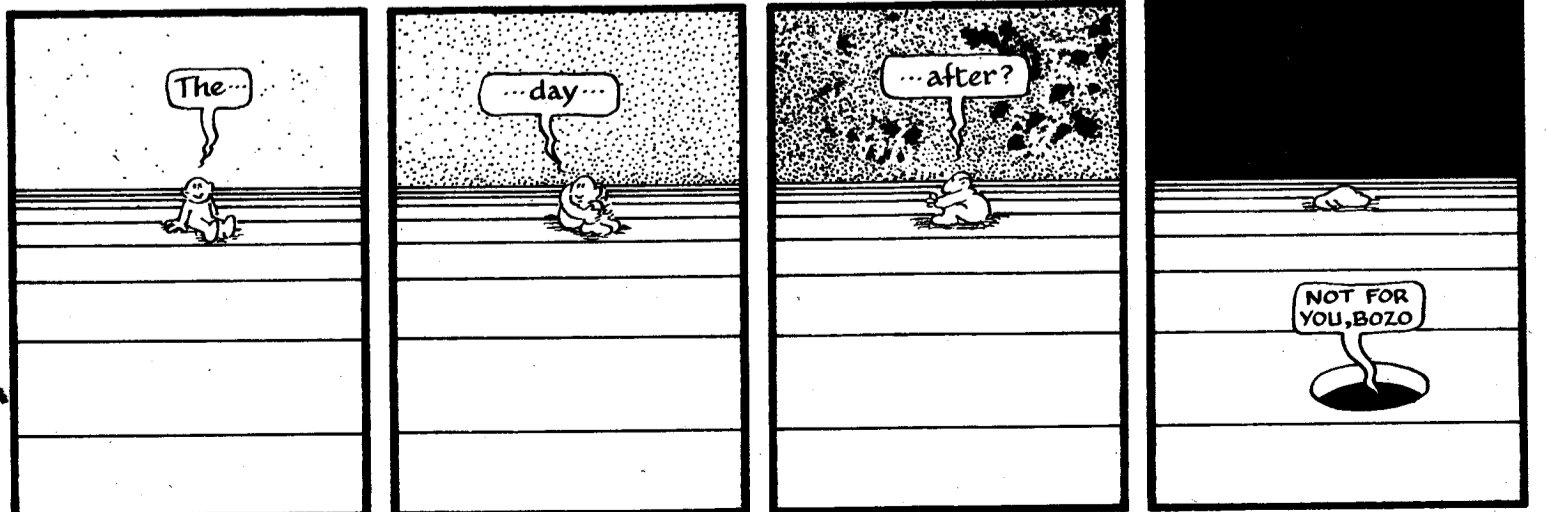
contracts, and the reestablishment of the absolute rule of the employers in their businesses.' If they get their way, this could equally apply to the Thatcherites.

It is time to regroup labour's forces. It is time

to begin the fightback, not only to win the next election but to ensure that labour is not so weakened and fragmented that it cannot seriously advance in the future. What is required is a bold socialist lead from the Labour Party. Part of that is a real fight against all class laws.

A PIECE OF THE ACTION

BY #38 12/83 CORMAC



THE ACTION INTERVIEW

Harrods bomb 'suspect' speaks

DURING Christmas, the British press was full of the horrors of the Harrod's bombing. Immediately, there were reassuring police reports that a suspect had been apprehended. That 'suspect', ALAN O'DWYER was arrested on Wednesday December 21, when the Birmingham house he was staying at was raided. CHRIS PALMER and ANITA RICHARDS spoke to Alan, and the two other residents, MARY PEARSON and CATH HAYWARD. All three are active on the Irish question. Alan is a former member of Sinn Fein. They told Socialist Action their impressions of the real purpose of the police raid.

Can you explain what happened when your house was raided?

Mary: The police rang the door bell at about 6.45 in the morning. Eight came in. They said they had a warrant under the Criminal Damage Act to search for explosive substances, but they didn't look in the right places for explosives or even in all the rooms. They even let Cath go to the toilet, and allowed me out of the house twice.

I'd like to know what evidence they used to get the warrant, because they were operating as if under the Prevention of Terrorism Act but with an explosives warrant. The PTA statistics kept by the National Council for Civil Liberties — maybe this is a way police are using to get round it.

Most of the time they spent looking through papers and boxes of books we've collected for Irish prisoners. Maybe they wanted to send them Christmas cards!

Then Cath told me that Alan had been arrested. I dived across the bonnet of their car in my night clothes until they told me where they were taking him. Our first priority then was to make sure Alan got support, and make sure the police knew he had support. I got a solicitor and contacted Roy Hattersley, our MP, and Claire Short MP.

What was happening to you meanwhile, Alan?

Alan: My flat in London was raided at 5.30 on the Wednesday morning when armed police kicked in the door. But I had already left for Birmingham. When they arrested me in Birmingham I was taken to Sutton Coalfields Police Station. They told me I was arrested under Section 10 of the PTA — regarding involvement in the preparation, instigation and commission of acts of terrorism — although they couldn't tell me what this part of the Act said.

I was questioned about Sinn Fein in Britain and Birmingham, and about the Troops Out movement. Ninety-nine per cent of the questions were purely political, like asking what I thought of certain people. I didn't answer but quoted Shakespeare, about giving everyone thine ear but few thy voice.

We went over this for hours. In the afternoon two detectives who refused to give their names, arrived from London. We went over the same ground with me declining to answer. I made a statement accounting for my movements on the days in question,



Aftermath of the Harrods bomb attack. Inset, Birmingham Troops Out supporters, including members of Birmingham Trades Council, march in Belfast last year.

which as far as I can gather they haven't bothered to check. Questioning about Harrods was minimal — just did I do it, or did I know anything about it?

It was just an information-gathering exercise aimed at the Irish community in general, and particularly organisations involved in working for a progressive political solution to the British occupation of Ireland. From what I can gather, the questions they asked others they arrested were purely political as well.

What do you think the raids were aimed at?

Alan: They were aimed on the one hand at intimidating people, to stop them voicing their opinions on British occupation. On the other hand they arrested 'suspects'. Subsequent media hysteria misleads the public into thinking the authorities are in control of the situation. But their record over the last six or seven years regarding IRA activity in Britain gives a lie to that.

The IRA have been able to do what they want. Few people arrested are ever charged with anything.

Mary: They are aimed at silencing people through, for example worries about their families. The police know we are two single parents with four

children. They disrupted us at 7am a few days before Christmas — that's not just chance.

What did you do after the raid?

Mary: We contacted progressive MPs and councillors, Labour Party officials, people on the West Midlands County Police Committee, and the NCCL.

Alan: I'm making statements to these people. I'd advise anybody held under the PTA to do this, and take it up in their trade union or any other useful organisation. Don't just let the thing slide. We can show at the end of the day how their actions aren't aimed at stopping terrorists, but at stopping political discussion.

Cath: Contact any MP, even Tories — because one of them has just spoken out against the PTA when one of his constituents was arrested.

Mary: On the Friday after the arrests, TOM organised a picket with trades council support to protest against the PTA. I also made an immediate police complaint, which will take ages, but I think you should go through all the channels available to you under law. For example I'm taking civil action for theft against a police officer who stole a petition dur-

ing the raid.

But don't just wait until someone is arrested, get progressive political lines on Ireland passed by trade unions and other organisations now, so that support is there in a crisis. I'm doing that now, for example, through Labour Party women's sections.

Were these protests effective?

Alan: I was held for 29 hours. They told me some of the people who had phoned them up. It definitely made them think twice, and think the whole thing would rebound on them because so many people were getting involved — MEPs, people from London and Coventry, not just local people.

Mary: What the press said about arresting a suspect for the Harrods bombing is just a smoke-screen. It was a political arrest to update the files.

Alan: A point I'd like to make is that my name was released to the media by the Irish Freedom Movement without my knowledge. I wouldn't have authorised it because it doesn't do any good having your name published at the beginning.

People have been misled so much by the media that they believe there is no smoke without fire. It was just a cheap publicity stunt on the part of

the Irish Freedom Movement which did me more harm than good. The whole media thing has been an exercise in disinformation, going along with the police line.

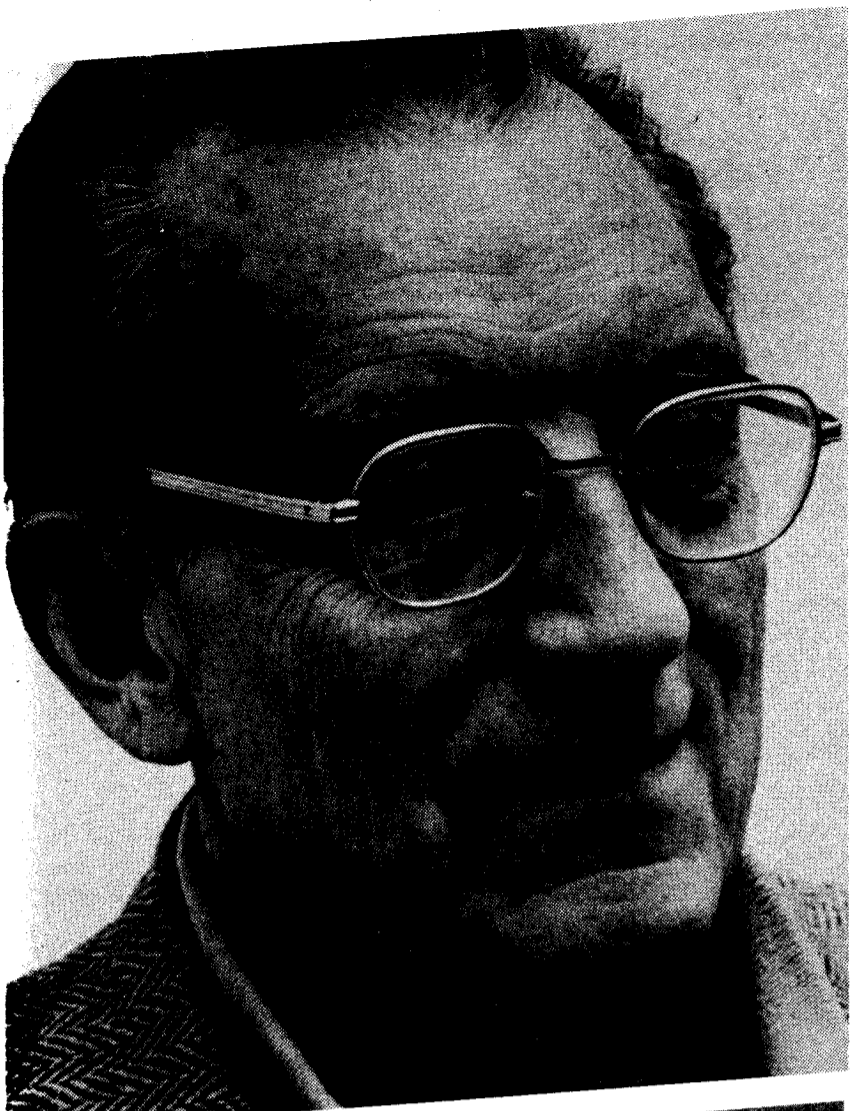
What are your feelings about the Harrods bombing?

Alan: They had 40 minutes warning and a car number and location, but couldn't find the car in time. Either they are incompetent or somebody in authority let their rank and file walk into it in order to create a situation the media could respond to. They're supposed to react to nuclear war in four minutes but they couldn't react to this in 40.

Mary: What happened was horrible, but while there's a war going on in Ireland these things will happen. The Irish people will take action against their oppressors to affect the government of the country that's occupying.

This sort of thing will continue to happen until there's a political solution in Ireland. And the only solution can be total British withdrawal. Nothing else will work.

Alan: The ultimate responsibility for every single death, every single injury, lies with successive British governments.



Joseph Hansen

We have been seeing the Cuban revolution in the light of the Cuban revolution, and we have seen the Cuban revolution as a model of the revolution in Latin America. The Cuban revolution was the single most important political influence on the revolution in Latin America, and the New Jewel Movement in Grenada. The events in Central America and the Caribbean fully confirm Hansen's conclusion that the Cuban leadership is not Stalinist. He was trying to extend the revolution and not block it. The Cuban revolution was no chance event. A leadership with the political character of the Cuban Communist Party can take it in certain semi-colonial countries. At the same time the political character of the Cuban leadership was Hansen's main argument. Hansen's analysis was written, not a word needs to be changed. Joseph Hansen was born in Utah in 1894. He was a member of the CP, and he was a member of the CP in 1950. He was a member of the CP in 1950. He was a member of the CP in 1950. He was a member of the CP in 1950.



THE

ONE OF THE byproducts of Cuba's fresh leap into world prominence has been a renewal of interest in the nature of the Cuban revolution and in the political character of its leadership. Questions such as the following are being discussed: Does the presence of Cuban advisers and troops in Angola, Ethiopia, and elsewhere in Africa prove — as Washington's propaganda machine alleges — that Castro is serving as a puppet of Moscow? Or is the Cuban government seeking to advance a policy of its own that happens, for the time being, to be congruent with Moscow's aims?

What does Havana's rising influence show about the present status of the Cuban revolution? Has a parasitic caste become entrenched in Cuba? Has the revolution degenerated to such a point that it must be said that a Stalinist regime has usurped power? With the wisdom of hindsight must it now be acknowledged that the Cuban revolution was Stalinist-led from the beginning? Or do the new developments speak otherwise, indicating continuation of a policy to extend the revolution internationally, thus cutting across the Stalinist policy of 'peaceful coexistence' with the imperialist powers and their capitalist system?

Questions running along these lines are not new. They were raised and debated during the first years of the Cuban revolution. The conclusions reached have proved of immense service in analysing subsequent developments.

At present Washington is pushing the line that Cuba has become completely dependent on the Soviet Union, abjectly obeys orders from the Kremlin, and has sent its troops to Africa to serve as surrogates for Soviet troops. These allegations conform to the pattern of the State Department's well-aged propaganda picturing the Soviet Union as an aggressive power intent on conquering the world. The truth is that the main objective of foreign policy as pursued by the Soviet

ruling caste is maintaining of the status quo; that is, 'peaceful coexistence' with the imperialist powers and the capitalist system.

by Joseph Hansen

If it were true that the Soviet bureaucracy had shifted from this policy to one of extending Soviet power and influence through the use of armed force, the turn would represent a new element of transcendent importance in world affairs. A reassessment of the nature of the Soviet government would be called for, along with a possible re-determination of the revolutionary Marxist attitude toward the ruling caste. The analysis might place the Cubans in a favourable light as the spearhead chosen to open the offensive.

However, the State Department is not acting on the assumption that the Soviet Union has adopted a class-struggle policy. The State Department distinguishes Castro from the Soviet bureaucracy.... Washington's attitude is hardly surprising — it is simply an imperialistic reaction to the efforts made by the Cuban leadership to defend their revolution by extending it.

The course of the Cubans can be conveniently divided into three phases:

1. In the great wave of enthusiasm over the Cuban revolution following its victory, many attempts were made in Latin America to emulate the July 26 Movement. The attempts were supported by Havana both politically and materially. Extension of the Cuban revolution appeared to hinge on extension of the methods used by the July 26 Movement — mainly initiation and pursuit of guerrilla warfare. This period reached its high point at the OLAS conference held in Havana in August 1967. There Castro subjected the reformist Latin American Communist parties to scorching criticism for their sabotage of guerrilla war. At that moment, Che Guevara was in Bolivia conducting the experiment that was to end in his death ...

2. The crushing of Guevara's ambitious project capped a series of defeats for the groups that took the road of guerrilla war. Castro now made a turn ... While still giving some aid — principally training — to the protagonists of guerrilla war in Latin America, the Cubans ceased fostering it as the royal road to success.
- The economic situation in Cuba

also worried them; the American blockade was inducing strains. The Cuban leaders stepped up the goals on the economic front, hoping by extraordinary exertion to overcome the effects of the American stragglehold. Unrealistic goals, notably in the 1970 campaign to produce ten million tons of sugar, resulted in dislocations of economic planning and exhaustion among the workers.

In view of such consequences, the Cuban leaders had to reassess priorities and set more modest goals. The pause for reflection over the meaning of the failures of guerrilla war and the consideration of possible alternatives lasted until 1975.

Washington evidently interpreted the downturn in guerrilla war in Latin America as evidence of the domestication of the Cuban revolution; and the State Department — whose blockade had failed to isolate Cuba — began probing ways to bring Castro under the general framework of 'peaceful coexistence'.

3. The breakup of the Portuguese empire, with climactic liberation struggles in the colonies and the toppling of the Salazar-Caetano dictatorship in Lisbon, presented new openings for the Cubans. They had already established ties with various guerrilla forces in Africa, Guevara himself having participated in this work. In Angola, the Cubans granted aid — most noticeably in the form of combat troops — to counter the imperialist efforts of Washington and Pretoria to block the liberation struggle.

The Cubans were invited by the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), which received international recognition as the legitimate government of Angola, to send material aid, including troops, to boost the country's defense against the efforts of South Africa and the United States to reimpose imperialist rule. The pattern was repeated in the case of Ethiopia....

The American Trotskyists have criticised Havana's foreign policy on several counts:

1. The extrapolation on a continental scale of the efficacy of guerrilla war seemed to us to be based on a misjudgement of both the Cuban experience and the possibilities for its repetition. The key to the toppling of Batista was the rise in the class struggle in Cuba. The rise was not 'sparked' by the guerrilla actions; on the contrary, the rise made it possible in this instance to win even through guerrilla actions.



RE

THE CUBAN



were met head-on by Castro. A more difficult problem is the example set by the Soviet ruling caste, which liquidated the proletarian democracy fostered under Lenin and Trotsky. No model of proletarian democracy exists in the world today to counter the totalitarian forms of rule upheld by the Kremlin.

It would be untrue to say that the battle against bureaucratism has been won in Cuba. The indications are that this insidious social disease has gained, as the introduction of ranks in the armed forces would indicate. Similar signs include the continuation of the ban of formation on tendencies and factions in the Communist Party and the jailing of the independent-minded poet Heberto Padilla on March 20, 1971; the brush-off given to protests against the jailing by leftist intellectuals like Carlos Fuentes, Gabriel García Márquez, Octavio Paz, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Mario Vargas Llosa; the show trial of Padilla, which included a Moscow style 'confession' by the poet; and the accompanying clampdown in the cultural field, where the Cubans had previously shown their intent to make the revolution a 'school of unfettered thought' in opposition to bureaucratic practices. Another bad indication has been the pillorying of homosexuals.

However, the headway made by bureaucratism has not reached such a degree that one must conclude that a hardened bureaucratic caste has been formed, exercises dictatorial power, and cannot be dislodged save through a political revolution. No qualitative point of change has yet been adduced to substantiate this hypothesis.

The stand taken by the Socialist Workers Party towards the Cuban revolution flows from its initial analysis of that event. It can be summarised in three points:

- For defense of the Cuban revolution against all its enemies. As a party within the United States, the SWP considers it to be its special duty to foster the strongest possible political opposition to the main enemy of the revolution, American imperialism. This defense is unconditional — it does not hinge on the attitudes or policies of the Cuban government.

- For the development of proletarian forms of democracy in Cuba. The purpose of this is to bring the masses into the decision-making process in the most effective way, thereby strengthening the struggle against bureaucratism. The initiation of workers' councils would add fresh power to the Cuban revolution as living proof that socialism does not entail totalitarianism but on the contrary signifies the extension of democracy to the oppressed in a way that will lead eventually to the withering away of the state.

- For the formation of a Leninist-type party that guarantees internal democracy, that is, the right of critical opinion to be heard. The power of a party that safeguards the right to form tendencies or factions was demonstrated by the Bolsheviks. A replica shaped in accordance with Cuban particularities could do much to induce the formation of similar parties in the rest of the world. This would greatly facilitate resolving the crisis in leadership faced by the proletariat internationally, thereby assuring a new series of revolutionary victories.

2. Guided by their desire to construct a common front against American imperialism, the Cubans failed to distinguish the components of this front according to programme. Thus supporters of the capitalist system were hailed, provided they were 'progressive,' i.e., denounced imperialism or spoke well of the Cuban revolution, with the consequence that many of them were diverted down false trails.

A case in point was the support given the Chilean regime headed by Salvador Allende. Although Castro may have sensed a coming showdown in Chile when he was there on tour — his parting gift to Allende was a sub-machine gun — the support he offered the regime appeared to be support for its adherence to capitalism. Allende's failure to act against the plotters in the military forces cost him his life. More important, the seizure of power by Pinochet dealt a cruel blow to the cause of socialism in Latin America, and a deadly enemy was added to the roster of regimes hostile to the Cuban revolution.

3. Similar criticisms can be made of Cuban policy in Africa today. The programmes of the Neto regime in Angola and the Mengistu regime in Ethiopia have not been presented for what they are — commitments to maintain capitalist relations in those countries.

The Cubans seem to be primarily interested in bolstering the anti-imperialist aspects of the upheavals in these areas. But to overlook the struggle for socialist goals can only prove counter-productive. And it is dangerous to believe that an anti-imperialist struggle automatically reinforces the struggle for socialism, as was shown in Chile. In both Angola and Ethiopia we have already seen repressive measures taken against revolutionary socialists.

As for the argument that Havana's rising prominence indicates the crystallization of a hardened bureaucratic caste in Cuba, the available evidence would seem to indicate the contrary. Hardened bureaucratic castes, such as the ones in the Soviet Union and China, characteristically display conservatism,

even a counterrevolutionary outlook, particularly in foreign policy; hence their pursuit of 'peaceful coexistence,' of 'detente', of deals with the imperialist powers at the expense of the masses.

But in Africa, Cuban activities have greatly increased instability at the expense of the imperialist powers. Castro has followed a course that closed off rather than invited a deal with American imperialism.... This fact alone speaks decisively against the contention that the events in Africa offer proof that a hardened bureaucratic caste has taken over in Cuba.

The Cuban course in Africa requires no essential alterations in the Marxist analysis of the lines adopted by the Castro team after they had consolidated the victory of the revolution.

Influence

Cuba's influence appears completely out of proportion to the size of this small Caribbean country — How is this anomaly to be explained? The answer is obvious — it lies in the power of the Cuban revolution.

The record is there for all to see: First, in the contrast between Cuba that was, under the American puppet Batista, and the Cuba that is, under a revolutionary regime. Second, in the contrast between today's Cuba and the rest of Latin America. Cuba demonstrates what can be done under a planned economy to improve the standard of living of the poor. Countries like Chile are hangmen's showcases.

The achievements made possible by toppling capitalism are impressive. The list includes the elimination of unemployment, once the scourge of the Cuban working class; the banning of racism; the promulgation of equal rights for women; the setting up of child-care centres on a national scale; the construction of a free educational system that provides not only books but food and clothing to students; the establishment of a model social-security system, including health care; the slashing of rents and initiation of an ambitious program to end the acute shortage of housing inherited from the past, and an agrarian reform that was

decisive in establishing the firm worker-peasant alliance on which the first workers' state in the Western Hemisphere depends.

It is the example of Cuba, the example of achievements made possible by the revolution, that accounts for Havana's standing among the peoples of the colonial and semicolonial countries and thereby its political weight internationally.

An accounting of developments within Cuba, particularly in the last decade, is of course required in any balance sheet of the revolution as a whole ... The Cuban revolution faced extreme difficulties from the beginning. Inadequacies of leadership counted among them, the prime one being, as I have indicated, reliance on guerrilla war to extend the revolution. Another was the failure to proceed immediately to establishment of forms of proletarian democracy.

Imperialism

However, the main source of the difficulties was American imperialism. The mightiest military power on earth, located only ninety miles away, decided to strangle the Cuban revolution. Castro was marked for assassination. Farm animals were inoculated with contagious diseases. Saboteurs set bombs. The blowing up of a merchant ship in Havana harbour and arson that succeeded in burning down one of Havana's biggest department stores were two of the more spectacular incidents. Forays of this kind were topped by the armed invasion at the Bay of Pigs.

Worst of all was the blockade, which completely disrupted Cuba's traditional pattern of trade with the United States and greatly reduced the possibilities of free trade with other countries. Tiny Cuba, dependent on imported oil as its source of energy, was truly an isolated fortress under heavy siege. In defense of the revolution, the Castro team placed Cuba under war-time regulations.

Wall Street and its political agents in Washington bear full responsibility for blockading the Cuban revolution from developing freely. This should

never be forgotten in criticising the weaknesses and mistakes of the Castro regime.

The Kremlin must be held responsible for another source of difficulties. Without help from the Soviet Union, the Cuban revolution would certainly have been smashed by either Eisenhower or Kennedy. The Cubans were completely correct in seeking that aid.

Stalin's heirs felt obliged to respond to the Cuban plea, but instead of providing aid free of charge as was their duty, they demanded that a price be paid — principally on the political level. In short, to get the required aid the Cubans had to let the red glow of the Cuban revolution shine on Khrushchev and Brezhnev.

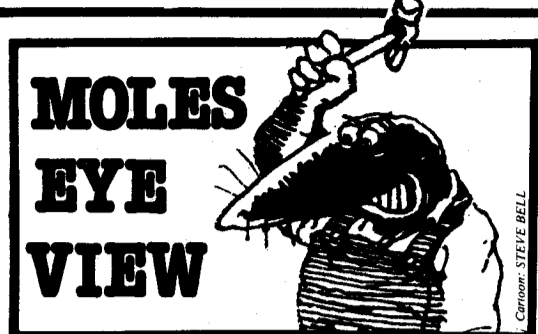
From many things that have appeared in the record — a good example is Castro's criticisms of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, which he reluctantly supported — it is clear that the price demanded by the Kremlin for Soviet aid rankled with the Cubans. They had to forego speaking out freely. While they were able to get the required material aid in time to save the revolution, the cost was heavy in terms of their political independence.

Campaign

Both the American campaign to crush the revolution and the strings attached to Soviet aid must be taken into consideration in dealing with the problem of bureaucratism in Cuba. By isolating and further impoverishing the country, the blockade helped increase the social importance of the layers charged with the defense. In the distribution of scarce supplies top priority had to be given the armed forces. One of the consequences was an army now recognized as the best in Latin America.

Another consequence, however, was the introduction of ranks, a sign of bureaucratization. The Kremlin's influence was shown in the growth of bureaucratic tendencies under the auspices of figures who were prominent in the Stalinist apparatus in Batista's time. These case-hardened bureaucrats

EVOLUTION



Justice in the Met

THE Metropolitan police force is an inspiration in the way that it maintains its own high standards.

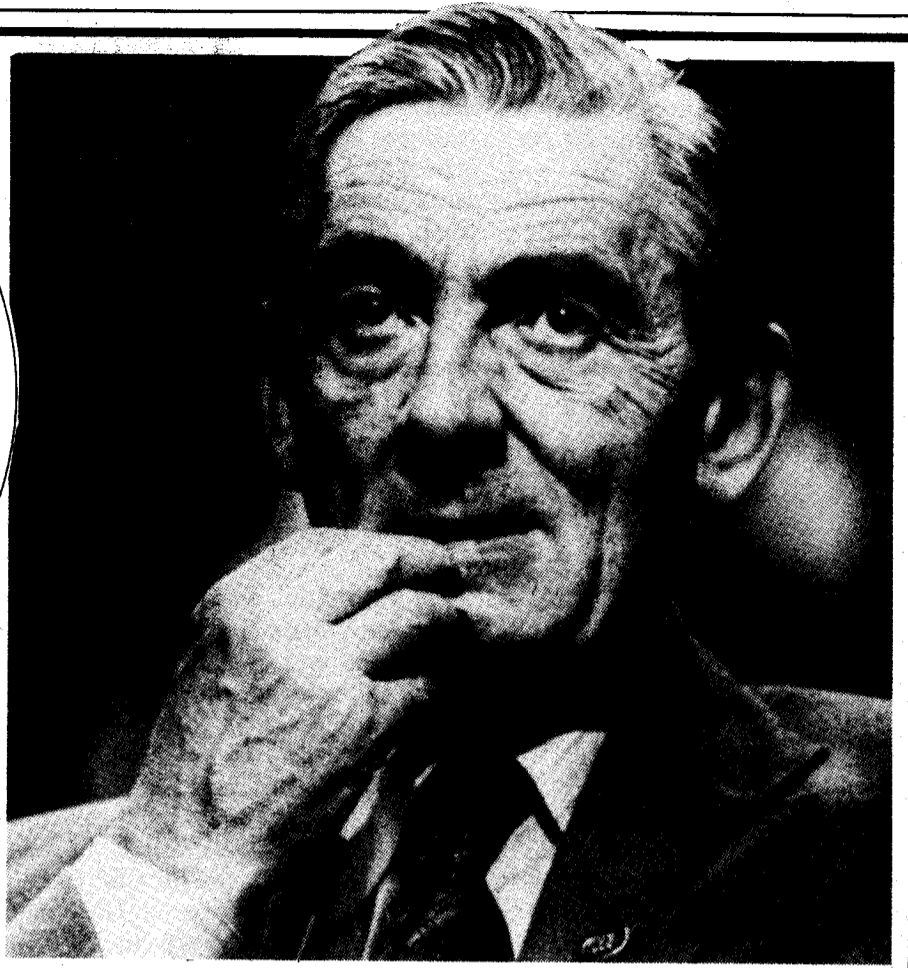
Impervious to the moans of the media, refusing to be budged by the whining liberals, it knows what is best for London when it comes to policing.

Look at Detective Constable Peter Finch. That brave man along with his mate pumped five bullets into an innocent unarmed man. Then defying all the dangers he heroically pistol-whipped his victim. Scotland Yard are worried that he has come under 'emotional stress' and they are sending him off to the uniformed

branch. OK, that shows the Yard can be considerate when it has to.

But it can also be tough. PC Trevor Attfield had the impudence to go to an industrial tribunal to support his patrol-car partner Wendy de Launey who claimed she was the victim of sexual discrimination. The tribunal agreed with Ms de Launey. But you can't have that in our police force.

Shooting the innocent, knocking wounded people about with a pistol — these are OK. Being against sex discrimination breaks all the Met's codes, and could lead to a moral decline in the police force.



Charitable Len

WHAT A nice man that Len Murray is. While you lot were lounging around enjoying your Xmas he was distributing tea and food to the unemployed down and outs. Mind you he and his mates on the TUC General Council are to blame for increasing unemployment and there are thousands of people dependent on a hand out over Xmas who can thank Len for their

plight.

But Len remains undaunted. He reckons Christian charity is the solution. If only those in a job would donate part of their wages to maintaining Salvation Army hostels and institutions for the homeless and maybe Mrs Thatcher might throw in a few bob as well. This would be preferable to strikes and occupations against redundancies, and would

make sure everybody stayed within the law.

As Len believes in the power of prayer a lot of trade unionists are suggesting he takes himself and most of the TUC General Council off to a retreat where they can pray against poverty and homelessness. They would even be given paid leave providing they promised to stay there for the next 10 years!

DIARY

These listings are free for all for labour movement and campaign activities — up to a maximum of 50 words. Semi-play advertisements cost 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 the Subwe Hour long video available for meetings or actions. £10 (payable in advance). Send to: Books for Africa Fund, PO Box 1, London N1.
Sri Lankan Research & Information Group will provide speakers on the present situation there for meetings. Write to 9 Grays Buildings, London EC1.
No Intervention in Central America (NICA) is a road 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 educational 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.

● **Guatemala benefit** with new film about Guatemala and an eye-witness report from Nicaragua by Stanley Clinton-Davis. Rio Cinema.

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Dalston. Thur 26 January, 7pm.

● **Trade Unionists from El Salvador** Trade Union leaders from El Salvador will speak at a rally with Tony Benn, Ken Cameron, Fire Brigades union general secretary and a representative of the NGA. Mon 23 January, 7.30.

● **Britain-Cuba Resource Centre** Information about activities, subs to Granma weekly review and newsletters from 29 Islington Park St, London N1.

● **Womens study tour of Cuba** 4-20 April, information from BCRC, 29 Islington Park St, London N1.

Ireland
 ● **Day school on Ireland** Sat 28 January, 11am, Chetwynd Room, Kings College, Cambridge. Organised by Cambridge and Norwich Troops Out Movement. Creche available.

Lesbian & Gay Liberation

● **Nottingham Labour Campaign for Gay Rights** meets monthly. Next meeting 18 Jan, 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-Thur 11am-7pm. (Westbourne Grove tube. Bad access, help available).

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.

Miscellaneous

● **GLC workshops** Employment and training for the future. 12 Jan Black



Reagan Free Caribbean badges in yellow, black and red. 25p each (plus postage); bulk orders 20p each. Money with orders to PO Box 36, 136 Kingsland High St, London E8. Cheques/POs payable to Hackney Book Club.

women, employment prospects; 26 Jan Greater London Training Board; 9 Feb Greater London Enterprise Board; 23 Feb Cooperatives. Black Women's Centre Brixton, 41A Stockwell Green, London, SW9, 7-9.30 pm.

Anti-cuts campaigns

● **London Health Service Campaign**. 34 Dalston Lane, London E8 3AZ 01-249 8086.

● **Hayes Cottage Hospital Occupation Cttee**, Grange Rd, Hayes, Middx 01-573 5593.

New pamphlet: Politics in the 1980's — The British Crises.

Articles reprinted from *Socialist Action* and *International* — John Ross, British politics in the 1980's; Alan Freeman, How Labour Can Win; Steve Marks, the 1983 Election; John Ross, Facing 1984; Alan Freeman, Rebuilding the Labour Party.

Available from The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper St, London N1, price 35p.

WHEN THE MOUNTAINS TREMBLE

A New Film About Guatemala and

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STANLEY CLINTON-DAVIS will open a

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Speakers from the Guatemala Committee for Human Rights and the Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign. The films will be showing at the Rio from the 26th January to 1st February 1984. Benefit organised by the Guatemala Working Group

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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.

Men and Greenham

THE ACTIONS of the Greenham women have been a focus and an inspiration to the whole peace movement. But not all socialists support women-only action. This article was circulated at CND's annual conference in Sheffield last December, signed by DAVID RATOVIJSKY. We haven't met David, and we don't know whether he would call himself a socialist, but we believe his views will be of interest to our readers.

MOST PEOPLE would agree that the peace camp at Greenham Common has been far and away the most successful anti-nuclear action that has ever occurred in Britain. It was begun more than two years ago by women and its survival has involved acts of supreme courage and enormous sacrifice by women.

As most people are aware, an essential aspect of this particular peace camp is that the women do not want men to participate actively in it: it is a women only event. Many men have felt unhappy about this decision and, in various ways, have tried to get women to change their mind: but the women have remained firm — no men at Greenham Common.

This does not seem to be particularly unreasonable to me and never has done. I cannot see how the action could possibly have been even remotely as successful as it has been if it had been a mixed action. Apart from the increased likelihood of violence, confrontation and internal mistrust, a mixed action would rob the Greenham peace camp of its supremely powerful symbolic significance: the juxtaposition of women protesters and the ultimate products of sexist society.

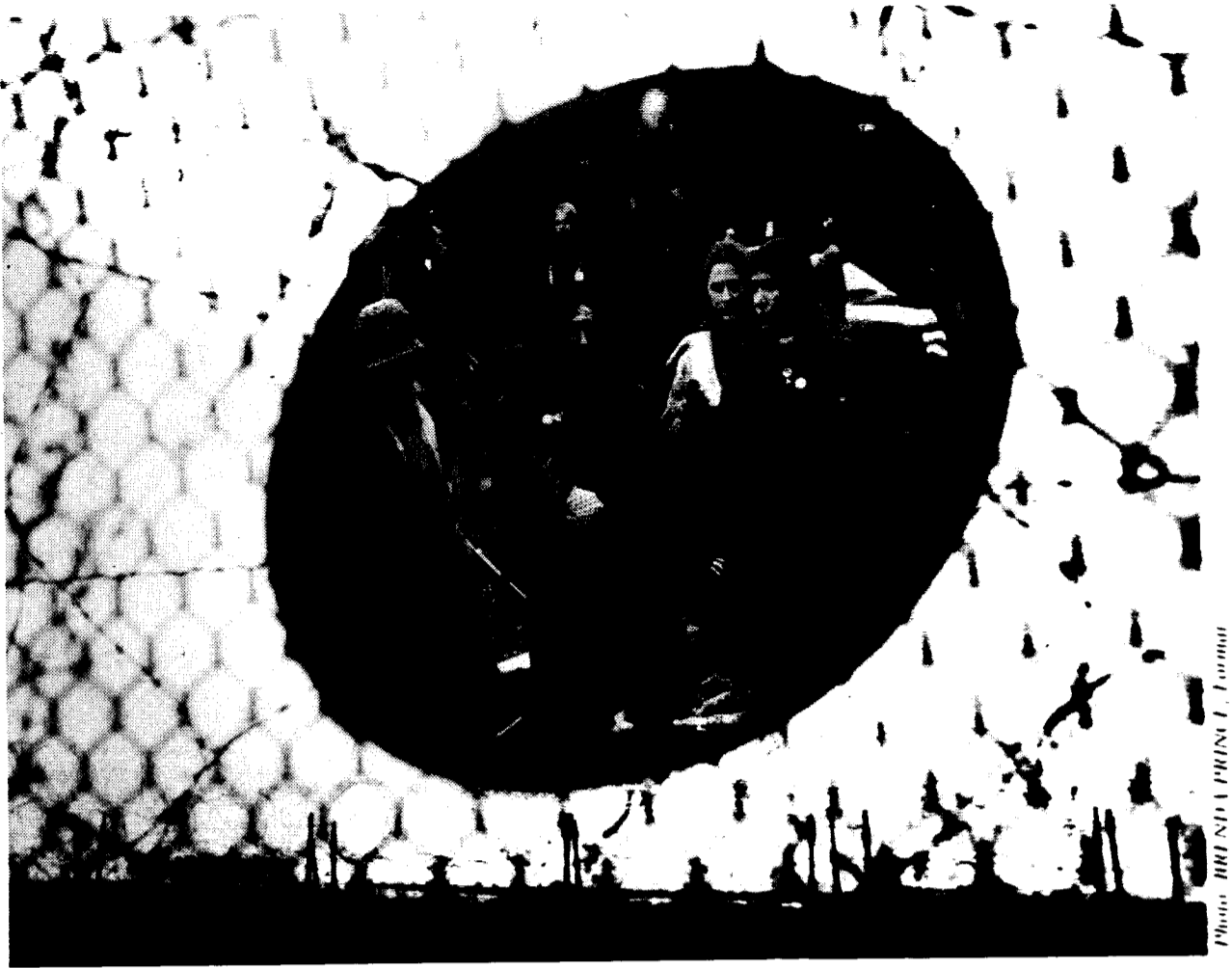
Many men do not agree with this view, or find it difficult to accept. They feel excluded and bitter. Wanting to protest against cruise they go to Greenham hoping to join the women or initiate a mixed action and they go away deeply hurt when — with all their good intentions — they are told that their presence is unwanted. Anti-nuclear men have repeatedly written to the Greenham women complaining about this exclusion.

There is a long-standing and sometimes acrimonious public debate on the subject. Many other men, viewing from afar, and with no real wish to participate, nevertheless find it easy to condemn this no-men policy. This article is addressed to all such men.

I would like to stress that I am not going to say anything that women themselves have not said over and over again until they are sick of saying it. The fact is that there is a great deal that men can do to support the women of Greenham Common and that our contribution can be crucial. Unfortunately such support does not involve our physical presence at Greenham or the drama of appearing on TV, being interviewed by the media or being arrested for our beliefs. Let me explain why I think this is so.



For centuries we men have wanted 'a piece of the action', to be out there fighting for what we believe in, decisive, active, strong. It comes naturally to us. This is the way it has always been and, of course, there's certainly nothing wrong with being decisive, active and strong. But can



Reflecting Greenham.

you tell me of a single political action of real importance that has ever occurred involving large numbers of people in which men did not participate as a majority? For that matter can you tell me of a single political movement that has ever existed in which, despite the presence of token women leaders, men have not overwhelmingly dominated leadership and policy making decisions?

Action

The only such actions I can think of have involved women struggling for basic rights denied to them by men. Few men wanted to be involved in that sort of action. Apart from these cases, a political action in which women were even equally represented is virtually unknown. If such an event is so rare may it not mean that women have, for centuries, been manipulated and coerced into taking a role subservient to men? There must be some reason for this peculiar under-representation which, despite laws and votes, strangely enough appears still to be with us.

I am sure you would all agree, since you claim to be 'liberated' men who support women's liberation, that men are no better than women and that women are just as capable of achieving things as men. If you agree that women should not be manipulated and coerced by men, and you personally would never dream of doing such a thing, how can you avoid doing so unintentionally?

The solution to this dilemma is wonderfully simple; it is in fact a tremendous relief to discover it and I heartily recommend the following formula to all of you who are worrying about unintentionally subjecting women to manipulation and coercion. All you have to do is:

- Ask the women in question what they want of you
- Listen carefully to the answer — and most important of all —
- Do it and do it gladly

Listening is very difficult for many men; we are not used to doing it. In fact most of us are so unused to listening to women that we don't even realise we're not doing it. However, although hard at first, with practise I have found it is not really difficult after all. I think that any man can do it if he really wants to. I also think that if all men genuinely listened to women with respect, took what they had to say seriously and based their actions on that understanding — the world would be a different and far happier place.

Remember

Listening to women involves not only the use of your ears but your mind as well, so try and suppress the urge to reply until the woman has finished and you have thought about what she has said. Above all, remember that if a woman says you're not listening to her she is almost certainly right.

Let us now apply the above formula for supporting women to the women of Greenham Common. Let us remember that a women-controlled political action of this type and of such great success is virtually unique. Let us remember also that these women live in the most atrocious conditions, constantly harassed by soldiers, police and journalists — the great majority of them male.

It does not take much imagination to realise that the women are under a severe psychological strain. Abuse shouted at them day and night. Physical attacks. Arbitrary arrest. Fear of infiltration. Continual

increasing pressure — most of it coming from men. The social people were there in the first place but since the Council had put up the trees and wanted it for the women, they were distressed — got in New Year's wearing peace badges and so what happens in 1984.

Bearing all this in mind I think we must be very clear that women are under no obligation to reply to us politely when we finally do get around to asking them what they want. Nor do we have any right to expect gratitude for doing so. Men have profited in a very literal sense from the oppression of women, and without it the international changes that make thinkable the murder of millions of innocent people would be impossible.

Demand

Women have a right to demand that we listen to them and we have a duty to stop making excuses and to hear what they say. There will never be equality and genuine liberation until men do this. After all, the women of Greenham Common have been saying the same thing all along. It is time to stop whining, to realise that they're not going to change their minds, and to understand why. Can you not see that there is a certain degree of justice in it all?

Why don't you go away and start cooking meals, being there for the children when they get home from school, changing nappies, washing dishes, reading bed-time stories, doing the washing, the shopping and all the other things women do day in, day out year after year? If you volunteer to do it for the right person — well, she could go to Greenham.

We men have vast privilege and power — until we are prepared to renounce it all our efforts for social change can never possibly succeed. Giving money to Greenham women is part of the redistribution of wealth and is a powerful political and symbolic act on the part of men. Don't worry — they need it and will accept it gladly. If you have access to food or any other articles useful to people living in rough conditions, arrange for them to get it.

None of this may seem particularly glamorous or heroic I'm afraid, but more such support and less hassle could make a very big difference in the campaign to get rid of nuclear weapons. If you do want to get rid of them, remember the struggle has hardly begun and SUPPORT THE WOMEN OF GREENHAM COMMON!



Photo: JOHN HARRIS

Greenham blockade, March 1983

The pro-Nazi past of Israel's prime minister

IN 1940-41 a dissident Zionist group tried to ally itself with Adolf Hitler. What gives this grotesque proposition contemporary significance is that one of its leaders was Yitzhak Shamir, and a scandal is brewing as the public is becoming aware that Israel now has its first Nazi Prime Minister.

Shamir was already a member of Vladimir Jabotinsky's 'Zionist-Revisionist' *Irgun Zvai Leumi* (National Military Organisation). The Irgun had come to realise that Britain had no intention of handing over all of Palestine — and Jordan — to the Zionists, and he looked elsewhere for new patrons.

He found two new backers. The anti-Semitic regime in Poland, eager to get rid of its Jews, and therefore always friendly to Zionism, armed the Irgun and began to train its cadres in the insurrectionary arts. And, beginning in 1934, Mussolini set up a 'Revisionist' youth squadron at Civitavecchia. Although Jabotinsky insisted that he was not a Fascist, Mussolini recognised him as such, calling him 'your Fascist, Jabotinsky'.

By Lenni Brenner

It was the Spanish Civil War which convinced Mussolini that he had to stand with Hitler against the European working class, and to do so he had to expel all Jews from his party. Disillusioned, Jabotinsky slowly returned to his previous pro-British orientation and with the outbreak of World War II he called off the Irgun's terrorist campaign against the Arabs and the British authorities in Palestine.

But a wing of the Revisionists had become so fanatically Fascist that they could not accept reality and blamed Mussolini's turn toward Hitler on — the Jews! They insisted that the Jewish left had 'insulted' the despot by proclaiming the fight against Hitler to be part of the 'anti-Fascist struggle'; and the mainline Zionists had stubbornly remained loyal to British imperialism.

The followers of Avraham Stern split from Jabotinsky and set up their own NMO, and tried to convince the Axis powers that, yes indeed, they were proper Fascists who could be counted on to fight the left Zionists and the British.

Shamir's ascent to power has naturally focused attention on his past and an Israeli journalist recently asked him about the Stern gang's incredible proposal. Said Shamir: 'There was a plan to turn to Italy for help and to make contact with Germany on the assumption that these could bring about a massive Jewish immigration (to Palestine): I opposed this, but I did join Lehi after the idea of contacts with the Axis countries was dropped.'

Even if Shamir were now telling the truth, he actually is confessing that he joined a pack of would-be collaborators with Hitler. But, in fact, he is lying. Late in 1940 a Sternist, Naftali Lubentschik, met with two German diplomats in Vichy-run Beirut, and gave them the Stern gang's 'proposal', which was found after the war in the Nazi files. Although Shamir is now claiming that he joined Stern only after this mad proposal was 'dropped', it was the Hitlerites who were not interested in any would-be Zionist allies. Here we print excerpts from the Stern Gang's proposals.



Stern gang members demonstrate in Jerusalem



Aftermath of the Stern gang bombing of the King David Hotel



British 'wanted' poster indicts Stern gang terrorists

Stern gang proposal to Nazis on war-time collaboration

'IT IS often stated in the speeches and utterances of the leading statesmen of National Socialist Germany that a New Order in Europe requires as a prerequisite the radical solution of the Jewish question through evacuation ("Jew-free Europe").

The evacuation of the Jewish masses from Europe is a precondition for solving the Jewish question; but this can only be made possible and complete through the settlement of these masses in the home of the Jewish people, Palestine, and through the establishment of a Jewish state in its historical boundaries.

The solving in this manner of the Jewish problem and thus the bringing about with it the liberation of the Jewish people once and for all, is the objective of the political activity and the years long struggle of the Jewish freedom movement: the National

Military Organisation (Irgun Zvai Leumi) in Palestine.

The NMO, which is well-acquainted with the goodwill of the German Reich government and its authorities towards Zionist activity inside Germany and towards Zionist emigration plans, is of the opinion that:

- 1) Common interests could exist between the establishment of a new order in Europe in conformity with the German concept, and the true national aspirations of the Jewish people as they are embodied by the NMO.
- 2) Cooperation between the new Germany and a renewed folkish-national Hebraism would be possible and
- 3) The establishment of the historical Jewish state on a national and totalitarian basis, and bound by a treaty with the German Reich, would be in the interest of a maintained and strengthened future German position of power in the Near East.

Proceeding from these considerations, the NMO in Palestine, under the condition the above-mentioned national aspirations of the Israeli freedom movement are recognised on the side of the German Reich, offers to actively take part in the war on Germany's side.

This offer by the NMO, covering activity in the military, political and information fields, in Palestine and, according to our determined preparations, outside Palestine, would be connected to the military training and organising of Jewish manpower in Europe, under the leadership and command of the NMO. These military units would take part in the fight to conquer Palestine, should such a front be decided upon.

The indirect participation of the Israeli freedom movement in the New Order in Europe, already in the preparatory stage, would be linked with a positive-radical solution of the European Jewish problem in conformity with the above-mentioned national

aspirations of the Jewish people. This would extraordinarily strengthen the moral basis of the New Order in the eyes of all humanity. The cooperation of the Israeli freedom movement would also be along the lines of one of the last speeches of the German Reich Chancellor, in which Hitler emphasised that he would utilise every combination and coalition in order to isolate and defeat England....

....The NMO is closely related to the totalitarian movements of Europe in its ideology and structure. The fighting capacity of the NMO could never be paralysed or seriously weakened: neither through strong defensive measures by the English administration and the Arabs, nor by those of the Jewish socialists.'

● Lenni Brenner is the author of - Zionism in the Age of the Dictators (Croom Helm, £9.95). His The Iron Wall: A History of Zionist Revisionism will be published next Spring by Zed Press.

Newham 8 campaign

A partial victory

FOUR of the Newham 8 defendants — Daldir Johal, Vipun Pathak, Kalbir Khela, and Gurjit Huntan — have been found guilty of affray. Other charges against them (such as criminal damage and offensive weapons) were dismissed, as were all charges against the other four defendants.

As we enter 1984, the question remains how do black people organise to protect the rights which every other section of society takes for granted, when all the forces of the state have failed to do so?

All the police officers, called as witnesses, including the Commander of K division, had either not heard of or not read the Home Office report into racial attacks, which established that Asians were 50 times more likely to be attacked than any other section of society.

In reaching their decision, the jury also ignored the evidence of eye witnesses who confirmed that the plain-clothes police officers pretended to be members of the district support unit (local SPG), jumped out of their car and proceeded to abuse and assault the group of Asian youth escorting school children back home after a series of racial attacks in and around the Little Ilford school.

By Unmesh Desai

Sentencing of the four is expected to take place in mid-January. Meantime, the Defence Campaign is:

- organising a public meeting on Sunday January 7 to discuss the implications of the case for the black community, and the need for strong local

organisation. Support groups around the country are asked to organise public meetings on the same theme.

- calling for a day of action and a mass picket of the old Bailey when the four appear for sentencing. Supporters are requested to check the exact date of the court hearing with the Defence Campaign.

After sentencing, the Campaign has plans for a public enquiry into the events surrounding the eight and policing in Newham generally. At the end of the day, judicial decision will not alter one iota the necessity for black people to defend themselves against racist attacks.

The campaign has played a major role in developing community self-organisation in



Asian youth campaign in support of Newham 8

Newham. Local black youth, radicalised by the whole experience of resisting racism for years, played a crucial role in the

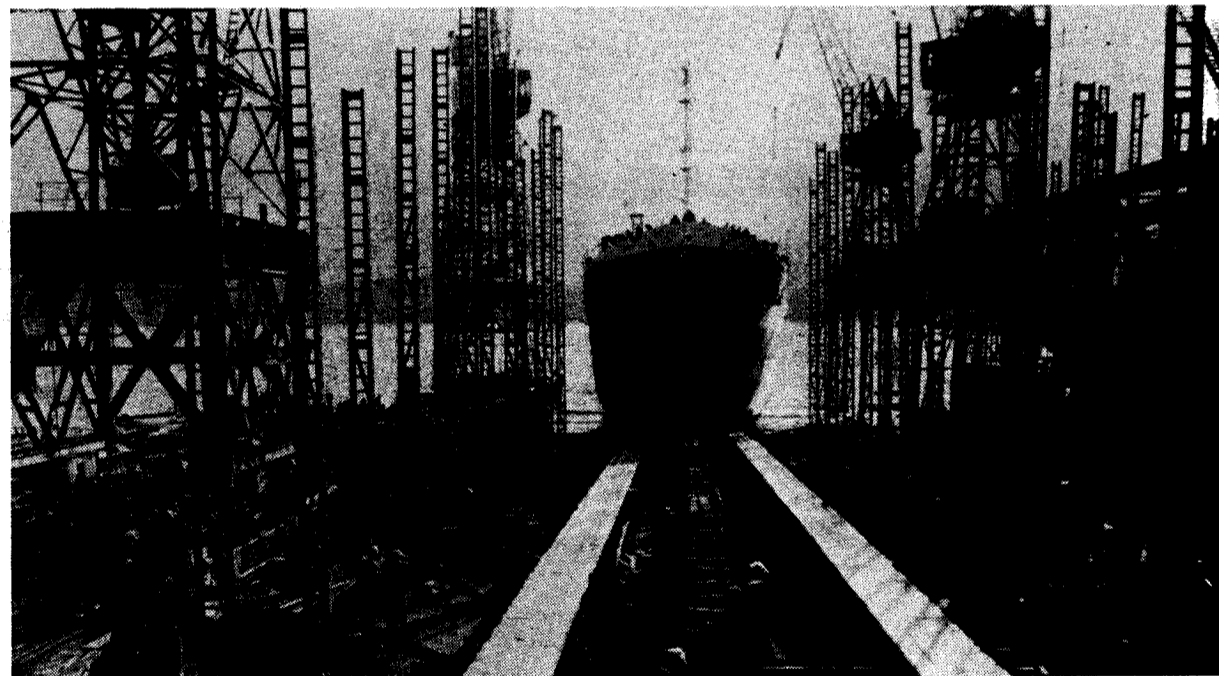
Campaign.

The capacity of the community to organise in face of the overwhelming odds, and the courage of

the Newham 8 should spur us on to successfully defeat the Police Bill and growing state authoritarianism.

For more information on the court cases and the Newham 8 Campaign, contact 555 3331 or PO Box 273, London E7.

Shipyards set for action



SIXTY THOUSAND shipyard workers, from 23 yards and workshops stretching between Southampton and Glasgow, are set for all out strike action from 6 January.

The nationalised British shipbuilders have offered a paltry 2 per cent pay increase and even this is tied up with strings.

Management, with government insistence are determined to drive through a 'survival plan' involving yard closures, massive redundancies, privatisation and major changes in work-practices.

In the last six years, 25,000 shipyard workers have lost their jobs and another 9,000 redundancies are planned in the next year.

This follows a pattern of so called survival plans imposed by the Tories on nationalised industries like British Steel, where the workforce has been massacred to less than half of the 1979 level.

With such rationalisation plans come assaults on union rights and hard won practices on the shop floor.

Already in the lead up to this dispute, managers in ship repair yards on Tyneside have tried to impose ballots over the heads of the union.

By Celia Pugh

Shipyard workers have shown they are determined to stand up against these attacks on their jobs, conditions and unions. Over recent months, three national conferences of lay delegates from every section, grade and union in the industry have voted overwhelmingly for industrial action to resist the BS 'survival plan'. Mass meetings in every yard confirmed support for a national strike from 6 January.

But there is concern about attempts to backtrack by leaders of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions, which unites the 13 shipyard unions.

In November the national negotiating committee, the SNC, came close to agreeing a deal which involved an attack on trade union boundaries and working conditions.

This was condemned by a national combine committee of shop stewards from around the country and stewards at the Swann Hunter yard in Tyneside passed a vote of no confidence in the national negotiating team.

The electricians union, EEPTU and the general workers union GMBATU, which organises the majority of shipyard workers, told stewards to organise secret ballots on the strike call, with a required two thirds majority.

This angered union members who had already voted in their vast majority

at mass meetings and through the national delegate conferences for strike action.

Sammy Gilmore, convener of the Govan shipbuilders in Glasgow asked 'How many times have we got to take decisions? There has never been any talk of the need for ballots at the mass meetings and we are not in favour of the "Tebbitism" being introduced'.

Govan workers showed their determination to take on BS by starting an immediate overtime ban in the second week of December.

British Shipbuilders' management are firm in their resolve to smash unions and conditions in the yards and to prepare the way for privatisation. The determination shown by Govan workers will be needed in the weeks ahead if union leaders are to be prevented from buckling at the knees. The whole labour movement should rally to their side.

NALGO leaders challenged over NGA

LEADERS of the public sector union, NALGO, have tied themselves in knots over the NGA dispute and fuelled a growing revolt among rank and file members.

NALGO was one of the first unions to declare unanimous support for the NGA in its fight against the Stockport Messenger Group and its defiance of the government's anti-union laws. Yet no sooner was this motion put to the test at the critical vote of the TUC General Council, then the four-person NALGO delegation was split down the middle.

New NALGO General Secretary, John Daly, voted against the NGA. So did Ada Maddocks, the union's national organising officer for health staff who occupies one of the women's seats on the General Council.

Their action provoked an angry invasion of NALGO's Central London headquarters led by Kent County NALGO. On the front steps of the building stewards struck up a chorus of 'Hang Down Your Head John Daly' before holding a stormy meeting with their embarrassed General Secretary. They called on all NALGO members to show their disgust at 'Daly's treachery' and mobilise to get rid of the union's ineffectual leaders.

By K. Kirkham

After the TUC refused to endorse 'illegal' action by the NGA, NALGO's National Executive duly backtracked declaring it would only support the printers 'provided that the continuing support does not involve positive breaches of the law'.

Such a step is nothing short of suicidal, especially when the Tories show every sign of intensifying their onslaught on the public sector in 1984 with crushing legal penalties at the ready. As Britain's largest white collar union, 800,000 strong, NALGO could make the running in the battle against rate-capping, against the abolition of the metropolitan county councils and the GLC, against health and education cuts and against moves to sell off whole sections of nationalised industries.

Remain

But its leaders look likely to remain with their heads in the sand unless members respond to the call of the Kent County stewards: 'These class collaborators must be replaced with leaders who will fight to defend our unions.'

Trident Campaign News

TRIDENT is coming sooner than many may imagine. Three hundred and fifty million pounds or more will have been spent on Trident by mid-1984. There is speculation that at least three under-ground nuclear tests have already been carried out in the USA, as part of the British Trident programme.

This means there's no campaigning time to be lost: a feeling reflected at the AGM of the Anti-

Trident Campaign (ATC) in Glasgow on 17 December, when delegates rejected a move to dissolve the campaign.

They were not convinced that the anti-Trident campaigning would be stepped up in 1984 without ATC, although CND is now committed to holding a major anti-Trident demonstration in 1984.

The AGM decided to

continue the anti-Trident convention in Manchester, (now postponed to Saturday 25 February). Already ATC is using a petition calling on the trades unions and local authorities to boycott firms working on Trident. Rolls Royce workers at Hillington, Glasgow, have successfully refused work connected with Trident. The potential is there — will the labour movement take up the challenge?

A Socialist ACTION

Black Christmas in Lebanon

PRESSURE is mounting in all the countries which have 'peace-keeping' troops in Lebanon for their withdrawal. In the United States three former directors of the CIA called for the withdrawal of the US marines on the grounds that they are 'sitting ducks' and have 'failed to change the balance of power in Lebanon.' The touching concern of these former CIA men is not of course for the Lebanese people, but merely an expression of the view that the US troops should either 'zap the natives' or get out.

But much of the pressure in the US, as well as France, Italy and Britain stems from another source — the realisation that the so-called peace keepers are there not to keep any sort of peace, but merely to bolster the reactionary Maronite Christian government of Amin Gemayel.

In recent weeks the international peace keepers have shown exactly which side they are on. On Christmas Day the French contingent occupying a section of the Beirut suburbs near Chatila and Sabra refugee camps withdrew in a move co-ordinated with the Lebanese army. The army immediately moved in 30 battle tanks and proceeded to attack the southern suburbs of the city which are a stronghold of the Shi'ite militia *Amal*.

Over the past month the Gemayel government has been coming under increasing pressure from the Israelis to 'clean up Beirut' — that is to defeat all those forces, which are opposed to the Israeli-imposed Gemayel government. The international peace keeping force, and in particular the French and American troops, have openly col-

laborated with Gemayel in the project of inflicting a military defeat on his opponents. Nothing could be further from 'peace keeping' than connivance in the indiscriminate use of modern battle tanks against the poor suburbs of southern Beirut.

By Paul Lawson

While urging Gemayel to take a tougher line against his opponents, the Israelis have been consolidating their grip on southern Lebanon. The Israeli occupation has been accompanied by massive harassment of the civilian population, which in the south is overwhelmingly Shi'ite Muslim.

Over the new year both Shi'ite and Sunni Muslim communities united in a series of mosque sit-ins and other acts of civil disobedience against the occupiers.

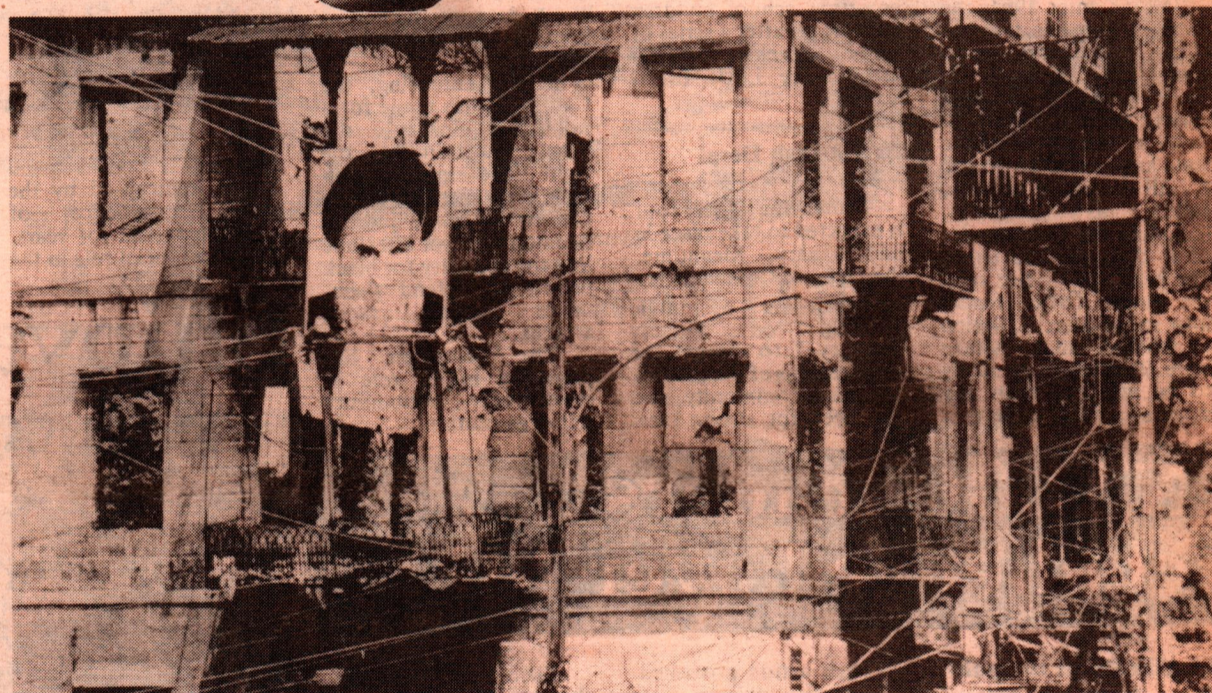
While the struggle against the Gemayel government and the Israelis continued, Yasser Arafat and his loyalist *Fateh* PLO fighters finally left Tripoli, to be scattered around the Arab world. The driving out of Arafat

represents the final accomplishment by the Syrians of what was started by the Israeli invasion last year — the drive to destroy the PLO as an effective fighting force independent of any Arab state.

While the rump PLO in Lebanon and Syria is effectively controlled by the Syrian government, Yasser Arafat himself has made a crucial mistake in turning towards the Murabak regime in Egypt. There is no way forward for the Palestinian people in alliance with the right wing Murabak regime, nor for that matter in alliance with Hussein of Jordan — who is making his own bid to be the 'ally of the PLO'.

The Christmas and New Year events in the Middle East have set the seal on two years of continuous defeats for the Palestinian people and the Arab nationalist forces in the region. There is no way forward for the struggle for the liberation of the Palestinian people, or in the struggle to defeat the reactionary Maronite regime in Lebanon, without creating a movement independent of every reactionary Arab state — and that includes Syria, Egypt and Jordan.

This struggle will be made immensely easier when the imperialist troops are withdrawn from the region. The campaign for their withdrawal, and especially the withdrawal of the British troops, must be a major campaign in the labour movement.



Lebanese army battle tanks attack *Amal* militia in Southern Beirut.

France: 'Socialist' government attacks strikers

THE GOVERNMENT of Francois Mitterand in France has sanctioned the use of 500 riot police to evict about 100 workers occupying the Peugeot-Talbot car factory in Poissy. The forcible eviction of the strikers, members of the pro-Socialist Party CFDT trade union, comes at the end of a three week sit-in against redundancies.

The company declared 1905 redundancies in a workforce of 17,000. When the CFDT declared a strike and sit-in against the redundancies, Peugeot suspended all 17,000 workers and threatened to dismiss all of them.

In a scandalous move, the Communist Party-dominated CGT union refused to support the strike and called for 'sensible negotiations'. Paradoxically the CFDT, which is generally more pro-Socialist Party, has begun to take a more independent stance in industrial struggles. The attitude of the CGT, however, following the line of the CP which wants at least for the moment to remain in the government, has been to cool industrial fights.

What makes the attack on the Poissy workers even more criminal is that the majority of the strikers are immigrant workers from North Africa. In a national climate of growing racism and the strengthening of the extreme right wing, it has been only too easy for the Peugeot company to whip up hostility to the strikers.

By Tony Smith

The duty of the CFDT and the CGT equally was the build support for the strikers. The Socialist-led government handed the right wing a gift by backing the company and by using riot police — a decision taken at a restricted cabinet meeting.

How can the Com-

munist Party stay in a government which uses riot police against the workers? Anyone who had

illusions in the Mitterand government should take a hard look at the Poissy events.

Salvadorean trade unionists in Britain

TWO trade unionists from El Salvador will be visiting Britain for three and a half weeks from 14 January. They are representatives of the two major trade union federations, the Trade Union Committee — CUS and the Revolutionary Trade Union Federation — FSR.

During their visit they will meet general secretaries and executive members from all the main national unions and Neil Kinnock and members of the Labour Party NEC. They will also tour union branches and workplaces throughout the country and speak at labour movement meetings.

For information about their plans and where you can hear them speak contact: Trade Union Tour c/o El Salvador Solidarity Campaign, 29 Islington Park Street, London N1. Tel: 359 3976.

● London Rally. Speakers from the CUS and FSR trade union federations of El Salvador, Tony Benn, Ken Cameron, general secretary of the FBU and a representative from the NGA. 7.30 County Hall, London (near Waterloo Station).

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