

A **SOCIALIST** ACTION

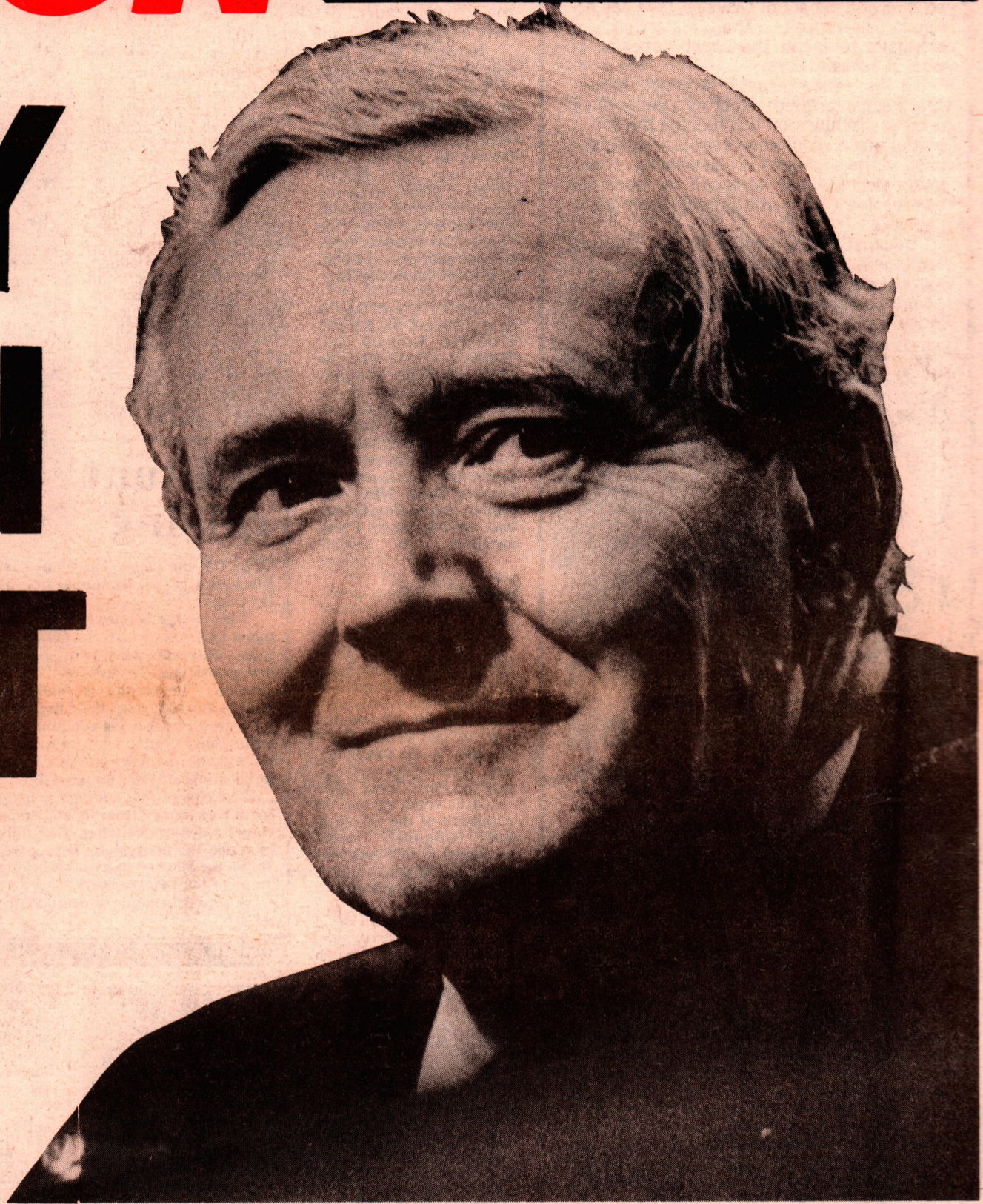
Save our cities!

Demonstration against the abolition of the GLC and the Metropolitan councils

Assemble 11 am 24 January, Speakers Corner

Speakers include Ken Livingstone, Frances Morrell

TONY BENN MUST WIN!



MODERN TIMES



Reagan's for world peace? The next thing we'll hear is that Kinnock was backing Benn

THE CHESTERFIELD bye-election will be the most important for twenty years.

It will be important because it will be the first bye-election since Thatcher's victory last June. It will be important because it will be the first opportunity to test Labour's surge in the opinion polls.

And it is even more important because the candidate will be Tony Benn.

This is not a question of the personality of one individual or his ideas. Tony Benn chose his words very well when he said after being selected, 'I am the standard bearer for Labour in

Chesterfield.'

The Labour movement as a whole is infinitely more important than any individual member. On whether the Labour movement wins or loses its struggles depends quite literally the future of democracy, peace, and social justice in Britain.

What is at stake in Tony Benn's campaign is not his politics alone. No-one is forced to agree with all Tony Benn's views.

But what is at stake in Chesterfield is an attempt by the Tory Party and the capitalist press to wipe out socialism as a legitimate political current and

political subject in Britain.

The *Sun* said this is its editorial on Tony Benn's selection, 'We wonder if, on his record, he has any real role in our democratic process.'

The *Times* was more sophisticated when it called for, 'the eventual extirpation from Labour politics of the kind of politics known as Bennism. Labour must, that is to say, discard the rag-bag of leftist, *Militant* and Trotskyite attitudes to which Mr Benn, from his position inside the party's left wing establishment has been willing to give shelter and protection.'

But all the phrases come

down to the same thing. There is, unfortunately, no threat in Britain today from the *Militant*, Trotskyites, Marxists and so on — and the *Times* knows this.

But there is a threat of a Labour Party which defends the NGA, which wants all nuclear bombs and bases out of Britain, which defends democratic liberties, which opposed the Malvinas war and which opposes American action in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Lebanon and a whole series of similar places in the world.

That, whether he wanted it or not, is very largely what Tony Benn has

come to represent for millions of people in Britain. And that is why the *Sun*, the *Times*, and the whole of Fleet Street will be running the most hysterical campaign in the last twenty years to make sure Tony Benn loses in Chesterfield.

And that's why Tony Benn must win. Not as an individual. Not as the 'darling of the constituencies' — as the press so charmingly puts it. Not even as a defender of particular ideas.

But because a victory for Tony Benn in Chesterfield will be a great victory for Labour and for every Socialist in Britain.

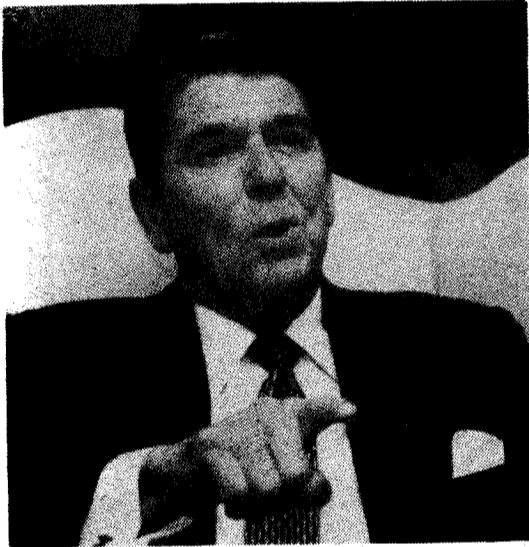
Socialist ACTION

Reagan's 'thaw' gimmickery

LAST MONDAY night Ronald Reagan showed that one aspect of Orwell's 1984 has arrived: newspeak. The distortion of language to mean the exact opposite of what it actually says.

In his 'peace through strength' broadcast Reagan argued: 'America's deterrence is more credible and it is making the world a safer place, safer now there is less danger that the Soviet leadership will underestimate our strength or question our resolve'. The truth unfortunately is the opposite.

Because of the United States' massive armaments drive and world-wide military aggression, the world is a much more dangerous place than it has been for a very long time.



In the first place it is much more dangerous for anyone in the third world who has the temerity to question the domination of a social order based on violence and exploitation. Much less safe for the Salvadorean trade unionist threatened by the death squads, the Nicaraguan doctor or teacher under threat from the 'contras' or the Palestinian refugee in the camps threatened by the murderous Phalangist militias.

All the reactionary forces in the world have had their military and political strength boosted by Reagan's anti-communist crusade.

But the world is a much more dangerous place from a still more fundamental viewpoint. Reagan's Pershings and cruise missiles make the danger of nuclear war much greater. The United States is now constructing nine new nuclear warheads a day — guaranteed, of course, to make the world a safer place!

At the beginning of this election year, Ronald Reagan wants to make a tactical turn from being seen as an out-and-out hawk to being a reasonable person who the Russians can 'do business with'. No one should be taken in.

On the very same day that Reagan made his presidential broadcast, his new chief advisor on Central America, Henry Kissinger was saying openly that aid to El Salvador should not be tied to human rights improvements, and that force should be used in Nicaragua 'only as a last resort' — ie only if the US cannot overthrow the Sandinistas some other way.

The tactics being prepared for this election year are a Reagan cover up — filled with 'peace through strength' rhetoric. After the elections, a re-elected Reagan can get on with the job of smashing liberation and socialist movements and with stuffing the world with more nuclear weapons.

Next June the world economic summit, the successor to Williamsburg, will be held in Britain with Reagan in attendance. It should be used for the most massive demonstrations against the warmongers. With the world's media present this could be a tremendous blow for the peace movement.

Editor: ALAN FREEMAN

Published weekly except two weeks in August and the last week of December.

Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent Socialist Action's views. These are expressed in editorials.

No expulsions!

SIX SUPPORTERS of the *Militant* have been expelled from Blackburn Constituency Labour Party. JOHN ROSS looks at the background to the new witch hunt.

The expulsions are the most important witch hunt to be launched in the Party since Neil Kinnock was elected leader. Blackburn is the first CLP to have expelled individual supporters of *Militant*.

However while the initiative for the expulsions was local its real causes lie in national politics.

The *Daily Mirror* ran the expulsions on its front page under the headline 'Militant plotters sacked for bid to oust an MP'. *The Times*, editorialising on Tony Benn, explicitly linked this to the *Militant*. *The Times* called for 'the eventual extirpation from Labour politics of the kind of posture known as Ben-nism.'

'Labour must, that is to say, discard the rag-bag of leftist, Militant and Trotskyist attitudes to which Mr Benn, from his position inside the party's left-wing establishment, has been willing to give shelter and protection.'

The expulsions also follow the decision of the Labour Party NEC last year to ban sales of *Militant* at Labour Party meetings.

Conflict

The expulsions confirm the new tactics in the witch hunt which are being pursued. The majority of CLPs are today sufficiently against witch hunts that a centralised purge against *Militant* or the left would meet massive resistance inside the Party. Four fifths of CLPs voted against the expulsion of the five *Militant* editorial board members at the Party conference. The witch hunt is therefore being pursued in two ways.

The first is to set up in the Labour Party the mechanisms for witch

hunts to be pursued locally by right wing parties.

This was the meaning of the ban on sales of *Militant*. It is also why a new appeals committee has been established by the NEC packed with right wingers Neville Hough, Kenneth Cure, Roy Evans and Michael Hadden. Witch hunter in chief John Golding has also been appointed as Neil Kinnock's personal trouble-shooter.

This is the mechanism which was set up to create cases like Blackburn. The six *Militant* supporters will appeal to the NEC. With

its present majority the NEC can be confidently expected to turn down the appeals. As the sole charge against the six expelled in Blackburn is that they supported *Militant* such an NEC decision would be a green light for right wing CLPs to go ahead and expel *Militant* supporters — as well as others on the left.

The second phase in setting up a generalised witch hunt is the role of the Labour Coordinating Committee. While right wing CLPs have a go ahead to expel *Militant* this is still only a minority of parties. An expulsion of the left which had to be accompanied by disbanding a whole series of CLPs would still be too expensive for Kinnock and Hattersley to carry out.

The role of the LCC is therefore to break the left inside the CLPs. While it claims to speak for the left



Militant editorial board members leaving NEC meeting

Militant's fund raising

ONE OF the chief charges against *Militant* in Blackburn is that its supporters raise money for the paper.

This charge is pure hypocrisy. There is not a paper in Britain which can get by on income from sales. There are only two sources of income a newspaper has to survive. One is advertising revenue. The second is fund raising from its readers and supporters. With its political views *Militant*, needless to say, is not going to get the type of advertising revenue from capitalist firms enjoyed by say the *Guardian*, the *New Statesman* or other publications of the Labour right.

The charge that *Militant* is acting improperly by raising money from its readers and supporters comes down to one thing. That only those papers in which the bourgeoisie is prepared to advertise should be allowed to exist and campaign for their views in the Labour Party.

A superb example of democratic socialism that is!

Should Peter Kellner be expelled?

RIGHT WING witch hunts are always based on double standards. No action is ever taken against right wingers for much worse crimes than the left is capable of. Take three examples.

Peter Kellner is the political editor of the *New Statesman*. He is an unashamed supporter of Neil Kinnock and the 'dream ticket'.

Last June the *New Statesman* called for people to vote Liberal and Scottish Nationalist — and therefore against Labour candidates — in fifty constituencies. Peter Kellner has since made it clear that he agreed with that position.

Frank Chapple called for a vote for the SDP against Labour candidate Jeremy Corbyn in Ilkington North.

Last year, an advertisement in Labour's programme called for a vote for Roy Jenkins against Labour in Glasgow Hillhead.

Chapple and Lever weren't even opposing Labour in seats which the Party had no chance of winning — which is what the *New Statesman* supported, nor in seats where Labour had a totally safe majority — which is where Communist and revolutionary left candidates have sometimes run. Chapple and Lever were actively trying to tip the balance so that an SDP candidate would actually defeat the Labour Party.

Kellner, Chapple or Lever — needless to say — are not being proposed for expulsion by the Labour Party. The right wing considers itself free to campaign against the Labour Party and against Labour candidates whenever it wishes.

Kellner, Chapple and Lever however show what witch hunts are about. They have nothing to do with protecting the Labour Party. They are simply attempts by the right wing to win by organisational means what it cannot win by political argument.

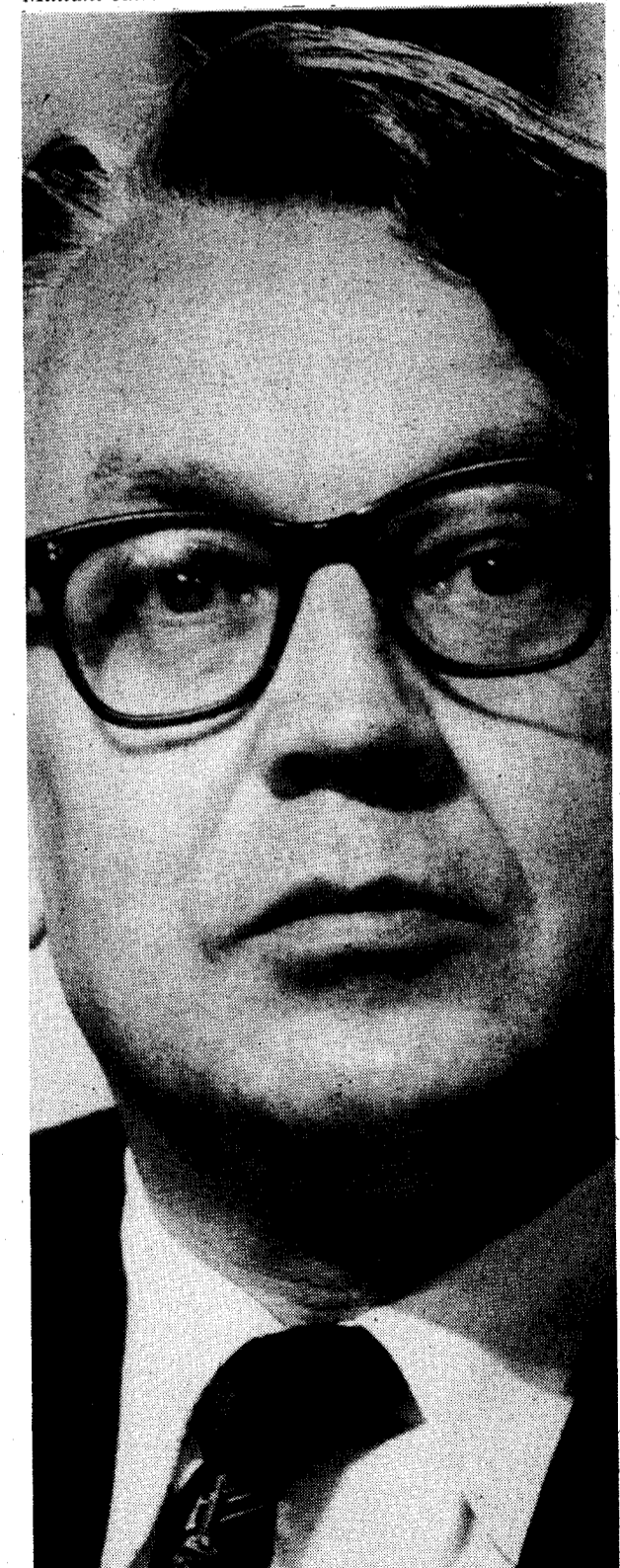
the only force the LCC has actually been organising against is the so-called hard left. If the LCC were to win control of CLPs away from the left then the way would be open for a central purge of the left.

Expelling individual *Militant* supporters and left wingers costs the NEC witch hunters no price. If the LCC wins in the CLPs then the witch hunt can go forward from localised expulsions to a central witch hunt.

The stakes in the Blackburn expulsions are therefore very high indeed. *Militant* has undoubtedly alienated many in the left wing of the party by its sectarianism, by its undemocratic manipulation of organisations it controls, and by its right wing policies on many issues.

But the politics of the *Militant* are not the point. These can and should be fought against by democratic means. To accept purges and witch hunts in the Party will not merely harm the left wing but tear Labour apart. The expulsions in Blackburn have to be fought throughout the Party.

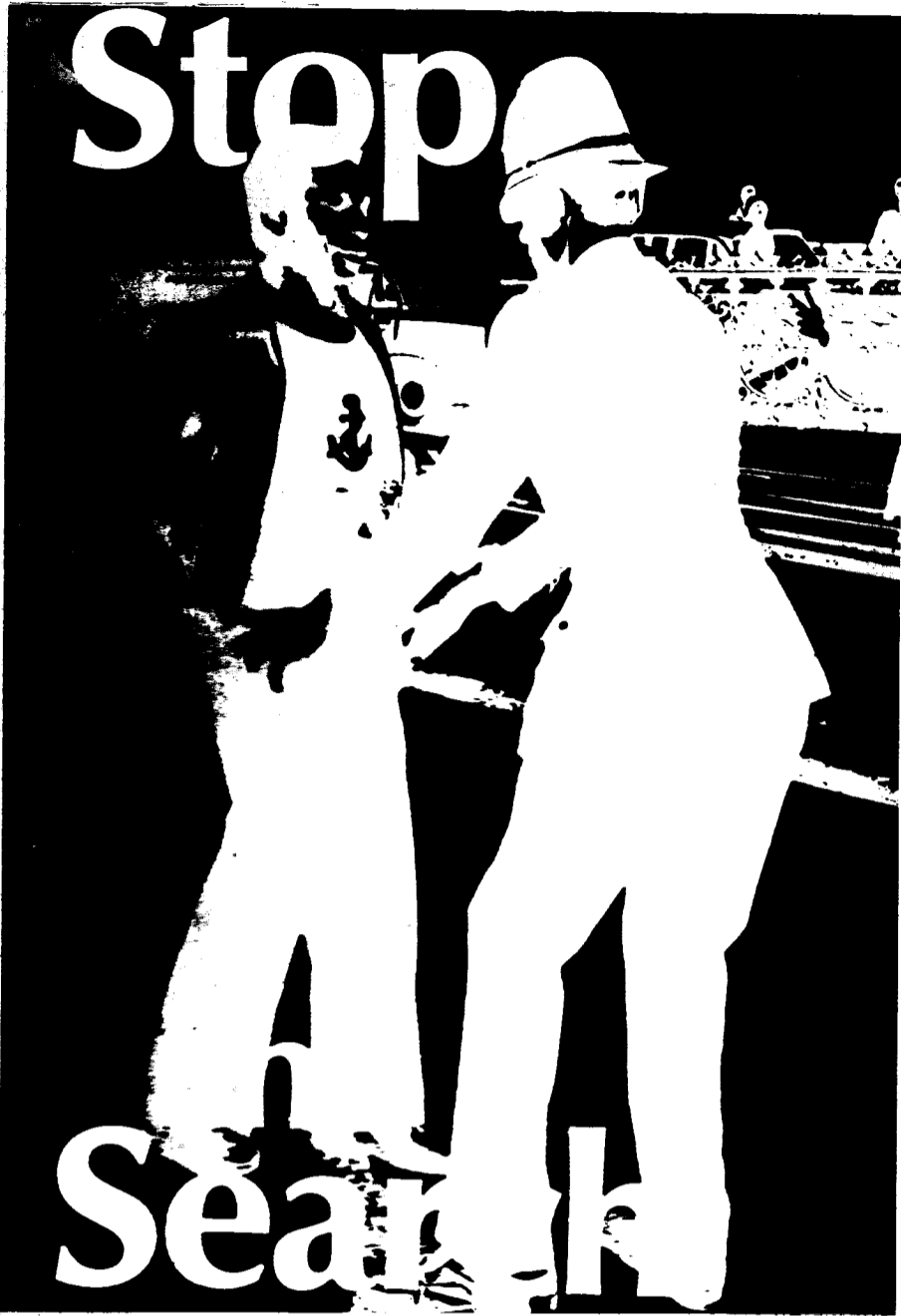
Labour Against the Witch Hunt and the CLPD conference, which starts this weekend, should start that fight.



Chief witch hunter John Golding

Photo: Militant

Photo: JOHN HARRIS



Labour must fight the Police Bill

RUSSELL PROFITT is one of Labour's few black councillors, and a leading member of the Black Activists Group within the party. The group is organising to combat Labour's inertia on racism.

Russell told Socialist Action why the Labour Party should lead the fight against the Police Bill.

BRITAIN IS a racist society. Labour Party members are afraid to face up to their own racism, and afraid to confront prejudice within the community.

National politicians made fine-sounding speeches, but when you look on the ground not a lot's changing.

Black people are among the most disadvantaged sections of the community. They live in the worst housing and have the worst education and job prospects. They suffer police harassment and day to day racism.

More black brothers and sisters are joining the Labour Party, looking for tangible support for the struggles of the black community. But often there's a quick turnover in black membership because they're not getting that support — the black presence is ignored.

In the end they turn off to any political activity. But the only way that

black people will get change in this country is by working in a political context, with progressive forces.

The struggle against police harassment has been waged much more by black people than by the labour movement. The Scrap Sus Campaign in the 70s increased awareness that the police were picking on black youth — using the fact that black youngsters are disadvantaged to criminalise them.

That issue has been brought to the fore again by the Police Bill. It's yet another attempt to manage rebellious youth, the most rebellious element of which is black youth, of course. That's why black groups are leading the campaign against the Bill.

The Labour Party isn't doing enough to fight the Police Bill. Very few Labour MPs took a stand against it first time round.

It's not an issue that strikes home to them.

They have no direct experience of police brutality; none of their kids are criminalised and brutalised in the way that happens daily to black families.

They have no conception of what's at stake. That needs to be put right. That's why we need more black people involved in all levels of the Labour Party.

Labour leader Neil Kinnock recently said the Bill should be 'heavily amended'. That's not enough. Such comments

depoliticise the Labour Party. If we wanted a party with sanitised policies, we'd have set up something like the SDP.

Kinnock must recognise the political dimension of this struggle, and speak for it, not against it, or to dilute it. If he can't do that, he'll lose the support of masses of people in this country.

Labour's leader must speak for the people at the sharp end of the struggle in this country, and condemn the Police Bill.



Plain clothes police observing a demonstration.

MALE ORDER

trendy pub regulars joined in with the abuse and threats.

The police arrived after Jo and Liz had been followed outside by some of the men and Jo was attacked over the nose bleed and punched in the eye by another. The police then attacked Liz, twisting her arm, yelling at her and calling her a slag among other things.

Eventually Liz and Jo were taken to Kings Cross police station on the pretext of making statements against their original attackers, only to find that Liz was being arrested for being drunk and disorderly — on orange juice!

Jo was told that she couldn't prosecute the bloke who gave her a black eye, and when she persisted she was told by an hysterical inspector that she would have to exchange addresses with him first! Presumably so that he could finish the job off.

They were eventually released at 5.00 in the morning.

This is just one example of the harassment that lesbians face day in and day out for having the affrontery to be open about their sexuality, and refusing to conform to 'normal' heterosexual standards. All women should boycott the Three Wheatheaves and make sure their sisters do the same — preferably letting the manager know why! (Helen MacDonald)

Compiled by HILARY DRIVER. Send contributions to reach us a week before publication to Male Order, Socialist Action, 328 Upper Street, London N1.

Thank heavens

CECIL Parkinson is probably quite pleased that Sara had a baby girl. While the vast majority of procreating humanity apparently longs for boys, it will be less easy for the press to compare the child as it grows up with its notorious father.

Sara's called the baby Flora Elizabeth after her sisters, which leads me nicely into the following joke ...



Sara Keays

Joke

YOU'VE heard of a certain margarine for men? Well an anonymous benefactor donated the following joke to Male Order:

'I changed my husband to Flora, and now

he's suing me in a lesbian custody suit!

● Do you know any good feminist jokes you've been keeping to yourself? Send them in and win popular acclaim (no, this is not a new brand of car).

Out of order

A WORD of warning to women wanting to go drinking in Islington, especially if they dare to hold hand and kiss in public.

Jo and Liz were sitting in the Three Wheatheaves when they were approached by the pub manager who tried to

take their drinks off them because he found their behaviour 'offensive'. He then had to be held off from attacking them when they challenged his right to say how they should act.

The rest of the predominantly male,

Mugger's charter

THE NATIONAL Police Bill Campaign was re-launched in August last year when the new Tory government said it would reintroduce the Bill. When the election was called, and the bill lapsed, it attacked the stuffing out of the original campaign.

Now we're trying to pick up the pieces and link it to grass roots campaigns like the Newham 5. But we want to make sure it's not based just on local, grass roots involvement, but also includes national organisations like the trade unions and the NCCL.

By Cecil Gutzmore (Secretary, National Campaign Against the Police Bill)

Reading the bourgeois press one gets the impression that major changes have been introduced in the new Bill. This is not so.

The police discretion to make intimate body searches remains. And the Bill gives the state the right to peruse confidential records for the first time.

Far from regulating and defining police powers, as Metropolitan Police Commissioner Newman claims, the Bill plays a trick. The police point to some old statute or some obscure common law which allows the police to do something everyone knows is wholly inappropriate.

They argue that since the law is ill-defined and contains such minor outrages, it should be regularised. The following is an example from the Home Office report justifying the Bill. In areas sur-

rounding the nests of rare birds, the Osprey in Scotland for example there are provisions for a rigorous search of anyone found there, to protect the eggs.

The Home Office tries to say that since such powers exist, they should be extended to the streets of our major cities!

Potentially, everyone is affected by the Bill. But, blacks, trade unionists, Irish nationalists, gays, Greenham women are the groups most at risk.

For example, the Bill links a provision for arrest and search to the 1936 Public Order Act. This will take place if a person has organised a demonstration at which a breach of the peace has taken place, or is organising a demonstration at which such a breach of the peace might take place.

You don't need much imagination to see that any event might be said by some ungenerous police officer to be such an occasion. There is no limit to the people who might be affected given the powers and direction of the Bill.

From Commissioner Newman's point of view, the Bill fits nicely into his overall policing policy. He's developed certain ideas from community policing — the notion that the police should be assisted by the communities themselves —



Trade unionists, blacks, Irish nationalists, gays, Greenham women — these are the groups most under threat from the Police Bill

and argued that government departments, like the Department of Education and local social services departments, should also be involved in spying on the community. All this would be done simply on

police needs as they define them.

In all these ways, the Bill extends state encroachment into the rights of ordinary citizens. It must be fought every inch of the way.

IRELAND UNFREE

Gifford report indicts informer tactic

PUBLICATION of Lord Gifford's report on informers should be used by Labour to highlight the absence of justice in the 6 counties and the irreflexibility of the state which inevitably throws up such self-protective mechanisms.

The report — *Supergrass, The Use of Accomplice Evidence in Northern Ireland* was commissioned by the NCCL-sponsored Cobden Trust. It claims that in the last analysis it is the judiciary who are responsible.

The continuation of the 'supergrass' system is guaranteed by judges turning a blind eye to obvious abuses, just as they did in the 70's over alleged torture in Castlereagh. Gifford also suggests that a policy decision to adopt the informer tactic had been made by the RUC with political agreement at a ministerial level.

Jim Allister, DUP Chief Whip said Gifford's report relied on 'tittle-tattle' relayed to him by 'discredited terrorists'. It is true that in actually going to interview defendants, their lawyers and relatives Gifford broke with a certain status quo in the eyes of the loyalists who regard any such 'dubious elements' with suspicion.

Asked by journalists how he could rely on the use of men like Robert Lean — the informer who escaped from RUC custody to a Sinn Fein called press conference to denounce the supergrass system and expose the intimidation and inducements made to him — Gifford calmly replied he could see their point.

'But did they not see' he continued 'that it was evidence like this that has convicted 86 people in four supergrass trials in the past year and holds 200 people in custody awaiting trial'.

He added mischievously that he personally would not support the prosecution of any police officer for conspiracy to pervert the course of justice based on the uncorroborated testimony of a supergrass. Recommendations coming out of the report include — legislation making corroboration of accomplice evidence compulsory; the end of immunity deals offered to grasses; a maximum of ten defendants in any one trial, in the 'Black trial, 35 were convicted.

In particular, Gifford focussed on the need to return to jury trials. He said that the no-jury Diplock courts had been prejudicial in supergrass trials especially since the circumvention of pre-trial hearings — an unnecessary delay for the conveyor-belt-type legal system preferred.

Informers are not the 'converted terrorists' that the RUC claim. Men like Robert Lean are held against their will, bullied, and bribed into signing statements drawn up by the RUC against people they have never heard of.

Informer John Grimley, before his new prestige as supergrass extraordinaire had more than 40 convictions for forgery, petty theft, sexual assault and robbery. After three attempts to join the British army under false pretences, doctors diagnosed him psychopathic.

After bumbling his way through his contradictory evidence scripted by the RUC, the judge was moved to admit he could 'place absolutely no reliance on Grimley's testimony'. Nevertheless, it was sufficient in the eyes of the same judge to convict 11 people and hand out more than 50 years of prison sentences. The more exposure given to the abuses of the so-called legal system in the North, the better. Only a democratic society can have justice. The legal system will be used to pursue the war against democracy as long as partition is preserved. Let's not make it easy for them.

Gifford's report makes an ideal subject for local Labour and trade union meetings which expose the barbarity of the Northern Ireland state.

Rate capping problem for Labour left

THE TORIES' PLAN to abolish the Greater London Council and other Metropolitan Councils is very unpopular. It is rightly seen as an attack on local democracy and a political manoeuvre to avoid trying to vote the Labour authorities out of office. Another aspect of Thatcher's attack on local democracy is the planned 'rate-capping' bill to stop councils putting up the rates above a certain level. However this piece of legislation looks like being a lot more popular. And that in a nutshell sums up a big problem of strategy and tactics for the Labour Left.

In recent years Thatcher has made it increasingly difficult for local councils (usually Labour-controlled) to maintain even their present inadequate services, let alone to finance any expansion or improvements. Government subsidies have been cut and harsh penalties introduced whereby councils lose up to £2 or £3 of grant for every £1 they spend over central government's ceiling for expenditure. This is all part of a cynical drive by the Tories to run down council services and lower working class living standards.

Debate has raged inside the Labour Party on how to respond to this. Many ingenious schemes have been dreamed up to get around the problem. 'Creative accounting', clever cost-cutting manoeuvres, and David Blunkett's plan to force the DHSS to pay higher rents for the unemployed Sheffield council tenants have all been investigated.

By Davy Jones (Islington South CLP)

Others have toyed with the idea of mass resignations by Labour Councillors, but all too often the councils have fallen back on the easy option of putting up the rates. The result is that the rates have recently spiralled upwards way ahead of inflation in many Labour-controlled boroughs.

While it's true that rate rises hit working class people less hard than rent rises, and that much of the rates fall on larger business and government offices, nevertheless big rate increases are an attack on working class living standards. And they are rightly unpopular with working people and small businesses as a result.

Rate rises discredit the Labour councils who im-

plement them — people see them as 'just the same as the rest' attacking living standards. They also provide an easy focus for opposition to the progressive measures taken by some Labour councils to finance 'unpopular' causes such as black, women and gay community projects. Half the outcry about these measures comes from basic racial and sexist prejudices, but the other half comes from people feeling that is the reason why their rates are shooting up — which it isn't.

Penalties

This year local Labour councils and parties are again faced with what to do about even bigger penalties and the threat that by next year the rate rise loophole will have been shut by the Tories through the planned rate-capping law. Unfortunately the response of most Labour members, including many good socialists on the left, is to say, 'let's somehow muddle through this year, and prepare for a huge battle with the Tories next year over rate-capping'. The argument goes that we have to conserve our energy this year for next year's 'final showdown'.

The problem is that they are walking straight into the trap the Tories have carefully laid for them.

Because after a few years of big rate increases inflicted on them, local working people even on the estates where Labour's vote is strongest, will not take kindly to another big rise this year while the 'final showdown' is prepared. Another round of rate rises will be just the ticket for the Tories and completely undermine the chances of a mass campaign against 'rate-capping'.

Who will get enthusiastic over a campaign to defend the right of local councils to keep putting the rates up?

There is an alternative to this trap, but it isn't easy. It's been made more difficult by the practice of Labour councils in recent years in putting up the rates rather than taking on the government. Such an alternative would mean a massive and thorough propaganda campaign in conjunction with the unions towards the local community to explain that the Tories have stolen the money for local services, causing improvements to be scrapped and services to deteriorate.

It would mean linking

up with other councils across the country and national unions in a coordinated protest campaign culminating in the refusal to cut services and a confrontation as the Tories try to bring in the commissioners to make the cuts.

Support

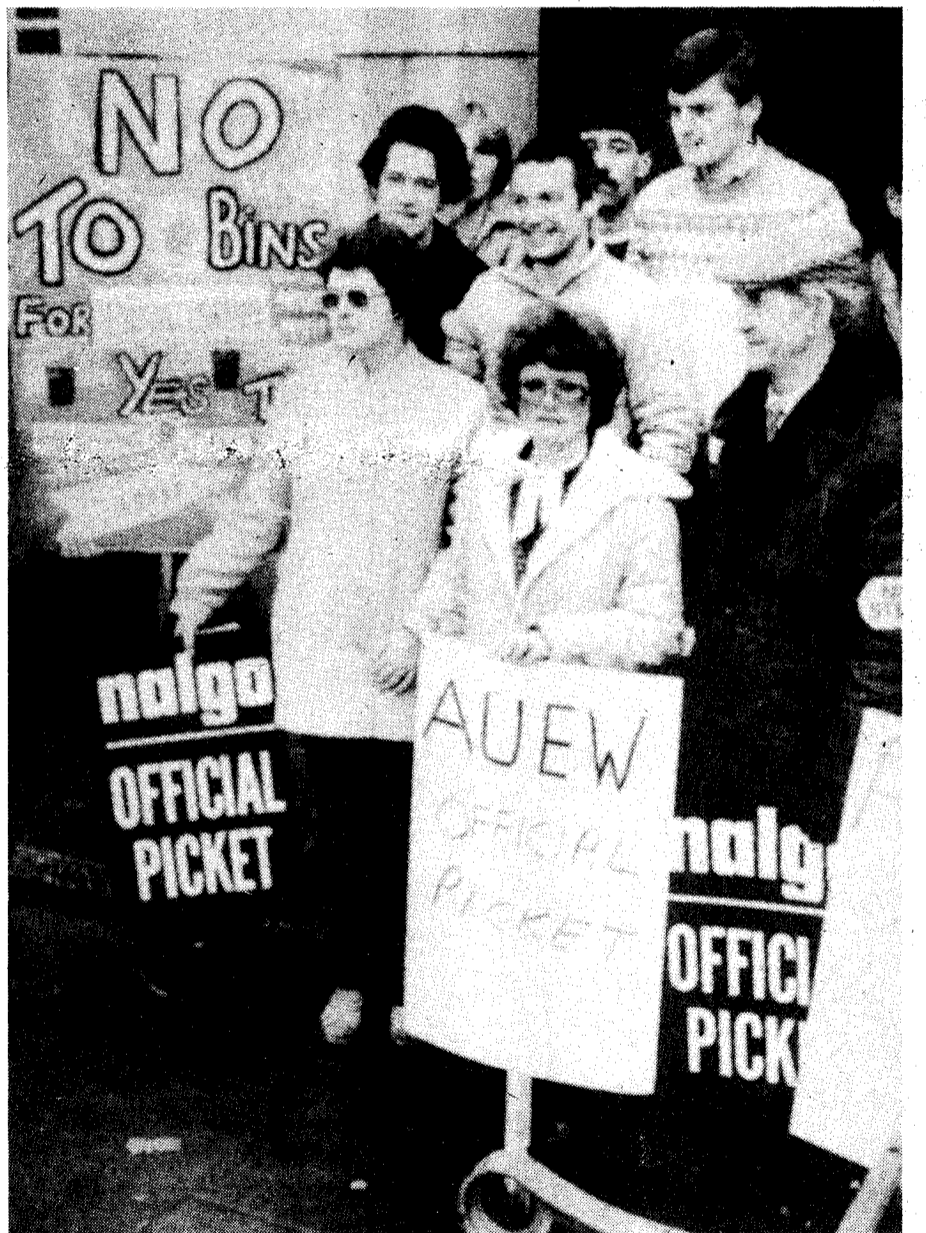
Only a protest movement with massive support rooted in the unions and the communities could force the government to back off.

Some say that such a confrontational approach would not guarantee victory. But slow death through losing working class support because of

rate rises is a guarantee of defeat.

Already Liverpool council have begun down the road of confrontation with the Tories. Some on the left have criticised them for 'going it alone'. But the responsibility for them standing alone lies with those other Labour councils and parties who have failed to give a similar fighting lead or to collaborate with Liverpool to form a national campaign.

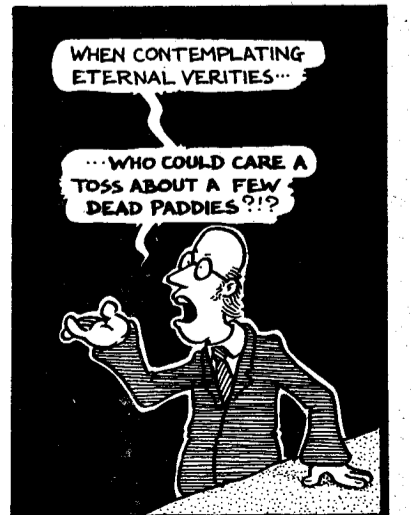
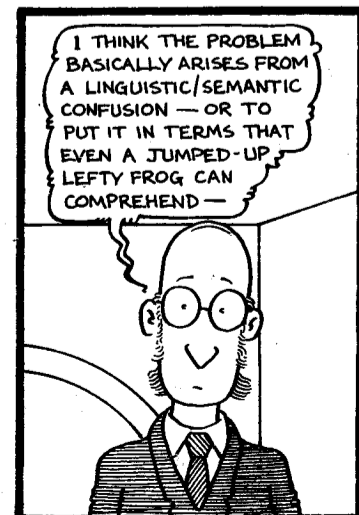
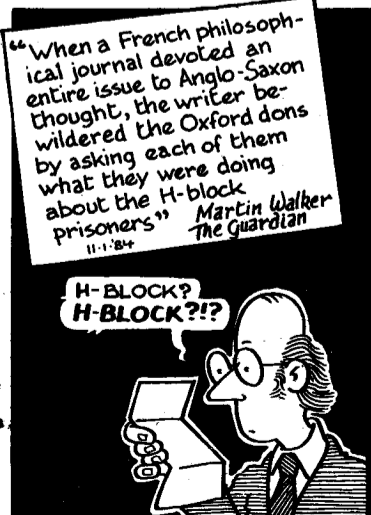
If Liverpool is left to fight alone and is defeated by Thatcher the right wing in the Labour Party will use its defeat to discredit any idea of confronting the Tories' attacks on local government financing.

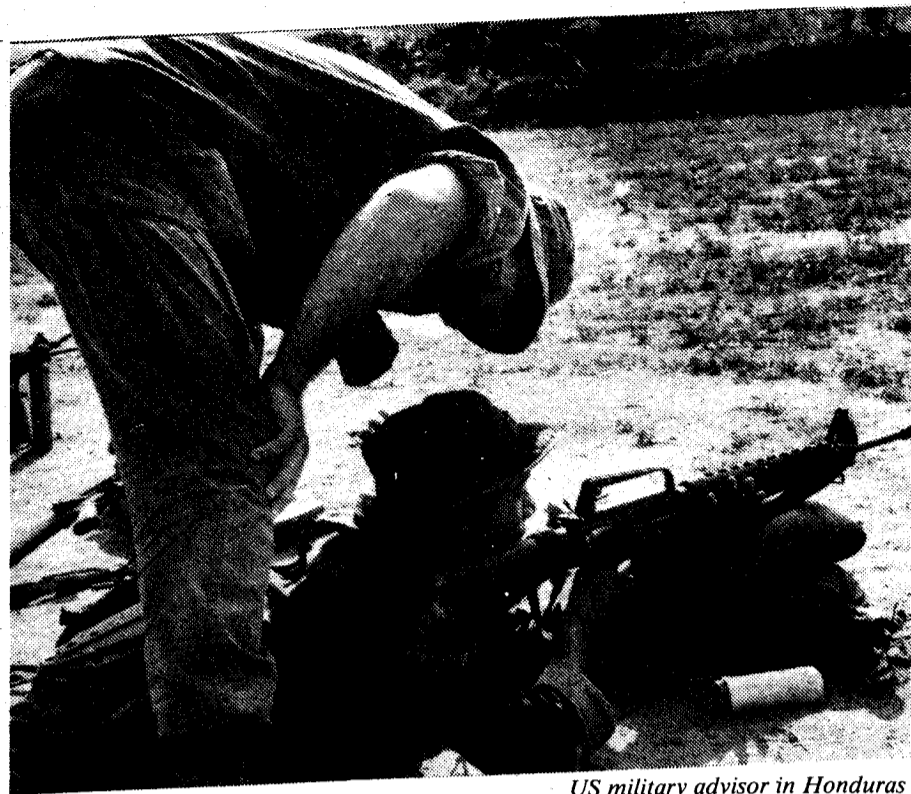


Council workers in Bury fight privatisation and cuts in services

A PIECE OF THE ACTION

BY #40 1/84 CORMAC





US military advisor in Honduras

Salvadorean trade unionists visit Britain

IF YOU are a power, sewer, port or telecommunications worker in El Salvador, you can be court martialed for taking industrial action.

- If you are an active trade unionist you could 'disappear' and lose your life.

Nine thousand trade unionists were murdered last year. El Salvadorean, print worker GERADO ANAYA faces the horror of death and torture every day of his life for his trade union activity.

He is a leading member of the industrial graphical union of El Salvador and is touring Britain on behalf of the FSR - the revolutionary trade union federation.

He is accompanied by Rosa Rivas a representative of El Salvador's major trade union federation the Comité de Unidad Sindical - CUS. She is the secretary to the clandestine FUSS trade union federation in El Salvador.

They have been invited to meet general secretaries and executive committees from 21 national unions and will have discussions with Labour leader Neil Kinnock, member of the Parliamentary Labour Party and Labour's NEC.

In three weeks from 16 January, the CUS and FSR delegation will speak at workplaces, union and trade council meetings in Glasgow, Aberdeen, Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield, York, Cardiff, Swansea, and Birmingham.

Miners' union president Arthur Scargill will join John Willats, a National Graphical Association officer and the Fire Brigade's union general secretary Ken Cameron in a rally to greet the delegation to London.

By Sian Hughes

Throughout the tour Rosa and Gerado will collect messages of solidarity to take back to their union federations.

They will encourage statements to the British government and US administration calling for the end of aid to the Salvadorean regime, the condemnation of its human rights record and the reversal of Thatcher's plans to send British

observers to the rigged presidential elections in March this year.

The British labour movement will be asked to consider a fact finding delegation to El Salvador to counter the disinformation of the Kissinger commission and US advisers.

A fund raising appeal for the zones under mass movement control will be given a special mention during the visit. They hope this will be adopted by labour movement bodies and that much needed funds can be sent direct to El Salvador in 1984.

● If you are interested in hearing the Salvadorean trade unionists, contact the El Salvador Solidarity Campaign, 29 Islington Park St, London N1 for details of their agenda. Tel: 359 3976.

● As a result of the tour it is hoped that funds can be sent to the FSR and CUS unions in El Salvador. Before this happens, the £3000 plus costs of the visit have to be covered. Trade union and Labour Party branches and individual members can make the risks of Rosa and Gerado's visit worthwhile by collecting money and sending it to ELSSOC, marked trade union tour.

Central America: Kissinger commission threatens invasion

UNITED STATES President Reagan woke up with a major headache in 1984. The Cuban revolution was celebrating its 25th year and its example has inspired revolutions in Grenada and Nicaragua now likely to be repeated soon in El Salvador.

As a matter of urgency, Reagan has to consider direct military intervention to maintain imperialist interests in the region.

But in election year such involvement faces mounting opposition as people contrast economic cutbacks at home with increased military spending.

As the coffins return from the Lebanon, fears grow about Central America. People remember the Vietnam war, when over 50,000 US soldiers were killed.

Reagan has now got a boost with the report of the bipartisan commission on Central America, headed by Henry Kissinger. This brings direct US military intervention closer - with the blessing of leading Democrats, like commission member Robert Strauss and right wing union leader Lane Kirkland.

The commission mumbles about human rights but this is just a face-saver to cover up for US imperialism's aggression - a policy supported by Republican and Democrat commission members alike.

Depend

Last year, Kissinger said 'A lot will depend on how Central America comes out. If we cannot manage Central America, it will be impossible to convince threatened nations in the Persian Gulf and in other places that we know how to manage the global equilibrium'.

The commission endorses this saying, 'The advance of Soviet and Cuban power on the American mainland affects the global balance'.

It concludes by saying the US Congress and administration have failed to do enough militarily to halt this situation and adds, 'The worst possible policy for El Salvador is to provide just enough aid to keep the war going but too

little to wage it successfully'. It recommends aid to Central American regimes of \$ billion for the next five years.

The cosmetic clauses in the report about human rights can't hide the reality that these conditions apply after a guaranteed two years of uninterrupted aid increase to the El Salvador regime.

By Celia Pugh

Kissinger has already opened the door for the administration to ignore the human rights sections of the report with the view that, 'Neither the Congress nor the executive should interpret conditionality in a manner that leads to a Marxist-Leninist victory in El Salvador'.

This report heralds a major escalation of the US war drive in Central America. Following the invasion of Grenada and the stationing of 25,000 US army personnel off the coast and borders of El Salvador and Nicaragua the administration is preparing for a major military 'exercise' in Honduras for in June, codenamed Big Pine III.

It will use the bipartisan agreement of the Kissinger commission to defuse opposition to direct US military intervention in El Salvador and Nicaragua in election year.

The labour and solidarity movements in Europe and America will need to be on full alert to respond to stepped up aggression against the popular revolutions unfolding in El Salvador and Nicaragua.

The Reagan administration is making new approaches to European governments to avoid the kind of diplomatic embarrassment suffered over the Grenada invasion.

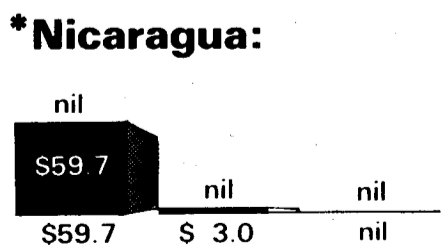
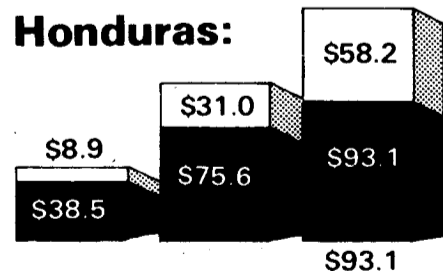
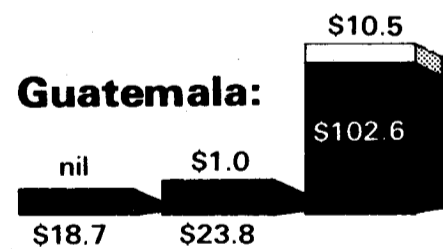
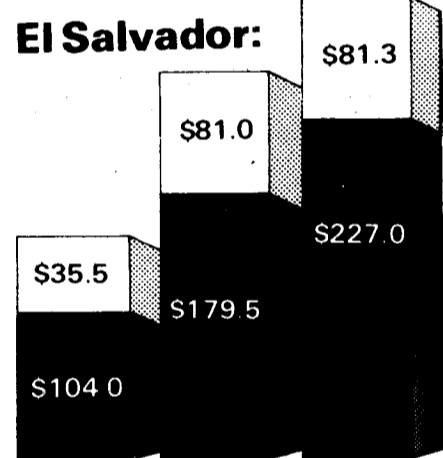
In the next few months the British labour movement has a vital job. It must stop the Thatcher government from giving unquestioning support to

Reagan's war drive. Opposition should be built to the sending of British government observers to the Salvadorean presidential elections in March. The Labour Party lead this attack on Tory policy. The present tour of Britain by Salvadorean trade unionists can be used to boost these appeals for solidarity.

US AID - \$ millions

□ Military
■ Economic

1981 1982 1983



*The annual cost of the US covert war against Nicaragua was estimated at \$30 to \$50 million for 1983. The CIA wants \$80 million for 1984 to support 12,000 to 15,000 contras.

RALLY COME AND HEAR LEADING TRADE UNIONISTS FROM EL SALVADOR

- Rosa Rivas
a leading member of CUS, El Salvador's largest trade union federation
- Gerardo Anaya
a leading member of the graphical union of El Salvador
- Arthur Scargill
NUM President
- Ken Cameron
FBU General Secretary
- Tony Benn

Speakers invited from the executives of NUPE and NGA
Monday 23rd January 7.30pm
County Hall (near Waterloo Station) London
Organised by the El Salvador Solidarity Campaign

US helicopter enters Nicaragua

A US helicopter pilot was shot down and killed on the Nicaraguan border on 12 January.

Official US statements claim that he didn't enter Nicaragua and that he was on a routine observation flight. They say he was disorientated and blown off course by bad weather conditions.

But Tegucigalpa airport in Honduras say that wind at the time was not more than 15 knots and cloud ceiling was 2500 feet. Honduran military sources believe that the helicopter crossed into Nicaragua.

This confirms previous reports of US helicopters supplying Contras inside Nicaragua.

LENIN'S LA

THIS WEEK is the 60th anniversary of the death of Lenin. His life and work have been misrepresented for decades by the rulers and ideologues of both East and West. Here PHIL HEARSE looks at Lenin's struggle against bureaucracy in the Soviet Union.

NEIL KINNOCK recently said that the *Militant* tendency in the Labour Party was incompatible with the Party because it was 'democratic centralist, not 'democratic socialist'. Leaving aside the question of the politics of *Militant*, Neil Kinnock's statement reflects a very common misconception that has been fostered by social democrats, anarchists and cold war warriors like — that Lenin's method of party organisation was dictatorial and a precursor of Stalinism.

The idea that Stalin merely continued Lenin's work was of course argued for decades by the official Communist Parties themselves. Very few political tendencies have any interest in revealing the historical fact that during the last years of his life Lenin waged a bitter battle against growing bureaucracy inside the Soviet Communist Party and the Soviet state, that he proposed a political bloc to Trotsky to fight bureaucracy and that he intended to drive Stalin from his position as party General Secretary.

Furthermore in the 1930s, when Stalin was consolidating his position in the Soviet Union he had to execute all the remaining members of Lenin's Central Committee in order to achieve this.

During the last two years of his life, from 1922 to 1924, Lenin suffered several strokes, which made his political activity intermittent

and physically difficult. Yet during this time he waged a bitter and growing struggle against the development of Stalin and the rising power of the bureaucracy in Russia.

The situation in which the Russian revolution found itself at the beginning of the 1920s was one of an economy which had been wrecked by war and the foreign invasions of 1918-20. Russian industry virtually collapsed. While the economic life of the country was dislocated thousands of the best and most self-sacrificing communists were killed in the civil war. The organised working class was itself dispersed as industrial enterprises ceased functioning.

Strangled

Outside Russia the Social Democrats — the equivalent of the Labour Party — in Germany had strangled the revolution. First they had voted for the treaty of Brest-Litovsk, under which the Bolsheviks had been forced to lose one third of Russia's industrial areas to the government of the Kaiser. Then, when the German working class rose up and overthrew the Kaiser's regime in 1918/19, the Social Democrats had allied with the fascists to murder tens of thousands of German workers and maintain capitalism in Germany.

By 1921 the Russian revolution was internationally isolated and blockaded both economically and politically. Around ten million people had died through the direct and indirect effects of the foreign invasions of the country.

In this period the Soviets, the elected worker's committees from which the Soviet government theoretically derived its authority, progressively ceased operating. The Bolshevik government became more and more based on the state apparatus. The apparatus of the Bolshevik party became more and more intertwined with the state bureaucracy, itself composed mainly of the old Czarist bureaucracy. A danger appeared of the creation of a bureaucratic layer whose interests would be separate and apart from the interests of the ordinary workers and peasants.

At the Eleventh Party Congress in March-April 1922 — the last national conference at which Lenin was able to speak — he devoted

much of his contribution to warning of the dangers of bureaucratism. But at this stage Lenin saw the bureaucratic threat coming from *outside* the party, a danger of the state apparatus directing the Communist Party, rather than the other way around.

In his Political Report he spoke of the state bureaucracy as 'that huge bureaucratic machine, that gigantic heap'. He asked: 'who is directing whom? I doubt very much whether it can be truthfully said that the Communists are directing that heap. To tell the truth, they are not directing, they are being directed'.

Lenin, Trotsky and Kamenov in discussion at the Second Congress.



Further he said the state machine 'was like a car that was not going in the direction that the driver desired, but in the direction that someone else desired as if it were being driven by some mysterious, lawless hand, God knows whose, perhaps of a profiteer, or a private capitalist, or both'.

Until November 1922 Lenin still saw the problem in terms of putting able and responsible communists in key positions to fight the bureaucratic danger. He maintained his confidence in the party apparatus. But in December 1922 there was a sudden change, as Lenin proposed to Trotsky a political bloc to defend the state monopoly of foreign trade, which

was under threat inside the party leadership.

Then between December 1922 and January 1923 Lenin dictated a scathing critique of Stalin's handling of the problem of the non-Russian nationalities in the Soviet Union and proposed Stalin's removal from the post of General Secretary. In addition Lenin called for a general reorganisation of the state apparatus, enlarging the party Central Committee to 50 or 100 members and strengthening the role of central state planning.

The struggle inside the party leadership over the state monopoly of foreign trade has to be seen

within the context of the New Economic Policy (NEP) which was introduced into Russia in 1921. During the civil war, given the breakdown of normal relations between the town and the countryside, the Bolsheviks had resorted to forcible requisitions of food from the peasantry to feed the towns. With the end of the civil war the Soviet government sought to boost productivity in agriculture and stabilise relations between the workers in the towns and the peasants in the countryside.

To that end they proposed strengthening market relations in the countryside. The peasants would be subject to only a very limited tax paid in agricultural products. The rest of production the



Lenin recovering after his first stroke

ST

peasants could sell on the market — and keep the profit. As private agriculture reasserted itself, a new layer of wealthy peasants ('Nepmen') came into existence with their own private capital, employing other peasants.

For the Bolsheviks the introduction of the NEP was a necessary retreat. The strengthening of capitalism in the countryside unless severely controlled threatened the creation of a rural class opposed to socialism.

It was in this context that the debate over the monopoly of foreign trade erupted. In October 1922, the Central Committee, in

Bureau in particular. Lenin was losing confidence in the party machine controlled by Stalin.

After the dispute on the state monopoly of foreign trade, Lenin's next clash with Stalin was over the 'nationalities' question — the relations between Russian, Ukrainian, Georgian and other nations in the Soviet state. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was only established on 30 December 1922. Before this there was only a loose federation between the Russian Socialist Republic and five other national republics. Stalin, who was in charge of the nationalities question, proposed a new federation in

Lenin now prepared to launch a fight at the 12th party congress, scheduled for March 1923, but which was delayed until April. Foteva, Lenin's secretary, told Trotsky: 'He (Lenin) does not trust Stalin and wants to come out against him in front of the whole party. He is preparing a bomb'.

The basis on which Lenin proposed to intervene in the party congress was against bureaucratism in the party, defence of the rights of nationalities, and the importance of state planning in face of the rise of the 'nepmen'. He provided Trotsky, from his sickbed, with notes and correspondence to use in the fight if he was too ill to attend himself.

In the event, Lenin was recovering from a new stroke. The party congress was dominated by the emerging triumvirate of Stalin, Kamenev and Zinoviev. Trotsky, making a major error, compromised with them, rather than detonating the 'bomb' which Lenin had prepared. As a relative newcomer to the Bolshevik Party Trotsky felt that, without Lenin's presence, he was unable to challenge the 'old Bolsheviks'.

Removed

Lenin was now effectively removed from the inner-party fight. But in his last writings, and especially his article *Better Fewer, But Better* he returned repeatedly to the question of bureaucratism. He proposed a 'purging of our government machine', especially the Workers and Peasants Inspection. This body, he argued, had been set up to control bureaucracy, but had become one of the prime culprits.

The proposals in *Better Fewer, But Better* have to be put in context with his 'Testament', written in December 1922-January 1923. His proposal in this document that Stalin be removed as General Secretary because of his rude and overbearing behaviour represents a growing awareness that the Stalin-Kamenev-Zinoviev faction was the political representation of growing bureaucratism. Lenin's last political alliances and struggles were aimed at blowing up this bloc, and rooting out the cancer of bureaucratism.

At the end of 1923 46 party leaders published a platform against the growth of bureaucracy.



Lenin's central committee in 1929. Rakovsky and Radek later disappeared

The statement heralded the beginning of the Left Opposition, forerunner of the Trotskyist movement. This was the real continuation of Lenin's last struggle.

In 1927 Lenin's widow, Krupskaya, ventured the opinion that if Lenin had lived he would be in one of Stalin's prisons. Lenin did indeed initiate the struggle against bureaucracy in the USSR, but this struggle was too brief and too difficult for him to fully grasp the topic theoretically or carry it through to its end. The Bolsheviks had the privilege and the 'misfortune' to lead the first successful socialist revolution in the world. They had no previous experience to guide them. But from the time Lenin characterised the USSR as 'a

worker's state with bureaucratic deformations' in 1918 he showed how grave a danger he regarded the processes that led finally to Stalin's rule.

It was not Leninist organisation which created bureaucracy but the isolation of the revolution, the poverty of the economy, and the ravages of civil war and foreign invasion. Lenin fought the rising Stalinist bureaucracy in Russia — a bureaucracy later hailed as 'realistic', and even as an ally, by capitalists and reformists around the world.

Lenin's programme remained that of control of the state by the masses and control of the party by its membership. That is the very essence of democratic socialism.



Lenin with Trotsky

Lenin and Trotsky's absence, passed a resolution aimed at weakening the monopoly. Its removal would have enabled Russian capitalists to establish direct links with the capitalist world market, determining imports and exports on the basis of their own profits rather than the needs of the socialised economy. Lenin supported the monopoly of foreign trade and his opponents were Stalin and Bukharin.

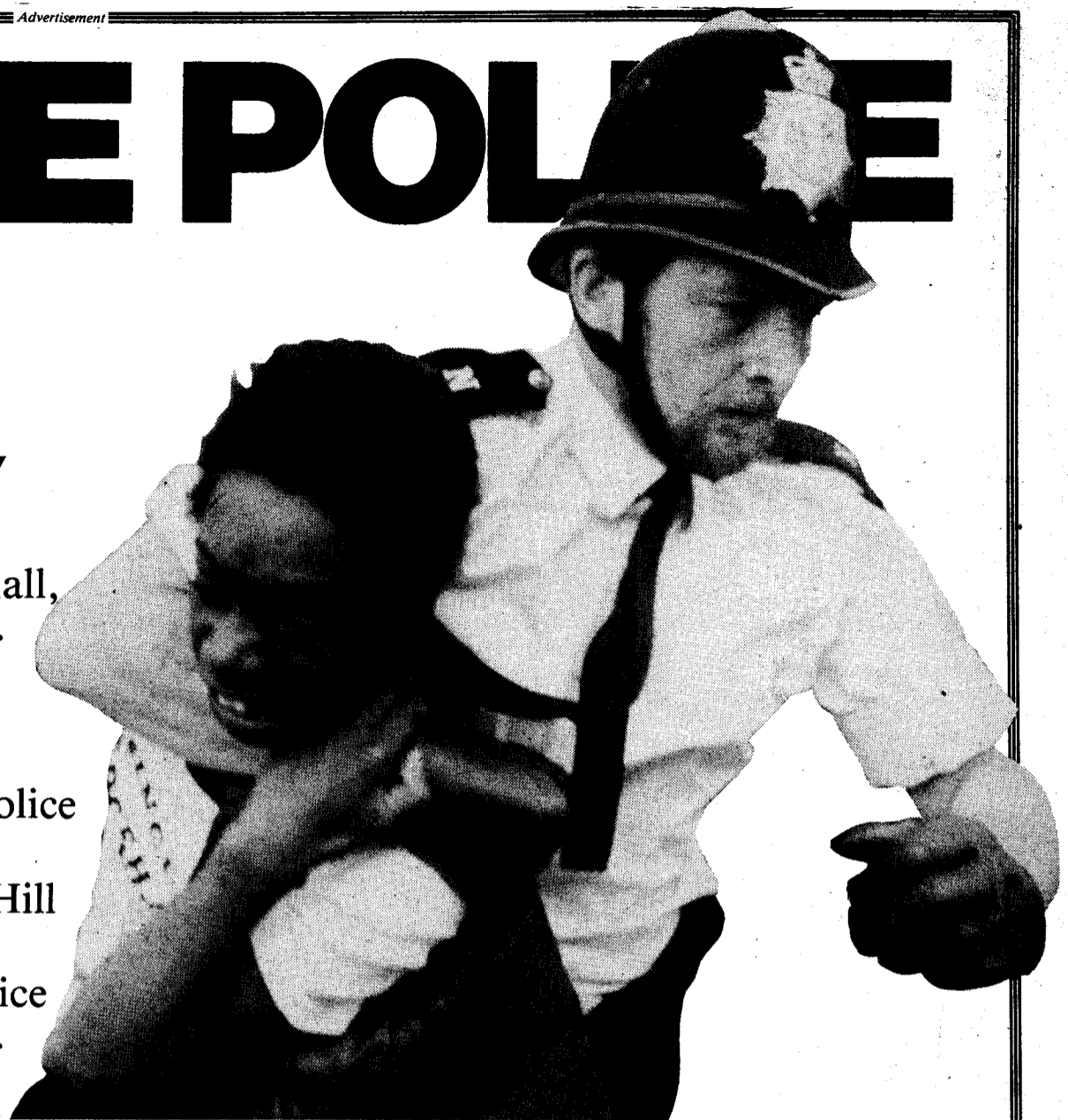
Lenin appealed to Trotsky for a common bloc to defend the existing state monopoly. During their meeting on 12 December he proposed to Trotsky a bloc not only on the monopoly question, but against 'bureaucracy in general' and against Stalin's Organisation

which central power would reside in Moscow. This was rejected by the Georgian Bolshevik leaders (a nation in the South West of the USSR) who thought it would undermine their position in Georgia, and that it was a violation of the right to national self-determination.

Stalin and his hatchet man Ordzhonikidze subjected the Georgian Bolshevik leaders to abuse, 'exile' in Moscow and even physical violence. When Lenin found out the facts of Stalin's action he again formed a bloc with Trotsky to defend the right of the Georgians to autonomy and self-determination. Kamenev noted 'Illich is going to war to defend independence'. This time Stalin attempted to fight.

STRUGGLE

KILL THE POLICE BILL!



NATIONAL MARCH AND RALLY

Brockwell Park (Brixton) to Trafalgar Square

Route: Brixton, Clapham, Stockwell, Vauxhall, Scotland Yard, Whitehall, Trafalgar Square.

Speakers from: Labour Party, NGA, Indian Workers Assoc (GB), GLC, Newham 8, Greenham Women, Relatives for Justice (Ireland), National Campaign Against the Police Bill, Young Liberals, Communist Party.

Assemble: Brockwell Park 11.30am (Herne Hill BR station — Buses 2 and 68).

Contact: London Campaign Against the Police Bill, 50 Rectory Rd., N16 7QY. 01-249 8334.

SATURDAY 21 JANUARY

NO POLICE BILL ■ KILL THE POLICE BILL ■ NO POLICE STATE

DIARY

(These listings are free for all major labour movement and campaign activities — up to maximum of 50 words. Semi-display advertisements cost 5p per word and must be paid in advance. Send to: *Diary, Socialist Action, 328 Upper Street, London N1 2XP* to arrive not later than Thursday, one week prior to publication).

International

- The Politics of Health in Zimbabwe Hour long video available for meetings or functions. £10 (payable in advance). Send to Books for South Africa Fund, PO Box 50, London N1.
- Sri Lankan Research & Information Group will provide speakers on the current situation there for meetings. Write to 9 Grays Inn Buildings, London EC1.
- No Intervention in Central America (NICA) is

a broad based coalition of solidarity groups, human rights orgs, aid agencies and political parties. More details from NICA 20/21 Compton Terrace, London N1 01-226 6747.



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.

● 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 videos and speakers at Peckham Labour Club, Lansbury House, 41 Camberwell Grove, London SE5: 31 Jan El Salvador; 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, Dalston. Thur 26 January, 7pm.

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

NATIONAL BOOK SALE

14 January - 4 February at

The Other Bookshop
328 Upper Street
London N1

Open: Mon Tue Sat — 10-6
Wed — 12-7
Thurs Fri — 11-7

25 Years of the Cuban Revolution

- 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.

Lesbian & Gay Liberation

- Nottingham Labour Campaign for Gay Rights meets monthly. Next meeting 15 Feb, 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).
- Labour Movement Lesbians is a new organisation of lesbians in the labour movement to support each other and organise initiatives on issues that affect lesbians. Next meeting 28 Jan, A Woman's

Place, Hungerford House, Victoria Embankment, London WC2, 2pm. Further information from Sarah c/o Feminist Library, Hungerford House, Victoria Embk, London WC2.

Ireland

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

● Day School on Ireland Jan. Organised by Labour Committee on Ireland. Agenda: Republicanism and socialism; Republicanism and feminism; Irish and British trade union movements; British Labour Party. Open to LP and LCI members, 10.30am-5pm. Tickets at £1 from LCI, Box 42, 136 Kingsland High Road, London E8.

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.

● Brixton Campaign Against the Police Bill pre-march public rally, Fri 20 Jan, 7.30, St Matthews Mtg place, Brixton Hill, London SW2. Speakers include George Jerrom NGA, Paul Boetang GLC, Ted Knight, Newham 8 Campaign, GMBATU, NUPE, National Police Bill Campaign, Relatives for Justice (Ireland).

● Stop the Police Bill Hounslow public meeting, 19 Jan, 7.30pm, Town Hall, Treaty Rd, Hounslow. Speaker: Suresh Grover

(Chair National Campaign against Police Bill). For details of local transport to demonstration on 21 Jan phone Hilary Driver 01-560 8800.

Yiddish lessons. Learn the language of the Jewish labour movement! Beginner and intermediate classes commence weekly in January, Central London. Teacher, Barry Smerin, organised by the Jewish Socialist Group cultural and anti-fascist project. Further details from JCARP, Southbank House, Black Prince Road, London SE1.

Miscellaneous

- GLC workshops Employment and training for the future. 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.
- Islington Labour Briefing meeting with Reg Race on 'What way forward for the Left?' Thur 19 Jan, 7.30pm, Town Hall, Upper St.
- Theatre workshops at the Drill Hall, 16 Chenies St, London WC1, led by actress Effie Arestides. Start Fri 20 Jan, 6.30-8.30pm. Every Friday until September 1984. Booking tel: 01-387 9639.

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.

Socialist ACTION

Join the fight for socialism

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

Name

Address

..... Tel

Age Union/CLP (if any)

Danger, men at work!

'THE EMPLOYER is sovereign over the persons and charms of his employees. The threat of discharge suffices to overcome all resistance in nine cases out of ten.... If the master is mean enough, and the official report mentions several such cases, his mill is also his harem; the fact that not all manufacturers use their power does not in the least change the position of the girls.'

'Women library staff at the *Financial Times* travel a long devious route to deliver files to journalists in the reporters' room. The detour is specifically to avoid the smutty, sexual remarks in the messenger section of the newsroom.'

These two quotes are from *Women and Harassment at Work*, a new Pluto handbook by Nathalie Hadjifotiou. Engels wrote the opening passage in 1892, while the second is from a union journal ninety years later.

By Hilary Driver

As the book clearly shows, while women have made some real gains over the last century, the basic economic and material conditions still exist to continually push women into subservience, passivity and powerlessness. Sexual harassment is one pernicious expression of society's view of women's role as sex objects — a bit of light relief from the more serious matters of life.

Women and Harassment at Work provides an extremely useful and detailed guide which explains what sexual harassment is, why it exists and how to combat it.

Sexual harassment can take many forms, but can broadly be defined as be-

ing any unwanted attentions of a sexual nature that cause discomfort or interfere with the job, and includes behaviour that denigrates woman's role as a worker. Not the easiest thing in the world to tackle, given that much of the behaviour associated with sexual harassment is seen as a normal and everyday part of the 'battle of the sexes', as harmless fun (for men), and so on.

The handbook points out that it is very difficult to do anything as an individual if you're being harassed, and concentrates on collective campaigns, taking up the issue in the union, collective agreements and how to use existing law. Specific campaigns are examined in detail, such as a campaign against pin-ups in a council's direct labour organisation.

While I wouldn't agree with all the advice given in the book, Nathalie herself points out that the recognition of sexual harassment as a political issue and a valid trade

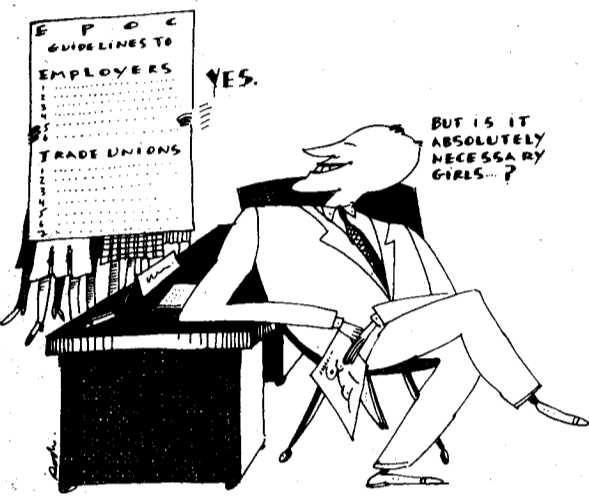


union concern is fairly recent. Effective campaigns against sexual harassment at work have been few and far between, leaving us precious little experience to draw on.

The achievement of this handbook is that it assumes no particular previous awareness or understanding of the issues by the reader, but at the same time it provides a comprehensive guide to sexual harassment. A

guide that every union branch should buy and that every militant should read.

• *Women and Harassment at Work* by Nathalie Hadjifotiou, Pluto Press, £3.95.



Is Greenham fighting for women?

BREACHING THE PEACE is a collection of radical feminist papers which tries to persuade feminists to withdraw their support from the Greenham women. Germaine Greer, writing in the *Daily Mail* recently, used similar arguments but added lesbian-bashing to gratify the paper's audience.

What a time to attack Greenham! The women at the camp are virtually banned from Newbury. They are attacked by vigilante groups who throw stink bombs, maggots and rotten eggs into their tents, and are arrested every day on trumped up charges.

By Judith Arkwright

The pamphlet uses three arguments to challenge the view that Greenham is a feminist issue. The main one is that women's solidarity is not feminism.

In her open letter, Sophie Laws concludes that Greenham women are not part of the women's liberation movement and should not be allowed to advertise their activities in WIRES (The Women's liberation newsletter).

It's true that the Women's Institute is not feminist, even it's a women's organisation. The demands and activities of a movement, as well as its membership, defines its character.

Do the demands of the Greenham movement defend the interests of women? Has this movement helped more women understand the aspirations of feminism?

The idea of women-only organisation within broader movements comes from feminism. The pamphlet equates the Peace Women of Northern Ireland with Greenham. This is false.

The protest against cruise is in the interests of women, and against the interests of imperialism. Of course the main job of the women's liberation movement, must be to fight for the specific demands of women, against Tory attacks. By their actions the Greenham women have given a boost to campaigning on all other issues.

The pamphlet takes the attack a stage further. Greenham is dangerous to the women's movement. Perhaps the authors — joined by other left sectarians advocate lobbies and pickets against the Greenham women?

A group of revolutionary feminists in London go to the extreme of comparing Greenham with the attempts of Betty Friedan to recast feminism in a reactionary mould.

Finally, feminist history is distorted to prove the point. Trisha Longdon states: 'the suffragettes' leaders were co-opted into a peace movement'. This is simply not true.



The main suffragette leaders sold women's demands down the river with their support for the imperialist war, not their support for peace. Socialist suffragettes continued to fight for women's demands and oppose the war.

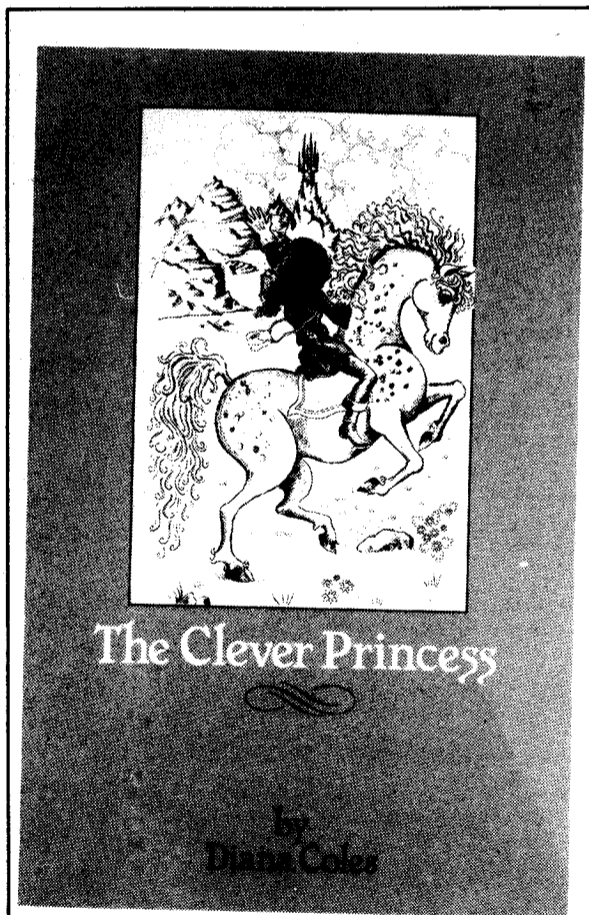
Greenham is denounced for campaigning on an issue which also affects men, and for defending the family. I didn't hang nappies on the fence when I went to Greenham. I think the family is an institution which

perpetuates women's oppression, and I want no part in glorifying it. But I also understand that women become feminist and socialist for all sorts of reasons, women do have common interests with other oppressed groups: children, blacks and the working class. Therefore, they should make common cause with them.

The authors are really afraid of any mass movement. Frankie Green says: 'I understand the appeal of numbers...but I find it a false appeal, as well as be-

ing a male, straight method of organising.' The London group argue that it is much easier to build a big movement than to fight 'the man next door'.

I disagree. It is very difficult and very necessary to build a mass movement of women fighting for our liberation. The steps towards this are many and difficult. Despite differences we cannot stand aside from Greenham. All feminists must stand together with the women of Greenham.



The Clever Princess

The Clever Princess, Diana Coles, Sheba Feminist Publishers £2.50 By Anna (11 years)

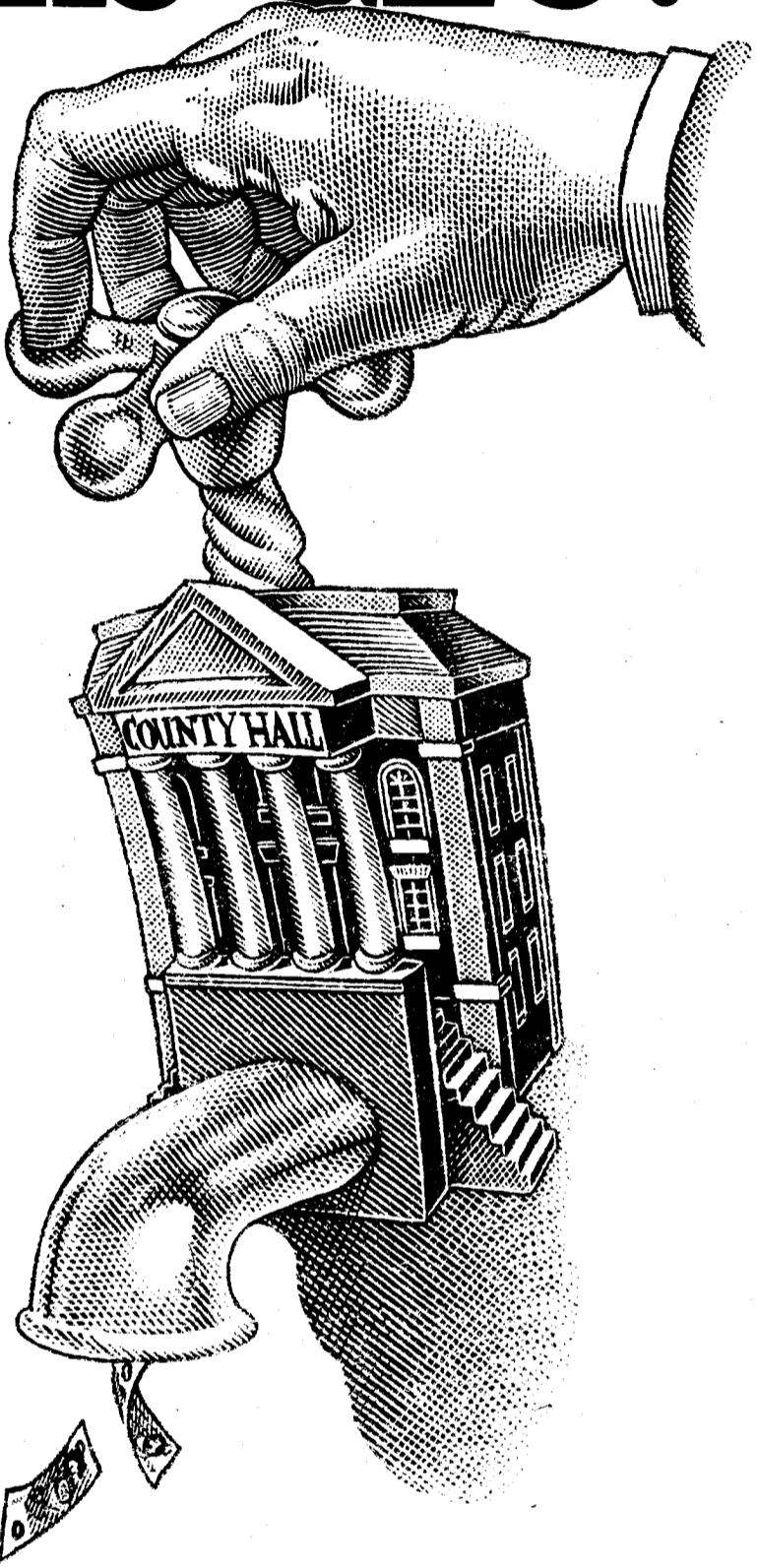
The Clever Princess is a really good book. It's a really interesting story and very lively too. It's about a princess who was a bit too clever and got sold to Boax a wicked magician for a box of jewels. However she does win in the end and shows her father and everyone else that brains are an advantage and not a disadvantage. It's fun to read and there's a lot of imagination in it. I like it best at the end when Boax gets knocked out and dies. I think its one of the best stories I've ever read.

NCCZ

NCCZ

Photo: MARXISM TODAY

Hands off the GLC!



THE GOVERNMENT have decreed that the Greater London Council must disappear on 1 April 1986. It is a purely political move aimed at reducing public spending to a minimum.

24 January will see London's first big demonstration against this attack. The organisers, SERTUC's 'save ILEA' campaign and the GLC unions' 'save democracy' campaign expect most London teachers to strike. The GLC's own staff association has voted 2-1 to strike.

However two problems still confront the campaign. The GLC Campaign Committee sees its objective as informing the electorate of the government's intention to deprive them of their democratic rights, exposing the political nature of the proposals, and highlighting the loss to the electorate as users of the services.

But will this be an abstract 'campaign for democracy' which lobbies politely the House of Lords — or will it organise London's unions for co-ordinated industrial action?

The union campaign is separate from the Labour

administration and is itself divided into the 'Democracy for London' campaign and the 'Save London' campaign. The Democracy for London campaign is being organised by unions which work within the GLC and includes unions such as NALGO, NUPE, GLCSA, GMBATU and TGWU.

By Lesley Catchpole (GLC NALGO, personal capacity)

The idea is that the campaign should involve outside groups such as pensioners, parents, users of public transport in

order to publicise the role of GLC/ILEA and how it provides services for Londoners.

The Save ILEA campaign is led by teaching and non-teaching unions involved in Inner London and representatives of parents' organisations. As a convener within NALGO I see my part in the campaign as spelling out to members that the GLC abolition means job losses and that means thousands more joining the dole queues. Granted it can include a broad-based campaign aimed at attracting public sympathy, but at the end of the day there is only one way the GLC/ILEA employee is going to save his or her job and that is through extra-parliamentary activity actively opposing the Bill. This is why it is crucial that this campaign links up and learns from the experiences of the NHS, the POEU and the NGA print-workers struggles, because at the end of the day their battle is our battle.



Immigrant workers let down by SP-CP

Talbot-Morning Star whitewashes racism

IF YOU HAVEN'T got a white face then you'd better go back to wherever you came from. That's the message that France's 'socialist' government has got for immigrant workers. It's a message also endorsed by the French Communist Party and their British comrades in the *Morning Star* newspaper.

In an article in the 11 January edition of that paper Harry Samson gives the 'background' to the strike and sit-in at Talbot's French car plant and tells us that workers who fight against redundancies are only playing into the hands of the right wing. Samson goes on to report that redundant immigrant workers 'would be aided if they voluntarily desired to return to their country of origin'. No criticism, no comment.

By Chris Bertram

So what is the background to the dispute? The Mitterrand government did a deal with Peugeot, the owners of the plant, a deal that involved 2000 redundancies. The workers at the plant objected to the job losses and took strike action from 7 December. The government then used every weapon at its disposal to smash the workers' resistance.

The Communist Party union, the CGT, explained that redundancies would have to be accepted since management was threatening to close the plant. However, the other main national union federation, the Socialist-led CFDT, was forced to support a struggle because of the militancy of its members at Talbot. But the division fostered by the CGT had doomed the strike. Under the pretext of preventing violence the government sent in riot police to evict workers occupying the factory on New Year's Eve.

Far from separating the immigrant workers and the fascist gangs organised in the CSL

union who were attacking them, the 'socialist' police evicted the workers and smashed up their union office. The CGT and the Communist Party then seized the opportunity to call off the strike but when their supporters, together with the fascist union, scabbed on the CFDT, violence erupted.

The Communist Party accused outside agitators of preventing ordinary working people (white ones?) from earning a decent day's living. Arguing with the bosses only leads to violence and that encourages the fascists claimed the CP. Bravo! The Peugeot family must

laughing all the way to the bank. The Socialist-Communist government have divided worker against worker and black against white and all to maintain the profits of big business.

Lapse

Unfortunately this isn't just a momentary lapse by these people. During last year's strike at Renault the socialist Prime Minister Mauroy explained that the real problem was immigrant car workers in the grip of Islamic fundamentalism. When the fascist National Front won a local by-election the government said that French people had reason to resent being swamped by an alien culture and that it would take measures to tighten up on immigration.

The CP is no stranger to racism. A CP mayor at Ivry led a march on a hostel for immigrants under the pretext that all Arabs are dope peddlers. When you make racism respectable and divide and demoralise the working class you open a veritable Pandora's Box. The Socialist and Communist leaders are digging their own graves and are releasing forces of reaction that will sweep them from power before going on to attack the working class and destroy its organisations.

What a contrast with the leaders of the GLC like Ken Livingstone, who have used their office to try to unite black and white workers in their anti-racist year. Does the *Morning Star* stand with Ken Livingstone or with the 'communist' advocates of 'voluntary' repatriation?

All out against Reagan!

ON 7-9 JUNE this year, the World Economic Summit takes place in Britain. This makes a visit by US President Ronald Reagan certain.

CND has a golden opportunity to lead a massive protest against American missiles — in the full glare of international publicity, and at the height of the European election campaign!

By Carol Turner

Last weekend's National Council of CND failed to grasp this chance when it voted down a proposal for a national demonstration in London on Saturday 3 June as the centre-piece of CND's European election campaign. Instead, Council voted:

'CND feels that a European-wide demonstration

against the new US nuclear weapons sited in Europe should take place prior to the EEC elections. Projects committee to consult with major European movements on the timing of the action.

'We suggest the focus be on the cruise and Pershing II missile sites in Europe. In Britain we propose discussing with the peace camps at Greenham Common and Molesworth. In the light of these discussions, CND would

decide both the location and character of our event.'

The visit must be the occasion for labour and peace movement protest against Reagan and his missiles.

Local CND groups should make their feelings known, and insist that CND's leaders seize this opportunity for the biggest public demonstration against the missiles in 1984.

Model resolution for CND groups:

This group demands that CND organise a mass demonstration in London against cruise, Trident and US bases, and for a nuclear-free Europe, on Saturday 3 June, just before Reagan's visit to Britain, as part of CND's campaign during the European elections. CND should propose this to other European peace groups as a day for coordinated demonstrations throughout Europe during the EEC elections.

Pits overtime ban: Solidarity action now

AS THE MINERS' overtime ban moves into its eleventh week, the National Coal Board, backed by the government, claims the ban is saving NCB money. With over four million tonnes of coal already lost, this is unlikely.

Last week the Tory media hailed the North Staffordshire winders strike as a blow against union solidarity. But the five North Staffs pits — Silverdale, Florence, Holditch, Wolstanton and Hem Heath are solidly backing the ban. On Saturday, the winders voted to halt further protest action. And a MORI poll published on Saturday shows the miners solidly behind their Executive. **ROB ANDERSON**, from Hem Heath colliery, Stoke on Trent, told Socialist Action what's been going on.

Our special branch meeting unanimously voted for the overtime ban. Last time, we allowed safety work to go on: winders, on-setters and loco-drivers worked.

This time we've called them out. There are 11 winders in our pit — and 43 throughout the North Staffs pits.

We don't have enough winders, and — under an 18-year six-day-week local agreement — they work regular overtime. They argued their local agreement allowed them to continue work.

We say it's overtime — they're paid overtime rates. Anyway, national agreements supercede local ones.

The winders at our pit were the motor force for breaking the action. We tried to find a compromise.

We said, at the end of the dispute, we'd support

their six-day agreement, or argue for more winders to be employed. But this failed.

They're the ones who've used threats: to stop the pit if they don't get their overtime.

On Saturday 7 January, they threatened to work, so we picketed the pit. None came through that Saturday or Sunday. But on Monday they called a one-day revenge strike.

Heart

I've never known feelings so strong as they are at the Hem Heath over this action. Nobody's heart was in last year's overtime ban. This time, they feel the winders are letting down the union.

North Staffs has always been moderate, isolated from other areas. The incentive scheme

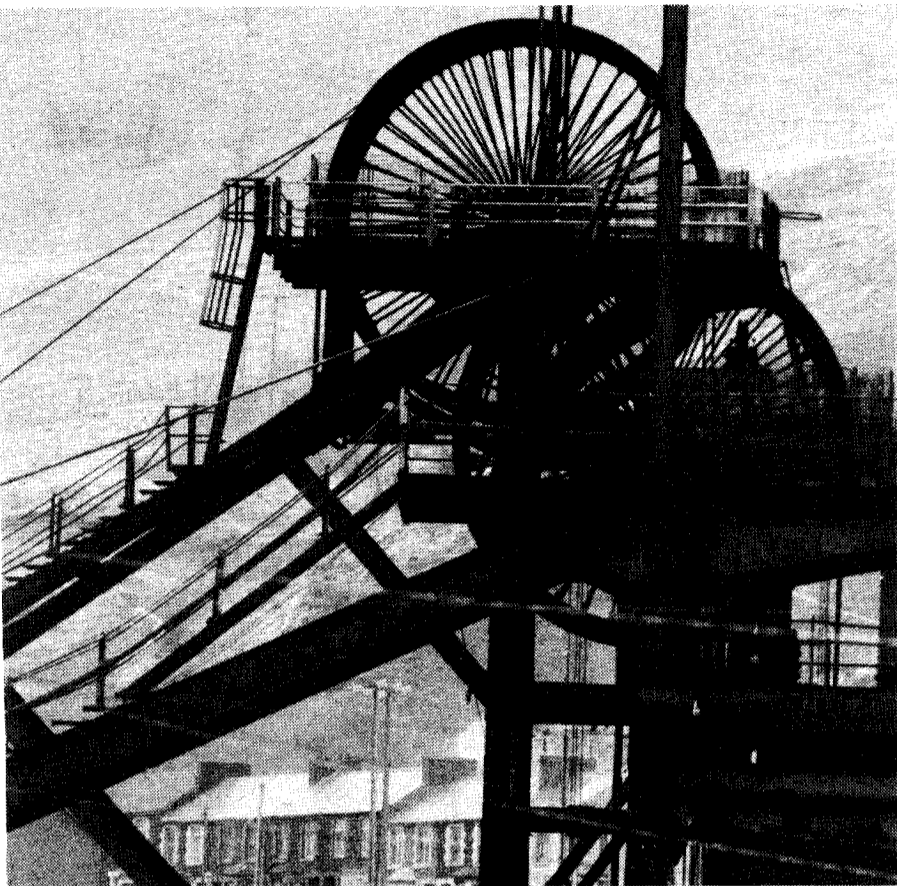


Photo: GM COOKSON

keeps pit wages here artificially high.

But the pressures to act has definitely come from branches.

Everyone can see, under McGregor, the NCB wants to shut down the pits because there's too much coal. Monkton Hall was threatened with closure because it was uneconomic, but it was one of Europe's foremost pits.

The British coal industry is more technically advanced than any other. And it has the best safety standards.

Others are cheaper for that reason, and because — like in Germany, Belgium and France — government coal subsidies are much higher.

The government want to import coal. If they get rid of their dependence on British coal, that will smash the power of the union. At the end of the day, our bargaining power will be nil.

If we stick together we can win this dispute. But we need the support of other unions.

Sun

NACOD (the supervisory union) should be called out. The Railwaymen should be asked to black coal from the pits, and the dockers should black imported coal.

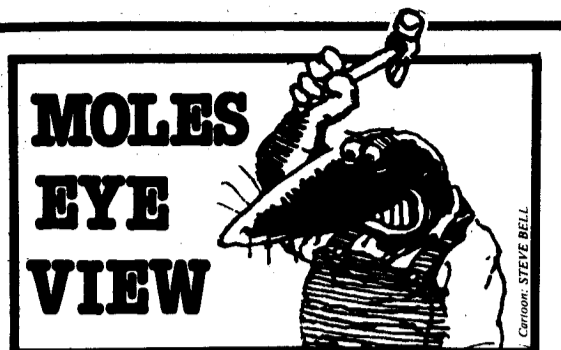
Then, if the NCB tried to move coal by road, the Transport and General workers should refuse to

handle it.

The longer the dispute goes on, the more fed up the blokes will get. The press is saying the action's not having any effect, and that puts doubts in their minds.

The action by the National Graphical Association at the Sun — demanding Scargill's right of reply to the editor's call for the miners to return to work — is terrific. Their own dispute has raised their understanding of how important solidarity action is.

If other unions supported our action, everyone would know it's working. Now's the time to implement all the steps to make our action a success.



Figures don't lie

'Kinnock can't dent Maggie' boasted last Tuesday's *Evening Standard*. Oh no I thought as I read 'Poll shows Tories standing steady as Labour leader's rating slips.'

The poll read Tory General Election 44 per cent; January '84 42 per cent. It showed Labour had 28 per cent at the General Election and now has 37 per cent. So

Labour from being 14 per cent behind is now 5 per cent behind.

If Labour's failings continue at this rate, even if Maggie holds steady in the next seven months, Labour could be seven per cent in front.

Christ knows what the mathematicians of the *Standard* will do if Labour has any successes.

Mummie's boy

YOU'VE GOT to hand it to Maggie she practices what she goes on about. When she talks about the virtues of the family then she does something about keeping it together.

There's her lad Mark — he's the one who keeps getting lost and then some damn fool keeps finding him again — working for Cementation International Ltd. Now just coincidentally Mark was trotting round the Sultanate of Oman trying to drum up business for his firm at the same time his mam was on an official visit. And do you know all those observant reporters in her official party never even knew he was there.

This was very helpful to the Premier who would have been just a

teeny bit embarrassed if it had leaked out that her boy was trying to win a contract for his firm at the same time mummy was using her influence to win it for Britain. For Britain read Cementation International Ltd!

Mark is however dead coy answering questions on the matter. When reporters asked what it was all about he got a bit huffy and claimed 'it was strictly between Cementation International and Trafalgar House ...'. Mind you you can't blame him for getting embarrassed. People think just because he keeps getting lost his mum should take him where he is going. Now they might go and get the idea that he needs his mammy to do his job for him.

SOGAT in court

PRINT UNION SOGAT '82 is now faced with the same threat of legal action as the NGA.

General secretary Bill Keys says his executive is prepared to face sequestration of SOGAT's £18 million funds rather than give in to print boss Robert Maxwell.

Maxwell is head of the British Printing and Communication Corporation which produces the *Radio Times*. With the BBC he has obtained a court injunction ordering SOGAT to end restrictions on the print run of the *Radio Times* and its distribution

in the London area. SOGAT took this action to stop the closure of the BPC plant in Park Royal, West London.

By Celia Pugh

Talks over the weekend of 14 January broke down when Maxwell reneged on pledges to guarantee work at the plant and threatened further court attacks.

This steps up the assault on print workers' jobs and their right to organise. With defence of the NGA, solidarity with SOGAT should be high on the agenda of the labour movement. The TUC must be forced to act to defend the unions.

YTS threats

WHEN the TUC made its wrong decision to cooperate with the Youth Training Scheme (YTS) one of the conditions it made was that there should be no element of compulsion associated with the scheme.

Documents released at the end of 1983 show clearly that the government is violating this agreement.

Department of Employment circular 82/128 explains to local social security offices how to stop benefits of unemployed school leavers who do not take up places in the YTS.

School leavers who 'unreasonably' refuse a

place or leave a programme can have their benefit reduced by 40 per cent for six weeks.

A series of other documents — including B2, B73 and B74 lay out other details of how benefit may be cut in the case of 'refusal' or premature termination' of participation in the YTS.

In short, the government is lying through its teeth when it says it is not making YTS compulsory.

• A complete pack of government documents on compulsion in the YTS is available from the Birmingham Trade Union Resource Centre, 7 Frederick Street, Birmingham B1 3HE.

SUN READERS! TELL US WHAT YOU REALLY THINK

THE MINER Ballot form

Do you wish Murdoch to continue owning the Sun, News of the World, Times, Sunday Times, etc. YES NO

Here is your chance to answer. Send this form to: Murdoch Ballot, the NUM, St James' House, Vicar Lane, Sheffield.

Do you think Australian multi-millionaire Rupert Murdoch should continue to own the Sun, the News of the World, The Times, and The Sunday Times, influencing the minds of millions of people?

★ **Calling all Sun readers**
Think about it. Is it right that Rupert Murdoch, who was elected by nobody, should control newspapers and periodicals with a circulation of 60 million in Britain, America and Australia?
Or should such immense power be in the hands of democratically elected people?

MINERS! TELL US WHAT YOU REALLY THINK

THE Sun Ballot form

Do you wish to continue with the Mineworkers Union ban on overtime? YES NO

COLLIERY WHERE I WORK

Send this form to Miners' Ballot, The Sun, Freepost, London EC4B 4NP

★ **CALLING** Britain's miners! This is the ballot that Arthur Scargill won't give you.
The Sun today presents its own ballot on the 10-week old overtime ban which is costing miners and their families an average £50 a week in lost wages. Yesterday, in protest, winding enginesmen staged a strike in North Staffordshire collieries.
★ We are asking all of the country's 190,000 miners to vote in this special Sun poll.
It is confidential and it is free. It won't cost you a penny to send back the form. Just tick Yes or No.
★ This is your first chance to decide whether you want an overtime ban on the twin issues of the Coal Board's 5.2 per cent pay offer and to oppose pit closures.
★ We will publish the results as soon as possible.

The NGA and The Sun
The members of the National Graphical Association employed on this paper object to the above ballot paper on the grounds that it interferes with the democracy of the National Union of Mineworkers.

Spot the villains

I do hope Tony Benn was listening when Harold Wilson warned about the 'evil men' surrounding Labour's prospective MP for Chesterfield. Harold is an expert on such people. Always anxious to reward honesty, diligence and business sense he knighted two chaps called Kagan and

Miller. The first guy used to make Harold's raincoats. Then look what happened. Mr Kagan became a guest of Her Majesty for fiddling other peoples' money. Mr Miller blew his brains out just before Scotland Yard 'felt his collar' for getting his hands caught in the till.

No Comment

FINALLY I reproduce without comment the following which appeared in *An Phoblacht/Republican News* on 12 January 1984. 'The British lefties of the Workers Revolutionary Party — through the medium of their meaty mouthpiece *News Line* have declared themselves (again) outraged by the IRA's London bombings.

When things were quiet in Britain, the WRP grandly declared that it "unreservedly supports the right of the IRA to struggle against British imperialism by whatever means they see fit." But when the 'means' gets too close to home they tend to forget their 'principles' and hurl all kind of abuse, the equal of any Fleet Street hysteria.

Perhaps you could sympathise with them if it was only drastic measures like bombs

which they object to, but the revolutionaries are ready to scream abuse at any foreign-linked activity which encroaches on British comforts — even the price of a cuppa!

In *News Line* on 4 January, they slam the Indian government for restricting tea exports so as to reduce the price of tea at home, whilst causing a rise in price in Britain.

Most of us would hardly begrudge the Indian people cheaper tea, even if it is a temporary election gimmick by Mrs Gandhi — and perhaps we should concern ourselves more with the exploitation of tea plantation workers to produce our favourite beverage.

But not *News Line*. Claiming that tea prices will 'rocket' by 4p a packet in Britain, they warn that it will 'hit the pocket' of 'millions of working-class families'.

The NUM's comment (left) on Sun's 'ballot form' (right).

A Socialist ACTION

Next steps against the Police Bill

IN THE FACE of immense difficulties, the Campaign Against the Police Bill is slowly turning back the tide of ignorance and indifference to the Bill. First, the Home Office produced a barrage of distorting propaganda.

This was unquestioningly regurgitated by the media. Then followed a wall of silence.

Campaigning also has been made difficult by the demoralising effect of the Tory election victory and the ensuing rightward shift, particularly by labour movement leaders.

Despite this, the meetings held up and down the country and the distribution of publicity material by the campaign — aided by the publicity from the Newham 8 trial — forced this issue into the

public eye. Last Friday's police station pickets in numbers of cities were most successful.

By Chris Guthrie

The slow, patient work of taking the issue into community and labour movement organisations must continue. We have to sound the alarm against this attack on democratic rights.

A labour movement conference — which should be sponsored by the NGA — would be a

valuable way of taking the fightback into the trade unions and Labour Party.

The unanimous vote against the Police Bill at Labour Party conference can then be made meaningful.

Such a conference would discuss the threat posed to labour movement activists by the Bill and increased police powers. The political context of the Bill determines what action the labour movement must take to defeat the Bill.

Imaginative tactics are needed to catch the public's attention. And the campaign needs a national focus — such as a national march, or a vigil when the Bill is in the final reading — to draw together local work.



Police advance during Brixton riots



Ken Livingstone, Tony Banks and Andy Harris protest Tory fares increases.

PHOTO: GM COOKSON

Save our cities

24 JANUARY will see a massive protest by public sector unions against the proposed abolition of the GLC and the other metropolitan councils. NALGO is holding a national day of action, while in London there will be strike action by the GLC Staff Association and all the unions involved in education.

The Tories' plans to abolish the metropolitan councils are a massive attack on local democracy. Thatcher's gang are determined to launch an assault on all the strongholds of the labour movement, and their attack on the local government goes hand in hand with the Tebbit laws aimed at restricting union rights and breaking up union links with the Labour Party.

But the attack on the councils is not just about democracy. It is a step on the route to a devastating attack on jobs and services in the localities. It will facilitate the Tories plans to cut transport and education, forcing up prices and leading to thousands of redundancies.

While the present campaigns to defend the GLC and the other metropolitan councils are of course excellent initiatives, there remains a massive gap in the opposi-

tion to the Tories' plans — the involvement of the unions in plans for strike action and moves towards non-cooperation with the implementation of the proposals.

For when the chips are down neither the GLC or the other councils will be saved by lobbying the House of Lords, publicity campaigns or general public sympathy. All that has to be turned into action.

Vocal

Thatcher, Tebbit and King have vividly demonstrated their ability to ride roughshod over the most vocal opposition unless they are confronted with direct action.

The preparation for strike action can only be achieved by uniting the present campaigns and showing that the democracy issue is linked to jobs and services. Some

people in the various campaigns imagine that strike action will alienate 'the public' — the users of councils services. That problem will only be overcome if the anti-government campaigns show that the interests of the 'consumers' are linked with those of the unions.

When the time comes for the Abolition Bill to be implemented any moves towards non-cooperation

will be illegal under the Tebbit laws. They will come slap bang up against the Tories, just as the NGA did. Then only a united national campaign involving strike action, and backed by the Labour Party, will succeed.

● 24 January. Assemble 11am Speakers Corner for march to County Hall. Speakers include Ken Livingstone, Frances Morrell, Bill Morris and Ken Gill.

SUBSCRIBE

RATES:
Inland
6 months £8;
12 months £15
Overseas
(12 months only)
Europe £17; Air Mail £24
(Double these rates
for multi-reader institutions)

Special free book offer!

Take out a years inland subscription and we will send you free one of these books:

Thatcher and Friends by John Ross
Hard Times by Bob Sutcliffe or
Over our Dead Bodies —
Women Against the Bomb

Introductory offer
for new
readers: Eight
issues for
just £2!

Name

Address

Please send me as special offer

I enclose cheque/PO payable to Socialist Action for £

Send to: Socialist Action Subs, 328 Upper St, London N1 2XP.

FUND DRIVE

WE HAVE had another success in our fund drive appeal. The last fortnight has brought in £1,376.16. But we still have to appeal to our readers for money to meet our running costs and expenses to move to a new building. Many thanks to the following who have contributed.

Sheffield	£220.00	G Stewart	3.00
Pat Hickey	51.00	R Rae	4.00
Cardiff	139.16	J Hardy	5.00
Harringey	50.00	E Coleman	6.00
Bath	22.50	Anon	210.00
Leicester	22.50	K Moore	5.00
Leamington	22.00	E Saraga	5.00
Bristol	40.00	G David	6.00
Camden	100.00	Anon	1.00
Huddersfield	25.00	G Monks	1.00
East London	300.00	C Arthur	5.00
Islington	125.00	P Holborne	1.00
T Gregory	2.00		
C Langford	5.00	Total	£1,376.16