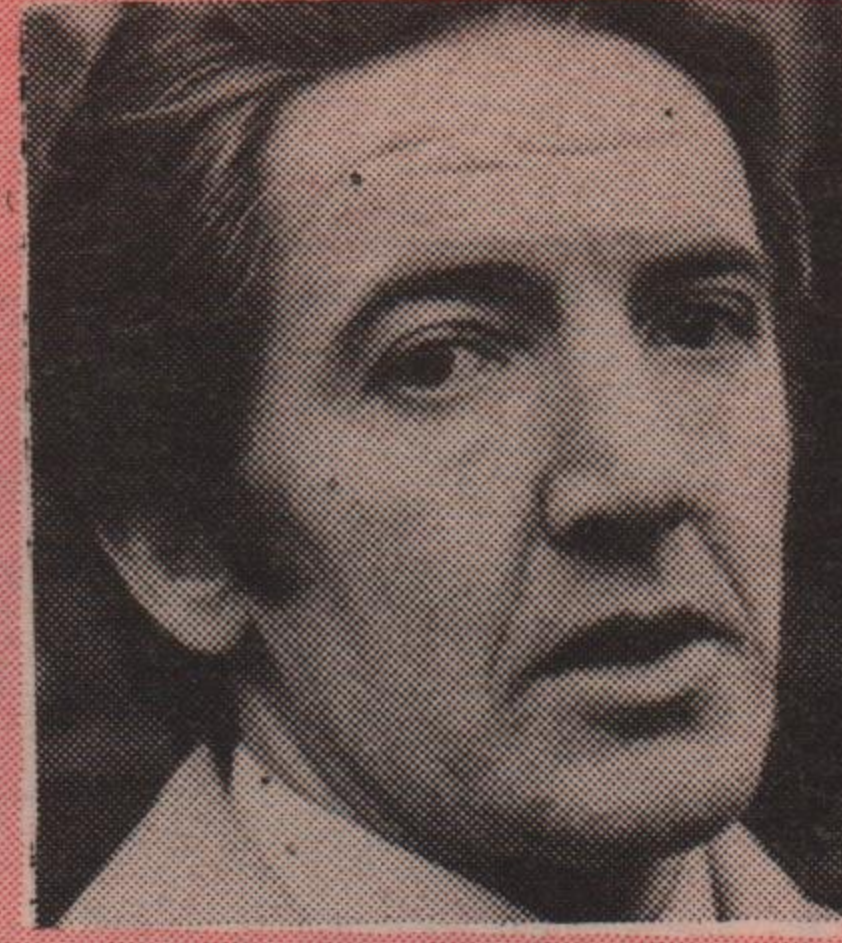


A SOCIALIST ACTION



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No state interference in the unions

Reject Labour's new union proposals!



SEVENTEEN YEARS ago the Labour government of Harold Wilson published a white paper on industrial relations, *In Place of Strife*. In the face of fierce opposition within the unions and the party it was withdrawn.

In Place of Strife never became law. But the attack on the democratic rights and strength of the British trade union movement which it posed was taken up by the government of Edward Heath.

When Heath followed Wilson into government, he introduced the Industrial Relations Act. And the labour movement took to the streets in their hundreds of thousands. Five dockers, the Pentonville Five, were jailed for refusing to comply with these laws. But massive sentiments aroused against this legislation not only forced Heath to do an about face

to get the dockers out of jail, but helped lay the foundations of his own demise, finally brought about by the miners strike of 1974.

But the Tory party didn't give up the idea of using the law to put more and more shackles on the unions, it simply took note of what happened to Heath's government — and prepared its ground more carefully.

When Margaret Thatcher came to power in 1979 she equally ruthlessly pursued changing the law to weaken the unions. The industrial relations legislation of Thatcher's seven years has systematically removed democratic rights from trade unions. At the same time she prepared to take on the miners, the strongest and most determined section of the movement, first with the Ridley Report which planned, in essence, how to bring down the NUM without the disastrous consequences of the close

down of electricity supply, then with the concentrated use of all the resources of the state against them when they struck.

During these seven years she has dressed up her determined anti-union legislation with hollow rhetoric about democratic rights and the need to protect the individual in an attempt to change the climate of opinion decisively against the unions.

But throughout this entire period Labour claimed to remain committed against these laws. It would restore the rights the unions, and therefore working people, had lost.

But from Labour's *In Place of Strife*, through Heath's Industrial Relations Acts, to Margaret Thatcher's own anti-union legislation — none of these measures are as thoroughgoing as the new policy statement jointly agreed by the Labour Party and TUC leaderships.

The People At Work: New Rights, New Responsibilities proposals will form the centre-piece of the debate at the 1986 congress of the TUC. If that policy is passed and implemented it will do untold damage to the ability of British trade unions to protect and further the interests of their members. For the first time it will be Labour passing a law against the unions.

If statutory secret ballots and a new legal body of the National Industrial Relations Court type are introduced under a Labour government, it will set trade unionism back for decades. It will for the first time mean Labour committing itself unequivocally to state interference in the unions.

That is why it is vital that delegates at Brighton reject the new document and the fudge proposals contained in the composite resolution tacked together by trade union leaders to

avoid a head-on conflict with Neil Kinnock and the NEC majority who support this document.

There is no doubt that Kinnock is refusing to budge on this issue. For him, attacking the trade unions is synonymous with winning the next general election. He has swallowed Thatcher's rhetoric hook, line and sinker. But it is for that same reason that trade unionists too must refuse to compromise. The entire document, and the strategy it represents, must be thrown out by the TUC. Instead, the right of trade unions to determine the content of their own rule books and to conduct their affairs free from interference by the state must be reaffirmed.

That is the single most important task at this year's TUC congress.

A Socialist ACTION

BUILDING AN ALLIANCE FOR SOCIALISM

Marxism Today and the Morning Star

IT IS a tribute to the power of the Communist Party — whose influence has always far exceeded its membership — that both its component fragments, *Marxism Today* and the *Morning Star* should play a role, both negative, in present developments in the labour movement.

The role of *Marxism Today* has been looked at many times and it is transparent. *Marxism Today's* policy is that of a coalition government between Labour and the Alliance. It sees its main goal as to strike blows against the left.

But a question which is less frequently looked at is the role of the *Morning Star*. The reason for that is obvious. The *Morning Star* is today not allied with Kinnock, Willis or the right wing within the labour movement — even less is it in practice aligned with the SDP/Liberal Alliance as is *Marxism Today*.

But the overall politics of the *Morning Star* must be clearly understood on the left. They are not simply a question of its obvious subordination to the regimes in Eastern Europe — although that is a very real factor.

The most obvious and striking feature about the *Morning Star* is its rejection of the key alliances which Labour needs. For example the union most completely influenced by the *Morning Star*, TASS, has never voted in favour of the demands of the Women's Action Committee at Labour Party conference — nor has the *Morning Star* campaigned for it to do so. Similarly TASS has never voted in favour of Black Sections — and nor has the *Morning Star* campaigned in favour of it doing so.

The most obvious and striking aspect of the *Morning Star* on British politics is its 'economism'. It constantly intones about 'class politics'. But when the actual content of what is being said is considered, it is clear that what is really meant is the primacy of economic questions. A harder line, at present, on the trade union front is coupled with crass economism and opposition to the alliances Labour needs. The *Morning Star* sometimes appears as a sort of gigantic version of *Militant*.

The consequences of this are disastrous for the left. Exactly the counterposition the LCC, and *Marxism Today*, want to create in the Labour Party is one between those allegedly representing progressive, democratic, 'alliance based' politics and *Militant* and the *Morning Star* representing crude economism. In that struggle, of course, *Militant* and the *Morning Star* will be crushed. The small fact that *Marxism Today*, in particular, doesn't support the key alliances Labour needs is never mentioned.

More important than these tactical considerations, on the politics of *Militant* and the *Morning Star* Labour could never build a majority. That is why, no matter what temporary alliances are made, the politics of *Militant* and the *Morning Star* have to be decisively rejected by the left.

But a question arises: Why does the *Morning Star* have this politics? It is a little subtle but very important to understand.

Both the *Morning Star* and *Marxism Today* share a common framework where, today, the working class is not to be the leading class in society. For *Marxism Today* its version of the politics of the popular front — for that is what its political framework is — means that the working class should be subordinated to the Alliance.

The *Morning Star* does not have a force with which it can apply its version of the popular front strategy today. The best it can find is a few bishops, rather than a substantial political force such as the Alliance. But that does not alter the framework of its politics.

On the theory of the *Morning Star* the goal of the working class is to link up with a progressive section of the bourgeoisie — on terms set by that alliance (with a small 'a'). The working class will protect its specific interests within that framework — in particular its economic interests. But the working class is not seeking to lead the whole of the oppressed against capital.

The working class is subordinated to its capitalist partners. The economism of the *Morning Star* is just, in today's conditions, an expression of that popular front strategy.

What is absent in any of these frameworks is the real alliances that are needed. That the working class leads the oppressed against capital. The working class as the decisive core of an alliance for socialism. In short the politics Labour's left is beginning to develop.

Analysis



Mandy Moore (Women's Action Committee), Julie Fitzgerald, and Linda Bellos (Labour Party Black Section)

Photo: ALAN FREEMAN

Kinnock is destroying the alliances Labour needs to win

LABOUR IS heading into its annual conference with a standing in the polls of between 36 and 40 per cent — not enough to win an overall majority at a general election. Within the party attacks are being launched on Labour's youth organisation, on the Women's Action Committee, and by refusing to allow the creation of Black Sections in the party. JOHN ROSS looks at the relation between these developments and how 'internal' struggles within the party are directly connected to winning Labour a majority.

In 1983 Labour suffered its worst electoral defeat since World War I. This followed the most severe attack launched on the Labour Party since the inter-war years — an attack organised above all through the creation of the SDP. With 28 per cent of the vote in 1983 Labour was right down to its rock solid support — the working class cities of the North, the council estates, manual workers.

At that time sections of the press, and momentarily Margaret Thatcher, dreamt that they could displace Labour altogether as a serious political force. That they could re-create in Britain a two capitalist party system equivalent to the Democrats and Republicans in the United States.

Defeat

This was then the officially proclaimed goal of the SDP — being expressed as the SDP/Liberal Alliance aiming to replace Labour as the alternative to the Tories.

This particular offensive was defeated. There is not, and never was, a risk of Labour being eliminated as a party. Even the SDP no longer believes, at least in the short run, that it can destroy Labour. It is instead discussing who to form a coalition with.

But while Labour survived this attack it did create a fundamental strategic issue which has to be confronted. Labour was ground down to a clearly minority position.



Style of the GLC without the content

A party whose support is confined to manual workers, and bastions in the North, cannot gain a majority in Britain. Labour certainly had to base itself on its core areas — but in order to break out of them and build a majority around them. This is exactly what Kinnock has failed to do.

However there have been two crucial, very different, experiences, since Thatcher was elected which show how Labour can gain a majority.

The first experience, a reformist one, was that of the GLC. The GLC was the most intelligent reformism seen in Britain for forty years — and we say 'reformism' explicitly because its base was the huge £2 billion rates income of the council. Ken Livingstone in fact, unlike his 'interpreters' in *Marxism*

Today, has never said that the GLC was anything other than extremely well done reformism.

But what the GLC did do was to use that massive rates base to build up a whole series of social alliances for Labour in London. Labour enjoyed a period of genuine popularity in London.

The accompaniment of the GLC was a massive flowering of women's organisation, black organisation, help to the lesbian and gay movement, links with Ireland, and support to innumerable other organisations. These alliances were based on the fact that London is the greatest centre of the black population in Britain, of the Irish population, and has one of the largest proportions of women in work in the country. These were areas in which London genuinely was advanced.

Kinnock has attempted to take the 'style' of the GLC — the glossy advertising — without taking the content. Whereas the GLC was based on a flowering of women's organisation, black self-organisation, lesbian and gay organisation, and links with Ireland, Kinnock precisely sought to contain and crush such organisation within the party.

Support

This is not an 'organisational' question. The GLC was enormously popular because it based itself on a new series of social alliances for Labour. Widespread support among women, active support in the black community, amongst young people was added to Labour's traditional base. It was these alliances which created the mass support for Labour and the GLC. Self-organisation was the expression of these social alliances.

The other example which showed the same lessons, in a very different way, was the miners strike. Far from having room for reforms the miners had no choice but to fight. They had their backs against the wall. But in that fight, aided by the previous example of the women's movement and the black movement, the miners reached out to make the widest set of social alliances seen in struggle in Britain this century. The miners strike was, as the *Financial Times* put it, 'the largest civilian mobilisation since the Second World War.'

Strike

Despite an unprecedented gale of abuse from the press and television, the onslaught of the state, and the attacks by Kinnock, even the opinion polls showed the population divided equally for and against the strike. Within the working class that meant a massive majority for the strike.

The miners created the alliances — with women, with the black community, with every group of trade unionists — that Labour needs. The same alliances, on a different basis, that were created by the GLC.

To cement these alliances however, the ones that would create a majority, the Labour Party would have to undergo a dramatic internal transformation. It would have to accept women's rights to control their own organisations in the party, to permit black self-organisation in the party, and to create a mass youth movement. But Kinnock has gone in exactly the opposite direction on each of these issues. He has rejected the alliances Labour needs and left the party as a minority.

The result is the lurch of Labour under Kinnock towards coalition. Because by Labour remaining

where it is, static and inert, there is no way it can create a majority. There are only two ways a political majority involving the Labour Party can be created.

The first is to move to the right — towards coalition with the Alliance. This would be a 'majority' based on attacking the working class and oppressed. It would mean Labour becoming a police force for capitalism. Its result would be demoralising right wing administration opening up the way for a Tory government, or a Tory-Alliance coalition, that would make Thatcherism appear like a liberal regime.

The only other way for Labour to create a majority is to consciously seek to ally the party's traditional working class base with women, the black community, and other sections of the oppressed. These together are not 'minorities' but a majority of the population.

That however requires a totally different orientation to Kinnock. It requires not clamping down on self-organisation within the party but opening it up to the social alliances that are needed. The demands of the Women's Action Committee, of the Black Section, of the needs to make links with the demand of Ireland for independence, are not 'internal affairs' of the party. They are directly linked to the only way it can create a majority in society.

Kinnock by his present course is destroying every alliance that could make Labour a majority in society. The fight within the party for the demand of the Women's Action Committee, the Black Section, and the other groups with whom Labour must ally are not a 'diversion' from winning the election. They are part of the fight for the only way Labour can secure a majority.

Building a strategic left

THIS SUMMER has seen major publicity given to activity on the Labour left. The *New Statesman* on 15 August devoted four pages to the rise of Labour Left Liaison (LLL). The public meeting held on 22 July in London by the Campaign Group — which attracted 600 people to hear Campaign Group, Women's Action Committee, Labour Party Black Section, and Campaign for Labour Party Democracy speakers — received prominent coverage in the *Observer*, *Guardian*, *Telegraph*, *Financial Times*, and other papers. The *Observer* carried another article last Sunday dealing with the LLL. JOHN ROSS looks at the tasks facing this new Labour left — and the opponents it faces in bringing its politics into existence.

Labour Left Liaison is a first attempt to create what might be termed a *strategic left* within the Labour Party. It does not aim to bring together 'all the left'. It is based implicitly, and increasingly explicitly, on a *strategic* line for the Labour Party. It is therefore not looking just to the next election, important as this is, but to remoulding the entire Labour Party and embarking on a strategy for socialism in Britain.

As Neil Kinnock, and his supporters in the LCC, manifestly lack any strategy whatever for socialism, it is going to be the forces assembled in the LLL, together with similar currents in the Parliamentary Labour Party and the trade unions, that will be the strategic driving force of the Labour Party. It is therefore worth spelling out what that strategy is — as it is implicitly inscribed in the demands of the LLL and as it is increasingly explicitly being spelt out.

The first crucial point is that Labour has to create, to consciously build, a *majority* for socialism. The idea that socialism can be introduced by a minority of the population, or that there exists a majority for socialism in Britain, is absurd. Creating that ma-

majority is the most fundamental task facing socialists today. Even winning a majority inside the Labour Party is of no use if it is not on a basis which can win a majority for socialism in society.

The first core of the majority for socialism is, of course, Labour's traditional working class base. Without maintaining this as its core Labour is going to get nowhere.

All of the main currents in the LLL are in fact marked by their serious orientation towards the trade unions. The Cam-



Val Price, CLPD

paign for Labour Party Democracy traditionally has among the strongest trade union links of any campaign in the party. The Women's Action Committee has also been progressively winning trade union support — gaining the support of a further two unions, the NUR and



Linda Bellos and Marc Wadsworth, leaders of Labour Party Black Section

UCATT, for its demands this year and only narrowly losing even in John Golding's NCU. The Black Section won the first major union, the NUM, to support it in 1984. It won the vote of the NUR and NUPE last year, and has received its first supporting amendment from a union, the ACTT, this year.

Miners

But it was the miners strike which radicalised and developed these forces and brought them together. The key forces in the LLL were those brought together around the defence of the miners strike — in the same way that the core of the forces grouped around the LCC today were those who rejected what the miners strike represented. Defence of the miners strike also radicalised the Campaign Group of MPs.

Core

The first 'prototype' of the alliances the LLL represents was, on a massively greater scale, the huge social movement generated around the miners strike. The ties of

the NUM to the women's movement, to the black community, to the lesbian and gay movement, to other trade union, are exactly the type of alliances the LLL is about creating.

Of course the LLL differs from the miners strike in that the campaigns which make up its core were often organised first through the constituencies and then went into the unions for support. But that does not alter the core of the matter. None of the key forces in the LLL is content to remain in the constituencies. All are out to link developments across the entire movement — taking in the CLPs and the unions. What is emerging is a strategic line for the labour movement as such.

Expand

These alliances precisely show the way that Labour must *expand* its entire traditional conception of politics and its social base. The miners strike was not just based on *trade union* solidarity of the traditional type — although it centrally included that. The miners strike allied a core industrial union, and other

unions supporting it, with women inside and outside the working class, with the black community, and with many other social forces. In short it enormously expanded the *alliances* of the labour movement.

Majority

It is this conception which creates the *strategic* element, implicitly and increasingly explicitly, in the LLL's approach. Because it is ridiculous to claim, as do the Labour right, that the orientation the LLL represents is one towards 'minorities'. Male workers women, the black community, young people, these are not a *minority*. These are the *majority* of society. Out of these Labour can create a real alliance for socialism in Britain, which is a majority.

Break

This is why the break of the LLL with anything remotely resembling the politics of *Militant* or the *Morning Star* was so decisive. Because the politics of these currents cut Labour off from the decisive alliances which can make it a majority in society — and a left which cannot explain how Labour will win a majority in society is a left which can never lead the party.

The process that led to the creation of Labour Left Liaison in reality represented a sea change in the entire orientation of the Labour left. The Labour left which had existed in the early 1980s was significantly marked by the influence of currents such as *Militant*, the influence of the *Morning*

New Statesman

Lonely hearts: a traveller on the love trail tells tales
Media: Phillip Knightley on sycophantic royal coverage
AND — new columns on eating; economy; see the RSC go crazy

WHAT HAPPENED TO LABOUR'S LEFT?



They have tried to obliterate the left... but there is a left, a broad left, between Hattersley and Hatton, and it is again growing in strength.

Tony Benn

Star, and groups such as *Briefing* — which had seen *Militant* as an integral part of the Labour left and in some sense as progressive.

Labour Left Liaison is totally different. It defends *Militant* from expulsion — and through *Witch Hunt News* has done the most effective work against expulsions. But this is from the point of view of Labour Party democracy. Politically Labour Left Liaison wanted nothing to do with *Militant* whatever. In fact the platform of the LLL — which includes as among its most central points support for Black Sections and the demands of the Women's Action Committee — makes it clear that *Militant* cannot be a member of the LLL.

New

That support for the demands of the Women's Action Committee and the Labour Party Black Section also makes it clear that Labour Left Liaison is in direct conflict with *Morning Star* influenced forces.

Unlike *Militant* and the *Morning Star* the LLL does have a strategy for how to win a majority for Labour — to tie its traditional working class base to a massive series of new social alliances, and recasting the labour movement on that basis. By put-

ting forward that strategy the LLL 'breaks the mould' of the existing framework of the Labour left.

It is precisely because the press understands that the LLL represents something new, and potentially extremely powerful, that it has been giving it such attention. What is emerging is a quite new type of force in British politics.

Prevent

It is also for this reason that many obstacles still exist in the way of the type of politics the LLL represents. Not only the bourgeoisie but the *Morning Star*, *Militant* and ultra-leftists such as *Labour Briefing*, will do everything possible to prevent the type of reshaping of politics on the left represented by the LLL.

Given these obstacles many ups and downs, unexpected steps forward and reverses, are to be anticipated. It may not be possible to succeed first time round. But whatever the short term problems, and immediate results, a new force is breaking its way into existence in British politics.

Sparkbrook: Right in chaos

ON TUESDAY 26 August the Management Committee of Sparkbrook CLP will assemble in the Mermaid Pub on the Stratford Road. It will be a well attended meeting, perhaps even outnumbering the attendant press. Among the delegates will be a few legendary figures such as the estate agent who represents the EETPU. All assuming that the media attention doesn't discourage him from turning up.

Once assembled the Management Committee will hear a report from its executive. The main issue will be the CLP's amendment to Labour Party conference. It will be explained that the amendment agreed by the last GMC calling for the reinstatement of Cllr Amir Khan and Kevin Scally was in fact out of order. The relevant section of the CLP's standing orders will be cited stating that 14 days notice must be given of any resolution seeking to overturn existing policy.

Some brave soul will remind the meeting that at the July GMC it was agreed that amendments

By Mick Archer

to Labour Party conference would be taken from the floor, a procedure adopted by many CLPs because of the tight timetable between the publication of the resolutions and the closing date for amendments. Nonetheless save for a miracle



Amir Khan

or a sudden surge of integrity the view of the EC will be upheld. It will then be announced to the waiting press. Any delegate who disagrees with the official version of events, and who publicly says so will probably face

disciplinary action at a later date.

For many the decision to overturn a vote of a constitutional meeting of the CLP will come as no surprise. Since last November officers have done their best to stifle opposi-

tion in Sparkbrook constituency to the expulsions and to thwart the national campaign for Amir and Kevin's reinstatement. Sparkbrook members who have picketed meetings or signed petitions have been threatened with disciplinary action. The local LPYS has been warned that it will be closed down.

Labour Party NEC members directly involved in the dispute, and in hearing the local appeals of those expelled, have determined the outcome of votes on the Appeals and Mediations Committee of the Labour Party and of the NEC itself.

In a letter, sent to every CLP, constituency officers explained that Amir and Kevin were expelled for 'what the constituency

believed to be a calculated public campaign designed to damage and denigrate other members of the Party.' Wild accusations of Sparkbrook being 'under siege' by 'outside extremists' have been fed to the press. Yet at the end of the day support for Amir and Kevin's reinstatement continues to grow.

Now the expulsions seem certain to be debated by this year's Labour Party conference. A resolution tabled by Ladywood CLP calling on the NEC to readmit them into membership has attracted sufficient amendments to ensure a discussion. Consequently the national campaign is turning its attention to winning the necessary support amongst the trade union delega-

tions. Given the inevitable pressure that exists to avoid damaging divisions at this year's conference this will not be an easy task. However, the campaign is appealing to all those involved in deciding their CLP or union policy for Labour Party conference to back the Ladywood composite.

Amir Khan and Kevin Scally's expulsions have done far more damage to the credibility of the Labour Party than the campaign for their reinstatement could ever do. Only a successful campaign to achieve their immediate reinstatement at this year's conference can bring this episode to a close and prevent similar expulsions occurring elsewhere.

Labour Youth Campaign Group

THE NEXT meeting of the Labour Youth Campaign Group (LYCG), on 30 August, will discuss campaigning priorities in Labour Clubs and student unions in the first term of

By Anne Kane

the new academic year. These priorities will be based on the fight of LYCG for a campaigning Labour students organisation, and a campaigning NUS, through active support for all struggles of the working class and oppressed and common work with the campaigns for democratic change and representation organised by the Labour Party left in recent years.

This meeting will help coordinate meetings in Labour Clubs with speakers from campaigns such as the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy, the Black Section, the Women's Action Committee, the Labour Committee on Ireland, and the Labour Campaign for Lesbian and Gay Rights during the first term, in particular immediately around freshers weeks. Also for discussion will be forming Campaign Groups in Labour Clubs, a student broadsheet for the beginning of term, and a fringe meeting with speakers from the Campaign Group of MPs and left campaigns at NUS December conference.

Over the last year students have dominated action against apartheid by their presence on demonstrations and boycott actions in the colleges. Students came out in thousands to protest against the bombing of Libya. In the wake of the Sinn Fein college tours organised through the LCI, NUS became the first mass organisation in Britain to commit itself to support for British withdrawal from Ireland. Students have campaigned vigorously against attacks on places, grants and DHSS payments. Student unions have been present week after week at the Wapping pickets.

Despite all this there is a total lack of any organised current or leadership capable of drawing all this together into a campaigning NUS. Laudable policy is passed at NUS conference which goes nowhere; NOLS is used to help attack and witch-hunt the LPYS; and on the Middle East and Zionism a reactionary sentiment is developing which adds up to opposing the right of return of the Palestinian people. All this flies in the face of the type of political activity thousands of students have been taking.

The first step in changing this is through building organised support for the demands of the Labour left amongst students — beginning with Labour clubs and NOLS. That is, to get NUS not just to oppose racism in the abstract or tell individuals just to get involved in groups like Anti-Fascist Action, but to fight for political power for black people by lending the active weight of students to fight for Black Sections in the Labour Party.

Many currents inside NUS are fond of saying students must ally with the labour movement. For the Democratic Left this means an alliance with Kinnoek, while SSIN has written a whole policy bulletin on the fight for a campaigning NUS which never concretely promotes the only real alternative to this alliance.

This alternative — an alliance with the left in the labour movement, which finds expression around the fight for Black Sections, WAC's demands, accountability and so on — has a basis already in the campaigning work of LCI and Black Sections amongst others. The weight that has been given to the demand for Britain to get out of Ireland and by the understanding of the LCI of the potential for winning support from NUS is the best example of the importance of building such a current.

Over the next year the LYCG wants to deepen this orientation of the left campaigns, win further support on policy and fight for NOLS and NUS to be led by the type of alliances that have emerged in the Labour Party.

● LYCG meets at 2pm, on Saturday 30 August in the Cole Room, the Fabian Society, Dartmouth St, London (nearest tube St James Park). For more details telephone 01-348 3588.

● Both the youth and student networks of the LCI have produced bulletins on their recent activities and future campaigning. The student bulletin contains information on policy gains in NUS and plans for the next term and the youth bulletin on recent youth and Ireland action, how to involve your LPYS in the activities of the LCI and fighting for policy inside the LPYS.

LCI Birmingham dayschool

Following a very successful youth and Ireland dayschool in Glasgow in July, LCI youth are planning a day-school in Birmingham with speakers from Sinn Fein, NUS and the labour and trade union movement on 8 November. If you want to know more about this, get copies of the youth or student bulletins, or get involved in other activities contact LCI student officer, Conor Foley, or the youth officer, Gerry Kirk, LCI, BM Box 5355, London WC1N 3XX.

Successful campaign on amendments for party conference

AUGUST SAW an extremely successful campaign waged around amendments for party conference by Labour Left Liaison (LLL) and the campaigns within it. The unprecedented number of resolutions on nuclear power to party conference had been used by the Labour Coordinating Committee (LCC) as a tactic to try to keep key issues off the party conference agenda. Without effective coordination on the left earlier in the year it had not been possible to effectively counter this. At the resolutions stage only Labour CND's resolution calling for the removal of all US bases from Britain, and the Women's Action Committee demands for the five women's places on the NEC to be elected by the women's conference, were already secure and on the agenda.

The Labour Committee on Ireland had seven resolutions. It has secured at least six amendments — ensuring that opposition to the Anglo-Irish Accord will be discussed at Labour Party conference.

While the campaigns were in any case putting out their own material it is clear that in a number of cases the coordination through the LL played an important role in gaining support for resolutions. The success on amendments on Khan and Scally is particularly striking.

The outcome shows the way in which this type of collaboration has to be developed for future years.

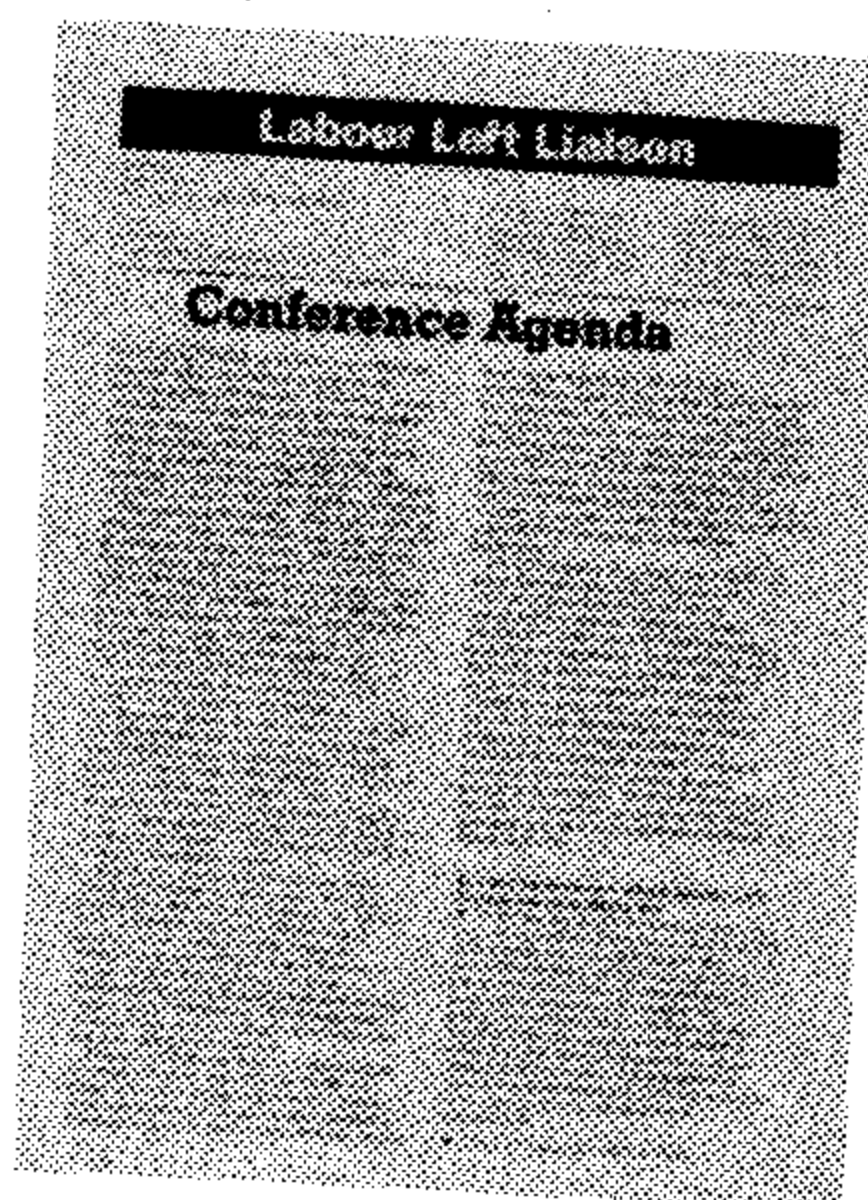
During the summer

on Black Sections and the Khan and Scally Reinstatement Campaign. It also called for support for amendments for maintenance of accountability in the selection of MPs, WAC's demand for an electoral college, the demands of the Labour Campaign for Lesbian and Gay Rights and of the Labour Committee on Ireland.

While the final outcome will not be known until the final agenda for party conference is published on 7 September the initial results sent to the LLL from individual constituencies are extremely encouraging. Seven amendments have been passed.

The Campaign for Labour Party Democracy has secured more than enough amendments to ensure that accountability of MPs, and opposition to the fraudulently entitled 'one member, one vote' is discussed.

The Women's Action Committee successfully secured amendments on its proposals for an electoral college at women's conference to elect the five women's places on the NEC.



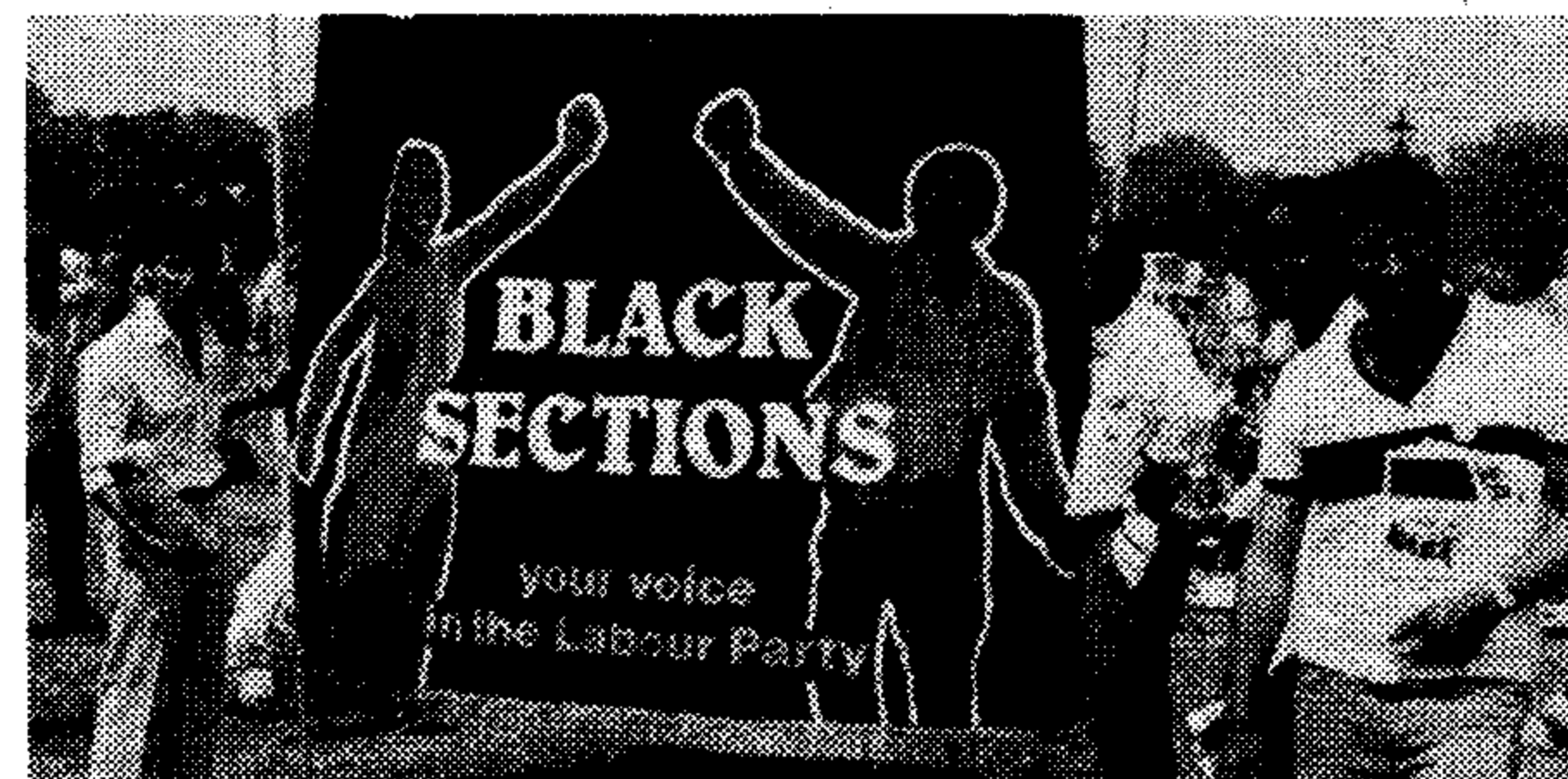
Labour Left Liaison produced a special newsletter to back up the material being circulated by the individual campaigns. This particularly concentrated on promoting resolutions

LCC opposes Black and Asian Advisory Committee

THE CAMPAIGN against the non-elected and divisive 'Black and Asian Advisory Committee' has picked up new ground with the decision of the Labour Coordinating Committee (LCC) to oppose the 'advisory' body.

Following representations made by the Labour Party Black Section the LCC executive adopted a resolution at the beginning of August stating: 'This Executive Committee reaffirms its support for Black Sections and does not regard the Black and Asian Advisory Committee as a political solution to the question of black representation in the party.' A copy of the resolution has been sent to all members of the committee.

Commenting on the



LCC's decision in the *Guardian* David Rose wrote: 'Other organisations on the left have criticised the advisory committee established by the leadership last year as an alternative to the campaign for separate Black Sections. But the LCC is a soft left body which strongly supports Kinnoek.'

This decision of the LCC is a further severe blow to the committee — posing the serious question of whether it can stagger on past party conference. Southall CLP, the centre of the largest Asian community in London, has

decided to sever relations with the committee. The chair of the committee, Jo Richardson, has also made it clear at press conference earlier in the year that she does not intend to continue on the committee after the conference.

If, as is anticipated, the London Regional Executive votes in September against any relations with the Black and Asian Advisory Committee it will already be dealt a devastating blow.

Defeat of this committee will open up the way to democratic and elected black organisation and representation in the party.

Campaign Group plans Manchester rally

The rally held by the Campaign Group in London on 22 July — including speakers from the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy, the Labour Women's Action Committee, and the Labour Party Black Section as well as Campaign Group speakers — was an enormous success.

There were 350 seated in the hall, 150 standing, and 150 unable to get in. Tony Benn addressed an overflow meeting on the steps of Hampstead Town Hall.

The Campaign Group is now planning a second rally in Manchester on 11 September. Speakers so far announced include Tony Benn, Eric Heffer, Les Huckfield, Joan Maynard,

John Tocher of the AEU, Amir Khan, Narendra Makanji, Secretary of the Labour Party Black Section, and Ann Pettifor of the executive of the Women's Action Committee. The meeting will be chaired by Graham Stringer, leader of Manchester council.

The meeting is at 7.30pm at the Free Trade Hall.

Other Books

The Other Book's mail order service offers a wide selection of socialist, anti-imperialist and radical literature. The following selection on and by women is available by post:

Shifting Horizons: a testament to women in the miners' strike
Lynn Beaton, Canary Press, 265pp, £5.65 + 40p p&p

Women Under Apartheid
International Defence and Aid Fund, 120pp black and white photographs plus text, £3.50 + 46p p&p

For Their Triumphs and For Their Tears: Women In Apartheid South Africa
Hilda Bernstein, 136pp, IDAF, £3.50 + 34p p&p

Part of My Soul
Winnie Mandela, Penguin, 164pp, £2.95 + 28p p&p

South Africa: The Struggle For A Birthright
Mary Benson, IDAF, 314pp, £4 + 59p p&p

Women and the Cuban Revolution
Edited by Elizabeth Stone, Pathfinder Press, 156pp, £3.95 + 28p p&p

Women and the Family
Leon Trotsky, Pathfinder Press, 78 pp, £2.95 + 18p p&p

Cosmetics, Fashions and the Exploitation of Women
Joseph Hanson and Evelyn Reed, Pathfinder Press, £3.95 plus 28p p&p

Cheques and postal orders payable to Other Books. Orders with payment should be sent to: Other Books, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP. If the total value of books ordered is over £10, then simply add 15 per cent for postage and packing.

These and other books, together with a wide selection of magazines, posters and postcards are also available from Birmingham's Other Bookshop, 137 Digbeth (just off the main shopping centre) (phone 021-643 5904)

SUPPORT SILENTNIGHT STRIKERS



Price 50p. All profits to Silentnight Strikers.

NEW!! Voices of the Silentnight dispute

'Although we have lost our jobs and our families have suffered financial hardship everyone's morale is very high ... the dispute goes on an I am with it all the way to the finish.'

Javed Akhtar, Silentnight striker
Socialist Action supporters in Huddersfield have put together this pamphlet in solidarity with the Silentnight strike — now over one year old. All profits go to the strike fund. It's a collection of the views of the strikers, poems and contributions by Tony Benn and Bob Cryer MEP.

Filled with photographs it provides the story of a real ongoing struggle. Smaller in scale than the miners' but born of the same stuff.

Support the Silentnight Strikers: 50p + 20p post and packing. Available from Other Books, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

News

Why the left must support WAC's slate

THE LABOUR Women's Action Committee is demanding that women in the Labour Party have real power. The democratic engine for that, obviously, is through Labour women's conference. At this year's national women's conference, for the first time, we asked women in the party — both constituency and trade union women — who should be the women's representatives on the Labour Party national executive committee.

Trade unions decide who their representatives are on the NEC. WAC is demanding that women are able to do likewise.

Women's conference held 'shadow elections' for the women's section of the party's national executive. Delegates from the constituencies and from many

trade unions took part.

That gave us a slate of Diane Abbott, Margaret Beckett, Frances Morrell, Joan Maynard, and Clare Short. All democratically elected by women to represent us within the party.

WAC's demands, and WAC's slate, are logical, fair and democratic. Trade



By Diane Abbott

unions would object if others elected their representatives. Women

are asking to be accorded the same measure of democracy.

And all the evidence is that when women meet together as women they come up with radical and progressive policies. Those policies are in the interests of the whole labour movement. Trade unionists in particular have an interest in supporting the demands of Labour women.

In the unions themselves, women are organising in a parallel way. Let's not forget the reason there's a women's

officer in the TGWU, the biggest trade union in this country, is because women demanded that. One of the original constituent parts of today's transport workers union was an all-woman trade union.

There is a tradition in the trade unions, that goes back to the nineteenth century, of women organising as women. Trade unionists in the 1980s should take cognisance of that — and support the demands of Labour women especially to choose their own representatives on the NEC.



In the Labour Party and the trade unions, women must have the right to choose their own representatives.

Trade unions and the Black Section campaign

BLACK SECTION conference urged the national committee to launch a concerted campaign in the trade union movement and that is what has been done. We reorganised our trade union work so that we now have trade union coordinators for all the key areas. These include the Transport and General Workers Union, General and Municipal, National Union of Public Employees, Association of Scientific and Technical Staff, TASS, National Union of Railwaymen and the communications unions. This has already begun to bear fruit.

One of the four unions which support us at Labour Party conference, the ACTT, was persuaded to submit an amendment to one of our six resolutions.

The ACTT latched on to the paragraph in the Newham North West resolution which showed how we have turned our attention to building an organised voice for black workers in trade unions as well as the Labour Party.

The other unions which support us are the NUM, NUR and NUPE.

Former NUR chair, Ernie Taylor, made a spirited speech in favour of Black Sections at the union's annual meeting. Ernie is a long-standing member of Mossley Hill CLP in Liverpool and was the only black person on the city's district party executive until it was disbanded by witch-hunters from national headquarters.

The health union COHSE has done it again. It is well-known for drawing subscriptions from a large percentage of black members who do not get

representation on decision-making bodies. And its reputation as a maverick union is underlined by its opposition to sections — women's, youth ... but not trade union.

This year, though, COHSE passed a resolution at its annual conference supporting 'positive discrimination' for women in the union. What delegates had in mind was 'automatic places' on COHSE's national executive council. But it is still 'no' to Black Sections and no mention of black workers.

● This information on the Black Section campaign in the unions is taken from the latest issue of Black Section Newsletter. Get Black Section speakers invited to union branches and union broad left groups. Contact the Black Section Trade Union Convenor, c/o 122a Ferndale Road, Brixton, London SW4 7SA.

Black Section plan is TUC fringe meeting

LABOUR Party Black Section activists are planning a presence at next week's congress of the TUC to encourage greater support for self-organisation among black trade union members.

They will also be taking the opportunity to lobby for support for Black Section resolutions at the forthcoming Labour Party annual conference.

At a Monday lunch-time fringe meeting, TUC delegates will hear the case for black self-organisation in the unions argued by an impressive platform. It includes Diane Abbott, Narendra Makanji and Russel Proffit from Black Section, as well as black trade unionists such as a representative from the NALGO Black Workers Group and a speaker from the strike committee of Kenure Plastics, where striking workers at the West London factory in Feltham are all Asian.

'Black Section is keen to promote the self-

organisation of black people in the unions,' Paul Sharma told Socialist Action. 'Such initiatives by black workers would be in line with the TUC's own policy passed at the 1984 congress.'

'We will also be taking the opportunity of lobbying delegates at Brighton for support for the issues raised by Black Section at the forthcoming Labour Party conference.'

'That means supporting our right to organise within the party through the Labour Party Black Section, and opposing the Black and Asian Advisory Committee set up by the Labour leadership to head off our demands. It also means backing the call for Amir Khan and Kevin Scally, expelled by Roy Hattersley's Sparkbrook constituency, to be reinstated into the Party.'

● Labour Party Black Section TUC fringe meeting will be held: Monday 1 September, 1-2pm, Royal Albion, Old Steine, Brighton.

IRELAND UNFREE

The bitter fruits of the Anglo-Irish Accord

THE SUMMER period of sectarian loyalist marches is always a tense one for the nationalist community in the North of Ireland. It is a time when loyalist blood runs hot — marching, throwing bottles, and asserting their so called 'British' identity by a reign of terror. But this year, as the reality of the Anglo-Irish Accord becomes even clearer, the period of summer Loyalist marches was particularly chilling.

The marching season reached its first peak around 12 July. After weeks of inflammatory outbursts by Unionist politicians the loyalists vented their feelings in attacks on Catholic women, men, children, their homes and property.

Two young married men were shot and killed by Loyalist paramilitaries on 12 July itself in Belfast. According to official RUC figures, which grossly underestimate the real situation, there were 71 attacks over the weekend of the twelfth. Nationalists defended their areas as best they could, in some places such as Dunloy and Ligonield erecting makeshift barricades.

The marches on the twelfth were preceded by a series of attacks earlier in July in Belfast. On Friday 4 July several homes in the Oldpark area of North Belfast were attacked.

On 10 July mobs in the predominantly Loyalist Woodside Estate in Portadown attacked nationalist homes with stones and petrol bombs.

On 10 July Loyalist mobs armed with axes began attacks in Manor Street in North Belfast while RUC landrovers stood by. On 11 July a nationalist taxi driver, and a young nationalist woman, were fired on by Loyalist mobs in North Belfast.

On 12 July every Catholic business in the village of Kilkeel was attacked. On 14 July petrol bomb attacks were carried out against Catholic homes in the Lower Falls Road area on Belfast. Other petrol bomb attacks took place in Lisburn, Dervock, Dunloy, Ballyhinch, Ahogill, Rasharkin, Limvady, Ballymoney, Maghera, Armagh and Derry.

This is the background to the much publicised loyalist march into the village of Clontibret, south of the border, which was led by Democratic Unionist Party MP Peter Robinson.

Just before 2 am on 7 August, several hundred loyalists armed with cudgels, and wearing balaclava masks, invaded Clontibret. The loyalists daubed 'Ulster has awakened' on the local school, uprooted signposts, trees, and gates and attacked the unoccupied police station.

The loyalists then marched in paramilitary formation to the crossroads at the centre of the village and blocked the roads.

Simultaneously, in an incident not widely reported on British television, 500 Loyalists, in around 150 cars, attacked the mainly Catholic village of Swatragh. The armed loyalists set up roadblocks, began searching cars, smashed windows, and fired shots into the air.

On 12 August the British army was directly complicit in a further loyalist show of strength in Derry. The army and RUC saturated the nationalist areas to police the 20,000 strong bigot Apprentice Boys parade. The Loyalists, led by Democratic Unionist Party leaders Paisley and Robinson, led the parade.

Five days earlier, on 7 August, the loyalist Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF) had released a video to the press announcing their intention of stepping up the sectarian murder of Catholics. The UFF were rightly termed by Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams as 'gangsters' who were, 'tolerated by the British government because their murder campaign fits into the classical "counter-gang strategy" perfected by the British government in Aden, Cyprus, and Kenya.'

What is taking place in the North of Ireland is clear. It has nothing to do with 'Catholic versus Protestant violence' — as it is portrayed by the British media. It is a systematic campaign by loyalist bigots, acting with the protection of the RUC and British army, to try to break the will of the nationalist community.

There is going to be no end to this type of loyalist bigot violence until Britain gets out of Ireland.

Photo: SHEILA GRAY

In Place of Strife Mark II

FOREMOST AMONGST the issue to be debated at the 1986 congress of the TUC is the question of what attitude towards the joint Labour Party-TUC policy document on industrial relations. 'Britain needs a new approach to industrial relations,' it begins, 'an approach that gives our people a better deal at work.' With that, it outlines a series of proposals for state intervention into the affairs of trade unions, proposals designed to shackle union power to take industrial action. This 'new' approach, in fact, is based on accepting the anti-union framework which Tory governments over the past two decades have fought to establish. It is tougher than the Wilson government's *In Place of Strife* proposals. CAROL TURNER looks at the provisions — and pitfalls — of *People At Work: New Rights, New Responsibilities*, and the response of trade union leaders so far.

COLLECTIVITY is the word which provides the sugar coating on Labour's bitter industrial relations pill. 'Collective strength enables workers to obtain better pay and conditions,' the new policy statement intones. 'Collective organisation enables workers to reach a considered and collective view on the conduct of the industry ... Collective organisation enables workers to exert a social and political influence on all issues of concern to the interests of working people ...' (our emphasis).

But, paragraph 16: 'Providing this positive framework is part of the way a Labour government will demonstrate its readiness to assume responsibility for managing the nation's economy. It will do so in partnership with workers, unions and employers.' Demonstrate to whom? Clearly, it is to the owners of capital that the Labour Party leadership intend to prove their ability to control and restrain the demands of labour. And the carrot with which they hope to tempt trade unionists into compliance is none other than a Labour victory at the next general election.

The stick is contained in paragraphs 70, 71 and 72 of the document presented to the TUC congress (paragraphs 59, 60 and 61 of the draft passed by the Labour Party NEC). IN these short lines that Labour Party and TUC leadership reveals its intention to make statutory provisions for secret ballots before strikes and to introduce a 1980s version of Ted Heath's infamous National Industrial Relations Court.

The core of these paragraphs is this: 'The new statutory framework will also entail laying down general principles for inclusion in union rule books based on a right for union members to have a secret ballot on decisions relating to strikes, and for the method of election of union executives to be based on a system of secret ballots ... On election, a Labour government in consultation with the TUC will establish a new independent tribunal that will have the duty of acting on complaints by union members that the statutory principles have been breached.' And it is around this decisive part of the document that debate at congress will centre.

The Union of Communication Workers (UCW) and the general and municipal workers (GMBATU) have both submitted resolutions which focus on this debate. Amendments are in from the transport workers and mineworkers unions, and from USDAW, SOGAT and TASS, among others.

The UCW calls for a 'workers rights act' to provide 'positive

democratic rights', while the GMBATU demands a 'wide-ranging charter of legal rights for all people at work'. Included in the original UCW resolution was 'the right to have an individual secret ballot before being asked to participate in industrial action'. This makes absolutely specific the intention of Neil Kinnock and the Labour NEC majority, an intention which has caused some ripples of reinterpretation in trade union and Labour Party circles since *People At Work* was published.

It is this which has been subsequently changed, in a deal between the UCW and the TGWU, just to refer to strikes.

The amendments of the NUM are equally clear. One would delete the above quoted provision for secret ballots in the UCW resolution, and replace it with: 'the right to determine their rules and constitution in accordance with ILO convention and without state interference.' A second would make clear that 'a change in political and economic direction' is necessary to protect the interest of working people.

The amendment — the subject of much press speculation in the run-up to congress, and of intense lobbying within top trade union and Labour Party circles — originally deleted altogether the offending subparagraph on secret ballots. It would have replaced it with a call for 'the complete abolition of the anti-trade union laws enacted by this government' together with an assertion of confidence in Labour doing just that, and also with the following final paragraph: 'Congress believes that workers rights should be protected by a combination of positive rights and legal immunities. These should avoid over-reliance on judicial interpretation and should support, not undermine, the process of achieving improvements through collective bargaining.'

It was the position of the TGWU, reflected by this amendment, which had been at the centre of much pre-TUC concern.

At the end of this process the NUM slapped down a clarificatory amendment, while Ron Todd of the TGWU expressed himself 'quite happy' with the composite agreed between himself and the UCW. His amendment, he claimed, was a mere aspect of the resolution as a whole. Regardless of these shifts, the real issue which will continue to dominate 1986 congress remains for or against state interference in the unions.

For Neil Kinnock, who will be addressing congress next week, the issue is ditching trade union rights for the election of a Labour government next time round. Trade unions legitimate refusal of interference by the state in collective bargaining must be subordinated, as far as he's concerned, to a Labour victory. And general secretaries such as Ron Todd and Jimmy Knapp of the NUR are backing him in that, against the interests of their own members.

But this view of what will win Labour the next election is completely false. It is not the Labour leadership's abject capitulation in the face of Tory anti-union laws, but a clear — and fighting — alternative to Thatcher's attack on trade union rights which will win Labour the support it needs for electoral victory. No amount of humbug about collectivity can hide the fact that *People At Work* is a major challenge to trade union democracy and trade union strength. Delegates to the 1986 congress of the TUC must throw out the fudge cobbled up by trade union general secretaries along with the Labour Party-TUC document — say no to state intervention in the unions.

LABOUR'S NEW POLICY

"A recipe for



Photo: PAUL MATTHEWSON

'The Labour leadership has made a dramatic shift to the right and accepted that attacking trade unions is a good idea for an election manifesto.' The miners strike showed what to expect when the state is unleashed on striking workers.

THE LABOUR leadership has sharply shifted its ground in the last 12 months. It has come to accept that legislation designed to interfere with the right of trade unions to decide for themselves what's in their rule books is no bad thing. That is the meaning of the joint Labour Party-TUC policy statement, *People At Work: New Rights, New Responsibilities*, which will be presented to the 1986 congress of the TUC and to Labour Party annual conference.

Although the Labour leadership has voted in parliament against the Tory imposition of secret ballots on trade unions, now it seems that same leadership has made a dramatic shift to the right and accepted that attacking trade unions is a good idea for an election manifesto. But we already have a clear

example of what happens when the party leadership adopts such a course.

“ *People at Work* is a rejuvenated *In Place of Strife*. It has built within it the operation of a new legal body not dissimilar to the National Industrial Relations Court of the Heath era, which would result in a minority who refuse to take part in industrial action being able to take their trade union to court. ”

In 1969 the then employment minister Barbara Castle introduced *In Place of Strife*. That piece of

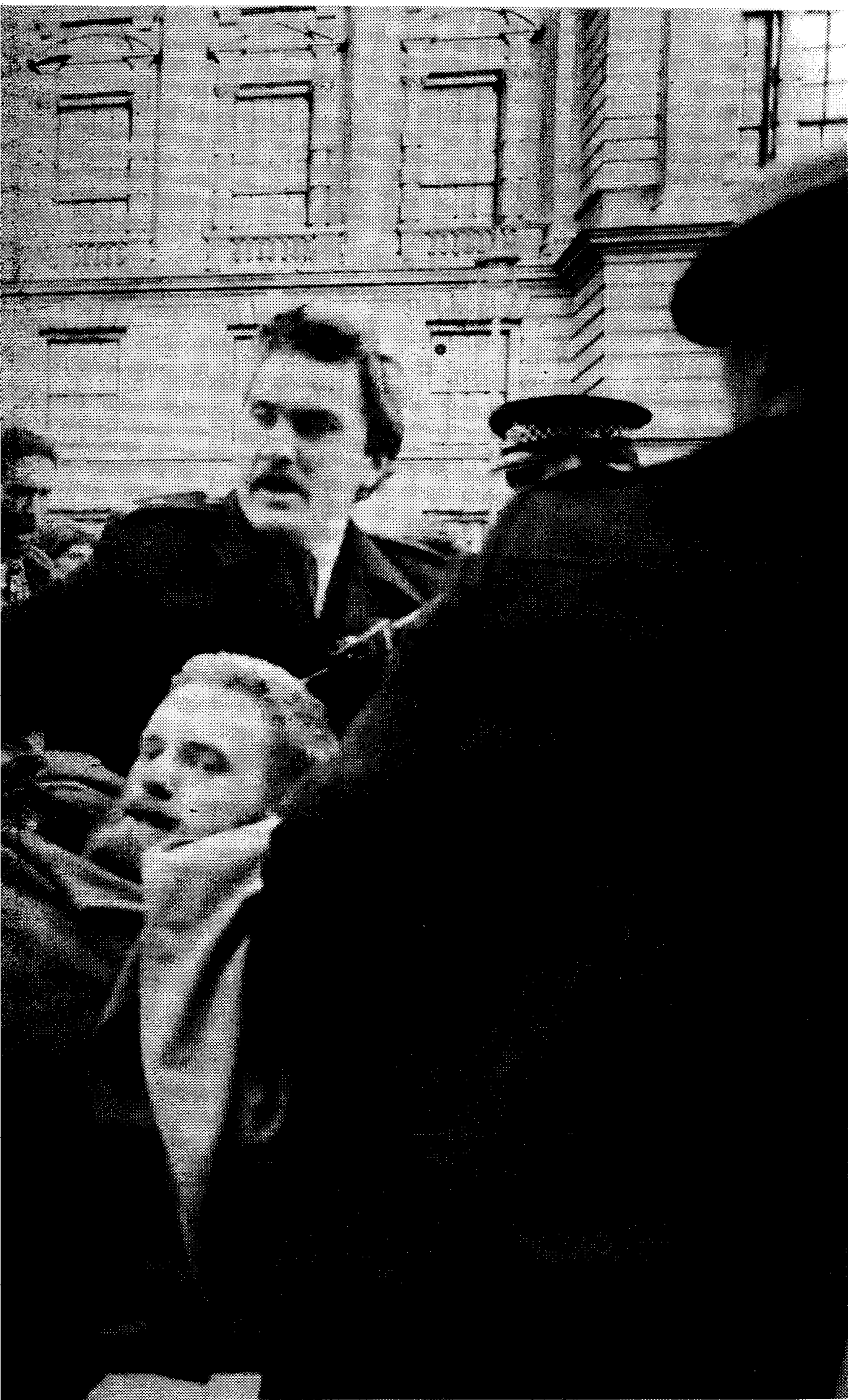
proposed legislation finally ran to ground at a Labour Party national executive meeting at which one of the principal opponents was none other than Jim Callaghan. The trade unions, by and large, were hostile to it, and eventually the whole ethos that gave birth to *In Place of Strife* had to be put on one side by the Labour leadership.

Following that, the Labour Party opposed the introduction into parliament of the Tory government's Industrial Relations Acts in the early 1970s. The unions and the party participated in one of the biggest demonstrations ever to hit London, when the 'Kill the Bill' campaign resulted in well over 100,000 people taking to the streets. That resistance by the labour movement helped to destroy the Tory government of Ted Heath in 1974.

Heath's legislation created an industrial relations atmosphere sur-

ON THE UNIONS

or disaster”



rounded by strife. It was a recipe for a disaster, culminating in 1972 in the magnificent march to Pentonville jail when five dockers were imprisoned for refusing to observe the Industrial Relations Act.

“The party leadership is busy arguing that ballots should be made a legal requirement for trade unionists, but they have no plans for ballots in the Stock Exchange, in Lloyds, or in the City of London generally.”

The Conservative government at that time had to find ways and means of circumventing their own law, of preventing it from being carried out. Heath sent an official sol-

icitor to Pentonville jail to rescue those trade unionists.

That bizarre sequence of events showed that such laws couldn't work. It seems a weird quirk of politics that the shadow cabinet, a prospective Labour government, should be putting forward the same ideas as a formula for good industrial relations.

People At Work is a rejuvenated *In Place of Strife*. It has built within it the operation of a new legal body not dissimilar to NIRC, the National Industrial Relations Court of the Heath era, which would result in a minority who refuse to take part in industrial action being able to take their trade union to court. As somebody aptly put it, the new Labour Party-TUC policy document could be described as a scabs charter.

People At Work represents a retreat by the Labour Party leader-

ship in the face of Tory propaganda. The Tories have tried to create a climate of opinion in which trade unions are held responsible for the nation's decline. But the evidence of the last seven years knocks that into a cocked hat.

Everybody now knows that the very essence of Tory monetarist policy has produced mass unemployment and has run down Britain's manufacturing output. There has been a £10 billion shift in the balance of payments — from £5½ billion surplus on manufacturing accounts in 1979, to a deficit of about £4½ at the present time. That has not been as a result of trade union activities. In fact, the number of people belonging to trade unions has dropped by nearly two million in that period.

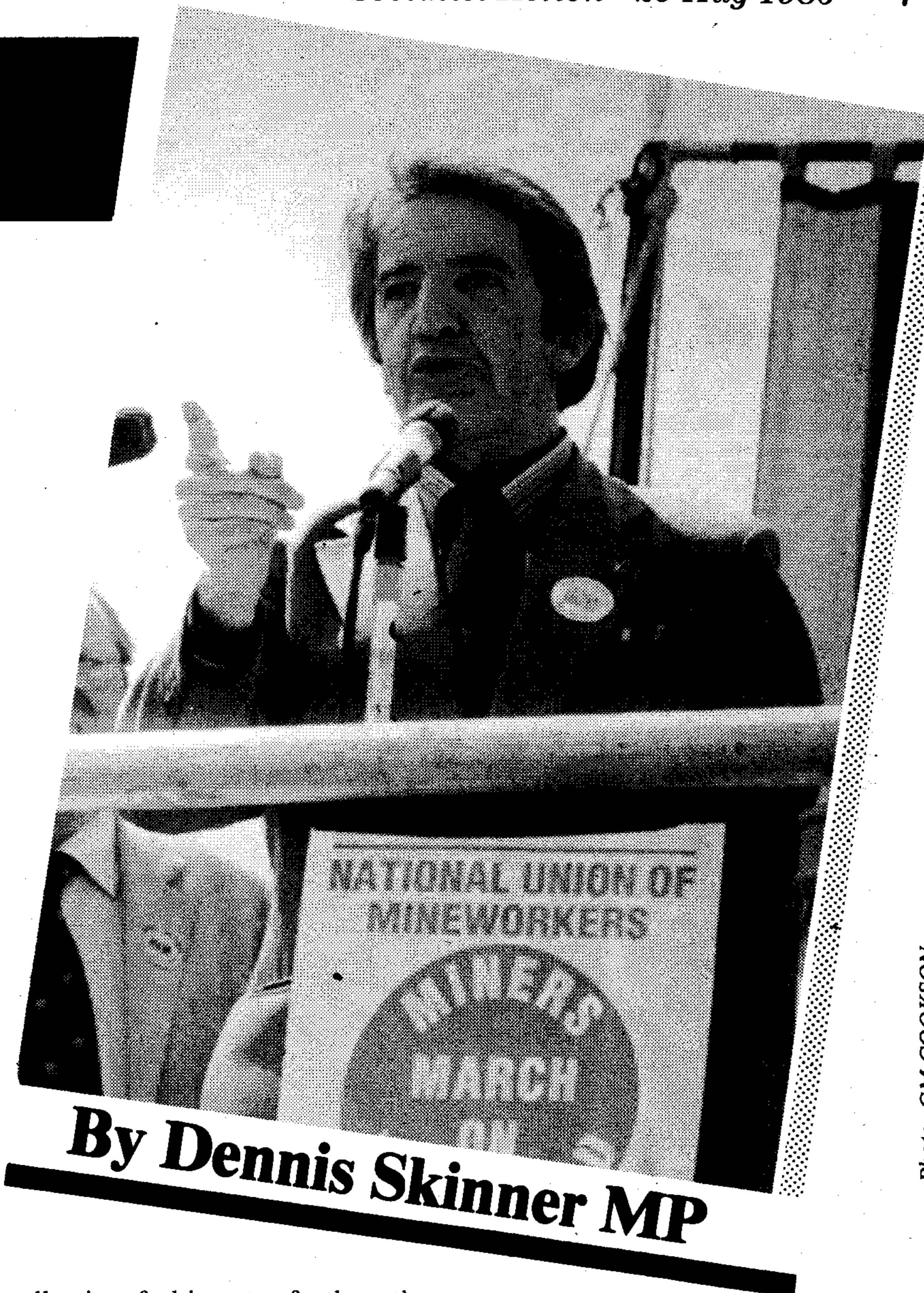
“Delegates at TUC congress have to ask themselves a simple question: will this policy assist the average trade unionist to further his or her wages and conditions, or will it put a break on collective bargaining and industrial action? The answer is that it will put a break on realising better wages and conditions for workers.”

There is no evidence that the industrial might of the trade unions has managed to stop the government in its tracks. Most independent observers would argue that some of the most bitter industrial struggles which have taken place in the last seven years have resulted in victory for the bosses and for the Tory government. I wish we *had* scored some bigger industrial victories, but the truth is that we haven't.

The Labour leadership's strategy for winning the next election is to take Tory claims at their face value — and to adapt to them. But if the message is that the next Labour government will be partial to the bosses and not too keen on trade union militancy, then many of those men and women who hanker after a job but can't get one under Thatcher will be unsure of what sort of prospects they face with Labour in power. If the message is that the next Labour government will do its damndest to shore up the rotten system we live under, then all those people who suffer by it will have no confidence that Labour will start the job of radically changing it.

A manifesto which pledges Labour to fight for the rights of working class communities is the only way to ensure a victory at the next general election. Defence of trade unions must be at the centre of such a manifesto.

Trade unions exist to act in a



By Dennis Skinner MP

collective fashion to further the wages and conditions of men and women at work. But the party leadership is proposing that the next Labour government enforces secret ballots and gives individuals who don't like what the majority in a trade union are doing the right to attack the very unions that they belong to. It is a policy which has the seeds of discontent sown within it.

At the Labour Party NEC which passed this policy, the left attempted to stop the document from being presented to party conference. That policy was carried by 17:8, with Tom Sawyer of NUPE abstaining. Only Tony Benn, Eric Clarke, Frances Curran, Eric Hoffer, Joan Maynard, Jo Richardson, Dennis Skinner and Audrey Wise were prepared to vote against it.

Several attempts were made to take out those passages that established a legal framework for industrial relations, which dealt with setting up an industrial relations court and imposed secret ballots. But the majority of the NEC — the right wing and the 'cuddly' left — went along with or supported the inclusion of paragraphs 59, 60 and 61.

“The very essence of trade union strength is to be able to take on the bosses as quickly and effectively as possible. The bosses don't have to hold ballots when they lock people out.”

The party leadership is busy arguing that ballots should be made a legal requirement for trade unionists, but they have no plans for ballots in the Stock Exchange, in Lloyds, or in the City of London generally. Instead, financial institutions have the right to operate self-regulatory procedures, to the extent of not even allowing the law to interfere.

Recently parliament was told that this 'self-regulation' has allowed Peter Cameron-Wells and Peter Dixon to get away with £39 million. Now they are living a life of luxury in America — and not one single

member of the fraud squad has paid them a visit.

Some Labour Party leaders are responding to criticism of the *People at Work* policy by engaging in semantics. Don't be fooled! They are trying to argue that secret ballots will only be imposed in respect of certain strikes.

“The Labour leadership's strategy for winning the next election is to take Tory claims at their face value — and adapt to them.”

The fact is that most strikes are unofficial in the very beginning. They have a tendency to be given official status only after a couple of weeks of action. It is in cases like these — strikes about important issues affecting wages, on privatisation, and so on — when secret ballots will have to take place. In the wake of those ballots certain minorities will have the right to dictate to the majority.

All this means chaos in collective bargaining.

The very essence of trade union strength is to be able to take on the bosses as quickly and effectively as possible. The bosses don't have to hold ballots when they lock people out; they don't have to hold ballots when they decide to attack workers for no good reason; management doesn't have to ballot the workforce before getting rid of a shop steward. Management is a law unto itself, but no legislation is being drawn up to restrict the power of the bosses.

Delegates at TUC congress have to ask themselves a simple question: will this policy assist the average trade unionist to further his or her wages and conditions, or will it put a break on collective bargaining and industrial action? The answer is that it will put a break on realising better wages and conditions for workers. And it would be a nonsense to have a Trade Union Congress passing a resolution which effectively places serious obstacles in the path of improving the lot of workers.

'Sacked miners still need your support'

EIGHTEEN MONTHS after the end of the miners strike the NUM is still fighting for the reinstatement of 468 sacked miners. Six languish in jail. And that means the National Justice for Mineworkers Campaign still has a job of work on its hands. At this year's Trades Union Congress and Labour Party annual conference we will be holding fringe meetings to publicise the plight of victimised miners and organising an art exhibition to help raise money for them and their families.

In many cases the Coal Board is refusing to take part in conciliation and totally ignoring decisions of industrial tribunals. We have a classic example of that here in Durham.

One of our members was alleged to have hit a scab on 5 November 1984. On 14 April 1985, six weeks after he'd returned to work, he was summarily dismissed and remains sacked to this day.

Management claim he was sacked for gross misconduct under the terms of his contract of employment, but when we tried for conciliation they refused to take part in the procedure because the contract of employment was suspended when he went on strike. For the purposes of reinstatement the



By Bill Etherington, Chair of the Justice for Mineworkers Campaign and General Secretary of the Durham Mechanics

contract was breached, but for punishment it was in force!

We have managed to get one Durham Mechanics member reengaged, but that means he loses all his previous rights and conditions — in addition, of course, to having been without wages for 18 months. This particular man was involved in a bizarre incident.

A security guard came upon three miners stealing coal and set his alsatian dog on one of them. In the scuffle that ensued my member made his escape, but was caught by the police, whose evidence

made plain that he wasn't involved in the assault.

The Coal Board kept him sacked for 14 months because he wouldn't give them the name of the other who escaped. That miner has lost 18 months wages because of malice by the Board.

These sort of examples show what the NUM is up against in trying to get our victims reinstated. The Justice Campaign is gathering information from the different Coal Board areas in order to produce a dossier of such cases.

Scotland

In Scotland for example, a striking miner is still sacked because he was found to be on Coal Board property unlawfully. He persuaded the police to let him onto a bus taking scabs into the pit, to encourage them not to go to work. When they got to the gates, because there was a picket, the police wouldn't stop the bus and let him off.

When it stopped in the yard management nabbed him for being on their premises without permission. That is one of the meanest, most petty cases I've ever come across.

Another example from the Scottish area is the case of a miner sacked because he refused to move off the public pavement. Management drew a white line down the footpath and said no picket could cross it.

This fellow challenged their right to do so — and was subsequently backed up by the local council who investigated it. But the Coal Board still sacked him for it.



Over 460 miners remain sacked, of which six are in jail — they and their families still need the whole labour movement's financial support.

There are hundreds more examples of the Coal Board's attitude. Our sacked members are victims of the Tories' attempts to decimate the coal industry and smash the National Union of Mineworkers — and they still need the support of the labour movement as a whole.

Funds

Although the receivership of the NUM's funds has been lifted, we've yet to

get our money back. It is important the labour movement understands that money is still needed.

CLPs

Over 400 organisations have affiliated to the Justice Campaign. That includes a hell of a lot of constituency Labour Parties and many trade unions which didn't necessarily support us during our dispute, and that's very

encouraging.

But the financial situation of our sacked and jailed members is worse now than ever it was. The majority have fallen into the social security poverty trap.

The NUM's national solidarity funds needs your money more than ever. This year's TUC and Labour Party conferences are an opportunity to show your determination to defend the victims of the Thatcher government's at-

tack on the unions.

● *Affiliation to the Justice for Mineworkers Campaign is: £50 per annum for national bodies, £25 for regional bodies, and £5 for local ones. Donations and applications for affiliation should be addressed to the Campaign Treasurer and sent to: Durham Mechanics Office, 26 The Avenue, Durham DH1 4ED.*

EAST MIDLANDS JUSTICE FOR MINeworkers CAMPAIGN

MUSIC - FOOD - POSTERS - T-SHIRTS - POSTERS - T-SHIRTS - POSTERS - T-SHIRTS

SEPT 6th at WEST HOTTIS, COLLEGE OF F.E., MANCHESTER

ASSEMBLY - 10.30 a.m. - MANCHESTER LEISURE CENTRE, CHESTERFIELD ROAD, CHESTERFIELD

MEETING - 11.00 a.m. - 10, WOOTTONS COLLEGE, WOOTTON

DELEGATES - SEE NO GUILTY, N.U.P., DENNIS SKINNER, N.P., JUSTICE FOR MINeworkers, S.O.G.A.T.

Come and support our victimised miners.

Women and the unions

OVER THE last few years the National Union of Railwaymen has adopted a number of positive policies concerning women. Commitments have been given by the union to fight sexual harassment at work, to establish women's advisory structures at local and national level, and to take up cases of discrimination under the Sex Discrimination Act.

By Ann Henderson, NUR

The recently published Equal Opportunities Commission report revealed extensive discrimination against women in the rail industry. Responsibility for this lies largely with the rail unions, and women members have been organising to take up these issues.

Women have gained confidence through participating in labour movement women's conferences, and learning from each others experiences. But these policy developments are not only the result of that — women form less than 10 per cent of the membership of the NUR. The debates in the broader labour movement, within the Labour Party and the TUC, have encouraged women to come forward and reawakened male trade unionists to the issues.

For example, the stand taken by the TUC on sexual harassment was impor-

tant for women in many unions. An increasing number of unions now have women's committee structures, special recruitment leaflets, and procedures for dealing with harassment and discrimination, although some are more advanced than others. This is partly because, with high unemployment, union membership is declining and unions are looking for new recruits. But those new women members have a right to expect something from the union.

Expect

For over a 100 years unions have been happy to take membership subscriptions off women, yet we still have not achieved equal pay, equal opportunity, or a working environment free from harassment and discrimination. Women will again be in a tiny minority at this



Women in the unions are fighting to establish their rights

year's TUC congress, and are completely under-represented at all level of union structures.

The issues which have been thoroughly debated at this year's Scottish TUC and women's TUC conferences, from the perspective of women trade unionists, have no guarantee at all of being raised at congress. The

frustration many women feel with this situation is reflected in the growing support for changes which is coming from the STUC and women's TUC conferences. Changes such as extra women's seats on the general council, the right of the women's conference to submit resolutions to the congress and STUC agenda, and other steps

for positive action for women within the labour movement.

The resolution from COHSE at the TUC this year, supported by a number of amendments, calls on the TUC to make the fight for equal pay a number one priority. This resolution must be supported, but the fight to actually implement it will be

the real test.

One hundred years ago, in the 1880s, the TUC committed itself to equal pay. If we are to be sure of advancing the position of women workers, women must have a central place in all the labour and trade union movement structures.

Ministry

The amendment from NUPE refers to the proposal that a future Labour government establishes a ministry for women, and calls for conference to support that. This move within the Labour Party is to be welcomed — but can only be successful if it is backed up by women taking their rightful place within the Labour Party structures and within a future government. Already we can see that the number of women selected as parliamentary candidates for Labour is tiny.

Recognising the continuing discrimination and under-representation of women in the Labour Party, the Labour women's conference has repeatedly passed resolutions calling for the right of women to elect the women's representatives on the party's NEC, for women's conference to submit

policy resolutions to annual conference, and other constitutional measures which provide for positive discrimination in the Labour Party.

Support have been growing in the labour and trade union movement for these demands. Many delegations of trade union women have supported these decisions at national Labour women's conference.

This year the NUR agreed to support the right of Labour women's conference to elect the women's seats on the NEC. UCATT did likewise. And the proposal was only defeated narrowly in a number of other unions.

These moves for change are closely tied to developments in the trade unions — women in the Labour Party and women in the unions face the same under-representation and harassment. They must be supported in demanding their rightful place.

Low wages and bad conditions, lack of child-care facilities, discrimination all hold the whole movement back — the whole movement must take these issues on board, and listen to what the women members are saying.

International

Growing repression in El Salvador

ON 13 SEPTEMBER the El Salvador Solidarity Campaign is calling for a picket at the US embassy to protest against the worsening human rights situation during the past eight months in El Salvador. Repression backed by the Salvadorean government has increased on all fronts. Since January the Salvadorean Armed Forces (FAES) have launched four major operations against civilian populations in the areas controlled by the FMLN (Farabudo Marti National Liberation Front). These involve massive bombings, assassinations, destruction of homes and crops, and the forced displacement of civilians. Hundreds of civilian deaths and casualties have resulted from this 'bomb and burn' strategy. More than one million people have now been displaced from their homes — one fifth of El Salvador's population.

Since January government repression in the cities has escalated. At least five trade unionists have been killed, 10 wounded, 36 captured and more than 400 workers have been sacked for trade union activities. Eight workplaces have been occupied by the army during industrial disputes. Industrial action having been declared illegal in 97 per cent of disputes this year.

The same repressive

methods have now also been directed at destroying the human rights and religious organisations

By Barry Gray

that are campaigning against the government's policies. Human rights and relief workers have been held incommunicado for days, extrajudicial 'confessions' extracted under torture, and the more useful 'confessions',

where 'suspects' implicate themselves or others as FMLN members, televised for the nation. The government's strategy is to link any group that opposes government policy to the FMLN in order to justify silencing their opposition.

These attacks on the popular movement result in the assassination of more than 20 people each month. They bring the civilian death toll since 1980 to more than 60,000.

Government efforts to destroy the FMLN's civilian support, and silence the popular opposition however are not succeeding. Salvador's president Duarte is becoming increasingly isolated both internally and internationally. Popular opposition to his government's policies particularly the 'economic package' (a set of austerity measures aimed at directing more national resources towards the civil war) is growing as the costs of pursuing the war place great strain on the economy.

Unemployment in El Salvador is over 50 per cent and inflation is running at more than 30 per cent a year. So far during 1986, half a million workers have taken part in strike action. Over 50 demonstrations and protests have been organised.

The May Day demonstration organised by UNTS (National Unity of Salvadorean Workers), a broad trade union organisation that includes unions which were supporting Duarte's policies until this year, attracted 100,000 people. It demanded withdrawal of the 'economic package' and that Duarte engage in a dialogue with the FMLN-FDR, a coalition of the FMLN with the Revolutionary Democratic Front, to secure a peaceful solution to the conflict.

At its second general assembly in July UNTS decided to demand an end to US intervention in the country — intervention running at nearly \$2 million a day of aid to



Duarte. It also demanded that UNTS should be party to the dialogue between the government and the FMLN-FDR.

The FMLN-FDR itself has continued to offer a public dialogue with the government. The offer has been directed at all parts of Salvadorean society, as a method of searching for and implementing a political solution to the conflict.

The offer is flexible and the FMLN-FDR are arguing for the establishment of a 'transitional government' in which they are a component part along with other forces. The transitional government would develop and implement the agreed political solution up to the point where fair and free elections could take place. It would make economic and land reforms in favour of the majority of Salvadoreans, reactivating the productive economy as a mixed economic system tackling the problems of unemployment and poverty. It would also end all forms of human rights violations and pursue international policies based on non-intervention and self-determination.

This offer of dialogue has attracted wide support within El Salvador — forcing Duarte to resume the talks that he broke off in 1984. The 20 August preparatory talks that took place in Mexico between the government and the FMLN-FDR indicate

the political pressure the government is under.

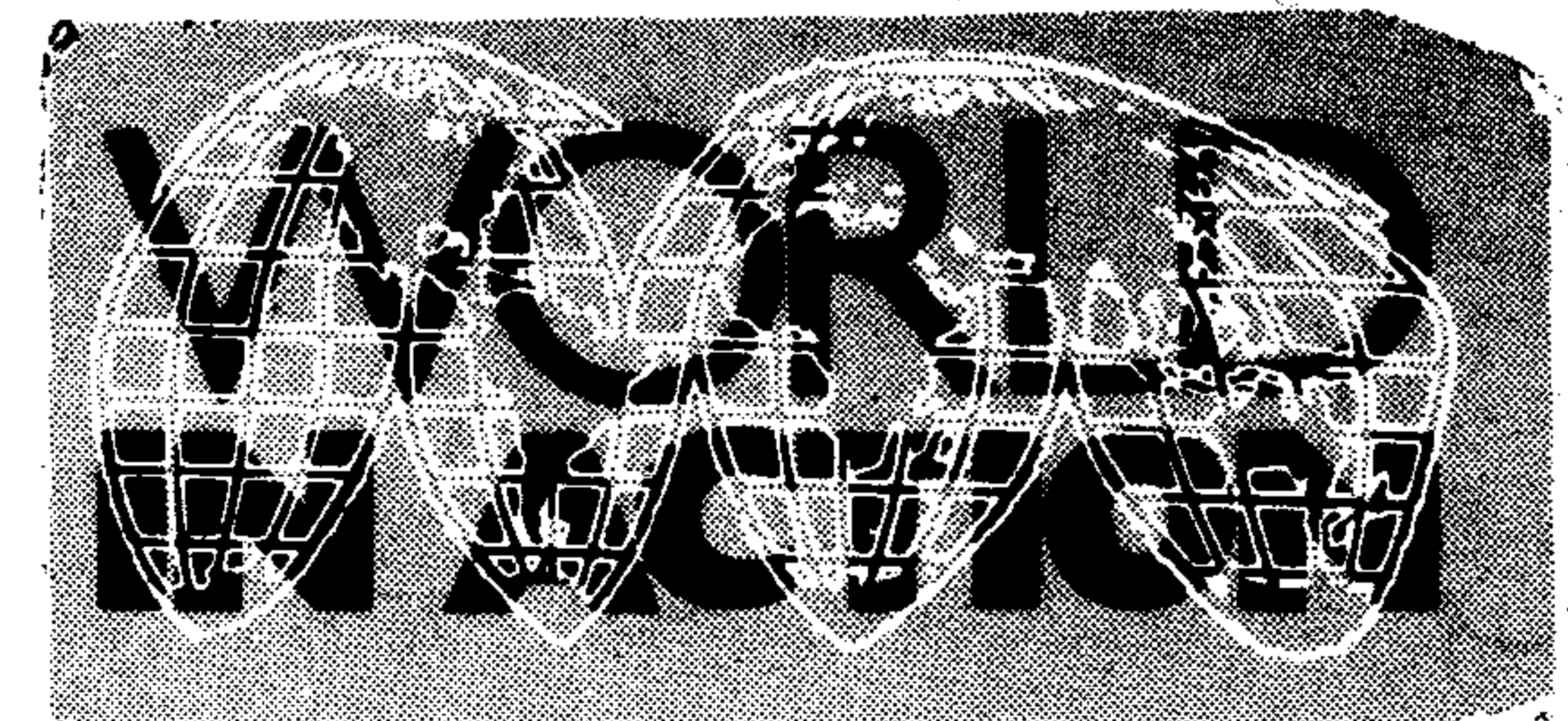
Despite their lip service to the principal of dialogue Duarte and his US advisors continue to pursue the military solution to the conflict. US aid is supplying the sophisticated hardware to conduct the war from the air — attack helicopters with rocket launchers and machine guns; A37 jet bombers; AC-47 gunships as used in Vietnam that can blanket an area the size of a football pitch with 600 rounds per second; US pilots fly reconnaissance missions, spotting guerilla movements with infrared equipment from a height of 10,000 feet.

To evade detection the FMLN operates in small units that concentrate on sabotage operations and inflicting high casualty rates on the FAES. Almost 3,500 casualties were inflicted on the government forces in the first six months of 1986. This was 25 per cent higher than in 1984.

Large-scale operations, such as the capture of the largest FAES barracks in the East at San Miguel in June, demonstrate the FMLN's ability to concentrate its forces and disperse them with few casualties — despite the sophisticated aerial surveillance equipment at the FAES's disposal.

The FMLN's strategy rests on this combination of political and military tactics — the demand for dialogue simultaneously with taking the war into all 14 departments of the country in order to alter the military balance of forces.

The US, recognising the failure of their current policies, is increasingly backing repression, claiming that the FMLN's tactics are designed to provoke it. The protest against human rights violations at the US embassy is aimed at building a campaign in Britain against the growing repression in El Salvador.



West Germany

There has been a vicious, racist campaign against the entry of Tamils into West Germany, led by the parties of the right, who are attacking the Socialists and the Greens as being 'soft' on immigration. They have also denounced the East German authorities for allowing in refugees from countries such as Sri Lanka — after denouncing them for 25 years for refusing to allow West Germans to cross the border.

There are estimated to be some 50,000 Tamils in West Germany. The right, who make a distinction between 'political' and 'economic' refugees, are claiming they are in West Germany seeking better jobs.

It is this which lay behind the much publicised voyage of Tamils from West Germany to Canada. But the result of this campaign is that Tamils are in danger of being deported back to Sri Lanka where they face death and torture.

New Zealand

Earlier this month New Zealand was expelled from the ANZUS defence pact, because it refused to permit US ships to dock in New Zealand ports. The US wouldn't disclose whether or not the ships carried nuclear weapons. This has caused considerable tension in the region, with Australia as the only remaining country supporting the pact.

The pact itself does not require the participants to use or deploy nuclear weapons. It was only when New Zealand tried to apply its non-nuclear policy that it became clear that the US regarded this as a condition of ANZUS membership.

Economic reprisals against New Zealand might be expected. Meanwhile economic tension between the US and Australia over competition in agriculture is causing further tension. Hawke has said: 'Australia is being held hostage to the economic bastardy of the European Community and the United States. This policy has caused disintegration of the body of support for the policies which underlined the ANZUS alliance. It hasn't disintegrated but it is weakening and I think that is a tragedy.'

Pacific

The upshot of a recent meeting of 13 Pacific states, at the 17th South Pacific Forum, was a calling for turning the Pacific into a nuclear free zone. This will bring them into contradiction both with the USA and France. The same meeting demanded that the question of New Caledonia be placed on the agenda of the UN decolonial commission. This has been seen by French commentators as a defeat for French diplomacy and a victory for the struggle of the Kanak liberation movement.

The new French government has moved backwards even in relation to the meagre measures proposed by Mitterrand, which foresaw a referendum on independence for New Caledonia in 1987. The Pacific Forum demands that participation in this referendum should be restricted to the Kanak people and those immediately related to them. It stated that if the result of this plebiscite did not go towards independence, it could only exacerbate the problems.

Spanish State

The Spanish and French governments are both having to weather a rising storm of militant opposition to their terrorisation of liberation fighters in the Basque country. The Spanish government has been conducting a dirty war of assassination and imprisonment against ETA. The French government recently decided to cease offering asylum or refuge to Basques in French territory.

It has begun expelling them from France, often without an extradition demand and without provocation. Txomi, the main leader of ETA, was deported in line with this. As a result there have been huge demonstrations in St Sebastian.

It is clear that the climate of opinion in the Basque country is swinging towards ETA and the political party which supports it. This has promoted a crisis among the conservative Basque nationalists, PNV, which has reversed its policy of support for the existing autonomy statute on the Basque country and called for it to be renegotiated. Most important of all, it has called for negotiations with ETA, something which the Spanish government steadfastly opposes.

PROTEST

AGAINST WAR ATROCITIES AND US INTERVENTION
FOR A PEOPLES RIGHT TO LIVE
EL SALVADOR WILL WIN



LONDON SATURDAY 13th SEPTEMBER
ASSEMBLE 12 NOON UNITED STATES EMBASSY GROSVENOR SQUARE
(NEAREST TUBE BOND STREET)

Gorbachev's test ban proposal

LAST MONDAY Mikhail Gorbachev announced the extension of the Soviet Union's unilateral nuclear test ban treaty. He stated: 'In taking this step we believe that people in all countries of the world, political circles and the international public will correctly appreciate the long silence at the nuclear test sites.' The Soviet leadership is now concentrating on agitating for a comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty. BRIAN JAMES looks at this proposal against the background of Soviet foreign policy.

It is clear why Mikhail Gorbachev is placing so much emphasis on a nuclear test ban treaty. It is a way of undermining the United States Star Wars programme. A number of key weapons the Reagan government is relying on for Star Wars, in particular X-ray lasers for destroying missiles and satellites, are best powered by nuclear explosions. Without testing such weapons it is impossible to deploy them.

The Soviet leadership

has made it clear that an agreement on arms limitation is its number one goal for the proposed US-Soviet summit later this year. Gorbachev, in announcing the extension of the moratorium, challenged Reagan to sign a comprehensive test ban treaty saying: 'This event would undoubtedly be the main real outcome of the meeting and a considerable step on the way to ending the arms race.' The US State Department immediately rejected the

proposal. In other words Reagan will continue to push ahead with Star Wars no matter what.

However Gorbachev's proposals has succeeded in gaining support not just in the anti-missiles movement but in various political circles in Western Europe and the United States. The US House of Representatives has voted a non-binding resolution which cuts off funds for all US nuclear tests over 1 kiloton if the Soviet Union continues its moratorium. Holland and Denmark have expressed support for a comprehensive ban. Owen, of the SDP has also made such a proposal.

The proposal for a comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty represents an important part of a general international

policy being pursued by Gorbachev at present. It is putting considerable effort into attempting to rebuild closer links with China, establish links with Japan, and maintain its relations with various West European countries. The aim is to gain a breathing space for the Soviet economy and utilise partial conflicts between the major capitalist powers against the United States.

The extremely dangerous aspect of this policy is that the Soviet leadership may well be prepared to make concessions to the United States in other areas, for example in Central America, in order to try to get concessions on Star Wars. However a comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty is itself a proposal which should be supported by every socialist.



Mikhail Gorbachev

LETTERS

Maurice Bishop

Tribune of 18 July carried a dishonest article, 'American frame-up in Grenada courts'. This claimed that Bernard Coard and his supporters have been framed by US imperialism for the murder of prime minister Maurice Bishop. It continued 'the circumstances surrounding Bishop's death ... are shrouded in deep mystery'. There is no mystery.

In November, 1983, a major statement appeared in the world's press in which Cuba's Fidel Castro gave detailed evidence of the guilt of Bernard Coard and his 'Pol Pot group'. The statement explained: 'On October 12, Bishop was removed from office by the central committee on which the conspirators had gained a majority ... He was placed under house arrest. On the 19th the people took to the streets and freed Bishop while on the same day Coard's group ordered the army to fire on the people, and Bishop and other revolutionary leaders were murdered ... Coard's group objectively destroyed the revolution and opened the door to imperialist aggression.'

Earlier this year, one of the 19 accused of aiding the murder of Maurice Bishop turned state's evidence. *Granma Weekly Review* of 1 June reports Fabian Gabriel's evidence that 'the firing squad was commanded by Calistos Bernard, who showed Bishop the execution order from the central committee. Gabriel testified that Bernard took the bodies from the spot where they fell and supervised their incineration at Camp Fellow in the south of the island'.

These vital facts are left out of the *Tribune* 'briefing'. But there is no mystery here either. The 'briefing' is 'based on information provided by *Caribbean Labour Solidarity*'. *CLS* is a long-standing supporter of Bernard Coard. Today *CLS* cynically use the banner of human rights to cover up for Coard's crime against the Grenadan revolution. That *Tribune* should fall for this is unfortunate. Perhaps in future you should get your briefings from the respected Cuban embassy or from the organisation which is the heir to Maurice Bishop, the 'Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement'. The MBPM has a support group in Britain whose address is supplied: 48 Broad Lawn, New Eltham, London SE9 3XD (Tel 01-851-3283).

Celia Pugh
(This letter has also been sent to *Tribune*.)

Zionism

On behalf of the Labour Movement Campaign for Palestine I would like to welcome, and make a few comments upon, the two recent articles in *Socialist Action* on Zionism.

Linda Balfe is right to say that Zionism accepts the logic of anti-Semitism but it is also the case that without anti-Semitism there would have been no Zionism, and once embarked upon their project the Zionists recognised not merely the 'futility' (Herzl's words) in combatting anti-Semitism but the dangers to their own movement if such a fight were to be successful. It is not merely that 'at worst, certain Zionists actually collaborated with anti-semites' but that the whole history of the Zionist movement consists of this from the czarist autocracy, to Balfour, the Whites in Russia and finally the Nazis. It is this which gives the lie to the accusation that Zionism and anti-Semitism are the same.

Dave King's account of his experience with the Union of Jewish Students rings true to a number of us who have worked in NUS. No one should however be surprised that an organisation with the closest of links with the Israeli Embassy and undoubtedly the Israeli intelligence organisation, Mossad, should use the tactics of entrapment and personal vilification of individuals. What is surprising is that a paper such as *Socialist Organiser* should refuse the right of reply to someone so attacked and indeed that *Socialist Students* in NOLS, which is controlled by SO, has a position on Palestine and Zionism which is further to the right than the leadership of NUS itself, in so far as it equates support for a democratic, secular state in Palestine with anti-Semitism.

The only disagreement that I would have with Dave King's article is over the question of support for the Soviet Jewry campaign. Whilst socialists support the call for the right of anybody to emigrate from the Soviet Union, this particular campaign, focussing only on Jews, is thoroughly reactionary.

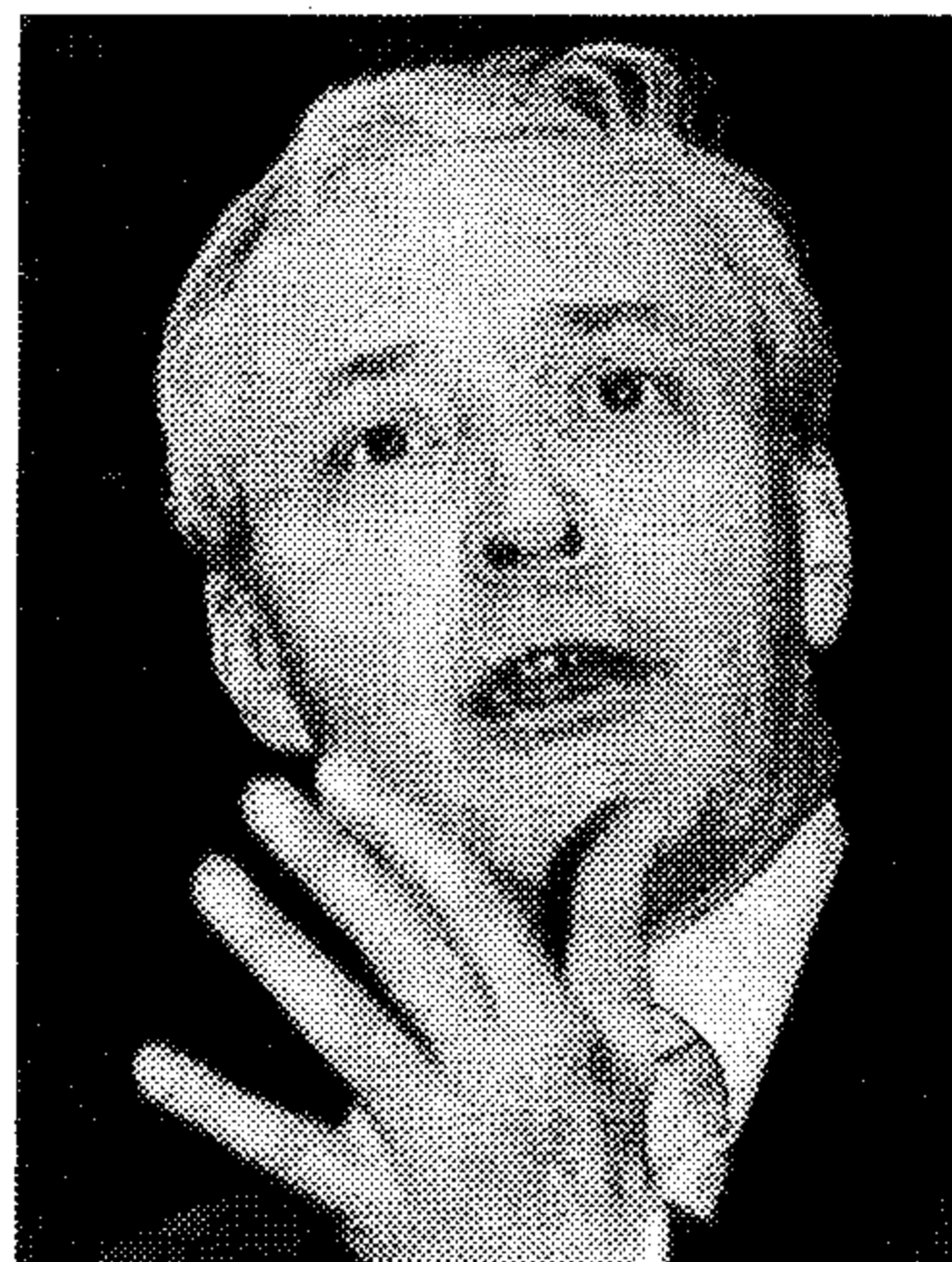
Tony Greenstein
Steering Committee, LMCfP

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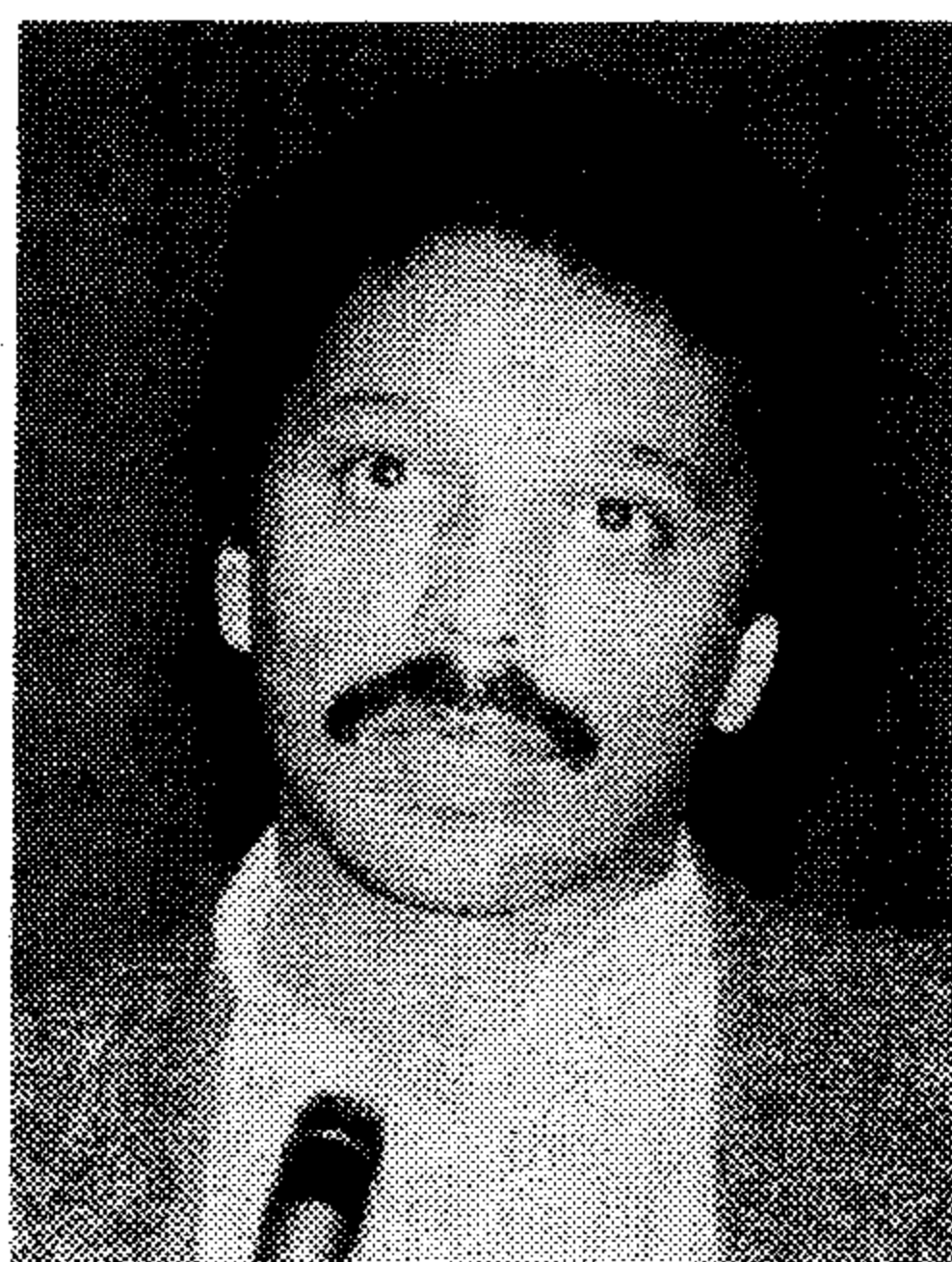
Tony Benn



Linda Bellos



Peter Heathfield



Marc Wadsworth



Betty Heathfield



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TUC must support the printworkers

OUR FIGHT is your fight! That is the message that striking printers involved in the News International dispute took to their colleagues at the *Observer* last week. A few days earlier the *Observer* management had announced the closure of the present building, and the transferring of printing to other sites outside London. Hardly had the new attack in the *Observer* sunk in on Fleet Street then Robert Maxwell was in dispute with the unions over conditions for his new evening paper.

Seeing the example of Wapping, and Murdoch's union busting operation, other Fleet Street proprietors are trying to jump onto the bandwagon. The stakes at Wapping are becoming still clearer for printworkers — either fight back or lose the conditions fought for and won over many years.

The forefront of the battle remains at Wapping. Every Saturday night the mass demonstrations continue to show the determination of the sacked workers to fight back. Time and time again they have shown their willingness to defy the courts by blocking the Highway, the main road outside Fortress Wapping. This is despite the fact that the national leadership of

SOGAT issued an instruction that the court order to cease blocking the road, and to restrict the mass demonstration to a small square opposite the plant, should be obeyed.

By Pete Evans

Included in the court order were new restrictions on the right to picket — for example, the six 'legal' pickets were instructed that they were allowed to give 'information', but not allowed to ask the scabs not to go to work!

Members of SOGAT showed what they thought of this in the recent elections to the SOGAT NEC where candidates identified with the strike won a sweeping victory in the London region.



Sacked SOGAT printworkers hold a tea party for Wapping children behind the picket line.

Faced with the situation at Wapping and in SOGAT, the strikers are beginning to organise to take their struggle out to the rest of the labour movement, and in particular to other printers faced with the same attack on their rights. As the leaflet from the Times Clerical Chapel of SOGAT given out at the lobby of the *Observer* said, 'we do feel strongly that now is the time for

you to act together...and bring the boycott campaign into Fleet Street itself.

'In doing this you will show not only Murdoch but your own companies that there will be no going back on the stand that we have all taken for the preservation of our rights and the retention of our jobs.'

But if the struggle is to be spread it will need the full support of the rest of

the labour movement. Until now the role of the TUC has been disgraceful. Faced with the scabbing role of the EEPTU, the TUC has tried to evade its responsibilities with fake attempts to get negotiations going (involving the EEPTU!) every time it looks like the strikers could take the offensive.

The latest round of talks for this week are specifically designed to head off any fight at the

TUC conference over the role of the EEPTU — on the basis that it could endanger a settlement! But in reality only by settling accounts with the electricians' leaders, and putting the full weight of the TUC behind the print unions, can the strikers get the upper hand, and a real settlement be achieved. That is one based on the sacked workers getting their jobs back and full union rights being gained.'

The NGA motion to the TUC conference, calling for the rejection of the General Council's decision not to demand that the EETPU instructs its members to stop scabbing, needs the full support of the whole movement.

The TUC has to mobilise support for the picket at Wapping, and support the printers in their defiance of the court restrictions on picketing. With the support of the rest of the labour movement the strikers can defeat Murdoch and the tide of defeats in Fleet Street reversed. That is vital to defend every union and job in the country.

New attack on railworkers

A MASSIVE attack on the jobs and conditions of British Rail guards is underway. It's part of a more general drive to get fewer rail workers to do more work for less money, and to eventually hand over entire networks to private firms.

By Ray Varnes, Kings Cross NUR member

Today the guards are at the sharp end, as management pushes ahead with Driver Only Operations (DOO). So far the union leadership hasn't given a lead that can start to turn the situation around. Two recent opportunities have been missed. Number one is the TUC. For the first time in its history, the NUR has submitted a resolution on matters other than transport policy. While its resolution on South Africa is to be welcomed, the end result of no second resolution means broader support to keep guards on the back of every train won't be recorded this year.

Secondly, Jimmy Knapp missed another opportunity in his political report to the union's na-

tional conference last month. His update on Labour's transport plans failed to mention guards' jobs — despite explicit mention about the need to maintain safety standards and to protect women passengers from physical violence while travelling.

The current attack takes place in a situation where guards were balloted on industrial action to defend their jobs last year, at the close of the miners strike. Although the ballot failed in the face of a massive campaign of intimidation, 49 per cent of the guards still voted to take action.

Since then there is overwhelming support in the union for keeping the guards' jobs. But the ploy by management to buy off

drivers with a payment of over £7 per DOO shift undoubtedly had made inroads into unity.

Depots affected by DOO are facing steamroller tactics by management. The national agreement on DOO — which involves monitoring procedures during the three month trial periods — has been ripped up where management can get away with it.

Guards in depots undergoing trial periods face serious problems. For three months while the trials are going on they are expected to sit around in mess rooms getting demoralised and taking home average earnings

Cheap

At other depots, management is getting guards to do different jobs on the cheap. Because the trial period doesn't involve management declaring any jobs lost, none of the substantial transfer payments negotiated by the NUR over the years

can be claimed.

Some prominent left wing activists have responded to the situation by proposing a second ballot of guards which they believe would get a majority today. But a second opportunity for management to interfere in union business, with no broader strategy to defend jobs, will solve nothing.

An aggressive campaign is needed, led nationally by the union, to hold the line in the industry and to start to map out a strategy to broaden the struggle beyond railworkers — especially to workers like the miners, and to the Labour Party. This is the way to lay the basis for industrial action which will be required to put a halt to the attacks faced by railworkers.

But how will we get to the situation where we have a united membership which understands that it will take a serious fight to keep our jobs? Certainly not by sector by sector ballots!

The first requirement is to ensure that intensive

monitoring is underway. This involves each and every LDC (shop stewards committee) having exact details of the agreement on DOO. A national meeting of LDCs would help prevent management from taking outrageous liberties with little resistance.

Stand

But secondly, the union must give every encouragement to workers who are able to take a stand on a local level. Where it is possible to take some form of action, links with other grades and depots, and beyond the industry, will be vital. However workers will never have the confidence to act unless they see that union leaders are seriously campaigning today in defence of jobs.

There are a number of concrete steps that would do just that. The TUC won't have a resolution, but support can still be mobilised in defence of guards and safety standards on trains. Equally

with the Party Conference. Not only NUR-sponsored MPs, but all MPs can be approached for support for guards jobs. This would help ensure that Labour's Transport Policy will be strengthened, and that a future government will indeed be committed to getting guards back on the trains.

But this will come about only with a vigorous campaign today — involving serious monitoring; holding the line where possible at depot level; and winning broad support in the labour movement for guards' jobs in their own right — not simply as workers who inspect and collect tickets on trains!

All these moves would build up their own momentum amongst the membership. It would bring more and more railworkers to the understanding that a united, fighting response is not pie-in-the-sky, but it should be part of an overall, campaigning approach to the defence of jobs.

Kenure plastics fights for jobs

FIFTY BLACK workers have been on strike against their sacking at Kenure plastics in West London for over three months. The dispute is a symbol of what is taking place in British industry today. LEWIS EMERY reports.

It's now nearly three months since fifty Asian workers were sacked at the small injection moulding factory of Kenure plastics at Feltham, West London. It has been three months in which the majority of the workforce has continued to work. Scab workers, supplied principally by the Ealing-based employment agency, Olympic Staff, have been keeping things going in the moulding section.

The sacked workers, members of the AEU, had their dispute made official just two weeks ago. That delay has been a bitter blow: lorry drivers and

others have found it a ready excuse for crossing the picket line and official channels for gaining support have remained largely closed off.

The tragedy is that none of the sacked workers joined the union until after they were dismissed. The AEU, like many other unions, hesitated to grant official status under these circumstances. Yet there are many thousands of factories like Kenure Plastics. The pressures against union organisation are greater now than at any time since the 1930s. Kenure Plastics is part of a

future that the labour movement has to learn how to face.

What led to the sackings? Kenure is typical of the more exploitative sectors of British manufacturing industry. Its workforce — black male workers, black and white women, are trapped in the low pay/long hours syndrome. Basic rates in the moulding section were just £2.33 per hour. Sixty hours a week and more was no exception.

Unity

Previous efforts at unionisation had failed in a general atmosphere of fear, favouritism and patronage. In May 1986, this sorry state of affairs came to an end. Unity broke out among the workforce. In a defiant

gesture the moulding section (totally male, Asian section) rejected a pay offer which would have left them on just £2.50 an hour. Following this, overtime was refused.

Yet with an arrogance typical of him, the boss issued his ultimatum: 'You must all sign contracts promising to work 12 hour shifts'. Dismissal follows a refusal like night follows day.

More support for the victimised workers has come and gone yet little practical progress has so far been made boycotting Kenure products and halting material supplies, especially of bulk plastic granules like Noryl, Orogann and ABN.

The newly elected left Labour council in Hounslow, and in par-

ticular the deputy leader, Dave Wetzel, (formerly of the GLC) has helped pile on the moral pressure. Councillors themselves have donated hundreds of pounds to the support fund, not to mention a Port-a-loo. Trade Union Support Unit have helped with organisational problems. More recently black activists, including Black Section supporters have strengthened their links with the sacked workers.

Needed

More support is urgently needed. Industrial tribunal dates are set for early September, but the granting of official status by the AEU must be seized on and the opportunity to win this dispute underlined. Kenure Plas-

tics may be a small 'back street' factory but in many ways it is typical of the struggles in the 1980s with fear, divisions, widespread disorganisation, self-employed agency lorry drivers who will cross any picket line, etc.

This must not be allowed to overcome the solidarity of working people. As one TGUW member said, 'No employer in Hounslow should be allowed to get away with treating working people like this. We owe it to ourselves to help them win.'

Donations, messages of support to either: Kingston District of AEU or Kenure Workers Support Fund, 18 Staines Road, Hounslow, Middlesex.

NUM

AT THE NUM conference in July Arthur Scargill was said by some South Wales and Scottish area leaders to be 'out of touch with reality'.

Scargill argued that 'sooner or later British miners will have to take organised and united action to halt the continuing disintegration of the coal industry and the further decimation of jobs.' It has become clear in the last few weeks exactly who is living in the real world.

In South Wales, miners voted overwhelmingly for a ban on the production of coal during overtime in protest at the non-payment of the £5.50 pay award. At Hatfield Main in Yorkshire miners struck on 26 August in a one-day action for the reinstatement of sacked miners.

Hatfield Main and Armthorpe branches have both imposed an overtime ban as part of a long-term campaign of reinstatement for sacked miners and the outstanding pay rise.

Two men at Armthorpe who were sacked for a recent disciplinary offence were reinstated at different pits after 'the £1 million strike'.

The Coal Board is proposing to close Seaham in the Durham coalfield, mothball the pit and transfer the workforce to Vane Tempest colliery. The Seaham workforce voted overwhelmingly to fight the closure and a ballot of the seven Durham pits has been organised for an overtime ban as part of an area wide campaign.

It is this growing militancy which has given rise to the rumours of a 'gesture of goodwill' by the new in-coming head of British Coal, Robert Haskam — reinstatement of a substantial number of sacked men and the outstanding £5.50 pay rise.

New attack

BRITISH COAL management has launched a new offensive against the NUM in Leicestershire. Last year Leicestershire miners voted decisively to stay in the NUM. But now a new attack is being launched by management headed up by the UDM organisation.

Ellistown and Bagworth pits in Leicestershire have been linked into a single complex by British Coal. But Bagworth has 100 per cent of its 900 miners in the NUM whereas at Ellistown management claims 50 per cent of the 500 workers are in the UDM organisation. Management has been treating Ellistown and Bagworth union representation as separate so as to avoid there being an overwhelming NUM majority in the complex.

Last week British Coal management unilaterally handed over the NUM office in Ellistown to the UDM — declaring that its policy was to recognise only one organisation per pit and it was recognising the UDM at Ellistown. This was despite the fact that power group workers gave the NUM a clear majority even in Ellistown itself. This attack was met by a walk out by 250 workers at Ellistown on Friday.

A Socialist ACTION

NUM calls on the TUC for campaign on South Africa

'CONGRESS AFFIRMS its total opposition to the evil policies of apartheid and in particular condemns the repressive and totalitarian measures adopted within South Africa in a final attempt by the minority white rulers to stifle all forms of opposition and to prevent progress towards liberation and majority rule. Congress applauds the black working class movement of South Africa struggling to throw off the twin yokes of apartheid and capitalist exploitation and pledges its total support for the liberation movements of Southern Africa, particularly the ANC, SACTU, UDF, and SWAPO.

Congress is utterly appalled by the manner in which the Conservative Government and Prime Minister of Great Britain have opposed the world-wide call for the imposition of economic sanctions and thereby have isolated this country both from its Commonwealth partners and all those who hold dear the pursuit of freedom and democracy.

Congress therefore instructs the General Council to mount an immediate and effective campaign drawing upon all necessary resources which, in concert with the Labour Party, the Anti-Apartheid Movement and the international trade union movement, will help to achieve a complete embargo upon all trade, commercial, financial, cultural, sporting and diplomatic activities in order to facilitate a rapid, and hopefully peaceful, transition to a free and democratic South Africa based upon majority rule.'

ANC renews call for sanctions



Demonstrators demand release of Nelson Mandela

ON MONDAY the Reagan administration handed down another ultimatum against any real economic sanctions against South Africa. Rejecting the proposal of Zambian president Kenneth Kaunda for a summit between the African frontline states and Reagan, the US State department declared this would be pointless without a commitment of the frontline states to: 'restraint and a negotiated settlement.' In other words no dismantling of apartheid is acceptable unless US interests are preserved. And the United States for 40 years has refused to take one meaningful step against apartheid.

This US approach is in line with the position taken by Thatcher at the Commonwealth mini-summit during the summer at which she blocked all meaningful sanctions against South Africa. It was also in line with Reagan's speech at the beginning of August in which he declared: 'Sanctions destroy America's flexibility, discard diplomatic leverage and deepen the crisis.' This was responded to by Bishop Desmond Tutu with the words: 'I found the speech nauseating ... I think the West, for my part, can go the hell.' Reagan's hypocrisy is shown up by the fact that throughout the summer he has been tightening sanctions against Nicaragua.

The tactics of Britain and the United States throughout the summer have been to hope that repression in South Africa under the State of Emergency would smash black resistance and thereby reduce the international publicity South Africa was getting. This would reduce the pressure for sanctions. The British

and US governments, in short, were directly hoping that Botha's policy of repression would work. The international press aided them in that by scrupulously observing South African censorship laws. An attempt was made to present the picture that black resistance had ceased.

But leaks in the censorship laws, and the activity of some courageous international journalists, is now allowing the real situation to become clear. Despite the repression, resistance continues at a high level. Only five of the hundreds of 'urban councils' set up by the regime in the black townships are now functioning. Mass unrest has spread into three of the 'bantustans'.

Armed attacks, including by the ANC's military wing Umkhonto We Sizwe (Spear of the Nation) have continued. In Natal two armed attacks on the houses of black collaborators took place on Friday and Monday.

A major schools boycott has also been taking place in Soweto —

where the army has been occupying schools. Police opened fire on Monday killing one person and injuring others in a crowd of 500.

The clamp down on the trade unions has been temporarily more effective with the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) unable to repeat the successful calls for general strikes on 1 May and 16 June. But in the townships the campaign by the ANC continues. The ANC has repeated its calls for international sanctions against the apartheid regime.

Six unions have submitted resolutions to this year's TUC congress on South Africa. The NUM in particular, has put forward a resolution stating: 'Congress applauds the black working class movement of South Africa struggling to throw off the twin yokes of apartheid and capitalist exploitation and pledges its total support for the liberation movements of Southern Africa, particularly the ANC, SACTU, UDF, and SWAPO.' The NUM calls for total sanctions against South Africa.

The TUC must adopt as one of its top priorities the demand for sanctions against the Botha regime. It must force a future Labour government to cut off all economic, diplomatic, sporting and cultural ties with South Africa and pledge full support to the frontline states facing South Africa's reprisals.

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Winnie Mandela speaks out

BREAKING through the press blackout imposed on South Africa by the State of Emergency, Winnie Mandela has put out an international call for sanctions against the apartheid state. Speaking through an interview with Cubap radio she condemned the stand taken by London and Washington against sanctions.

'Had it not been for their stand,' she emphasised, 'apartheid would have long been dismantled. But as long as Pretoria has these allies, the most powerful countries in the Western world, the United States and Britain, it will continue perpetrating acts

of the most tragic violations of civil rights humankind has ever seen.'

'We see no other way towards a peaceful solution other than methods whereby this country could be strangled economically. That the country be isolated. That foreign companies leave us to fight our battles and not finance our bloodshed, and not finance the armaments that kill us every day. Each time we lower each coffin, each time we pick up a body of our people in the streets, we know the allies of that bloodbath are America and Great Britain.

'We know of no other way, no other viable avenue that is open for us other than sanctions against our country,

disinvestment. And not just token sanctions, mandatory sanctions in their entirety. That way the minority regime will be brought to its knees. Already, the downfall of the rand has been a very telling lesson to our oppressors. And for the first time, we saw white South Africa reacting to the country's repression only because its pocket was beginning to be hit hard.'

Sanctions, she went on 'are the only peaceful doors that are open to us. We are originally a very peaceful people. Up until the '60s, the African National Congress did not rise up against our oppressors. Up to that stage, the black man bore the country's racism, bore the worst insult to his dignity, a violation of the most

fundamental of basic human rights. It is now apparent that the government was and is in no way prepared to change whatsoever.

Struggle

'And we could no longer stand the humiliation of being oppressed by a minority. We took the only honourable stand that was open to us, that of accepting the inevitability of armed struggle. All we are saying is we can no longer turn the other cheek: you have been hitting us all these years. The government then found a way of not attacking us individually but literally occupying our townships and unleashing the worst violence any country has ever seen.