

Socialist
ACTION
 BUILDING AN ALLIANCE FOR SOCIALISM

Inside:

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**VOTE
 LABOUR**

**IN EVERY
 CONSTITUENCY**



Socialist ACTION

Right wing continue to sabotage Labour

THE MOST bitterly humorous intervention of the election campaign so far came last Monday with Eric Hammond's speech to the EETPU conference. According to Hammond he has blazoned the way for victory against the Tories.

Speaking to the conference Hammond declared: 'A growing constituency of opinion supports our policy of one member one vote in the Labour Party for the leadership and for the selection of members of parliament. Recall the fight against *Militant*. Initially our view was blasted. Now hardly a voice is raised in their support. Even the office of the leader of the Labour Party correctly warned the London party that their support for "peculiar causes" was offending Labour voters.'

Hammond's acolyte, EETPU president Paul Gallagher, went further. He claimed credit for the struggle against: 'the perception that far too many people had of the Labour Party, a party dominated by fanatics, committed to extreme policies, catering exclusively to the most bizarre minority causes, the advocacy of homosexuality, of inverted racism, of discriminatory feminism.'

Hammond went on to attack the call by Ron Todd, general secretary of the TGWU, and John Edmonds, general secretary of the GMB, for Labour's campaign to concentrate on traditional working class issues such as unemployment, the health service and schools. This call was made at the height of the witch hunt against Sharon Atkin.

'What were they trying to demonstrate? Their influence? Don't they know that Neil Kinnock's tough independence of mind is our biggest asset. Neil has almost single handedly brought our party back from the brink of oblivion... The last thing he wants or will need is pressure from trade union leaders with little experience of real elections.'

We must judge from this that Hammond concludes that concentration in Labour's election campaign on its proud record of expulsions, or its failure to support lesbian and gay rights, is the way to political success.

It is therefore worth making a balance sheet of the contribution of Labour's right wing in the last four years to Labour's possibility of victory in this election. The single most important contribution of the right wing, of course, has been to sabotage every mass struggle — the decisive events that could have turned the relation of forces against Thatcher and best deprived her of the possibility of victory at the election.

Hammond was the bitterest foe of the miners. He led the opposition to the councils holding out against rate capping. The EETPU organised with Murdoch against the print unions at Wapping. It was victory by Thatcher in these struggles that, more than anything else, strengthened her government against the labour movement.

Secondly Hammond led the opposition to every move that would have extended Labour's support. In particular the EETPU has opposed every move to strengthen Labour's women's organisation — and also led opposition to adoption of the policy of the national minimum wage.

Thirdly, as Hammond accurately claims, the EETPU has been in the forefront of promoting the witch hunt. And all the evidence is that every time the witch hunt has been put in the forefront Labour has slumped in support. Even Todd and Edmonds call for a 'bread and butter' campaign, which Hammond denounced as insufficiently right wing, is more electorally popular than Hammond's witch hunting — as has been seen so far in the campaign.

The balance sheet of Labour's right wing in the last four years is clear. They have set back every single struggle that could have weakened Thatcher — and which would thereby have aided Labour. They have cut off Labour from the key new areas of support, in particular women, where it could have expanded its appeal. They have thereby not only weakened the whole labour movement's position in the country but worsened Labour's chances of winning the election.

In the last four years the Labour right, with Hammond as their most extreme representative, has been the best ally of the Tories within Labour's ranks.

Will Labour's weakness on women cost it the election?

A 'traditional working class campaign'?

SO FAR the Labour campaign, given what could have happened, has been better than one could have expected and than very many party members feared. Naturally it has nothing to do with a socialist campaign, but at least the leadership has not been committing disastrous own goals. The result is that unless something catastrophic is done in the last week of the campaign, there is every chance that Labour's vote will be significantly above the level of 1983. That will be an important element in the relation of forces. Every worker in Britain will feel more confident if, on 12 June, Labour has significantly increased its position in the poll.

Events so far have also decisively answered the question of what framework of campaign Labour should have been running. The most fundamental of political lessons, that the party which sets the political agenda wins, is actually being to some degree applied.

Take what was happening prior to the election. Labour accepted an agenda dictated by its opponents. Walworth Road was thrashing around trying to prove that it could bash Black Sections. Before that it was doing its best to convey the message that it wasn't really a party that supported lesbian and gay rights. It was the same tactic as when Kinnock went out to show he could 'bash *Militant*' at the 1985 conference, and as at the consciously right wing 1986 conference.

What was the result? Labour entered the campaign in a disastrous position. At the end of April, as the NEC and Kinnock were in full cry witchhunting the Black Section and Sharon Atkin, Labour's support was down at 29 per cent. It was third in the polls in one survey.

Speech

It was the same following the 1985 conference, and Kinnock's 'bash *Militant*' speech. Labour's lead over the Tories fell from a five per cent lead to no lead at all following that performance.

The same occurred with the 1986 conference and its 'I will die for my country' speech — and the general 'bash the left' tone of the conference.

Labour went into the 1986 conference leading the Tories by four per cent. By a month following it Labour was three per cent behind the Conservatives — a worsening of Labour's position by seven per cent in two months.

The facts show that the witch hunting, bash the left, line is unpopular in terms of Labour's standing in the polls. There is simply no factual doubt about it.

The reason for this is not that *Militant*, for example, is popular. It is that the working class community regard such an issue as essentially irrelevant. The poll taken in Liverpool this election, showing that only two per cent of the population considered that *Militant* was the decisive issue in the election, compared to more than fifty per cent who said that unemploy-

ment was, illustrates this point perfectly. If Labour allows its opponents, or the Fleet Street press, to dictate the political agenda, the labour movement loses.

Point

The point was shown perfectly clearly as the election started. As soon as the election was announced, thank god, Labour dropped all the 'bash the left, expel the black section, denounce the gays' emphasis. It instead began to pump out an unremitting stream of material on the theme of 'save the health service, cut unemployment, save our schools'. The result is that Labour rapidly soared in the polls. By 13 May it was up to 33 per cent. By 27 May it hit 37 per cent.

Apart from inserting part of Kinnock's speech attacking *Militant* into the first TV broadcast, which bluntly didn't affect things one way or the other, Labour, for once, stuck to what Bryan Gould explained in *Labour Party News*: 'Our opponents will be lobbing hand grenades at us throughout the campaign, trying to distract us from the issue on which we can win. We are just going to have to discipline ourselves and keep plugging away at our central themes... developing our campaign in a properly thought out fashion rather than just responding to what the other parties are doing.'

Labour, in short, began to try to set the political agenda. That is why it began to recover rapidly in the polls — because it was dealing with issues which really affected working class lives.

Reason

The reason that Labour is not within striking distance of winning, however, shows up just what is the weakness of what is conception of 'working class issues' is.

The single biggest weakness of this entire campaign is Labour's failure to win over women. The national polls show Labour only 3 per cent behind the Tories among men. But it is 12 per cent behind among women.

The figures in London are even more shattering. The Harris poll taken in the middle of May showed Labour 4 per cent behind the Conservatives among men and 23 per cent among women. The beneficiaries were the Alliance — which stood at 15 per cent among



men and 22 per cent among women.

To give some idea of what that means if, on the national figures, Labour were running at the same level among women as it were among men it would be four per cent higher in the national polls — and breathing down the Tories neck.

Yet Labour has easily the best policies for women in this election. The introduction of a national minimum wage is the single promise in this election of any party that would benefit women most. The demand for a Ministry for Women is supported by 64 per cent of women. Yet the words 'national minimum wage' have scarcely been mentioned in the campaign. There was an initial press conference to launch the campaign for a Ministry for Women but since then little has been heard of — so little in fact that polls show that the majority of women thought that the proposal for such a ministry was a policy of the SDP.

By emphasising

'traditional working class issues' — jobs, housing, health, education — Labour has recovered from the absolute disaster it faced on the line of 'bash the blacks, abandon the gays and lesbians, we can bash *Militant*'. But it has only recovered to a level at which it is still not winning the election. The steps which are necessary to win, to overtake the Tories, will not fit into the framework pushed by the leadership.

Single

This framework started long before the election. The single biggest crime of the Labour leadership in the last four years was its failure to support workers who were engaged in struggle with the Thatcher government. Failure to support the miners, the rate-capped councils, to really back the NGA and SOGAT at Wapping, allowed Thatcher to deal the blows against the labour movement which allowed her to even have the possibility of winning the

election.

It is not possible to that round in an election campaign because the fundamental determinant of the relation of forces which determine the relation of forces are decided in an election campaign but outside it. The most crucial part of Labour's activity had to be — and must be — Thatcher wins — supporting every section of the working class that struggles.

What the election campaign has shown is clear. First Labour fight to set the agenda, not respond to the others. Second it must be its campaign by supporting every struggle which place outside and before the election. Third it can win today if it expands its 'traditional (male) working class issues' — above all among women.

These conclusions are not 'looney propaganda'. They are facts established throughout the election campaign.

Unilateralism put to the test

AFTER A WEEK of unremitting pressure over the 'defence issue', Labour called its first London press conference of the election campaign on Thursday 28 May. Polaris would be scrapped within a fortnight of Labour taking office Neil Kinnock said. Nuclear deterrence is 'unnecessary', he said. First because a Soviet occupation is not 'feasible' (which is nonsense); second because the Soviet Union has no intention of invading Western Europe (which is true). Despite the hue and cry that followed — and despite all predictions to the contrary — Labour has not fallen in the polls.

In the wake of Kinnock's 'Dad's Army' nonsense during a TV interview with David Frost the previous Sunday, the Tories and the Alliance, backed up by the press, have done their level best to keep the pot boiling on the Soviet threat. But, since that initial pillorying, the Labour leadership has held up better. It has done so by refusing to shift its ground and abandon unilateralism.

Despite headlines like the *Independent's* 'Kinnock spells out unilateralist approach' of Friday 29 May, Labour has maintained its change of emphasis on the defence issue — including for the first time, by denying that the Soviet Union will invade Europe and by putting nuclear disarmament clearly. Continuing to do so throughout the rest of the election campaign is the best way of avoiding further pitfalls on 'the defence issue'.

Should Labour revert to pushing its conventional arms policy, the opposition will inevitably be able to exploit all the contradictions of Labour's position.

Even this limited change of direction has already begun to demonstrate that a commitment to getting rid of nuclear weapons from Bri-

tain is not the election loser that opponents of this policy believe it to be. If the real issue, that the 'Soviet threat' is totally bogus had been pursued over the last few years by the Labour leadership, the party would have been in much better shape going into the election.

Since Kinnock's 'Polaris will go' announcement, the media have desperately sought splits in the party leadership. Even though everyone knows the right completely rejects unilateralism, the pressure of the party ranks, demanding unity and success in the election, has kept them in line.

'Tories home in on nuclear split' trumpeted *Today* on Monday 1 June. It turned out that Peter Shore 'was quoted as saying' he would be concerned about the decision of a Labour government to scrap Polaris.

Alongside that non-story appeared another: 'Union's bomb plea.' But it was hardly news that electricians' leader Eric Hammond is opposed to unilateral nuclear disarmament.

Hype aside, *Today's* leader writer was angrily forced to conclude: 'Mr Kinnock has weathered the defence storm well. His gaffes and false



arguments over nuclear issues have not done him as much damage as his supporters feared. But he is still not a man who deserves to be prime minister.'

Alongside all the garish headlines and 'searching for the right wing split', the faithful bourgeois press have struggled to find statistical proof for their assertions that Labour will plummet if it emphasises getting rid of the bomb. They have failed.

'More voters worried by gap in Labour's defences' claimed the *Sunday Times* last weekend. 'Labour's greatest liability in the election campaign is now its defence policy, according to this week's poll conducted for the

Observer by the Harris Research Centre,' the article began.

'After last week's row on nuclear disarmament, defence has jumped 10 points, from third to first place, as the reason most commonly cited by Tory and Alliance voters for not voting Labour,' it continued (our emphasis).

But arguments like the *Sunday Times* one have already been refuted by their own opinion polls.

Peter Kellner, no unilateralist, summed this up, writing in the *Independent* on Monday 1 June.

'This weekend's polls present a conundrum,' he began. 'They register that defence has become a major election issue in voters' minds, that most dislike

Labour's policy — but that Labour's overall support had not been dented by late last week.'

Among the four reasons Kellner gave was that 'those who say their loyalties are swayed by defence tend to be non-Labour voters already'.

By the morning of Tuesday 2 June, *TV-AM's* rolling poll, registering opinion from Saturday 30 May to Monday 1 June, showed Labour down by only one percentage point — well within the four point margin of error for this poll.

Meanwhile, CND last week published the results of a survey conducted for them by Gallup between 8-13 May on support for policy. Overall, only 45 per cent of respondents approved of Tory policy, while 41 per cent disapproved and 14 per cent didn't know.

While there is wariness about Labour's position there is *not* support for the Tories defence policy.

Events of the past week all go to show what nuclear disarmers in the party have been arguing since 1983. Promising to get rid of nuclear weapons from Britain is not an albatross for Labour.

But, like all other policies which are so viciously opposed by the ruling class, the popular majority which potentially exists for nuclear disarmament among the electorate of this country has to be fought for and won. That can only be done by a consistent policy that starts from pointing out the truth.

If Labour does not win the election the right wing will undoubtedly launch a massive campaign demanding unilateralism is dropped. The evidence of the campaign is clear. Not only is unilateral nuclear disarmament necessary if campaigned for, *does not* lead to Labour's support falling.



Alliance shows its true colours

ONE OF the delightful things about an election campaign, like any major political event, is that it forces political positions clearly out into the open. Where people and parties stand in the political process is cruelly exposed. For no person, and no party, has this been more true at this election than the role of Owen and the SDP.

What journals such as *Marxism Today* have been trying to cover up, that the role of the SDP is to support Thatcher and Thatcherism, has come out more clearly in this election than ever before. So much so that even some of the Fleet Street press are forced to express it.

The *Sunday Express* put it rather well on 31 May: 'All those who heard Dr Owen's passionate speech on defence last week will understand his deep contempt and loathing for the party (Labour) to which he used to belong.'

'They will understand, too, why his greatest fear has been that he might split the Tory vote, and allow Labour to sneak into power through the crack.'

'Today he can begin to breathe a sigh of relief. For he sees the Tories holding rock steady and only the Labour vote wavering towards the Alliance.'

'So ... this morning, at least Dr Owen has one blessing to count. Although he himself will have no say in the running of Britain 12 days hence, it looks as if he has helped to ensure that that dim, dangerous, posturing shadow-puppet, Mr Neil Gordon Kinnock, will have no say in it either.'

Simon Jenkins, writing

in the *Sunday Times* the same day, put it even more accurately: 'His (Owen's) historical achievement is to have let Mrs Thatcher dominate Britain with the smallest poll percentage of any modern Tory leader.'

This message is even getting through to SDP members. The SDP agent for the marginal seat of Nottingham North quit on Saturday declaring he was 'absolutely disgusted' with their campaign, and that it had demonstrated they were clearly 'second class Tories.'

The newspapers have been increasingly full of reported complaints even from Liberals that Owen's open pro-Thatcher stance is costing them votes.

Before weeping tears for the Liberals however it is worth noting the nifty footwork Steel has been doing to avoid publicity being generated by some of the activities of the local Liberal parties. Most notorious has been his attempts to keep the glare of publicity away from the role of the Liberal controlled Tower Hamlets council.

On Monday 150 Bangla Deshi families demonstrated outside the National Liberal Club in London against the racist policies of the council. Tower Hamlets has declared members of the Bangla Deshi community 'intentionally homeless' in order to avoid providing services for them and fulfilling the statutory duty to provide them with accommodation. The council argues that they have alternative homes — in Bangla Desh!

Following the Alliance's daily press conference Steel was bundled rapidly into his car to avoid being photographed near the demonstration. He would not speak to the demonstrators or hear their case.

The election and after

EVERY CANDIDATE will putting the Labour Manifesto before the electorate, making it absolutely clear that the commitments in it will be the policy of an incoming Labour government. That is our job and given the enormous urgency of defeating Mrs Thatcher and substituting a Labour government, that is the information the electorate must have. But in facing the challenge of tactical voting, which is a strategy of destroying the labour movement and socialism, Labour candidates will inevitably be stressing the long-term commitment of the Labour Party to a better life for our people.

From the point of view of the electors, the election must be about their own lives and prospects. Practical matters like an end to the dole queues and the restoration of full employment; an end to the housing crisis and a major building programme; an end to the cuts in the health service, its expansion, and the restoration of its basis free of charge; the need for lifelong education on a comprehensive basis; the importance of giving retired people dignity and a full life based on a living pension; the ending of low pay and of discrimination against women and black people; and of course, the ending of the arms race which is bankrupting us here and leading to millions of deaths around the world.

Labour candidates will be listened to if they address their arguments for

change around the linkage between those demands and the changes that

By Tony Benn MP

would have to be made to realise them.

Labour was set up by the trade unions and others to fight for jobs, homes and schools, for good health, pensions and peace. And when we speak of representation it cannot be limited to parliament. The NUM was representing the miners during their struggle, and so were SOGAT and the NGA.

The labour movement has come to learn that this task of campaigning is not solely confined to electoral campaigns but must develop around struggles of people to meet their basic needs. That has certainly been true over the last five years, when the left began to get stronger in the party, and it has

helped to build a network of support and political education around the country.

Therefore when the election is over, whichever ministers are in power, we know that that struggle will need to be sustained and developed. Not least because if Labour is in power, the IMF and the EEC, NATO and the City, MI5 and MI6 will be trying to destroy it. A necessary part of our campaigns then would be to sustain a Labour government so that its policy could be implemented and also to campaign to prevent others that might blow it off course.

However you look at it, this election must be seen as a part of a long process and not a question of 'democracy for a day' after which we revert to a mere fan club of parliamentarians waiting for the signal to do it all over again. It is this depth of commitment — the historical perspective and the idea of a manifesto of demands — that will prove to be the answer to the shallow psephological calculations associated with tactical voting.

I am sure every Labour candidate will be wanting to put socialism back onto the agenda through seeing the process as a continuum



from the early days of the movement to the moment when we shall secure a majority for the transformation of our society. One factor above all is helping us in this, and it is the new hope for an end to the cold war which has emerged as a result of the Gorbachev initiatives in disarmament and the evident changes taking place inside the Soviet Union in the direction of democracy.

British socialists have long seen the need for democracy in the USSR and the socialist countries but we may have been slower to see that it was that same refreshment of democracy that we require in Britain to deal with the crisis symbolised by the Social Democrats who now present themselves as a challenge.

Militant not an issue on Merseyside

THERE are lies, damned lies and opinion polls — but not always, especially in key marginals like Liverpool's Broadgreen.

Broadgreen. The other two parties are so far behind that no tactical voting campaign on earth could save them from defeat.

A similar picture is seen across the Mersey in Wallasey. The local election showed Labour neck and neck with the Tories in this 'safe' Conservative seat. A full canvass of the whole constituency shows Labour pulling ahead and all set for a victory.

Hundreds of local Labour Party and trade union workers are helping the Labour candidate, sacked Cammell Laird worker Lol Duffy, defeat the Tories Lynda Chalker, a Thatcherite health and transport minister who has overseen the closure of four Wallasey hospitals and the privatisation and deterioration of local public transport.

Granada TV commissioned a special poll among over 800 voters in that constituency last week.

According to the national media, *Militant* is the issue — because Labour MP there, Terry Fields, is a supporter. But the poll showed only two per cent of voters thought *Militant* of any importance.

The overwhelming majority believed jobs and low pay were the main issues. And there was no confidence in the ability of the Tories or Alliance to deal with them.

The poll also showed Labour with 48 per cent of the vote in

Why black people should vote Labour

FOR THE LAST eight years we have had a savage Tory government determined to drive back the gains that the working class have made — and black people have suffered most under the Tories. Those attacks must be reversed. We need a Labour government committed to revamping the economy and creating jobs, committed to funding the health service, education and local government, so that working class people benefit. About 90 per cent of black people in this country support Labour. They should be voting for a Labour government on 11 June.

It is no coincidence that there has been a big increase in racial harassment and race attacks as unemployment grows and welfare services deteriorate.

The black communities are at the bottom of every pile: jobs, housing, health, education.

Take education. Our schools system has come under a massive attack by the Tories. There is a shortage of teachers, a lack of text books and other equipment and recently we have seen an onslaught by Kenneth Baker on anti-racist education.

Look at the response to Brent which has started the process of developing a curriculum which centrally includes anti-racist education. Under a Labour government Brent and areas like it will be able to pursue that sort of education policy that benefits the black communities and other oppressed parts of this society.

Labour is also the only party where black people can lead a fight against racist immigration laws and for the democratic control of the police by local authorities. No government but a Labour one will even begin to change things in the interests of black people.

Black people will get nothing from the Tory Party. And the Alliance is the Tories in disguise. We've seen that in Tower Hamlets where they are evicting Bangladeshi families — we've seen their racist colours in Tower Hamlets.

A vote for Labour is vital on 11 June, but it isn't enough. The Labour Party Black Section argues that black people should also join the party and join Black Sections so we can work to ensure that Labour is committed to anti-racist socialist policies. Those policies will only be consistently addressed by the party if we work and organise to bring them about.

By Kingsley Abrams, Secretary, Black Section

It is important that the black community builds alliances with other sections of the working class. Only by being active in the Labour Party and in the labour movement can we build the alliances that will allow us to lead the struggle for the elimination of racism in society.

The Labour Party Black Section has already played a fundamental part in that. We have not only increased the profile of black people and raised the necessity for our self-organisation in the Labour Party, but the Black Section has also played a vital part in beginning to forge such an alliance, by its role in Labour Left Liaison, the umbrella organisation which brings together the different campaigns within the party.

Tackling racism and sexism is fundamental to LLL, as well as supporting

anti-imperialist campaigns and struggles, and fighting for democracy and accountability within the party and against all witch hunts. Alliances like that are a vital part of our strategy.

The Black Section aims not only to deepen our roots in the community, but to make sure that the self-organisation of black people becomes an important part of the Labour Party. Eventually Black Sections will win constitutional recognition in the party.

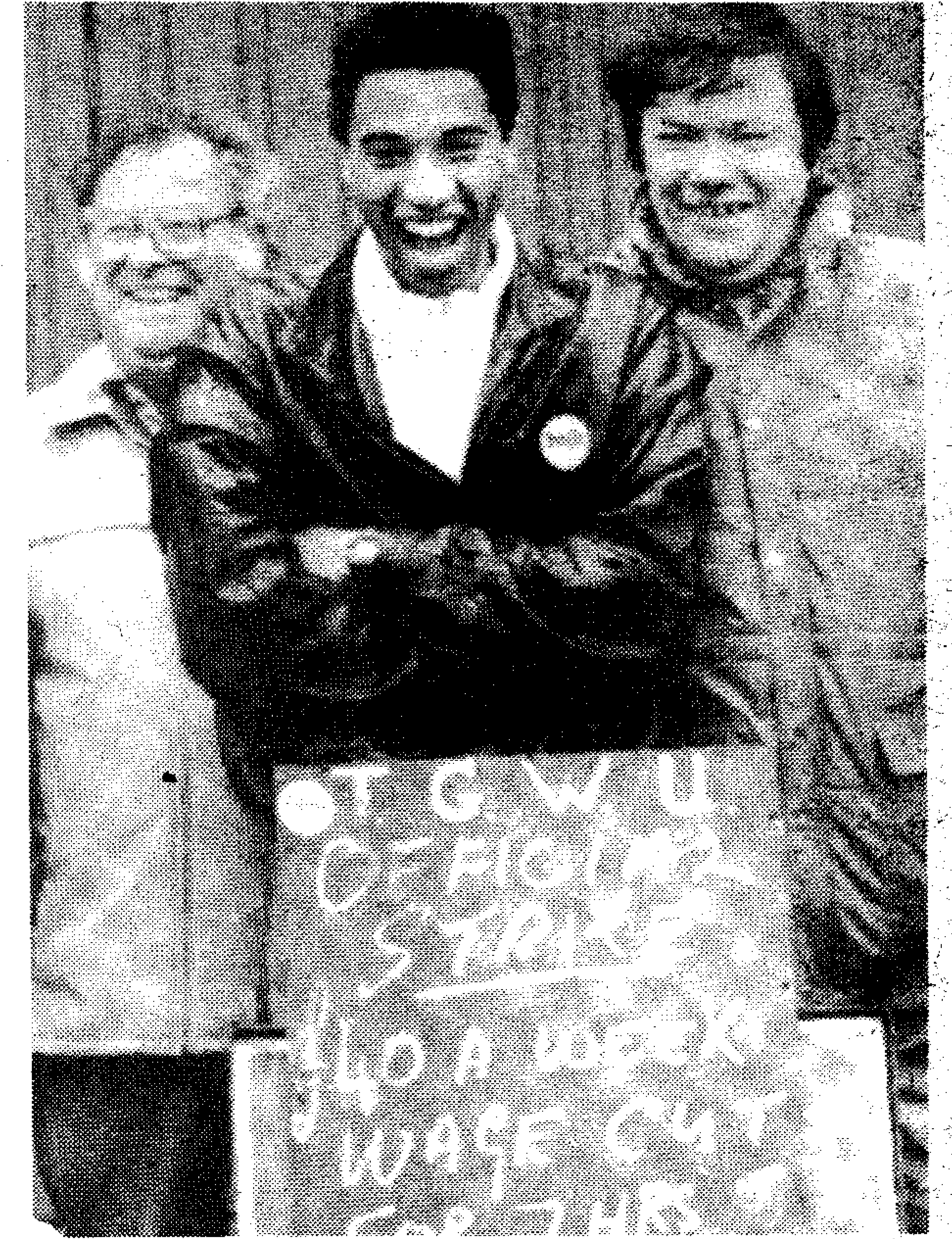
The concept of black self-organisation has a long tradition. The Black Section has developed within the Labour Party what was already happening outside.

Since then we've seen an increase in the representation of black people. There are now over 200 black Labour councillors, the majority of whom support Black Sections. There are three black leaders of councils. And there is a high probability that after 11 June there will be at least five black MPs.

All those developments come about as a result of campaigning for black representation. At the same time we have seen increasing involvement by Black Sections in the campaigns of the black community — from Broadwater Farm to the Kenure Plastics strike.

The alliances that the Black Section wants to build benefit the Labour Party and the labour movement as a whole. They are in the interest of working class communities as a whole.

Black people have an important part to play. They should start by casting their vote for a Labour government on 11 June. But they should also join the Labour Party and the Black Section to carry out the fight for anti-racist socialist policies that will fundamentally change this society.



Labour swing in Manchester marginal

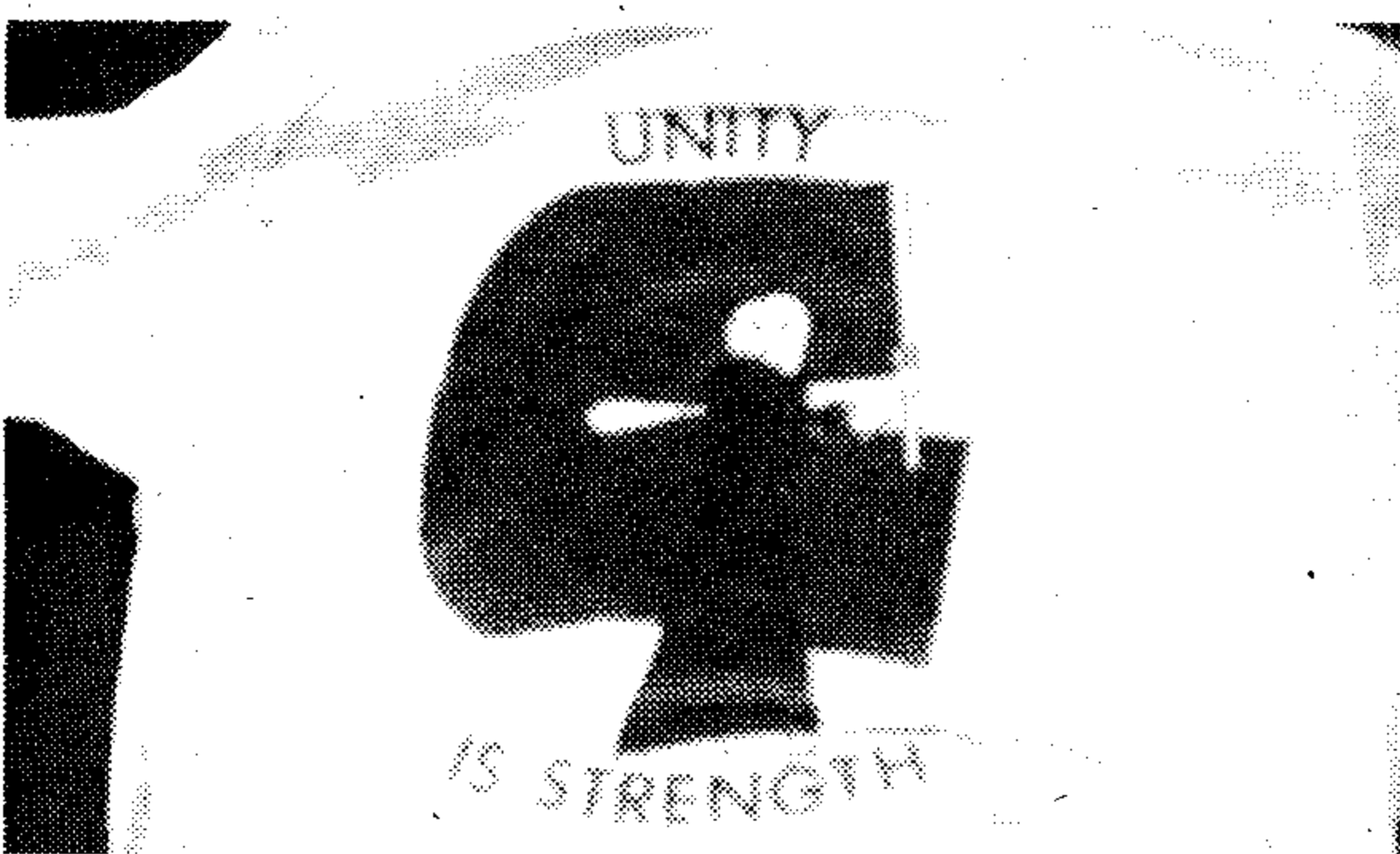
WITHINGTON, a key marginal and the only Tory held seat in the Manchester city area, seems likely to be won by Labour according to a recent poll by Mori for Granada Reports.

According to Keith Bradley's election agent: 'Labour Party canvass returns back up the Mori poll published by Granada Reports which shows that the voters are turning to us as the only viable way to get rid of the Tory MP, who is little known in the area yet votes for policies which harm our health, education and local services.'

This swing to Keith Bradley, a prominent member of Manchester City council, is interesting in the light of the progressive policies associated with the council which have been lambasted locally and nationally by the press, and the highly unpopular 20 per cent rates increase.

The poll gave Labour 46 per cent, Conservative 31, Alliance 22, and others 1 per cent. The results indicate a 15 point lead — and a swing of 10 per cent to Labour's candidate, Keith Bradley.

The figures represent a huge switch since the 7 May local elections and a boost for the Labour campaign in Withington.



Support our fund drive!

SOCIALIST ACTION urgently needs the financial support of its readers. We have resumed weekly publication in the election period but this requires a big increase in income — much bigger than can be covered by extra sales. That is why we are asking every single reader to make a contribution, no matter how small, whatever you can afford, to our election fund drive.

Readers in Newport have the right idea. They have produced the fund raising T-shirt we show on this page. All profits from

this will go to Socialist Action's fighting fund.

Not every reader is in a position to organise a major fund raising initiative like this. But we ask every reader to make a donation — no matter how large or small, it will help get out our newspaper.

Please send contributions to Socialist Action Fund Drive, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

● Unity is Strength T-shirts, available at £4.50 each or £3.75 for bulk orders of ten or more, from Geoff Holmes, 4 St Woolos Road, Newport, Gwent. Make cheques payable to Socialist Action.

Hattersley's credibility gap in Birmingham

MR ROY HATTERSLEY is not having a good election campaign. Despite his prominent role as deputy leader of the Labour Party in the usual round of rallies and TV and radio programmes, the local and national press have carried regular reports of unrest in his Sparkbrook constituency, among what he once contemptuously called 'my Asians'.

Two weeks ago the disputes appeared to come to a head. Mr Mohammed Yousaf, chair of the Sparkhill ward, resigned from the party after ten years. He alleged neglect of the constituency's housing, social and educational problems, adding that when Hattersley did attend constituency meetings it was to 'whip the Asians into line'.

He went on to urge Asians in Sparkbrook to vote for the Tory candidate. Other party members followed in Yousaf's wake in a damaging display of discontent.

Outside Sparkbrook many assumed that they were watching the depar-

ture of yet another disaffected Hattersley man. But things are rarely what they seem in Sparkbrook.

In fact, Yousaf was identified with the broad Hattersley opposition; his position as chair of Sparkhill ward had been won with the left's support. So what drove Mohammed Yousaf and the others out of the Labour Party and into the Tory camp?

By Mick Archer

In the first place Sparkbrook's right wing: the Sparkhill ward is the sole remaining base of opposition in the Sparkbrook constituency. As such, it has been on the

receiving end of several attempts to 'whip it into line' — expulsions, intimidation and disruption of its meetings have all played a part in this.

Mohammed Yousaf, as the chair of the ward, has been a target of regular abuse at ward meetings and was recently accused of assault by one right winger after Yousaf stepped in to prevent a fight. He was also facing possible disciplinary charges for allegedly describing constituency officers as racists.

It was a by-now familiar pattern of intimidation aimed at driving him out of the party without burdening the National Constitutional Committee with yet another case. Not surprisingly Sparkbrook's right wing were 'ecstatic' when Yousaf decided to go.

But Yousaf's decision wasn't simply due to pressure from the party's

right wing. The deepening discontent among many Sparkbrook constituents — black and white — is very real.

Sparkbrook boasts some of the worst housing and unemployment in the West Midlands. There is a growing credibility gap between Hattersley's campaign against Black Section and against the left, carried out on behalf of 'ordinary folk', and his lack of campaigning around any of the issues that actually affect them.

In this year's local elections Labour's share of the vote fell from 68 to 55 per cent across the three wards in the Sparkbrook constituency, while the Tories' share increased from 18 to 30 per cent. This brought the Tories within 356 votes of taking one of the seats.

Now several Muslim religious leaders, or Imams, have expressed public support for Mr Nazir Khan, the Tory parliamen-

ary candidate. What impact this will have on Labour's vote remains to be seen.

But for Sparkbrook's right wing there are bigger fish to fry. Not content with driving members out of the party they are now talking of 'restructuring' the Sparkhill ward: and, of course, Sparkhill might not be the only ward to suffer this fate.

As Kevin Scally, now Sparkhill ward treasurer after his successful campaign for reinstatement, explains: 'Clearly, if we lose the general election the left will be blamed. There will be a crack down on left wing wards and individuals.'

'The closure of a left wing ward in Hattersley's constituency would be a signal to other right wing dominated constituencies to do the same. That's why the whole of the Labour Party should be following these events.'

Letter

WHY on earth did you choose to publish that terrible photograph of a CPSA/SCPS picket to illustrate your article 'Civil servants step up action' in the 8 May edition of Socialist Action?

The photograph I am referring to shows male members of the union standing in the foreground, holding their placards, smiling at the camera — the women members firmly in their place in the background (without placards) huddled together. One can only picture the scene — 'Right lads, grab a placard, let's get our photo taken — out of the way, please, ladies'.

I realise that this photograph may

represent the reality of civil service which have a predominantly female membership (over 70 per cent of CPSA members are women) but whose full time officers and national officials are mostly male. But there is another reality, which is that there are a lot of women playing an active role at a grass roots level of the union.

There are women organising pickets and standing on picket lines during the current dispute. Couldn't you have published a photograph of them? And if one wasn't available couldn't you at least have censored this one? I really did find it offensive.

Paula Wilkes, CPSA, Equal Opportunities Commission Branch.

Sinn Fein's election campaign



ON 11 JUNE the test of British policy in northern Ireland will be the vote of Sinn Fein — the only party campaigning for British withdrawal and a united Ireland. Britain's entire policy over the last two years has been directed to the goal of eliminating mass support for Sinn Fein. In the general election they had hoped to see this reflected in a collapse of Sinn Fein's vote and, above all, in the defeat of Gerry Adams by the Social Democratic Labour Party (SDLP) in West Belfast.

Sinn Fein's campaign was launched around a manifesto entitled 'For Freedom, Justice and Peace'. This argues that the only democratic solution to the war in Ireland is British withdrawal and Irish self-determination. Within this framework, Sinn Fein supports every possible step to improve the living standards and end the discrimination suffered by the nationalist population in the six counties.

Sinn Fein takes up specifically women's rights and also demands an end to discrimination against the Irish language and culture, that the six counties be recognised as a bilingual area.

The Irish Times on

Monday 1 June reported on the start of Gerry Adams campaign in the Ballymurphy area of West Belfast as follows: 'In this small republican enclave, which boasts wall to wall IRA graffiti, new murals urging *Vote Adams and Adams X* cover the gable walls. The street pavements echo the same message and every second house has its own brand new Adams poster in the window. He didn't have to canvas — just showing his face was enough to confirm the vote.'

Study

Of course not every area is as solidly republican as Ballymurphy, but nonetheless, Sinn Fein reports that its initial canvas returns

show it is holding and even slightly increasing its vote. It is gaining support amongst young voters on the register for the first time.

Action

The SDLP's appeal in the election was to have been based on the benefits the Anglo-Irish Agreement was to produce for the nationalist community. But these have not materialised. The SDLP's promise of steps towards disbanding of the notoriously sectarian UDR and reform of the RUC have been exposed as completely false.

The RUC and UDR treatment of the nationalist community has got worse not better since the agreement was signed — something exposed by the ruthless harassment and intimidation at recent republican funerals.

So, the SDLP have shifted their tack somewhat to attack Adams for refusing to take up his seat at Westminster. They argue he has failed to represent his

constituency and win material concessions. Sinn Fein's response that what concessions the nationalist community has extracted from Britain have been a result of mass campaigns and the republican struggle, not the SDLP's lobbying.

Opinion

Sinn Fein do take up seats in the Dublin parliament, Leinster House, but they do refuse to attend the Westminster parliament which has no legitimacy in the nationalist community and in which, in any case, representatives of the nationalist community can never constitute more than a minute and insignificant minority.

So it appears that the main chance the SDLP have of defeating Adams is to persuade sufficient Unionists to vote 'tactically' for them to keep out Sinn Fein. This is precisely what Joe Hendron, the SDLP's candidate means when he says Unionists 'may well feel that a vote for Frank Millar is wasted'. Frank Millar is the general secretary of the Official Unionists and their West Belfast candidate.

Nonetheless the SDLP receive major support from the Westminster and Dublin governments.

Left

Alongside the efforts to politically undermine Sinn Fein and build up the SDLP there are more sinister developments.

Election workers in West Belfast estimate they have 6-8 cases of election workers being harassed in various ways by the security forces — abuse, searches, arrests and so on — every 24 hours. This has included: Martin McGuinness, Sinn Fein candidate in the Foyle constituency, being held by the RUC in Newry; Gerry

O'Hara, chair of Derry Sinn Fein, being held by the RUC for the best part of a week; Eamon McKenna, having his nose broken by British soldiers whilst putting up posters for Sinn Fein in North Belfast and so on.

More worrying, is the way that Sinn Fein workers are being made the targets of sectarian assassination attempts. Normally, loyalist assassins gun down arbitrarily selected Catholics. But in these cases they are specifically targeting Sinn Fein workers.

Enemy

Alex Maskey, Adams' election agent was shot at his home and is still seriously ill in hospital. Alex Quinn, a Sinn Fein worker in North Belfast, was shot by men in RUC uniform, when he refused to open his front door to them. Another Belfast Sinn Fein worker, Brendan Davies was shot in a shoemakers' shop.

There is strong evidence for collusion by the security forces in these assassination attempts. They were all carried out by professional hit squads who had detailed knowledge of the movements and habits of their intended victims. That type of information cannot be gathered by loyalist assassins in strong republican areas. The only people in a position to gather that type of information would be the security forces.

If Sinn Fein succeed in holding their vote with the entire apparatus of repression, the Dublin government, the British government political party in the six counties against them it will be a colossal victory and a major defeat for the entire strategy of British imperialism in Ireland.



Women students in conference

THE WOMEN'S campaign conference of the National Union of Students met last weekend in Newcastle. The women's campaign of NUS has greatly increased its power for the

By Polly Vittorini, Delegate, SOAS

first time this year through the creation of the post of women's officer as a full member of the NUS executive elected by women. This parallels the demands of WAC in the Labour Party and is in itself a victory for women in NUS.

Of only two candidates for the post, both were Labour Party members and supporters of WAC. However, Julia Grant, who was elected, was the only one of the two who supported the creation of the post of women's officer at last NUS conference. Most of conference was taken up with this election, and anti-imperialist politics were entirely absent from the agenda, which dealt with sexual harassment, access to education and a 'Charter for Women'.

Arguments for the charter, which was proposed by 'Socialist Students in NOLS' called for the women's campaign to 'go back to basics' — tampon machines in toilets, better lighting, childcare and access courses — on the basis that this would involve as many women as possible. Perhaps next year we shall hear demands for a campaign for women's toilets on all campuses as the way to involve all women!

Conference mandated its elected representatives to prepare such a charter, while campaigning against strip-searches was not discussed because of lack of time! Meanwhile, motions for campaigning against racist and sexist immigration laws, and for supporting women fighting apartheid in South Africa were not prioritised. The situation of Palestinian women was mentioned only once throughout conference, in a hushing speech by a Campaign Student supporter, and it is indicative of the true situation that both candidates for women's officer support the continued existence of the Zionist state of Israel.

Another resolution calling for a Labour victory in the general election in the interests of women was also not taken for lack of time, even though it had the written support of half the delegates. Clearly women's conference is not prioritised by NUS and it needs more time and resources.

Conference also voted to introduce a system of electing the women's committee by reserving places for black, Jewish, lesbian, Irish, disabled women and women with children who would be elected by closed caucuses. This means that the number of candidates for women's committee will be greatly reduced and roughly two-thirds of conference will not have a vote on eight places out of nine. This will limit not extend democracy and political clarity of conference.

At present the National Organisation of Labour Students do not stand a slate for elections, and no candidates apart from those of Campaign Student stand on a platform of support for Labour.

Support the strip-search demo!

'I HAD to stand naked while they checked my clothes. Prison officers rub my hair and ears and like an animal I have to lift my feet so they can inspect them too'.

That's how Ella O'Dwyer, now in Durham prison, described her experience of strip-searching while on remand in Brixton, where she was on average stripped 50 times a month.

In the four years between their introduction in November 1982 and November 1986, 2000 strip searches were made of women in Armagh and later in Maghaberry prison. There were never more than 30 women held at any one time.

They are justified on grounds of 'security'. In all that time only one five pound note and one phial of perfume were ever found on prisoners.

Now systematic strip-searching has been stepped up in British prisons. Irish women in British jails, are immediate targets, but others have been subjected to forced strip-searching: black women, women arrested at Greenham and Faslane after disarmament demonstrations and

miners' wives. Anne Matthews, leader of Southwark Council, recently visited Ella O'Dwyer and described the security methods: 'Durham H wing was originally used in 1961 as a special security and punishment block for male escapees. In 1965 the wing was converted for the arrival of the train robbers and the Kray brothers.

'The conversion includes dog runs, electric surveillance and other forms of maximum security. I had gone through four sets of electronically controlled doors, innumerable other locked doors and gates, guarded all the time, been photographed, been checked over with a metal detector, then stared at by two warders during every minute of my visit with Ella.' Yet she knew that Ella would be stripped when she left.

Strip-searching is designed to produce the maximum stress, anxiety and fear through what all women who have suffered it have called 'humiliation' and 'sexual violence'. It has resulted in severe weight loss among women prisoners, migraine, menstrual problems and other stress-related il-

nesses. Many groups and organisations in Britain and Ireland have stated their opposition to strip searching. People such as Peter Barry, Irish Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cardinal O'Fiach have called it degrading and inhuman.

In Britain many trade unions have policy against it, as does the National Organisation of Labour Women and the National Union of Students. So has

the Labour Party, although again it undermines its whole argument by the kind of statement in its election manifesto. 'We will replace present strip-searching practice with more effective and acceptable security measures'.

Although many of the arguments against strip-searching have been won, the practice goes on — and with increasing frequency. It is vital that this inhumane treatment of women is stopped.

Stop strip searches in Maghaberry and Durham



End imperialist violence against women

National demonstration
DURHAM
Saturday 13th June
2pm

CRECHE AVAILABLE

SPEAKERS

Ex-Armagh Prisoner
Prisoner's Relative
GAMLR (Children Women's Group)
Iranian Women's Association
Women's Support Group (formerly
Birmingham Women's Group)

INVITED SPEAKERS

Tania
Broadwater Farm Defence Campaign
SWAPO
ANC

Assembly at University Students Union, New Elvet, Durham

THE most important issue at this election is the Thatcher government's assault on the strength of the labour movement — against the trade unions, the support of the Labour Party, and against Labour's use of local government to oppose government policies.

Previous issues of Socialist Action have looked at the scope of Thatcher's attack on local government and the Labour Party. But for eight years the centre of the political stage has been occupied by Thatcher's assault on the trade union movement. The defeat of ASLEF, the defeat in British Leyland, of the NGA at Warrington, of the NGA and SOGAT at Wapping, and of the miners have marked that offensive.

But beneath the surface other shifts, with profound long term consequences, are taking place. These will continue to operate whatever government is elected. JOHN ROSS looks at the trends in the trade unions linked to the growth of the 'dual economy'.

Thatcherism, the unions and the dual economy

openings. Most are linked to the development of what has become known as the dual economy. The changes involved are extremely radical and demand a clear, and new, strategy from the labour movement.

TO understand the tasks facing the trade unions today the first fact which must be grasped is that, despite the defeats, the fall in union membership is still, as yet, limited in Britain compared to historically comparable periods of recession. While the scale and length of unemployment now exceeds anything seen in British history, the decline in union membership is still not as severe as in the recession of the 1920s and 1930s.

Between 1920 and 1928, the first eight years of the inter-war recession, the trade unions lost 42 per cent of their membership. By 1933, the trough of the inter-war period, they had lost 47 per cent. The 27 per cent decline in trade union membership since 1979 is therefore, as yet, significantly less than in previous periods of recession. The absolute level of trade union membership is twice that of the inter-war period — and, apart from the 1970s, still the highest level in British history.

But the most important new, and long term, developments flow from the restructuring of the capitalist economy. This is the tendency developing in all imperialist economies today, to restructure the workforce around a core of permanently employed workers, in many cases well paid, and a periphery of part time and temporary workers with few rights — with the gap between the two sharply increasing. This development, the 'dual economy', is the characteristic feature of the recession.

The trends towards a dual economy in Britain are clear. Since the depth of the recession, in 1981, the number of full time workers has decreased from 16.6 to 15.6 million. Simultaneously the number of part time and temporary workers has increased from 7.0 to 8.1 million.

The sex balance in these workforces is totally different. Of full time workers 69 per cent are men and 31 per cent women. Among part time and temporary workers the proportions are nearly reversed — 38 per cent are men and 62 per cent women. The economy, in short, is being reconstructed around a core of full time male workers and a periphery of short term and temporary, mainly female, workers — with the periphery increasing in size compared to the core. Outside even the periphery are 12 per cent of the workforce who are unemployed — on the understated official figures.

Within that workforce itself major shifts are taking place — with industries such as steel and mining in decline and the private service sector and certain high tech sections of manufacturing expanding. The number of white collar workers is constantly rising compared to the number of manual workers.

The differentials affecting these two parts of the economy are rapidly widening. Those on the boundary of the bot-

tom 10 per cent of earnings have seen an increase of income of 6 per cent since 1979. Those on the bottom quarter an increase of 9 per cent, those on average earnings an increase of 13 per cent, those on the top quarter an increase of 20 per cent, and those on the top 10 per cent an increase of 25 per cent. Two million workers have been forced into poverty through unemployment.

In addition to the differentials produced by the direct increases in wages, Thatcher has sought to consolidate these economic divisions through other means — in particular subsidised sales of council houses and shares. The aim of this has been not only economic but political — to reinforce the position of a relatively prosperous section of the working class that will vote either Tory or Alliance.

This strategy has been relatively politically successful — aided by the dreadful record of the last two Labour governments. In 1979 and 1983 three million workers, the great bulk of them skilled or living in the more prosperous south of the country, stopped voting Labour and started voting Tory and Alliance.

This developing structure of the workforce, and the divisions inside the working class that are being consolidated by other means, evidently pose tremendous strategic problems for the trade unions. First how to organise and maintain traditional trade unionism among the 'core' — in particular among the new industries and those sections of the working class where Thatcher has concentrated on creating relatively prosperous conditions. Second how to organise among the 'periphery' — the new layers of temporary and part time workers. Finally, how to recreate the relative unity of the working class that has been broken by the dual economy and the political offensive of Thatcherism.

THE development of the dual economy has undoubtedly helped reinforce the development of 'new realism' in the unions. The skilled unions — the EETPU, AEU, NCU — with their main base among the 'core' workers, are the centre of the new realist trend.

The social base of 'new realism' was actually accurately described by John Edmonds, general secretary of the GMB, in contrasting it to developments among the working class as a whole: 'industrial, demographic and technological trends point to a shrinking of ... well-organised sectors and the growth of a new class of exploited workers ... New jobs are being created only in private services, and these jobs are primarily for part-time women workers ...

'I cannot ... see much appeal to these workers in the "market" or "business" unionism promoted by some commentators and unions. This model seems geared only to a small part of the workforce (generally on a secure inside track).'

Bill Morris, deputy general secretary of the TGWU, at the conference to

launch the union's 'link up' campaign, aimed at organising part time and temporary workers, also correctly described the new realist strategy of the EETPU/AEU: 'Business unionism is a short step down the path. The single union deals, the sweetheart approach, follow as night follows day, and you end up in a ghastly parody of the old craft unionism, crossing picket lines, selling out the jobs of thousands of your fellow trade unionists to boost your own membership.'

Edmonds, in April 1986, could also correctly draw out the trade union implications of new realism: 'Business unionism is the epitome of ... sectional trade unionism ... That kind of approach tends to depress all the social and ideological values the trade union movement is meant to represent in the cause of narrow, sectional gain. And you might also jeopardise a few civil rights in the meantime, for example, the right to strike or the right to be represented in the way you want to be represented. You are giving up something fundamental in order to achieve a very narrow sectional advantage'.

New realism is a strategy to attempt to protect the most privileged sections of the working class — and the unions that contain them. It is prepared to accept, and requires, the destruction of other sections of the trade union movement — as was shown at Wapping and in the 'one union' deals of the EETPU. As a strategy it involves selling large numbers even of its own members jobs in order to secure high wages for those that remain — the strategy of the EETPU in the power supply industry and John Golding in BT.

In line with their social base new realist unions vote most determinedly in the labour movement against the demands of low paid workers, women and black people — and against workers in the public sector. They are the chief opponents of unilateral nuclear disarmament, the strongest supporters of NATO etc. They are also the unions which have been most prepared to enter into contact with the SDP.

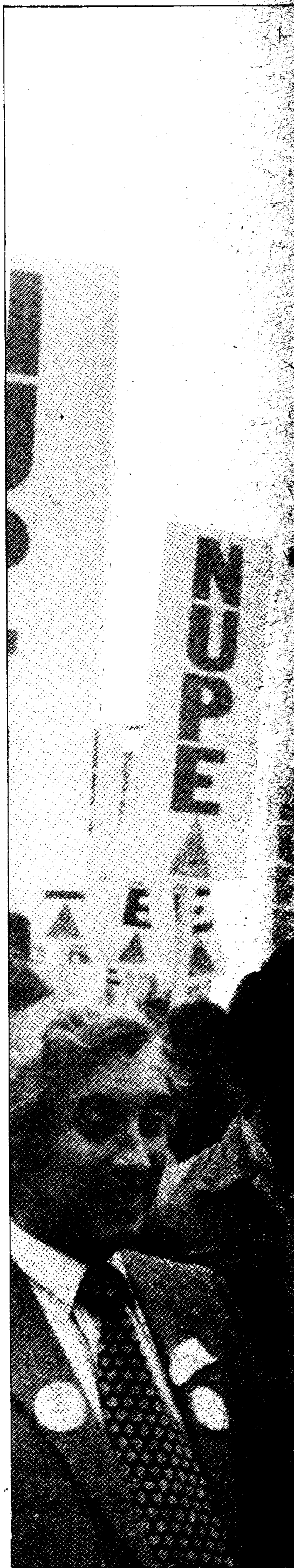
The political problems in the core sector, in particular its expanding sections, explains part of the significance for the trade union movement of the TASS-ASTMS merger. Despite drawbacks, concentrated in the undemocratic practices of TASS's *Morning Star* dominated leadership, and its backward policies on issues such as women and racism, the policies of the TASS-ASTMS merger represent form of traditional aggressive trade unionism in the core sectors — an important counterweight to the policies of the 'new realists'. While it organises overwhelmingly among white collar workers, with only TASS stretching into the manual sectors, nevertheless a TASS/ASTMS merger would provide an alternative to that of the EETPU/AEU. That is why both the Tories and the SDP have set the task of trying to prevent the merger.

Among the new sections of 'core' workers, in particular the high tech industries, there are only two mass roads today. The first is the open class collaborationism of the new realists —

no strike deals, one union deals, and political collaboration with the SDP Liberal Alliance. The second is an aggressive traditional unionism of the ASTMS-TASS type. Socialists, as part of their strategy in the unions, must give strong support to the TASS-ASTMS merger — while fighting to correct the wrong positions we have outlined.

THE second key development taking place among the 'periphery' — and in tying developments in the periphery to the core of the labour movement. A understanding the development taking place here requires a historical perspective it is worth outlining.

The reformism of the British labour movement, based in the power of British imperialism, meant it historically addressed itself primarily to the top layers of the working class — ignoring the most oppressed. Trotsky put the point very well: 'opportunism organisations by their very nature concentrate their attention on the top layers of the working class.' The majority of the working class movement collaborated in the international policies of British imperialism, it failed to take up the





demands of women workers, it actively promoted racist policies, it failed to organise youth.

The price paid for this backwardness, even in the most immediate terms, let alone the crime it represented against the oppressed, and the historical consequences for the labour movement, was enormous. Taking simply the electoral consequences, for example, it condemned the labour movement to 16 years of Tory government between 1951 and 1974 — Labour defeated the Tories in the vote among men at every general election from 1945 to 1974 but the Tories appealed over the heads of the male working class to women to win the elections of 1951, 1955, 1959 and 1970.

The significance of the present development is that the labour movement can no longer allow itself such luxuries. What is involved in the attempt, and necessity, of unions to begin to organise in the 'periphery' is a reversal of the entire historic trend of British trade unionism.

Some implications of the necessity of the unions to start to organise among the 'periphery', where the overwhelming majority of workers are women — and many black, are beginning to penetrate

the trade union movement. Some were spelt out by Bill Morris in *Tribune* on 23 January discussing the 'link up' campaign: 'First, the trade unions will have to come to terms with their own history; their own failure to represent the very people who are now being pushed into the secondary labour force. Most temporary and part-time workers are women... child care has in the past been at best a marginal issue for trade unions, as have many of the other central concerns of women workers. That was never right, but now it could be disastrous.'

Edmonds also spelt out some of the implications in terms of his proposed strategy for the unions: 'We have got to put together a strategy that does something for all working people... A system of legal minimum rights, including pay and hours guaranteed, unfair dismissal guarantees on day one for any service, any length of hours.

'We have got to campaign for such changes, which above all will help the unorganised. This will put the trade union movement on the side of the oppressed and disadvantaged, which is a side of the argument we haven't actually been on for some time. It also puts us on the side of women, which is good

because we have tended to be on the side of men...'

Edmonds actually doesn't have a strategy to deal with this situation. But the pressure on him, shown in his remarks, shows the new situation clearly. It is also beginning to show in new policies being adopted by the unions.

The first step, one decisive for the future of the labour movement, is support for the policy of a national minimum wage. Adopted as official policy by the TUC and Labour Party at their 1986 conferences, it has, however, not been pushed by the Labour Party.

The NUPE membership, the union which led the fight to get the minimum wage policy, has reaffirmed it is not going to give up the fight for it. NUPE's 1987 conference adopted a policy of demanding a national minimum wage be set at two thirds of average national earnings. This would mean a minimum of £120 a week — as opposed to the £80 a week which has been mooted by the TUC and Labour Party.

Equally significantly, the NUPE conference rejected tying the introduction of a minimum wage to wage restrictions on higher paid workers — by voting to oppose any wage restraint measures under a

Labour government. Maintaining *both* positions is vital to have any ability to unite the working class. If a minimum wage is tied to support for wage controls higher paid workers will simply vote Tory and Alliance and support the new realists. The policy of the minimum wage is decisive itself because it affects the entire low paid section of the working class — the entire periphery.

The second development is the shift in the unions position on women. With a tremendous delay the huge increase in the number of women in work — up three million since 1950, is working its way consistently through the unions. At its 1987 conference NUPE became the first major union to elect a majority of women to its executive. GMBATU has introduced a system of reserving one quarter of its executive places for women. Without developing systematic policies in support of women workers it is quite impossible to organise in the 'periphery'.

The third development has been the extension of struggle, and political development, into new sectors. The period immediately prior to Thatcher's election saw an unprecedented wave of struggle by public sector and health workers — the winter of discontent. Following this 1982 saw the longest ever strike in the National Health Service. A year later, 1983 saw the first national strike in the water and sewage industry. This year has seen the first ever national strike in telecommunications.

Most significant of all however, has been the struggles waged in the last two years by the teachers and civil servants — the first serious campaigns of industrial action ever waged by these groups. Furthermore the political fund ballots saw not merely every union vote to retain its political fund but new civil service unions, the IRSF and CPSA, voting to establish political funds. NALGO will be voting on the establishment of a political fund at this year's conference. Another important campaign among white collar workers is that to unify the two TUC affiliated teaching unions — the NUT and NAS/UWT.

In short, while severe setbacks have been suffered in traditional sections of the working class, industrial action, and serious trade unionism, has been spreading far more widely than previously.

The concentration of much of this struggle in the public service sector is perfectly logical. The development of the dual economy creates a highly productive, highly paid, manufacturing sector which is serviced by a low paid service sector. A large part of the most vital of these services are in the public sector. While the government can privatise individual industries such as telecommunications, gas or steel, it cannot, in the present relation of forces, dismantle the health service — the largest single employer in the country, the education system, the civil service, or, despite its best efforts, local government. Even the process of privatisation in sectors such as health and local government, while viciously anti-working class and anti-union, is still limited in its scope.

Combine this inability of the government to dismantle large parts of the public sector with its constant attempts to undermine spending on it and you have a recipe for prolonged conflict in the public sector — not simply in the traditional industries, which have been subject to vicious rationalisation, but also in the public service sector.

The trends we have seen over the last years in the public sector are therefore not an aberration. How rapidly there will be an upturn of struggle in the 'core' private sector almost certainly depends on overall developments in the international economy — an upturn of output and growth would be the biggest stimulus to a revival of struggle in the private sector.

What the trends of the last eight years represent is clear. The development of the

dual economy, under the impact of the recession, is not just dealing severe blows to the trade union movement. It is also transforming its character. A greatly increased weight of women and the public sector is accompanying the development of strong right wing trends in sections of private industry — and in shortly to be privatised industry. Such trends have been seen in other countries — notably in Japan, which has the most developed 'dual economy' of all, and where for years the trade union movement has been dominated by a division between right wing private sector industrial unions and more militant public sector ones.

The net effect of the Thatcher years on the trade unions must therefore be understood in a complex way. The defeats which have been suffered are very real. The trade union movement is weakened and on the defensive almost everywhere.

But at the same time the impact of Thatcherism, and of the dual economy, has politicised unions. It has spread trade union action into sections of the working class that have never experienced it before. It has pulled hundreds of thousands of women workers into struggle — and forced even hardened traditional unions, and their leaderships, out of sheer necessity to reorient their unions' activities to winning women workers. It has made the public sector a chief battleground.

If Thatcherism has pushed back the most advanced points of trade unionism it has also enormously broadened its range. How quickly, and how thoroughly, there is a recovery in the 'core' sectors depends probably more on the economic situation than anything else.

All of this indicates the underlying trends of the situation — the direction trade unionism is being forced to take. The second Thatcher government saw, in the miners strike, the most advanced class struggle, and the most advanced leadership, in peacetime for sixty years. It took quite a different type of leadership to develop a strategy tying together the miners not simply with trade union solidarity but with women, black workers, and whole communities. But the miners, and their leadership, were able to achieve this only because they drew on smaller, 'molecular', developments which had been taking place within the working class. The miners gave the first central leadership to this profound development taking place within the working class — but they did not create the process itself.

These developments indicate the task which the left faces in the unions in the developing 'dual economy'. Inside the core there is the fight to defend even 'traditional' trade union principles and politics against the onslaught of the new realists. Here there is a necessity of united action, and organisation, with the Communist Party, straightforward social democrats, and others in the traditional Broad Lefts. This is an absolutely necessary alliance in the fight against the Hammonds, Lairds and Goldings.

The second fight is to organise in the 'periphery', including large parts of the public sector — where demands for women, and black people, are absolutely central and the new realist forces relatively weak. In the public sector, in a number of cases, the fight is *against* the Communist Party and 'broad left' forces with which, in other unions, it is necessary to unite to oppose the new realists. This situation differs from union to union. There is no common tactics although the basic forces — the 'class struggle left', the Kinnockites, and the realists — operate, in different relations of forces, in each union. But what is beginning to emerge is an agenda of common problems stretching across different unions — one whose chief feature is the consequence of the rise of the dual economy.

Developing the basis to unify these concerns and struggles in the face of a deepening offensive by the employers, is the chief task of the left in the unions in the coming period.

HOW THE WEST SUPPORTS

IT HAS TAKEN many years of struggle to reach the point at which we are today. In that period, tens of thousands have been killed, injured and imprisoned within South Africa. Thousands of others have suffered a similar fate in Namibia. The rest of Southern Africa has also seen enormous numbers of people die, economies forced to the verge of collapse and social programmes brought to a halt.

Precisely that scale of destruction has only served to confirm the view among the victims of apartheid violence that they dare not give up, but have to fight with everything they can lay their hands on, to end the system that has brought about so much suffering. It is that resolve and determination by millions of people which guarantees the defeat of the Pretoria regime and the liquidation of the apartheid system.

And yet there are those in this country who doubt the certainty of our victory. These calculate that the racist regime is so powerful, and the white minority so steadfast in its commitment to the maintenance of its domination, that the oppressed are condemned to a futile and self-destructive battering at the ramparts of the racist fortress. These positions have resulted in a policy which amounts to appeasement of the apartheid regime.

By Oliver Tambo

In terms of this perspective, it is required that this regime should gradually reform the apartheid system out of existence. To do so, it is considered necessary that the supposed reformers should work their wonders in a situation of stability. Consequently, it is viewed as a *sine qua non* for the abolition of the apartheid system that the forces that are fighting against this system should be kept in check by repressive means.

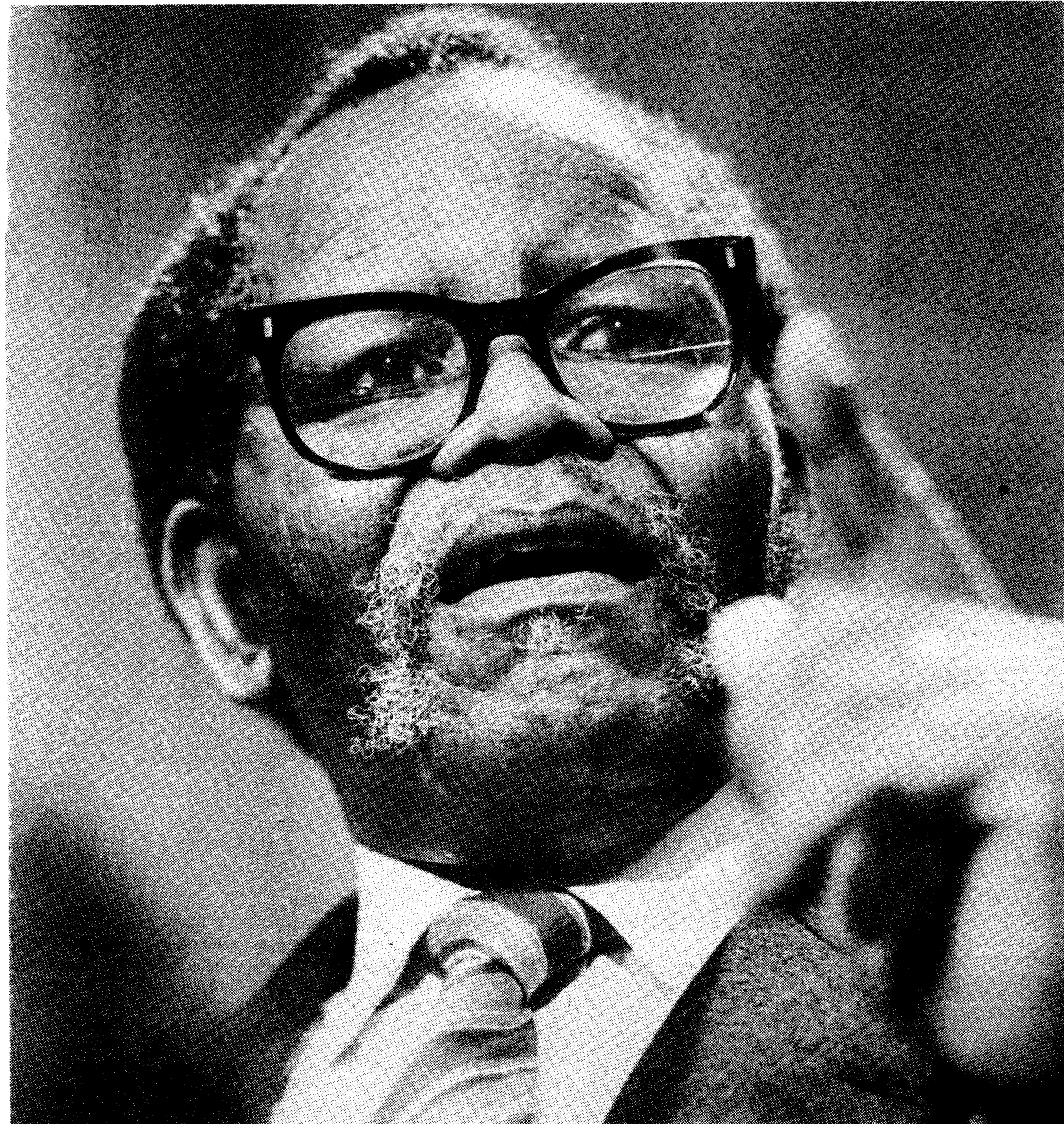
The major western powers have not departed from their old positions. According to these, the white minority regime is seen and treated as the defender and guarantor of the perceived interests of these powers. We, on the other hand, are viewed as a threat which must be dealt with in the appropriate manner. The decisions taken in the various capitals to relate to the ANC, did not in any way imply that there had been any change of attitude towards our policies, strategy and tactics.

Issues

On all major questions pertaining to the issues we are discussing, the coincidence of views between the Pretoria regime and the powers that be in most of the West, persists. Where the racists describe us as a communist front, Western governments go so far as to order secret investigations of the ANC to establish the extent of this alleged communist domination. Pretoria calls on us to renounce violence. The West calls on us to lay down arms. When the sole aggressor in Southern Africa talks about so-called regional security, the western powers condemn 'cross-border violence from all sides'. The white minority regime conducts a vigorous campaign against sanctions and is joined in that campaign by the western powers.

We can go on *ad finitum* and speak even about the questions of formulations and terminology. For example, our armed struggle is never that, but is either terrorism or violence. The limpet mines we use are never simply limpet mines, but are either of Soviet or communist origin. On the other hand, the guns and planes that Pretoria uses with such relish are never of British, American, French, Belgian or West German origin, but are mere guns or planes. The conclusions to draw from all this are obvious to all honest people.

As things stand, the Pretoria regime



APARTHEID

knows that it can continue to ignore the call for negotiations because the governments of the major western countries have undertaken, almost as a matter of principle, that they will not act against the racist regime despite its continued failure to respond to the universal demand for an end to the apartheid system and its replacement by a democratic social order. It was obvious from the very beginning that Sir Geoffrey Howe's mission to South Africa, last year, would not succeed, precisely for the reason that both the British government and the EEC were committed to avoiding any effective sanctions against apartheid South Africa.

Measures

If the key to negotiations were in our hands, we would long have used it to open the door. Such measures as have been proposed for us to adopt, namely, the cessation or suspension of our armed struggle or the unilateral proclamation of a moratorium, will do nothing to bring about negotiations. The Pretoria regime is refusing to negotiate not because there is an armed struggle, but because it is unwilling to give up white minority domination.

The source of violence in South Africa, Namibia and our region is the apartheid system and the racist regime. What must cease is the violence that

arises from the administration of apartheid. For that to happen, the system of white minority domination must be brought to an end. It seems to us strange reasoning that we, the victims of violence, should be asked to respond to the continued terror of the Pretoria regime against the peoples of Southern Africa by committing ourselves to cease our armed resistance, whether temporarily or permanently. The Pretoria regime has blocked the path to negotiations. The recent whites-only elections in South Africa have confirmed PW Botha in his view that white South Africa stands with him in his determination to resist all change and further to entrench the apartheid system. The governments of the Western countries that awaited the results of this illegitimate electoral process now have their answer.

This places the western powers in the position in which they have to choose either to work for the total elimination of the apartheid system or, in fact, to connive at its perpetuation, as they do now. Sooner or later they will come to realise that there has emerged an alternative democratic power within South Africa, an indigenous product of struggle which holds the future of South Africa in its hands. The West will then have to decide whether it takes the side of this alternative power and the rest of the anti-colonial and anti-racist forces of the continent of Africa made

up of nearly five hundred million people, or whether it ties itself to the doomed course followed by far less than five million Africans of European origin. It is no longer possible to run with the hares and hunt with the hounds.

The broad perspectives of our country's democratic power are spelt out in the Freedom Charter. Organisationally, it is represented by many formations which recognise the leading role of the ANC in the struggle for a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa. Whether or not they support or engage in armed struggle, they are at one with us in seeking this outcome and are active in the struggle for its realisation.

Peace

I should state here that when we say we are fighting for a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa, we mean what we say. It is very clear to us that unless our country becomes such an entity, we shall know no peace. To propose any so called solutions which fall within the parameters of the apartheid system is no more than to prepare a recipe for a continuation of the conflict which has already claimed too many lives. As long as this system exists, whatever guise it assumes, so long will the Front Line and neighbouring states be victims of aggression and destabilisation. For all this to end, for

these crimes to become a thing of the past, South Africa must become a democratic country, with guaranteed liberties for all citizens, with equal rights for everybody regardless of colour, race or sex.

Given the changing balance of strength in our country and the shift of the strategic initiative into our hands, there is a sense in which the apartheid forces are becoming the opposition to the ascendant democratic movement rather than the other way round. The recent white elections demonstrate this point inasmuch as the Botha regime contested them on the specific platform of opposition to the ANC.

The boycott campaigns, from their inception in the late 1950s, were aimed at the total isolation of apartheid South Africa. This objective is inviolate and needs to be pursued with even greater vigour. At the same time we must take into account the changes that have taken place over time. In particular, as in almost every other field of human endeavour in South Africa, there has emerged a definable alternative democratic culture — the people's culture permeated with and giving expression to the deepest aspirations of our people in struggle, immersed in democratic and enduring human values.

Power

As in politics, trade unionism, education, sport, religion and many other fields, these developments at the cultural level both contributed to and are part of the emergent alternative democratic power at whose head stands the ANC. Without doubt the developing and vibrant culture of our people in struggle and its structures need to be supported, strengthened and enhanced. In the same way as apartheid South Africa is being increasingly isolated internationally, within South Africa this people's culture is steadily isolating the intellectual and cultural apologists of apartheid.

The moment is upon us when we shall have to deal with the alternative structures that our people have created and are creating through struggle and sacrifice, as the genuine representatives of these masses in all fields of human activity. Not only should these not be boycotted, but more, they should be supported, encouraged and treated as the democratic counterparts within South Africa of similar institutions and organisations internationally. This means the ANC, the broad democratic movement in its various formations within South Africa, and the international solidarity movement need to act together.

Everywhere in our country, and after a year of national state of emergency, the democratic forces are at work to expand and strengthen their ranks and to raise the level and intensity of the offensive against the apartheid regime to new heights. For its part, this regime prepares itself for more atrocities, for the campaign of repression of which PW Botha boasts — as though to shoot and kill children, to imprison and torture them and their parents, to carry out one outrage after another against independent Africa, were the worthiest activities that one could ever imagine.

A terrible collision between ourselves and our opponents is inevitable. Many battles will be fought and many lives will be lost throughout our region. Yet the outcome is not in doubt. Having reached the crossroads, the masses of our people have decided that our country must advance as rapidly as possible to the situation where they, black and white, will govern themselves together as equals. Whatever the cost, there is no doubt that we will win.

The above are extracts from a speech made by Oliver Tambo, president of the ANC, on 28 May in London. He was speaking at the Canon Collins Annual Memorial Lecture.

'Nicaragua will survive'

THE following are extracts of a speech delivered in London by ALEXANDRO BENDANA, general secretary of the Nicaraguan foreign ministry. He was speaking at a 'Blood Money' rally organised by the Nicaraguan Solidarity Campaign.

ALMOST eight years ago a small country in Central America dared to dream, to dream that in the backdrop of one of the greatest military powers on earth independence would be possible. That dream began to materialise in 1979 with the victory of the Nicaraguan people and the insurrection by the Sandinista National Liberation Front.

The dream was not merely to turn out the dictatorship, and it was not merely to establish a new course for the Nicaraguan people. But also to take into account the frustrated aspirations of peoples everywhere in Latin America, who also had a dream and were struggling for their freedom and for their self-determination.

We dreamed that it was possible to move to the eradication of the illiteracy rate of 52 per cent, of the malnutrition that claimed the lives of 2 out of every 5 children before they reached the age of 3. And yet within a framework of commitment and the principles of political pluralism, of a mixed economy and of a foreign policy of non-alignment.

The Reagan administration from the time of its own Republican Party platform proclaimed that the Nicaraguan revolution had to be reversed. And it gave the Contras a job to go about executing the objectives of American foreign policy — to destroy the Sandinista revolution, to march into the streets of Managua.

Well we are happy to report today that they have not marched through the streets of Managua, that they will not march through the streets of Managua; that they are being beaten, first and foremost not only because of the crisis in Washington, not because of the decomposition of the contra leadership, but on account of the armed struggle of the people of Nicaragua.

That battle is still being waged, the war has not stopped. And in fact it may be entering its most dangerous stage, because the Reagan Administration

is not convinced that it cannot overturn the Sandinistas. Notwithstanding seven years of struggle, the Nicaraguan people continue to be hopeful, because we happen to believe in the American people as we believe in people everywhere.

Why have the Contras failed? Could it be that the steady stream of atrocities would not find the sympathy of the Nicaraguan people?

We would hope that the Reagan Administration will think twice; will listen to the voice of the Latin Americans and bargain with Contadora and their supporters which say that there is a way out, which is called negotiation. That it is possible to reach a political solution in order to end the bloodshed.

We would hope that the Reagan administration will heed the orders of the World Court, 27 June 1986, when in effect it convicted the United States of waging state terrorism against Nicaragua; and ordered it to desist in that oppression, ordered a cease-fire, ordered it to pay reparations.

We would ask the United States to listen to the voices the world over which are demanding that Latin Americans be given a chance to solve their own problems, that the principles of the United Nations Charter be allowed to apply in Central America, because the peoples of Central America will not accept second class citizenship, we feel that those principles will apply to all of us or they will apply to none.

The principles of respect for the self-determination of the people, of non-intervention in the internal affairs of state, of non-resort to the



Nicaraguan people demonstrate their determination to survive

use of force in international relations, the peaceful settlement of disputes. We believe that these principles must be allowed and they must, they must apply to the crisis in Central America.

Those voices I'm sad to say are not being heard. Every indication is that the Reagan administration remains obsessively committed to its objective of overthrowing the Sandinista government. We need only to listen to Reagan and his speeches. The policy and decisions of trying to destroy Nicaragua are responsible in great part in getting this administration into the morass that it has sunk into.

The implications are that the voice of reason will not be heeded; the Reagan administration continues its inordinate military build-up. At this very moment there are over 5,000 American troops in Honduras. There are warships parked on both of our coasts. Hardly a day goes by without spy overflights and now we hear that the largest military exercise there's been in Central American history is about to take place: 50,000 men — aircraft carriers — and a practice invasion landing — for what?

What we denounce today are the actual preparations for direct military intervention in Nicaragua. If

the Reagan administration does not change its objective and if the Contras have failed in accomplishing theirs, then there is only one road left, and that is the road of direct intervention.

The pretext would be a simple border incident which wouldn't even appear on the international news — a clash between Honduras and Nicaraguan forces, as there has been — or an appeal by Honduras, or an appeal by Costa Rica, to its great neighbour to the north, against the 'Sandinista communist invasion'. American military troops, American military advisers with the consent of Congress, are being sent to less than 20 miles from our border.

They have already begun to prepare the Contras in American piloted helicopters. What happens if one of those helicopters with American personnel strays over our border. We will not hesitate to defend our national territory and our sovereignty. And if these Americans were to get killed, we could have a new 'Gulf of Tonkin'.

The Nicaraguan government will spare absolutely no effort to reach a political accommodation. We will back Contadora, we have backed it, and we will back the new initiatives that are being put forward all in the

name of avoiding an impending disaster.

We will do so in defence and on the basis of the defence of the Nicaraguan people's cherished right to self-determination; we will respect whatever the general interests that other parties might have, including those of the United States — but they can never be considered, or allowed to be considered legitimate, in the legitimate interests of any party, the death and widespread destruction of the Sandinista revolution, because that is simply unacceptable and we will fight to the end.

Nicaragua will survive. It may take further pain, further suffering, but we will survive because we believe that this battle we are waging is not simply for the future of our own people, of our own children; we know that there is a beacon in Central America that is being watched by people the world over, and that that light cannot be allowed to go out, because it represents the light of hope, the light of freedom, the light of the possibility of self-determination for small nations.

We have the historical need, we have a historical duty to people everywhere which gives us the strength to continue.

Behind the violence in Sri Lanka

THE Sri Lankan government has launched an all-out military offensive against Tamil militants in the country's Jaffna peninsula. More than 8000 government troops have been employed in the biggest ever raid involving land, air and sea activity. According to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, the heavy fighting has to date claimed the lives of over 1000 civilians, as the government aerial bombing raids have targeted residential areas.

In the following article abridged from the 8 May issue of the US socialist newsweekly, *The Militant* MALIK MIAH explains the background to the present campaign of state terror against the Tamils.

THE LATEST violence in Sri Lanka must be seen in the context of the struggle of the Tamil minority to end decades of ethnic discrimination in jobs, education, land distribution, and other spheres of life. Sri Lanka is a tear-shaped island with a population of 16 million people. It is mostly flat or rolling except for the south-central plain where mountains and the large tea plantations exist.

A British colony until 1948, Sri Lanka is composed of two major ethnic groups: Sinhalese and Tamils. The Sinhalese are 75 per cent of the population, with a majority supporting the Buddhist religion. The Tamils are 18 per cent of the population, with most following the Hindu religion. There is also a smaller Tamil-speaking ethnic Muslim community — 7 per cent of the country's inhabitants — who are descendants of Arab traders.

Tamils

The Tamils are divided between Sri Lanka Tamils (those who first migrated to the island over 1,000 years ago), and Indian Tamils who were brought to the island as labourers by the British colonialists in the 19th century to pick tea. The Sri Lankan Tamils (12 per cent of the population) are mainly concentrated in Jaffna Peninsula, the Eastern Province, and Colombo.

Since the 1950s a majority of Sri Lankan Tamils have favoured autonomy for the north-eastern area of the country. Since the late 1970s a growing number of Tamils, especially the young, have demanded 'Eelam' — an independent homeland.

The roots of the current civil war go back to the post-independence period.

During the struggle against British colonial rule both Sinhalese and Tamils fought together in the independence movement. A central demand of the struggle was to end the privileged status of English and make Sinhala and Tamil the national languages. But soon after independence the main capitalist party, the United National Party (the party currently in office), pushed through parliament three anti-Tamil laws. These denied Indian Tamils their right to vote, which they had had under the British, as well as the right to citizenship. Many were told to go back to India.

Sinhala

Sinhala chauvinists, led by the Buddhist clergy, pressed for a Sinhala Sri Lanka. (The country was then known as Ceylon.) By 1956, parliament adopted the 'Sinhala-only' language law. Few Tamils speak Sinhala, and even fewer Sinhalese speak Tamil. This chauvinistic action by parliament led to protests and riots by Tamils and other supporters of democratic rights. Even Tamil capitalist politicians came out for autonomy.

From that point on, Tamil parties pressed for full equality. A fully-fledged guerrilla war, however, did not break out until 1983. After a military clash between the army and guerrillas left 13 Sinhalese soldiers dead, anti-Tamil pogroms resulted in some 2000 Tamil deaths. Tens of thousands of Tamils fled the country and thousands of youths signed up with the militant organisations.

Since 1983 at least 5500 people have died, most of them Tamils killed by the army or 'Home Guards' — the mainly Sinhala paramilitary outfits. The Jaffna Peninsula is essentially a liberated zone under the control of the Tigers, who recently set up a parallel administration. The eight army bases are surrounded. The army's main fort in Jaffna City, for example, is only accessible by helicopter gunship or sea. A government blockade of the region over the last five months has been basically ineffective.

While the Sri Lankan government claims it is for a negotiated settlement with the rebels, its real policy has been state terrorism. Since 1985 the army has doubled its strength from 11,500 to 24,000. Nearly 15 per cent of the budget is for the military — 15 times the amount spent on the armed forces 10 years ago. The government gets military aid and training from such countries as Israel, Pakistan and South Korea. Special 'anti-terrorist' training is also provided by a British security agency, Keeny Meeny Services.

Despite this fire-power, the Tamil militants continue to grow and gain support. This reflects the broad sympathy they have among the Tamil population, including an increasing number of Indian Tamils.

Britain backs Fiji coup

LEADER of last month's coup in Fiji, Lt-col Sitiveni Rabuka has been placed in command of the country's armed forces and promoted to the rank of colonel. This honour was bestowed on Rabuka by the Queen's representative in Fiji, governor-general Ratu Sir Penaia Ganilau. The move provides further evidence of British government support for the overthrow of the democratically-elected government of Timoci Bavadra.

It takes place against a background of mounting opposition to the new government. Sugar mills scheduled to start crushing cane a week ago remain idle as a result of industrial action. Fields have been burnt and many shops are shut in a show of defiance against the new regime.

The huge wave of protests has caused unease amongst the governments of New Zealand, Australia and the US who are, with Britain, keen to maintain a pro-Western stability in this

key region of the South Pacific.

By Jon Silberman

The US was strongly rumoured to have masterminded the coup following the visit to the islands of General Vernon Walters, US ambassador to the United Nations and an individual with a long history of links to CIA-backed coups.

Now the US has joined New Zealand in cutting economic aid. Other

economic measures taken include insisting that all Fijian trade is paid for in advance in hard currency. The imperialist powers fear a collapse of the Fijian dollar as a result of the economic problems associated with the decline of tourism adding to the industrial action against the coup.

There is now open talk of an external military intervention, possibly by New Zealand. New Zealand has major trade relations with Fiji and established the country's army in 1949, with which it maintains close links.

No externally imposed solution — be it by the Queen's representative in Fiji itself, or by the government of another imperialist power — will answer the demands and aspirations of the Fijian people for independence, democracy and the right to determine

their own government.

The main imperialist powers active in the region — Britain, US, France as well as Australia and New Zealand — have launched an international campaign of lies and hysteria designed to mask their real intentions.

Press reports of Libyan and Soviet 'interference' have been the backdrop to the announcement by the commander-in-chief of the US Pacific fleet, Admiral James Lyons, of an armada of warships being sent to exercise in the Pacific, the likes of which 'hadn't been seen in more than a decade'.

Despite the rhetoric, no evidence has been forthcoming to justify the claims of 'interference'. All that has happened is that the Soviet Union signed the Rarotonga Treaty — banning nuclear operations in the South Pacific — and

has been prepared to buy local fish at more just rates than the imperialists have been prepared to tolerate.

Meanwhile, Libya has established diplomatic relations with the government of Vanuatu. The imperialist powers are seeking to pressurise the government of Vanuatu which is trying to break free from economic dependence on Australia and New Zealand, and its former colonial rulers, Britain and France.

They are equally trying to prevent the emergence of governments like that of Timoci Bavadra in Fiji, a product of the breakdown of racial divisions amongst workers and farmers, whose stated intention was to join Vanuatu in becoming a member of the Non-Aligned Movement, and to itself police the Rarotonga Treaty.

Superficial theories of socialism

ROY HATTERSLEY's *Choose Freedom* has been held up as the new gospel of the Labour right. Its influence can be seen in many aspects of Labour's election campaign. COLIN FOSTER reviews Hattersley's book.

It is an interesting comment on the way political pressures have built up in Britain that the Labour right currently feels compelled to spell out a political philosophy. As Hattersley himself remarks: 'The Labour Party has been anti-intellectual not so much in theory as in practice. It became a Benthamite movement which insisted that its members could recognise human happiness when they saw it and did not need any theoretical justification for arguing in favour of its extension.' Indeed Hattersley points out: 'during Harold Wilson's leadership ... pragmatism was elevated into a major socialist virtue.'

Hattersley claims that this was a grave weakness because it gave credibility to what he terms, in a typically generous and tolerant phrase: 'the army of political riff-raff who infiltrated the Labour Party in the late sixties and early seventies.' Hattersley has therefore explicitly set out to provide a 1980s ideology for the Labour right — in the way that Crosland's *The Future of Socialism* provided one in the 1950s and 1960s. How does it measure up?

Reviews

Actually, it must be said, the first six pages of the book are extremely impressive — living up to the rave reviews from Labour right wingers printed on the cover. Hattersley smashes into what he terms: 'the nineteenth century view of liberty: the fallacy that it is no more than the absence of restraint.' Hattersley rightly ridicules this tenet of liberalism — and its classic expression by those who defend the bible of 19th century liberalism, John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty*, by the claim that 'liberty is no more than the absence of coercion.'

Hattersley correctly makes the point that freedom only exists when there is a positive possibility to enjoy it — without that it is a hollow sham. He writes of the reforms of the 1945 Labour government that: 'We ... had not previously been denied the right to health, education and decent housing. There was no statute which forbade us to live in a proper house or accept adequate health care. In the decades before the war we had simply been unable to afford the price of enjoying such advantages. It was because of that practical experience that I came to regard the idea of negative freedom — liberty as the absence of coercion — as a cruel joke.'

On the grounds of the falsity of purely formal 'liberty' or purely formal 'equality', Hattersley assails the old 11 plus exam: 'Today, it seems impossible that anyone ever honestly believed that children from the slums — badly housed, badly fed, badly protected from disease and enjoying little or no acquaintance with books — could be said

to have acquired any sort of equality with their well provided suburban contemporaries, just because they took the same examination on one or two mornings of their mutually twelfth year ... Jean Flood, when Principal of Newnham College, Cambridge, described the situation with proper scholastic clarity: "Social as well as academic selection is at work in schools."

This is another way of putting the famous phrase that: 'the law is open to all, just like the Ritz hotel'. But is an absolutely correct point and a most central one of socialism — it was criticism of purely formal definitions of liberty and freedom that led Marx to become a Marxist.

Formal

Against the false, purely formal, idea of negative freedom, Hattersley rightly counterposes as: 'positive view of liberty — freedom to work, freedom to be well housed and educated.' He correctly argues therefore: 'Rights are not, in themselves, enough. They must be accompanied by sufficient economic power to give their theoretical existence a practical meaning.'

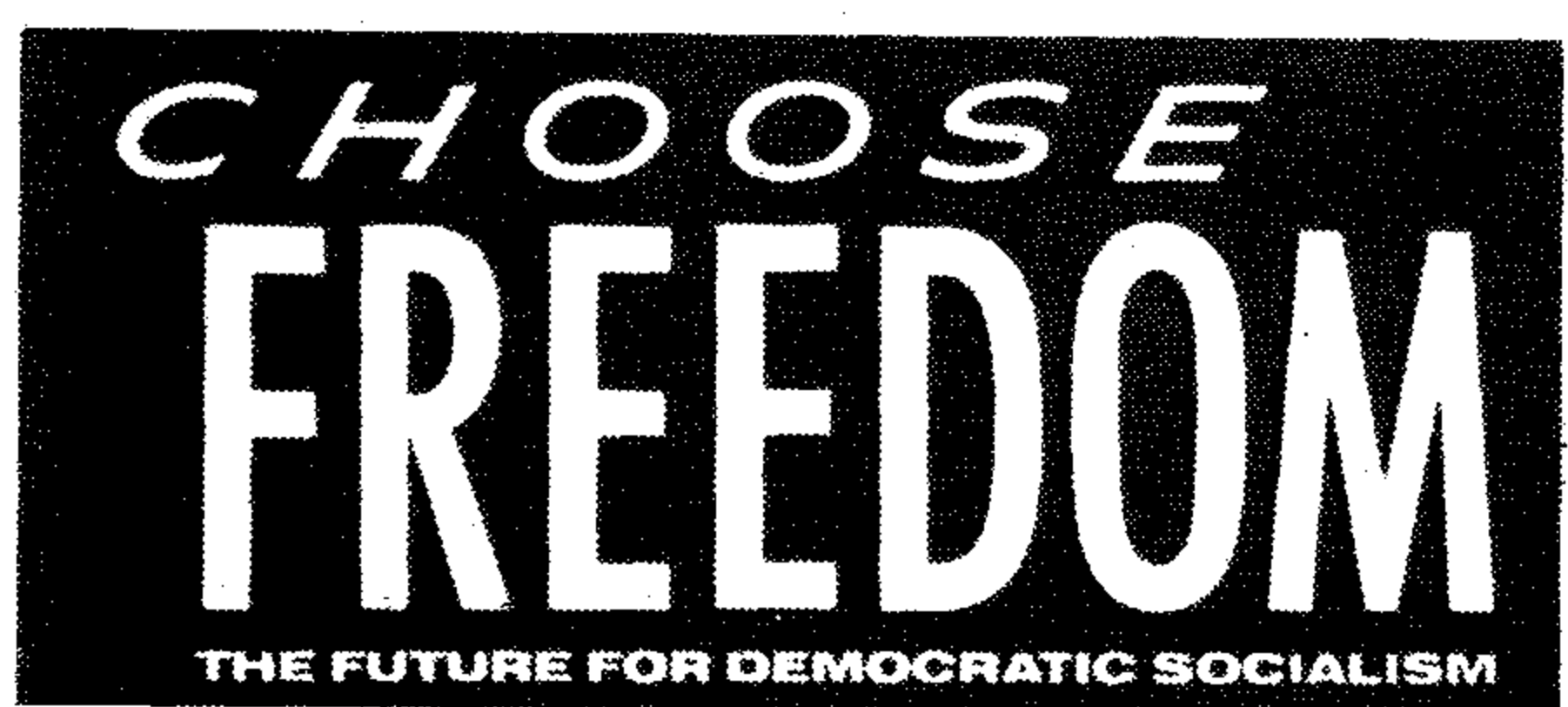
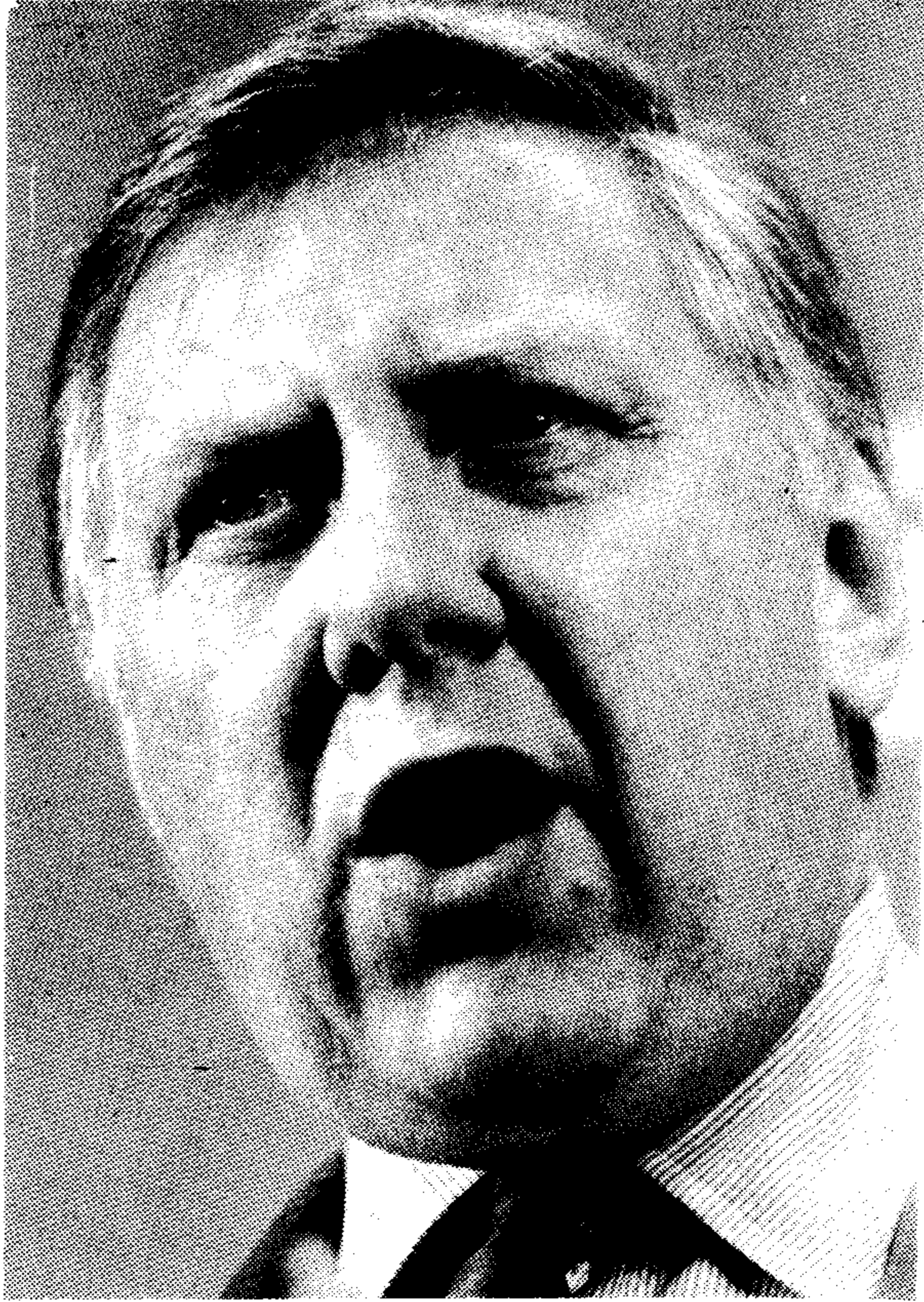
Hattersley then points out that these goals can only be achieved by the intervention of the state which, alone, can give the resources to health, education, protection from poverty — which can make positive liberty real: 'The true object of socialism is the creation of a genuinely free society in which the protection and extension of individual liberty is the primary duty of the state.'

Idea

What Hattersley has taken in here, of course, is the idea of the 'enabling state' pioneered by Sheffield council and the GLC — the correct point that the role of the state is not to restrict but to provide the material resources with which individuals can expand their choice and liberty.

Why then does the book so lamentably fail, and why are the following 240 pages so crushingly boring — after an excellent first six? It is because Hattersley has such an incredibly narrow view of what 'inequality', his central target, is. He makes the extraordinary claim, for example, that: 'The achievement of a more equal distribution of wealth and power, and the resultant increase in the sum of freedom for the community as whole, is the principal goal of socialism. Socialism is about the nature of society and — since it is concerned with a social and political system — there are some subjects about which there is no intrinsically 'socialist' position. There is, for example, no such thing as socialist defence or foreign policy.'

Really? What greater inequality in the world



could there be than the imperialist system — the system of exploitation of the majority of the countries of the world by states such as the US or Britain? It is worth quoting on that theses on the colonial question of the Second Congress of the Communist International:

'An abstract or formal equality in particular is in the very nature of bourgeois democracy. Under the guise of the equality of the individual in general, bourgeois democracy proclaims the formal or legal equality of the property owner and the proletarian, the exploiter and the exploited.' Socialists in the international field, also: 'must base themselves on an equally clear distinction between the oppressed, dependent and subject nations and the oppressing, exploiting and sovereign nations'. In reality in the pursuit of 'equality' *nowhere* is this more applicable than in the international field — in the struggle against imperialism.

Equal

Similarly, in the field of economic exploitation Hattersley puts forward an extraordinary position. Talking of equality he claims: 'The same rule applies in the labour market, where ... an equal bargain depends on ... the combination of working men and women to create a countervailing force to the strength of even a single employer.'

But this is not 'equality' at all. That is simply the right of a trade union to limit decisions that are not taken by employees at all but by capital.

This takes us to the core of the issue. Marx made the point that inequalities in distribution, which is what Hattersley deals with, are a

product of 'inequalities' in production: 'Distribution according to the most superficial interpretation of products ... But before distribution becomes distribution of products, it is ... distribution of the means of production ... It is evident that the distribution of products is merely the result of this distribution, which is comprised in the production process and determines the structure of production.' It is *capital*, private ownership of the means of production, which constantly generates inequality in income.

Demand

As the second congress of the Communist International put it: 'The real meaning of the demand for equality consists in it being a demand for the abolition of classes' — something that can only be secured by the public ownership of the means of production.

Hattersley's is, literally, a *superficial* theory of 'socialism' — that is it looks at the *results* of the capitalist system of production — the vast inequalities of income it generates. It refuses to look at what *generates* these inequalities — the underlying structure of capitalist society with its private ownership of capital, its imperialist system, its racism, and its sexism.

That is why the first few pages of Hattersley's book are very good — actually well worth reading, and why the other nine tenths are so crushingly boring — and wrong.

He is like someone who 'supports' bubonic plague — but regrets that it causes death.

● *Choose Freedom* by Roy Hattersley, published by Penguin Books, 254 pp. £3.95.

TGWU — what policies for women and black people?

THE T&G has a substantial membership of women and black workers. In the wider labour movement there has been a trend for the demands of these workers to be taken more seriously. The T&G's reaction to this trend has been patchy. The greatest impact has been made by women.

On the negative side, traditionalist suspicion and outright hostility to feminist influences continues to prevail in some parts of the union. This may partly account for the tiny numbers of women who, even now, gain election to various conferences and committees. It is an attitude which has no future. Over 40 per cent of the total workforce, and over 90 per cent of all part-time workers, are women. The employers are increasingly chosing to exploit such workers. That renewed exploitation occurs precisely because of the continuing oppression of women in British society. To confront the new realities, the union must deal with sexism in its own ranks.

On the positive side, the current big campaigns 'Link Up' and the 'Living wage campaign' are heavily aimed at women. The inclusion of demands for employer-provided cervical cancer screening in national negotiations and the call for union involvement in the child care campaign also reflects this.

The union is involved in the new wave of struggle over equal pay for work of

equal value. The AIDS issue has also forced the union to deal with issues of sexuality that would previously have been taboo and to discourage anti-gay attitudes.

These developments prove that the union has partially succeeded in overcoming traditional backwardness. Pressure from the base of the union, notably from groups of women like the Ford machinists, has reinforced active lobbying by a section of women members. One result has been the creation of regional and national women's advisory committees.

In two regions, Ireland and the South-West, these produce their own magazines, while in other parts less 'radical' developments have been permitted.

The membership of these committees who are selected through the trade group machinery are playing an increasing role with the recent decision to reserve places for women in the LP and TUC delegations.

In terms of the Labour Party debate over the role of the party's women's con-

ference, the union's position appears to be broadly positive, although the preference is for an electoral college which would reproduce the union's block vote within the women's conference.

It is noticeable that the same level of awareness on racism and the needs of black workers has not been seen so far in the T&G. Bill Morris, who must be considered one of the most prominent black trade unionists in Britain, has led the union in hardening its stance against Black Sections in the Labour Party.

Apart from the occasional pamphlet or Asian-language leaflet, there has been nothing comparable to the publications coming from the women's advisory committees.

The union was clearly conscious of the significance of the dispute involving Chinese catering workers at Wheelers in Brighton. Nevertheless the union generally prefers not to acknowledge the specific issues of relevance to black people, or to follow the example of unions like NALGO or NUPE. There is not even an advisory committee network comparable to that existing for women members.

As a result the union is much more poorly equipped to deal with the tide of racism which continues to threaten us.

French railworkers take stock

'We regret nothing about our strike'

THE FRENCH rail strike at the end of last year ended inconclusively. With four unions involved and half of French rail workers not organised at all, local strike committees played an important role in the strike. Following the strike a national liaison committee emerged out of these strike committees, and it convened a 200 strong conference in Paris on 23 May. NUR members, MIKE COLLEY and CHRIS MORRIS, were there and gave us this report.



South Africa expressing solidarity with the strike of South African rail workers and protesting the murders of the six strikers.

The main resolution was also adopted. It called for the continued existence of the national liaison committee and local strike committees, the production of local papers and the establishment of a national journal. An amendment opposing the existence of two national strike committees during the strike was added.

The major problem facing railworkers in France is their division into the various unions and the resulting large number of unorganised workers. The conference demonstrated the desire for unity and the continued combativity of the railworkers.

Although the full demands of the strikers were not won, the morale of the workforce remains high and there is a strong conviction that with this greater unity and organisation, next time round the railworkers can win.

with sectarianism and the divisions which have already caused such harm.'

The morning session discussed the nature of the economic offensive now being prepared by management for the railworkers. The French national railway company, the SNCF, wants to break even in 1990. To do so it is planning massive redundancies, privatisation of certain sectors of the industry and productivity increases.

International greetings were given by railworkers from Britain, Belgium, Italy and Spain at the beginning of the afternoon session, the bulk of which was taken up with workshop discussions.

There were workshops on uniting the different unions; on the crisis of the workers movement; an assessment of the strike committees; international links; a workers' plan for the industry; and perspectives for struggle and tactics.

Following reports back from the workshops, a resolution was adopted unanimously to send greetings to COSATU in

'THE NATIONAL Liaison Committee was born after the strikes of December/January. It gathers together those who have been in the front ranks of the movement. It is the meeting place of all those who want to defend and ever reinforce the main gains of our movement — unity at the base, fraternity in struggle and democracy — as a result of which we regret nothing about our strike, despite the results obtained.'

So read one of the resolutions adopted by the conference, the first of its kind.

Although all unions representing rail workers were formally invited to attend, only the CFDT (the union federation associated with the Socialist Party) sent official observers. The leadership of the CGT (the federation led by the Communist Party) opposed the conference.

The liaison committee made clear that far from wanting to pose as another union, it wanted to encourage maximum unity.

'All the unions were invited to the meeting because we want to finish



NCU members demonstrate their opposition to strings during their strike earlier this year.

NCU tells Golding to go

THE ANNUAL conference of the National Communications Union, meeting in Blackpool this week, has been dominated by the fall-out of the national strike earlier this year.

The first all-out national strike in the union's history ended when members voted by two to one to accept a leadership return-to-work recommendation following BT's revised offer of 12.7 per cent over two years. The deal involved productivity strings, including substantial changes in work practices, strongly resented by members.

Results for the elections to the union's national executive announced last week already showed that the union's membership had given a big 'no' to the course pursued by the leadership during the strike. Many right-wing leaders were replaced by supporters of the Broad Left and 'non-aligned' members, and the previous overwhelming right-wing majority on the executive has been eliminated, becoming a 'hung' NEC.

This rejection of the course of the leadership

around general secretary, John Golding, was deepened during the conference itself. The union's key engineering group voted by 76,672 to 35,262 to censure the executive for its handling of the dispute; and by 62,708 to 50,686 to call for Golding's resignation.

The clerical conference also voted to censure its executive.

The resignation calls did not simply come from the traditionally militant areas of the union, but also from branches previously associated with the right wing.

Speaking to the motion, Geoff Graham from Carlisle said that he had a lot of respect for Golding as a political operator but that Golding had failed to 'live up to his pre-election promises to provide leadership for this union'.

With traditional right wing areas voting with those dominated by the

union's Broad Left, a humiliating rebuff was delivered to Golding's, and the right wing executive's, role in the strike.

Golding immediately made it clear he had no intention of resigning — despite his repudiation by the conference. But the vote, together with the executive elections, was a thorough going vindication of the campaign mounted against Golding and the executive. It shows the possibility to step up the fight against the union's leadership. It also shows the openings to strengthen the position of the left in the union — and the necessity to organise it, and deepen its politics, against the Golding leadership.

The second key issue discussed was that of victimisations.

Despite a 'no victimisation' clause in the return-to-work agreement, a number of key union activists in the strategic City of London district have been victimised by BT. There have been suspensions, engineers being moved off their traditional jobs to isolate them

and, in the London City branch itself, two members — John Treadaway and John Deason — have been sacked.

In a closed session of the conference on Monday morning, from which the press were excluded, delegates considered a proposal to launch a campaign in defence of the victimised members.

The outgoing executive asked that the composite from London City and Met South branches be remitted. When that course was rejected, the executive recommended rejection of the motion. In justifying their position, Brian Harper from the top table made a witch-hunting tirade. But he made no impact on delegates who endorsed the resolution in favour of action overwhelmingly.

● Following a request signed by over 100 delegates, the standing orders committee agreed to propose to conference that a speaker from SACTU be invited to address conference over the current rail strike in South Africa.

ASTMS in conference

THE annual conference of ASTMS was dominated by the proposed merger between the union and TASS. We carried a full report on this, by conference delegate PHIL PAXTON, in last week's issue of Socialist Action. In the following article, Phil Paxton, a delegate from the union's 3 divisional council, writes in a personal capacity on other issues debated by conference.

DECISIONS of ASTMS conference on issues other than the merger with TASS were largely routine — reflecting the concern of delegates on employment and trade union issues and looking to the election of a Labour government to solve these problems.

The conference voted to support the TUC policy for a national minimum wage, to fight against the growing trend towards short fixed-term contracts, for greater

control over multinational companies, and for the expansion of industry. An emergency motion sought to build a campaign against the government's latest green paper on the trade unions.

The union, which has many members in universities, declared its total opposition to Tory proposals to replace student grants with student loans in higher education and instructed the national executive to campaign against these proposals. Other motions sought to protect the environment, extend public

housing, and redress the balance between military and non-military research.

On international issues a speaker from Imperial College received considerable support from the conference for ASTMS members who are refusing to work on Star Wars projects at Imperial and other colleges.

Conference supported increased sanctions against South Africa and building a solidarity campaign for Moses Mayekiso of the Metal and Allied Workers Union and four other people charged with high treason and sedition by the South African state.

The conference also condemned the killing of six black South African workers taking part in the railworkers strike. A collection among

delegates for the South African railworkers raised over £400.

Anti-Irish racism was discussed in an amendment to a motion calling for more action within the union by delegates to implement the agreed union policies and to support the courses and work being done within the union on anti-racism.

The motion was carried but the amendment to include anti-Irish racism was lost.

The Associated Staffs for a United Ireland (ASUI) Group held a fringe meeting at which 150 delegates heard John Mitchel general secretary of IDATU (the Dunne's strikers union) call for support for a united Ireland as the only solution for bringing peace and progress to the whole of Ireland.

Notts miners strike

LAST month, miners at Thoresby colliery in North Notts staged their first lightning strike since before the imposition of the overtime ban in 1983. The strike, over payments for working in wet conditions, united rank and file UDM members and NUM men in action against management.

Attempts by UDM members to exclude NUM members from a canteen meeting to discuss the strike resulted in an overwhelming majority of men walking out in disgust. NUM members at Thoresby regard this strike as marking a

major step forward towards bringing rank and file miners back into the unity of the national union.

This incident at Thoresby is part of a whole series of actions in which rank and file unity has begun to be reformed. This growing strength of the national union is also reflected in the industrial tribunal victories of Notts NUM leaders Paul Whetton and Mick McGinty, who were framed up and dismissed by British Coal for their union activities.

Management's response to these gains has been to launch a new round of attacks on Notts NUM. They have so far failed to set

Whetton and McGinty back to work, and they have suspended Area Council member Steve Abbot on another trumped up charge.

The local Justice for Mineworkers Campaign plans to make the issue of the reinstatement of the sacked miners a major election issue. A rally in Mansfield in the run-up to election day is being planned, and prominent national and local speakers are being invited.

At a recent 'Justice' rally in Kirkby some 400 miners and miners wives heard Tony Benn, Peter Heathfield, Alan Meale and sacked Nottingham East PPC, Sharon Atkin, speak in support of the sacked men.

Tories take NALGO to court

FOR the second time within a year, supporters of the Conservative trade unionists organisation have sought to attack the union through legal channels.

Last year, Alan Paul, a political adviser to the Tory local authority in Wakefield, complained unsuccessfully to the certification officer over NALGO's method of electing its national executive.

Now Paul has upped the stakes. Along with a colleague, Simon Barron Fraser, he is seeking an injunction to prevent the union proceeding with its 'Make people matter' campaign.

Their counsel is

submitting that the campaign — which calls for investment in services — invites criticism of government policy, and that it is especially active in Tory marginals.

Although NALGO has political objectives within its constitution, the union has no political fund. Their litigation is receiving advice from Tory central office.

The court action will doubtless strengthen moves at next week's conference of the union to ballot for the establishment of such a fund. Last year, the CPSA decided on such a ballot, with an overwhelming endorsement by the union's membership.

NALGO's local government group conference will also be considering calls for a ballot — over industrial action on pay. On 14 May, the employers made an offer of 4.75 per cent on 1 July and a further 2.2 per cent next February.

The total offer is worth six per cent — an amount rejected by the group conference last year. The executive is recommending acceptance but recent industrial action, especially by members in London and pay campaigns by other public sector unions will mean strong support for rejection.

Senior Colman

MANCHESTER engineers are redoubling their efforts to mobilise support for the strikers at Senior Colman. The strikers, who have all been sacked, have been out since January in defence of union organisation. A major

demonstration and rally has been called by the local district of the CSEU for 4 July.

A support group for the strike has been established, and its first street collection last weekend raised £200.

The strikers received a major

boost with the news that Manchester direct works unions have told the city's architect to kick into touch plans to employ Senior Colman air distribution equipment in 41 buildings being planned. The order was worth £¼ million.

CPSA elections

CIVIL servants battling against the Tory government for a 35 hour week and a £15 pay rise have elected a left-wing dominated executive in ballot results due to be announced this week.

Broad left candidate,

and Militant supporter, John MacReadie has been elected the union's deputy general secretary. He polled 22,399 votes to 16,524 for the right-wing candidate Barry Ainsworth and 11,584 for the CP-backed Broad left '84 candidate, Veronica

Bayne.

MacReadie was the target of a press witch-hunt when he won the last year's election for general secretary. Allegations of ballot 'irregularities' forced a re-run in which John Ellis, the current general secretary topped the poll.

Ford workers against apartheid

SHOP stewards at Ford, Dagenham, were at the plant gates on 21-22 May collecting on behalf of striking South African railworkers.

The collection was the latest in a campaign

of actions in the plant which had led earlier this year to the company's decision to phase out trade with South Africa. Jointly organised with Rail Against Apartheid, it raised over £200.

One hundred and twenty Dagenham workers attended a public meeting organised by the 1/1107 branch of the TGWU where local Labour candidates spoke on the election.

Teachers new strike call

IN addition to their strike action against the Tory government's withdrawal of their negotiating rights, NUT members in

London are being balloted by the national union for a one-day official strike on 16 June. The move comes in

response to a campaign for action by the union's inner London division who are fighting plans by ILEA to compulsorily redeploy 1300 teachers.

Socialist ACTION

Will Hattersley cost Labour the West Midlands?

ON 11 JUNE Labour may well pay a high price for deputy leader Roy Hattersley's witch-hunting attack on the Labour Party Black Section. Polls in most of Britain show Labour advancing in almost the entire country. The one exception is in the West Midlands. Judging from the local government election results last month, and according to several regional surveys carried out during the general election campaign, support for Labour is seriously dropping in Hattersley's own Birmingham area and throughout the West Midlands.

The events leading to the worsening of Labour's position started with the infamous letter of Hattersley and other right wing MPs warning Linda Bellos and Bernie Grant not to come to Birmingham to speak at a Black Section meeting. This focussed national media attention on what would otherwise have been a virtually unnoticed meeting.

The racist hounds were then unleashed by the removal of Sharon Atkin as candidate for Nottingham East by the April meeting of Labour's national executive. Having released a racist campaign, Labour then proceeded to reap the results in the form of a strong Tory advance.

A shift to the right cost Labour control of the Birmingham city council in the local elections. It has

left the party with fewer votes than the Tories in two of the parliamentary seats that Labour currently holds.

By Annie Brady

In the 1983 general election Labour polled 31 per cent of the vote in the West Midlands, compared to 45 per cent for the Tories and 26 for the Alliance. A poll in April showed Labour down five per cent, with the Tories up two per cent and the Alliance up three.

Current polls also show Labour still doing badly in the region. A survey for Midlands Independent Radio shows the threat of Labour losing three seats: Birmingham-Erdington, Walsall South and Wolverhampton North East. A Channel 4

News survey of Dudley West on Monday 1 June showed the Tories had a growing lead in their seat there.

However, far from running a campaign designed to counteract the problems that Labour is clearly facing in the West Midlands, Roy Hattersley and the right wing on Birmingham council reacted to the local government election results by shutting down the council's equal opportunities and race relations committee.

John Spellar, who briefly held the Birmingham-Northfields seat for Labour up to the 1983 election, has argued that Labour must duck 'a wave of hostility centred upon Black Sections and gay liberation'. This follows the local elections where the Tories captured two seats from Labour councillors in the constituency.

Having unleashed — and capitulated to — a racist wave with their witch hunt, Roy Hattersley and the Labour right in the West Midlands look likely to deliver Labour a harsh blow on 11 June.



Black survey shows Big growth in support for Black Sections

THE LABOUR PARTY Black Section is fast gaining ground within the black communities according to a Harris opinion poll published this week by Britain's largest black newspaper group. Support is growing despite the attacks the Black Section has suffered at the hands of the Labour leadership and from the media. Asked 'do you approve or disapprove of the setting up of Black Sections in the Labour Party?', 39 per cent of black Labour supporters wanted to see Black Sections established.

This latest poll stands in sharp contrast to the only other of its type, also carried out by Harris in 1983. Then only 16 per cent of those surveyed supported Black Sections, compared to 60 per cent who didn't.

This recent survey, commissioned by the Hamsib group of newspapers, which includes the *Asian*, *Caribbean* and *African Times*, was conducted among 1007 Asians and Afro-Caribbeans across the country. It showed an overall 72 per cent support for Labour among black people in this country.

This appears to be a drop on the Commission for Racial Equality figure of 81 per cent of black people supporting Labour in 1983. However, the two results are not directly comparable.

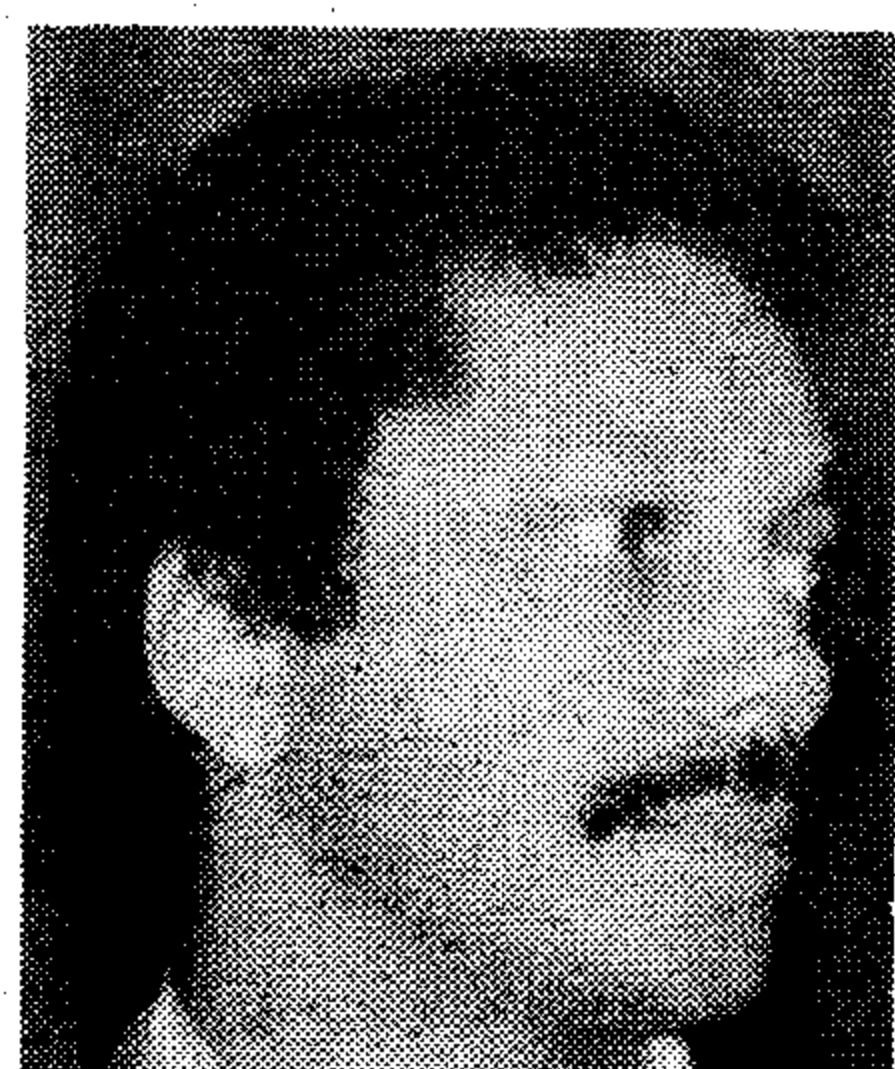
Thirty-three per cent

of all respondents in the Harris survey, regardless of political affiliation, favoured setting up Black Sections in the Labour Party, compared to 45 per cent who did not. The proportion for and against changed quite noticeably however when Labour supporters only were questioned: 39 per cent favoured Black Sections, while 44 per cent did not.

By Carol Turner

Commenting on the survey, Marc Wadsworth Labour Party Black Section national chair, said: 'These results obviously mean that we have majority support for Black Sections among black party members.'

'The poll also reveals that our arguments are becoming more clearly



understood among Labour supporters. If it were not for the hostile media and repeated attacks on us from key figures in the labour movement, we believe there would be majority support among them too.'

The most dramatic results of all came from a breakdown of support for Black Sections on the basis of social class. Only 14 per cent of black professionals supported their establishment, compared with 37 per cent support from unskilled black workers.

As the *Caribbean Times* points out, this provides 'a counter claim to the argument that Black Sections are only popular with the middle classes'.

Marc Wadsworth told Socialist Action: 'This poll is the proof positive of our

campaign for black organisation with Labour Party. The give the Black Section clear black man continue from a position than ever

'The Harris survey plodes the myth that Section are the pre the black middle class vindicates our employment campaigning among rank and file of workers who are the oppressed section class and who are properly catered for by the Labour Party's trade union movement power structures.'

'We are going stepping up our campaign for black self-organisation and representation increased vigour for this tremendous This proves that workers want Black Sections despite the paganda we've heard certain sections of party.'

'Only black people lead the fight racism is this country continuing to within the Labour and to build across the labour movement, we will ensure anti-racist socialist are at the top of Labour agenda.'

PHOTO: George Makin



Demonstrators protest Birmingham council's decision to abandon the race relations and equal opportunities committee

Tottenham Tories in chaos

THE TORY Party in Tottenham is running a dirty campaign against Labour candidate Bernie Grant. But its main effect has been to create a split within the Tories own ranks.

Former Tory councillor for Haringey, Michael Conroy, and another Tory candidate in the local elections, Sushil Vig, are publicly calling for a vote for the Alliance's parliamentary candidate Stuart Etherington.

Vig told the *Hornsey Journal* last week: 'I may be forced to vote for him after 27 years as a Tory to try and keep Grant out.' Vig has already contacted several hundred hardcore Tories

who, he claims, will do likewise.

But the split among the Tory Party in Tottenham isn't a straight forward case of tactical voting. In the last election the Tories polled over 13,000 votes to the Liberals 6000.

The Tory split arises from the fact that the PPC for their area, Peter Murphy, is an extreme right winger. Conroy told the *Hornsey Journal*: 'He treats people like dirt. The way he behaves towards people there was always going to be a backlash. And now here it is.'

Murphy, however, is more than just unpleasant. He has a track-record as an out-and-out racist.

During the recent local elections, Murphy — who denies he's a racist — cir-

culated a leaflet showing a white man being hit on the head, next to a Broadwater Farm Estate sign. The slogan read: 'You are about to be mugged here.' Another of his leaflets called for 'Dirt, Violence, Filth, Theft — Gypsies out of Tottenham'.

Writing in *The Voice* of 26 May, Mark Harrison unearthed some of Murphy's unsavoury past. In June 1986 he turned up uninvited to a race equality committee meeting and racially abused Labour councillor and Black Section supporter Narendra Makanji.

According to Makanji's solicitor, quoted in Harrison's article, Murphy said: 'Your brain comes from the sewer ... You deserve apartheid.'

In May 1977 Mark Harrison was expelled from Wood Green Tory group 'disruptive and unacceptable' behaviour. Last same year he was suspended from the London Conservative Association, by a 33

More recently Mark Harrison was suspended from council meetings after he cushioned at the Labour mayor and stumped woman councillor. Murphy's written apology to the Haringey chief executive officer said he was suspended didn't hit the mayor and square in the where he deserved it.

Murphy's candid so far has divided the Tories. But, needless to say, Murphy has not repudiated by the Tories.

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