

Socialist Challenge

UNEMPLOYMENT THE ONLY GROWTH INDUSTRY IN TORY BRITAIN

ONLY one thing is growing in Tory Britain — the dole queues.

* MacGregor, the new boss who cost British Steel £2m, has just scrapped plans to sack 100,000 steelworkers. Instead, he threatened to completely shut down steel plants in either Port Talbot or Llanwern. He wants to INCREASE the number and speed of sackings in steel.

* Unemployed school leavers' job prospects will receive a further blow following the increase in fees for youth retraining programmes.

* Two million people will be out of work by the end of next year and this number will continue to rise, according to the National Institute of Economic and Social Research.

Everything else in Britain is standing still or in decline.

* Inflation will continue to be 17 per

cent this year which means that those in work will not increase their living standards despite pay increases. Those out of work or in low paid industries will suffer big cuts in living standards.

* Gross Domestic Product will contract by one per cent meaning that the economy will contract, investment will fall, and more and more firms will go bankrupt.

TORY policies are not working. They cannot guarantee a basic right — the right to work. In a recession all the Tories can do is urge people to grin and bear it and wait for an 'upturn' in the economy.

There is an alternative to unemployment and capitalist stagnation, one that starts from the need of every person for a job and a decent living standard.

Work should be shared, holidays, time off, and training schemes increased, industries that declare themselves bankrupt should be placed under workers' control and taken into public ownership — without putting people on the dole in the meantime.

But this would cut into the bosses' profits. It would challenge their hold over the economy. They would resist with their law, their courts, and their police. The Tories themselves would fight such a solution like mad.

That's why we must build a movement to kick this bosses' government out.

**Cut the dole queues.
Share the work!**

**Kick
out the
Tories**



BLACK YOUTH —THE REAL LIONS

THIS weekend the all-white British Lions rugby team plays an all-white South African rugby team.

This sporting occasion is meant to welcome back the apartheid regime to the world of respectability.

But this is one circus which, even before it is staged, will have no chance of diverting attention from the real world of South Africa.

In Johannesburg last Monday, 52 church leaders were arrested by the racist regime. They had dared to demonstrate, calling for the release of another cleric who supported the demands of South Africa's black youth for an end to discrimination in education.

During the past six weeks the youth themselves have been killed, shot, and tear-gassed by South African police.

In Port Elizabeth, Johannesburg, Soweto, Cape Town, Bloemfontein, and Batho, school students have demonstrated, boycotted their classes, and in return they have been savagely assaulted by the forces of white 'law and order'.

But the blacks have not taken their treatment lying down. Police cars have been overturned, government offices have been set on fire, bricks have been hurled at the cops attacked.

And it is not just the youth. In Durban, black textile workers on strike for more money have also been on the streets. Tear gas has been used on them. There is also intensification of the war in Namibia between SWAPO and the South African illegal army of occupation.

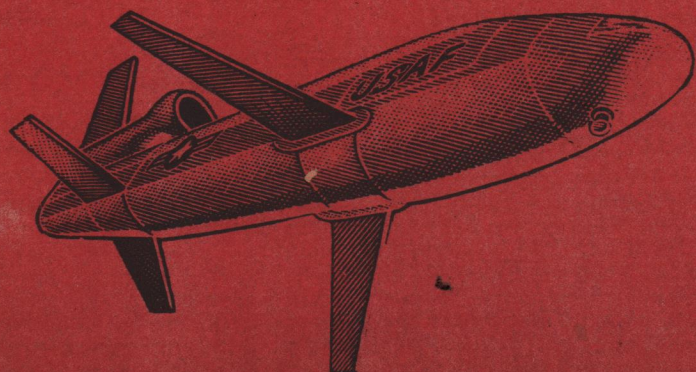
Last week the South African army lost five officers and an undisclosed number of other soldiers in what has been described as the biggest military battle in Namibia so far.

Now the Angolan government has announced that in the last month South African forces have invaded its territory. Fighter bombers, gunships, and heavy artillery were used in the invasion, designed to punish Angolans for supporting the national liberation struggle in Namibia.

Whether openly or secretly, all this is supported by the Thatcher government and other Western powers.

The Tories have refused to disclose the names of 33 British firms in South Africa which are paying wages below the poverty line.

Rugby balls or no rugby balls, the real contest in South Africa is outside the sport stadiums. It is the battle between a white racist regime and its black, majority population. Forget rugby, just cheer on the blacks.



Socialist Challenge says:

**No Cruise missiles!
Britain out of NATO!**

**Demonstrate Saturday 22 June,
12.30pm**

Assemble Embankment. March to Hyde Park
Called by the Labour Party



Inside Britain's co A VISIT TO

AT AUSCHWITZ, they had an orchestra at the entrance to the death camp, a macabre and unsuccessful gesture to disguise the horrors within. At Long Kesh they say it with flowers.

In recent months, as a result of the increase in public concern about the conditions in the H Blocks at Long Kesh, five miles south of Belfast, a trickle of influential visitors has been allowed in.

So, in the midst of the great expanse of grey wire and machine-gun posts, the authorities have planted a couple of tiny regimented beds of hyacinths and wallflowers.

LIZ CURTIS and ALASTAIR RENWICK describe a recent visit.

Only one half-hour visit is allowed each calendar month. Everything has to be said in that time.

In theory the prisoners are allowed one letter each month, but these frequently never reach them. So, in the absence of newspapers, radio, TV, or books, the prisoners on protest for political status rely on the monthly half-hour for all their information about the outside world.

The prisoners have to run a gauntlet of screws and mirror searches to reach the visiting cubicles. They are forced to squat naked over a mirror on the floor to have their back passages examined. If they refuse they are beaten.

One former blanket man, Joe Maguire, told us that often he was so worried about the beating he was going to get on his way out that he could not concentrate on the visit at all.

The visitors have been wor-

rying for days beforehand about the visit. What will he be like? Will he be better or worse than the last time? What will he want to know? Will I remember everything I want to tell him?

The half-hour visit takes up most of the day. Minibuses are organised from the various nationalist districts of Belfast. They go first to the Prisoners' Welfare Office in a small, endlessly busy building on the Falls Road. There have been Loyalist sectarian murders here, and the front of the building is now wired in.

Most of the visitors are women, perhaps because former prisoners are barred from visiting. They keep up a flow of talk as the minibus moves out through the Belfast suburbs into the green countryside. Only the children are really cheerful, clambering about the packed bus.

We have been here before,

18 months ago. It is still a shock to come up a country road and be confronted by the corrugated iron and watchtowers of HM concentration camp.

They have spruced up the visiting facilities since we last came. The huts at the entrance seem to be new, and you no longer queue in the open air to show your ID.

Turnstile

'They did it up to make us feel worse,' says Betty, whose son Kieran we are visiting. But while the visitors find it hard to take the contrast between the spotless walls and the degraded condition of their imprisoned relatives, the new huts and paintwork are in fact a response to the growing international criticism of the H Block regime.

We get out of the minibus and wait by a green-painted turnstile which breaks the acres of grey wire. Two children climb up the turnstile, poking their hands through the bars and shouting at the screws the other side, 'Let us in, you horrible monsters.'

Eventually a screw unlocks the gate. Over by a wall another screw stands with a huge alsaian dozing at his feet. We go into a hut and queue to show our ID. People give in their handbags. Then we sit in rows waiting to be called for the search. The few men are in a separate row from the women. 'Next!' a shout comes from behind a partition wall. You go round and a screw sends you into a tiny cubicle of a room with a second door opposite you.

A screw is sitting at a table. The other screw comes in

behind you, orders you to open your jacket, and pats you all over including round the crotch.

The screw at the table takes your ID and puts it in an envelope, then asks for your purse. The screw takes out all the notes, counts them, and — bizarrely — selotapes them into an envelope and puts it back in the purse, which is returned to you. This is a recent innovation, which no one can understand. What can they buy in the H Blocks? The screws perhaps?

The standing screw takes everything out of your pockets and shakes your handkerchief. Your belt is removed. Your cigarette packet is examined to make sure there is no silver paper in it. There is a lengthy list of forbidden items on the wall. Even chewing-gum is not allowed. It seems a subversive use can be found for almost everything.

The screw asks you to take off one of your shoes, shakes it and looks inside, then returns it. At last you are let out of the other door into a room the far side.

Lighters

It seems there has been another strange innovation. Till a fortnight before, visitors were allowed to take through four matches. Now these are forbidden, and no lighters are allowed anyway. One woman has managed to get through the search with her cigarette lit. We all light up from her. From then on somebody has to have a cigarette alight all the time. 'They're trying to make us ask the screws for a light,' somebody says, 'because we refuse to talk to them.'

We sit and wait. We spend far more time sitting and waiting than we will spend talking to Kieran.

At last a screw starts to call out the names and numbers of the prisoners who are being visited. Mothers summon their children. We have Kieran's six-year-old brother Liam with us. He is rushing about the room. Kieran has been two and a half years on the blanket, so Liam is entirely familiar with visiting Long Kesh and quite undaunted by it.

Flowerbeds

We file through the door and into a waiting minibus. All the windows except the wind-screen are covered in opaque material so that you can't see out. What are they hiding?

We travel round the perimeter of the camp and arrive at an enormous pair of parallel gates. The bus is let through the first gate, which is locked after it. The next gate is opened. The bus goes through and the gate is locked.

We are let out of the bus onto a broad 'avenue' lined with corrugated iron and high wire fencing. We see the two cruelly incongruous little flowerbeds.

We go through another turnstile into another waiting room. Again the prisoners' surnames and numbers are called out. A screw tells the visitors the numbers of the cubicles where the visits will be.

We sit down at the table. It has a board underneath so that there can be no contact with the prisoner. There are high partitions on either side of us. Liam promptly climbs on the table and looks over into the next

cubicle.

The waiting is awful. We wait half an hour till Kieran comes out. Betty worries endlessly that he is never going to come. This has happened before: visits have been stopped at the last minute.

As the blanket men come through the door at the end of the hut, visitors crane round the partitions to try and see who it is. They smile and say 'Hello' even if they don't know the blanket man.

The blanket men are very pale. Their hair is very long and greasy. They are wearing the most absurd outfits. The so-called uniforms are crumpled bits of demin which would even be rejected for sale as jumble. They are too small for the big men and too big for the small men, a deliberate attempt to humiliate them. The prisoners have no socks on and there are no laces in their boots.

Visits are the only time the men will wear the uniforms. They do so because without the visits there would be no means of getting any information in or out. Ironically, conforming prisoners — those who are not on the protest — do not have to wear uniforms for visits. But the blanket men are forced to.

Martin Meehan comes through, immediately recognisable and looking furious. Meehan has been a leading Republican for several years; the previous week he was framed in court so blatantly that even priests protested about it. He got 12 years for something everyone knows he did not do.

Liam is running up and



concentration camp H BLOCK

down between the boxes. Betty calls him. He hides behind the table to give our Kieran a surprise.

At last Betty says, 'Here's our Kieran.' He is tall and very thin and pale. His arms protrude from the shrunken uniform jacket. It's over a year now since his hair was forcibly shaved off, and it has grown very long. He walks with a stoop and his eyes are red-rimmed. He is 20 years old.

Stooped

When he smiles at us we catch a glimpse of the charm he used to be known for. He sits down and turns immediately to his mother. He is clearly very nervous and blinks a lot. 'I've got messages for you, but I can't remember them,' he says. From time to time during the visit he repeats, 'I can't remember my messages.'

Memory loss is common among the blanket men. The tension of the visit makes it worse. Before someone takes a visit, his comrades on the wing call down the messages they want passed out. These are often about arrangements for their own visits.

Kieran is desperate for news. We hadn't anticipated this. When he goes back to his cell he will be asked the 'sceal' (Gaelic for news). Speaking fast and under his breath he asks us what is happening in Belfast, what is happening in Zimbabwe and in Palestine, and what is happening in England. 'Do people really support us there?' he asks.

He asks us whether the Easter march in Belfast really was big. It was — there were several thousands out. The

blanket men like to check their information to make sure it's true. One visitor's account is not enough. Apparently the news of Mountbatten's death last year, and the deaths of the 18 soldiers at Warrenpoint, was checked time and again before any of the prisoners believed it.

Because he has to talk very quietly so that the screws can't hear, he can't talk to all of us at once. He alternates between us.

What is happening in England is very important to them, he says. We tell him about the march last August and the Bloody Sunday Commemoration. He finds it hard to believe that thousands will come out on the streets of Britain in their support. We tell him about public meetings, and that letters smuggled out of the H Blocks have been published in English papers. He is pleased and surprised. But we are careful not to exaggerate the support.

Gaelic

Their conditions would be completely intolerable to anyone without their clear and strong political motivation. We know from meeting Kieran and hearing what he was like before, and from meeting others who spent years on the blanket and are now released, that they are physically and psychologically marked for life in a way that the prisoners with 'status' never were.

Kieran tells us that despite everything there is no way the protesters will yield. His cell is 'stinking', he says. They keep going by learning Gaelic. The teacher shouts from behind the cell door and they scratch the

words onto their cell walls with rosary beads.

They run quizzes — using every scrap of information that comes in — and they sing. 'We sing Republican songs and pop songs — but we're right out of date. Sometimes we overhear bits of songs on the screws' radios, but that's all.'

He wants the latest football results. Fortunately one of us follows the football, so we can help with that. 'You saved me, knowing the football results!' Betty says later.

Kieran asks us to write him a letter — a 'big' letter. 'They might let it in if it comes from England,' he says. It's no use writing about Ireland; they would censor it. He asks us to write about Zimbabwe and other international news and the football results and the latest pop songs.

Suddenly, all too soon, the time is up. There is no hanging about. That would only lead to more beatings. Kieran kisses his mother and Liam, and shakes hands with us. Then he is away, led off by a screw.

We go back, dazed, to the bus with the opaque windows. Gradually the post mortems on the visits start. The visitors share their news as we are funnelled back through the system, signing for bags and belts and being let out through the turnstile.

As we travel back towards Belfast we recall the words of Sean O'Casey's lament for Thomas Ashe, who died in 1917 after being force-fed while on hunger-strike.

You cannot put a rope around the neck of an idea
You cannot put an idea up against a barrack-square wall and riddle it with bullets
You cannot confine it in the strongest prison cell that your slaves could ever build.

Postscript

* We visited Kieran in April. After his May visit his mother Betty, his sister Deborah and his brother-in-law were banned from visiting him or anyone else for life.

At the end of the visit their names were called out. They were locked into a van and driven back to the search area. The screws insisted that Kieran had passed them letters — a totally false accusation.

Knowing that Kieran is anxious for anything written in Gaelic, Deborah had clipped two articles in Gaelic from *Republican News* and smuggled them through the search.

She didn't give them to Kieran, because screws were standing over them all the time. Now she pulled out the articles and threw them at the screws, saying they were all she had and nothing had gone in or out. Betty, as we ourselves knew, categorically refuses to take anything in.

Then all three were searched. Betty was made to pull down her pants and show her sanitary towel. Nothing was found.

Then they were summoned to see a senior screw, who told them they were banned from visiting Kieran or any other prisoner for life. Deborah protested that it was only her who had anything, and she didn't pass the articles in anyway — and they were hardly dangerous substances! — but to no avail.

The following Sunday two priests tried to see Kieran. They were told he was 'on the boards' in the punishment cells, and they were not allowed to see him or give him communion. Later Betty heard

from visitors to other prisoners that Kieran had been beaten up.

As we go to press we have heard that Betty wrote to the governor of Long Kesh and received a reply saying the mat-

ter would be overlooked and she would be allowed in.

We have also heard that Father Denis Faul visited Kieran, who told him that after the visit he was subjected to a very severe search. He was put on the boards for two days and the screws examined all his excrement to see if had swallowed any letters. Nothing was found.

THE ISSUE

THE H blocks were a creation of the last Labour government.

In 1972 the Heath government recognised the exceptional nature of those in prison for 'crimes' connected with the political situation in the North of Ireland and granted those prisoners 'special category status'.

This meant that the prisoners were allowed to wear their own clothes, mix freely and take orders only from their officers rather than from prison staff.

Their status was similar to that given to prisoners of war.

This procedure was abolished by the Labour government in 1976. But the prisoners refused to accept the change and refused to wear prison uniforms. The British reacted to this by denying prisoners the usual facilities and by harassing them. One example was that unless prisoners wore prison uniforms they weren't allowed to go to the toilet.

The British insist that the prisoners are ordinary 'criminals' but, from the minute they are picked up to the minute that they are convicted, those 'on the blanket' are treated entirely differently from criminals. They are convicted by special 'Diplock' courts, in which the normal laws regulating trials are ignored. There are no juries in these courts, the accused are tried by judges alone and those making accusations are not required to appear in court and therefore need not be cross-examined.

A new campaign has recently been started in Britain to support the demands of Irish political prisoners. Details of this campaign, called *Charter '80*, will appear in subsequent issues of *Socialist Challenge*.

British Oxygen workers explode over safety

By Geoffrey Sheridan

BETTER health and safety at work was meant to be one of the presents that the last Labour government gave to the trade unions in return for defeating the Heath administration.

The Health and Safety Executive was set up, chaired by Bill Simpson, former general secretary of the Engineering Union's foundry section, and legal provision was made for union safety representatives to be appointed in most workplaces.

The Labour government didn't say that trades unionists could only depend on their own action to protect their lives and health at work, but that was a conclusion that has been drawn by the workers at British Oxygen's depot in Hackney, East London — with good reason.

Each day they work among a thousand potential bombs — 5ft-high steel cylinders filled with compressed oxygen. If one of the containers, known as

bottles, goes up, the effect is like a high explosive.

So you would think that improvements in health and safety would mean more frequent testing of the bottles. In fact BOC has changed the scheme whereby each bottle is tested once in five years. The company is now testing them once every ten years.

Bottles have exploded. One worker at BOC's Greenwich depot was blown to pieces by an explosion in 1955, and another

worker had his stomach smashed.

The remains of three workers ended up in the streets around the Hackney depot after an explosion while a bottle was being filled in 1965. Six years later another worker was killed in Wembley when a bottle exploded.

Mickey Boulter, the deputy convenor and union safety rep at the Hackney depot, considers that there is only one reason why management is cutting the tests — money. The workers' position, he adds, is that profit must not come before safety.

'We should be moving forwards not backwards,' he says. 'We should be testing the bottles every year. We have no idea what happens to the bottles when they are out of the depot — they could be dropped from a roof or anything.

'We want more tests not less. That's the way we feel and that's the way the testers here feel.'

But not the company. Paul Foot wrote about the danger at BOC in the *Daily Mirror* last week. As a result the union representatives and the testers at the Hackney depot were hauled in by management and quizzed for several hours and threatened with disciplinary action.

Hackney is the only one of BOC's 46 depots refusing to implement 10-year tests. As Mickey Boulter puts it: 'We're holding out for all the depots.'

And the Health and Safety Executive? 'They don't want to know,' Mickey says. 'They play one side against the other. They're a joke.'

Tessa Van Gelderen adds: the basic rights of trade union organisation are under attack

at BOC. On Tuesday at the Hackney depot management met all the shop stewards and announced the closure of the acetylene department, with 26 workers to go in three months.

The work will go to depots in Bristol and Cardiff. It just so happens that workers at the Hackney depot have been in the forefront for improving safety conditions in BOC and fighting for better pay and conditions all round.

Blatant

John Walsh, convenor at Hackney, says: 'It's a blatant attack on the union to break the solidarity at the depot.' The scheduled redundancies include the branch chairperson, the vice chairperson, branch secretary, shop steward, and assistant con-

venor.

The cutbacks will be fought, and they are not the only attack by management.

An all-out strike began at the Wembley depot on Tuesday, when the plant came out after installation engineers were suspended by management. The engineers refused to accept the splitting of their department, which would result in a weakening of union organisation. 'Management obviously thinks we won't support the other depots because we have our own problems,' says John Walsh. 'But the whole union must support both disputes.'

'They are linked and a defeat of either will be a big blow to the union inside BOC. This is a make or break situation and we intend to fight all along the line.'

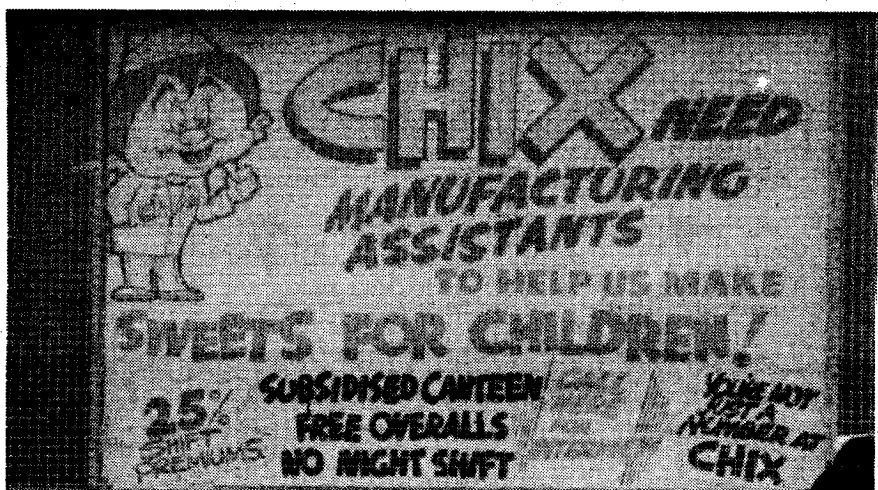


Photo: PETE GRANT (Socialist Challenge)

SELL-OUT AT CHIX

By Oliver New

AFTER just over seven months of picketing, Asian women workers at the Chix bubble-gum factory in Slough heard last Friday that their strike had been called off.

This decision, which leaves most of the strikers out in the cold, was taken by officials of the General and Municipal Workers Union, after consultation with only a few of those involved.

Before the walk-out of 96 Chix workers began in October, they were paid 95p an hour and treated like animals. The fight against such intolerable conditions has brought the dispute much attention within the labour movement, but there has been only patchy support on the picket line and in supporting a boycott.

Yet the determination of the strikers succeeded in getting supplies shut off, and on occasional days of action up to 400 people joined the picket line.

Chix boss Denis Rose was forced to the negotiating table earlier this month.

The agreement reached with the GMWU means that although the company has given way on the principle of union recognition, the majority of the remaining strikers — 28 part-time workers — are to receive redundancy pay as a result of 'lost contracts'.

But this apparent shortage of work does not affect the scabs who have been recruited by Chix since the strike

started. The 19 returning strikers will now be outnumbered by scabs.

Whatever arguments the GMWU employs to justify this agreement, its failure to report back to the strikers most certainly cannot be justified. The only people consulted were the 19 day-shift workers who will be

keeping their jobs.

Throughout the strike, the Chix women have been patronised by white men who were their supporters.

The fact that they have not even been consulted over the ending of the strike is a further insult to Asian women whose militancy and determination should have been taken as an example to the whole trade union movement.

The sell-out would have been more difficult if the strike had been run by an elected strike committee.

Telegrams of congratulations have been sent to Mrs Brar, now to be made redundant and to CP member Mohammed Anwar, the local GMWU branch secretary, showing that many in the labour movement have the impression that a victory was won.

There is a possibility that the Chix women may continue their strike, which — with rapid labour movement backing — would oblige the union to renegotiate the settlement.

Public employees vote for a fight on union rights

DELEGATES at the annual conference of the National Union of Public Employees earlier this week defied the recommendation of the executive and carried a motion in support of the Rank and File Code of Practice on union rights.

The motion, proposed by Bert Ellicot, district secretary of Manchester South Hospitals, was carried by approximately 5,100 votes to 4,300. It stated:

Conference supports the R&F Code of Practice for industrial disputes and in particular urges: * The promotion and defence of one hundred per cent closed shops throughout the public sector. * Industrial disputes involving NUPE members to be run by stewards and/or district committees.

*The establishment of picket lines in all disputes in the public services and respect for the same by all NUPE members. *Full consultation with the members concerned in all disputes, including full report back and decision-making by all involved at mass membership meetings. *Total opposition to any enforced arbitration.

The conference backed an economic policy. Watement embracing the Labour left's

Alternative Economic Strategy, which will now be debated within the union's divisions. With only one vote against, delegates supported a resolution calling for a fight for full equality for gays.

A resolution totally opposing the use of nuclear power for whatever purpose was carried against desperate pleas for caution from the platform.

A solid minority emerged to support a resolution proposed by Ray Varnes, ILEA district delegate, calling for mass action to get rid of the Tories. Support for this position swelled as conference split on the wages debate.

However, a motion calling for an £85 minimum wage and a recall conference to ratify any settlement fell with 5,000 votes against and 3,500 for.

Photo: PETE GRANT (Socialist Challenge)

POEU demand 30% and 35 hours

Post Office Engineering Union

By Colin Talbot,
Westminster branch, POEU

A 30 per cent wage increase and an immediate 35-hour week will be among the issues discussed at the Post Office Engineering Union's annual conference next week.

Delegates to the conference gather against a background of profound changes. Post Office Telecommunications is in the process of being separated from the rest of the Post Office, into a new corporation — British Telecom.

A massive modernisation programme is underway, including converting over 6,000

telephone exchanges from old-fashioned electro-mechanical systems to all-electronic systems. Post Office Telecommunications continues to be highly profitable industry, £347m were made in 1979. This is despite paying out almost £500m in interest payments.

The Thatcher government wants to divide up Post and Telecommunications so that they can weaken trade union resistance to their plans for both parts of the business. It would also neatly divide the profitable from the non-profitable sections of the Post Office, preparing for the run-down of the latter and opening up the former to private ownership.

The POEU leadership has gone along with the Post Office, or rather the Telecommunications, management, even to the extent of sup-

porting the split.

Two years ago they sold out the campaign for the 35-hour week, capitulating to management and settling for a 37½-hour, 'nil cost', agreement.

After this campaign the POEU Broad Left was formed, which now has supporters in over 70 union branches and seven supporters on the current National Executive Council.

The Broad Left is opposing the split in the Post Office and organising with militant forces in the other PO unions against its effects. On wages, we are fighting for a 1980 claim of 30 per cent, without strings, to bring our wages back to the level of 1978.

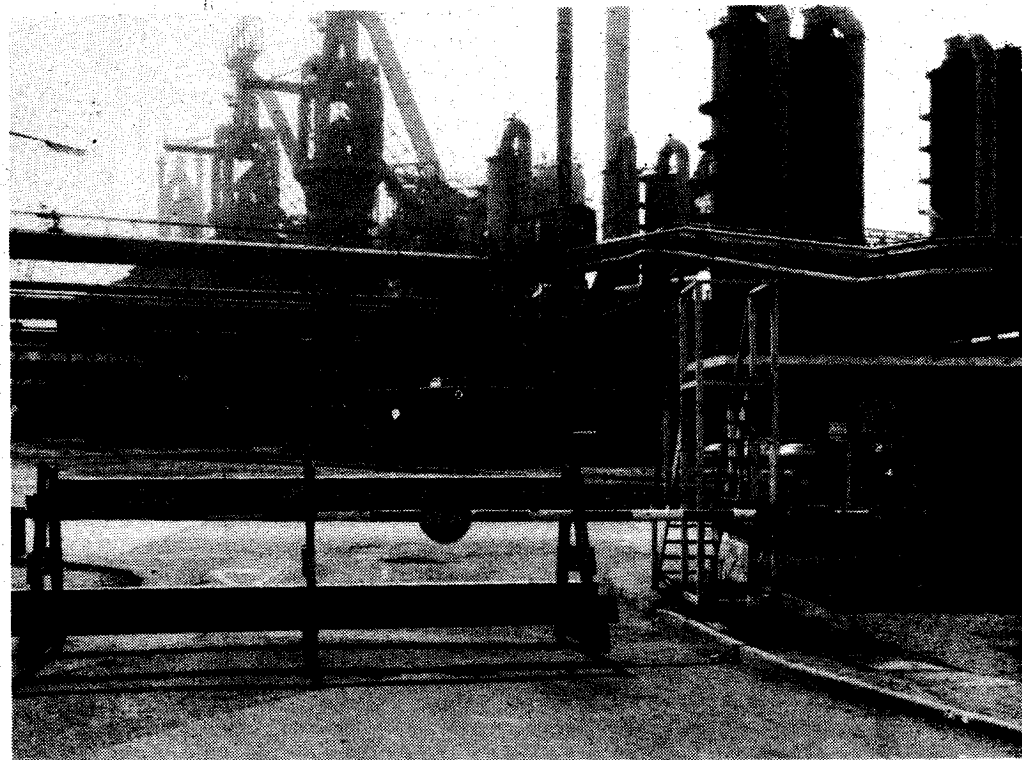
On hours, we want a campaign of industrial action for the 35-hour week now, and the 32-

hour week by 1984 is being proposed, to maintain and increase the number of jobs in telecom in the face of modernisation.

Demands are also being made for increased annual leave, better training facilities and job security.

Every activist in the union understands that we are in for a tough time. The management has made a 'final offer' of only 15 per cent productivity. The government imposed cash-limits are going to make it even harder to rebuff attacks on our standard of living.

On the other hand, PO engineers have tremendous power — if only we bring ourselves to use it. Maggie Thatcher might just find that pushing the working class around isn't quite so easy when Buzby goes off the air.



THESE contributions from Bill Sirs (ISTC General Secretary) and George Wright, of the Wales TUC, surprised many steel workers who observed the Wales Labour Party Conference in Swansea on 17 May.

These are not the words they remember when they demanded a strong lead from the ISTC and the TUC during the steel strike. For all Sirs' and Wright's retrospective demagoguery on jobs, their record in the steel strike is not forgotten. In the last week of the strike, Sirs explained his position in the *Steel Workers Banner*:

'Practically all of the important principals demanded by the corporation have been conceded. It will not be easy for us. It will mean the surrender of many customs and habits. It will mean negotiating away many jobs.'

Retreat

In February, George Wright explained away the Wales TUC retreat from a call for industrial action to oppose steel and coal redundancies: 'We have never called, will not call, and never intend to call a general strike'.

Demagoguery aside, this is the real face of the leaders who have allowed jobs in Port Talbot to be negotiated away in return for pitiful redundancy payments and the prospects of permanent unemployment.

Tommy Lyons, EEPTU branch secretary at Port Talbot Steelworks, explained his disgust to Socialist Challenge:

'The ISTC, NUB, and AUEW in Port Talbot have signed the BSC proposals. The EEPTU and the TGWU have so far refused to sign. The other unions have accepted the slimline hook line and sinker. They have negotiated the golden handshake deal. In my

South Wales jobs

Negotiation: a sick joke

'Jobs are more important than wages. We should be fighting for jobs to protect the future of our children. We wanted to strike for jobs but every other union on the TUC Steel Committee turned us down. When we went to the TUC to fight for jobs they turned us down.... we must unite against a common enemy and get rid of the Tory Government. We cannot afford to have them in office for another four years. We must use every method to push them, if possible, out of office.'

Bill Sirs, ISTC.

opinion, the lay delegates are too interested in getting their own redundancy pay. They aren't looking further than tomorrow. Even the young workers have resigned themselves to the situation.

'Many of them will have a rude shock when they try to find jobs in Port Talbot. Just last week a building firm shut down with the loss of another 1,000 jobs in the area.

'The agreement made in Port Talbot will set the scene for the rest of the country. Thirty six thousand jobs are planned to go, on top of those in South Wales. The agreements made now in Port Talbot

and Llanwern will set a precedent for the BSC in these areas.

'Bill Sirs said at the Welsh Labour Party conference that the jobs fight should be taken up. So why has the executive not issued a national directive that the local leaderships stop the negotiations? Why has the national Steel Committee not taken this up?

'They should have sent a letter to the local plants arguing against negotiating these deals. They must come clean on whether they want a jobs fight or not. We cannot afford to stick out on our own — we need

a national directive.

'The EEPTU in Port Talbot has demanded a meeting with our national official so that he can tell us what the national position is. If the jobs are going to be signed away it must be clear that this is a directive from our national officials.

Pathetic

'The British TUC and Wales TUC have been pathetic. Our problem is that these leaders, people like Sirs, and Duffy, are not giving a lead. Half the workforce of Port Talbot will go with this deal. The other half will have a real

fight on their hands to stop the same happening to them. But their fight has already been undermined by the lack of response from a national level.'

In Llanwern too, negotiations are in progress over BSC threats to cut almost 5,000 jobs. *Steel Sheet*, the bulletin produced by ISTC, NUB and AUEW members in Llanwern, is campaigning against these talks and for a fight against the redundancies.

Resist

A call has been issued to the 400 pickets who agreed at the

end of the strike to resist the redundancies to meet again on 4 June to plan this opposition. As one contributor to *Steel Sheet* argues:

Lounge

'Our trade union leaders in their air-conditioned offices and lounge suits have become used to discussing national problems with the government over tea and buns. They have become isolated from the everyday dirt and insecurity of workers in industry as they accept their role as the "third arm of government".'

'Negotiation at Llanwern is a sick joke. A fightback within these rules is doomed to failure. The time for action is near. The leadership you are looking for is ready to assert itself, if you give it your backing. It is now up to you, the victims of Tory-manipulated BSC, to hit back.'

Many are now looking to the miners to act. They too are faced with devastating redundancies. Philip Weekes, South Wales Director of the National Coal Board, announced this week that 6,500 miners will face the dole queue by the new year as six pits close and a government subsidy on Welsh coaling coal to Llanwern is withdrawn.

Miners

This is only a start. At the South Wales miners conference held a fortnight ago, 15 lodges submitted an emergency resolution opposing NCB plans to recall 21 pits for investigation with the possible loss of 15,000 jobs in the next year.

Workers in other unions were called on to support a fight against these redundancies and Welsh miners will campaign at the national NUM conference in July for country-wide action against the pit closures. The squeeze is on, but there is still time to fight for the trade union leaders to act before it is too late.

Nottingham teachers step up action

By John Hobbs

EILEEN Crosbie was not a union militant, just a conscientious nursery school teacher who refused to teach a class of 39 when the official recommendation for her class size is two-thirds of that figure. For this Eileen Crosbie was dismissed.

Nottingham county council has unilaterally upped the ratio of children to teachers in nursery classes and seems determined to press ahead with this cut, come what may. Teachers have no say in the matter.

Councillor Bird, a boot-strap Tory, has said that education policy is of no concern to teachers and the National Union of Teachers should 'mind its own business' about class size.

When Eileen Crosbie came up for a disciplinary hearing, two thousand teachers in Nottingham took strike action in her support. This was coupled with the implementation of class-size ratios.

The council retaliated by locking out teachers taking action, including the whole staff at one school in Eastwood.

The union response has been to escalate the fightback. First 25 schools took three days' strike action, then 30 schools the following week. Now 35 schools are out, affecting some ten thousand school students.

With other local authorities watching to see if the Tories succeed in imposing their cuts in Nottingham, the teachers are pressing the NUT's national action committee for a further stepping-up of the local action, and a national demonstration and rally in Nottingham.

Donations and messages of support to: Eileen Crosbie, c/o 111 Portland Rd, Nottingham.

The strange case of TB or not TB

By Rob Patterson

'VIRGINITY tests' are not the only medical ploy being used to exclude black people from Britain. Mohammed Butt presently faces deportation because an immigration service doctor says he has infectious tuberculosis.

Mohammed arrived in Britain in February after being cleared by Home Office officials, including a doctor, in Pakistan. But he was immediately arrested and put in an isolation ward pending deportation.

Pressure on the Home Office resulted in his temporary release from hospital, provided Mohammed paid for private medical treatment.

Now a private consultant says that Mohammed has only a mild form of TB which does not prevent him from working, and that in any case the illness will be cured in less than three months.

An appeal has been lodged against the refusal of leave to enter Britain, and even if this is successful — which will be known in a few days — Mohammed will still have to reapply for permission to enter the country.

A defence campaign is being set up, aimed at the labour movement and health workers. Contact: Friends of Mohammed Butt, c/o 301 Cheetham Hill Rd, Manchester 8.

Workers plan for better health

By Hilary Wainwright

Workers in the aerospace industry organising a meeting on better health? Certainly not part of the normal run of trade union activity.

But then most of the initiatives of shop stewards at Lucas Aerospace go well beyond the normal limits of trade unionism. Their workshop last Saturday in London on 'Workers plan for better health' was no exception.

They organised it through CAITS, the Centre for Alternative Industrial and Technological Systems, which they run jointly with the North-east London Poly.

The Lucas Aerospace stewards have long been challenging the way that trade unions separate the workers' needs as producers from their needs as consumers and members of the community.

The stewards' plan for socially useful production was based on bringing together these needs. Many of the products proposed were for the health service; improved kidney machines and more advanced equipment for the disabled were examples.

These products and the new tactic of organising around alternative plans based on social need has attracted a lot of interest among health workers and cuts campaigns.

This wider awareness was reflected in the points made by 50 to 60 participants at the workshop. Speakers with experience of fighting to save hospitals in Brent and Hounslow talked of how important alternative proposals had been in generating enthusiasm for their campaigns.

The other link between workers' plans and the movement for better health was brought out by the Politics for Health group and workers from Guy's Hospital.

They argued against the 'take care of yourself'

individualism of most preventive medicine and emphasised instead the social causes of ill-health: high unemployment, the poor nutritional content of the food which most people can afford; shift and overtime working; increasingly stressful working conditions.

Traditional trade unionism came under criticism on these and other issues for bargaining over financial compensation for unhealthy work conditions rather than attacking the conditions themselves; and for failing to challenge health-damaging products.

Speakers from women's and tenants' groups raised the problem of trade unions drawing up social plans without organised contact with community organisations. The workshop elected a group of people to help CAITS turn the papers written for the conference into a pamphlet.

Further details from: Jane Barker, CAITS, NE London Poly, Longbridge Rd, Dagenham, Essex.

Pressing for workers' say

By Colin Robinson

THE right of working class people to reply to hostile coverage in the media was among the issues stressed at the first annual meeting of the Campaign for Press Freedom last Saturday. It was held in the wake of Fleet Street's rampage over the 14 May 'Day of Shame'.

Some two hundred delegates and individual supporters attended, fewer than might have been expected in view of the support the campaign has gained within the labour movement.

John Jennings, the campaign secretary, reported that 16 national unions had affiliated, including all the print unions.

But the issues which the campaign is raising — the opening up of the existing media and the need for an alternative press — have not yet been taken to the union rank and file and into the community.

Many delegates recognised that this was where the campaign had to go. Aidan White, from the *East End News*, emphasised the need to link those fighting for basic rights and to defend their living standards with those working in the media.

Bill Freeman, a NATSOPA official, reiterated his union's willingness to take action on behalf of those receiving rough treatment in the press. 'We got an article on the front page of the *Observer* to put the workers' case at Grunwick,' he said. 'We can do it again.'

The campaign's national committee now includes several union and campaign activists, and will hopefully implement a number of the proposals put forward. A hundred copies of Socialist Challenge's new pamphlet, *The Tory Press and How to Fight It*, were sold at the conference.

The Tory Press & How to Fight It

Now in its second edition, this Socialist Challenge pamphlet arms activists with the facts that lie behind the media's assault on the TUC's Day of Action, and how the working class can fight for its own voice to be heard.

Single copies 10p (plus p&p), bulk orders 8p a copy (pre-paid, sale or return) to: Socialist Challenge, 328 Upper St, London N1. Rush your order now!

Youths occupy over gay sacking

THERE has been a sudden change at the Third Feathers youth club, just off the Earls Court Road in West London.

Members sell the food and coffee, cope with the phone calls, pass on information, and keep the premises clean. There is a general air of involvement that's entirely new to this private club.

The explanation is plastered across the entrance on banners and posters announcing a confrontation with the management committee and inviting support.

The club is owned by Whitbread's Brewery and until recently the management committee were pleased with the new youth leader, Richie McMullen — until they discovered he is gay.

The committee, chaired by Raymond Seymour, the vice-chairperson of Whitbread, sacked him on the spot. That was on 15 May, and McMullen was ordered to quit his flat by the end of the month.

When the staff and club members rallied to his support, the staff were sacked and management attempted to close the club. It refuses to speak to anyone involved, and so the occupation continues.

Support to: Third Feathers, 17 Braham Gardens, London SW5.



FLASHBACK to a successful strike — on the Klein's picket line

VICTORY AT KLEINS

By Kay Bastin

THE employers at Klein's clothing factory in Salford have given in after an 11-week strike. The strikers were mainly women who'd never been out before, and they carried on despite the hardships involved.

The agreement is not in doubt — it will be a resounding Yes to the union, the Tailors and Garment Workers.

Although recognition is not immediate, the workers

feel they have won a victory, forcing an employer reminiscent of Victorian days to recognise their rights.

The actions which brought this about were picketing and boycotting of products, and a day of action on 14 May when Salford Trades Council led a demonstration past the factory. The employers closed for the day and went to Blackpool!

More contact could have been made with the surrounding clothing factories, but the union feels that organisation of the many other unorganised workplaces will now be possible.

The clothing industry is notoriously bad — a sweatshop industry. Now that Klein Brothers has been forced to an agreement, others had better watch out.



WOMEN in Fleet Street last Friday, outside the law courts, protesting at the treatment Irish women are receiving in Armagh Goal, in the North of Ireland.

32 women who are demanding political status have been confined to their cells for 23 hours a day, denied washing and toilet facilities, and have suffered physical harassment from male and female wardens.

The picketers called on the British Government to allow the women prisoners to live in humane conditions.

A similar picket took place at the same time outside Armagh goal. If you are interested in supporting the activities of the Women's Co-ordinating Committee on Armagh please ring Sophie on 01-485 4432.

Journalists counter lockout with a work-in



SIR Alex Jarrett is boss of Reed International, the outfit which owns the *Daily Mirror* and *IPC*, which is about the biggest magazine company in the world.

Jarrett also chairs the CBI's committee on the 'Balance of Power', a high-powered group of bosses who formulate strategy on weakening the unions.

This might well explain why 1,500 journalists at *IPC* have been locked out for the past month. They had put in a pay claim for 32 per cent, and worked a strict 40-hour week to back up their demands, together with a day's strike action.

When the journalists rejected management's 'final' offer of 17 per cent, they were all dismissed. The NUJ chapel decided to work-in, to demand the right to work.

There has been good financial support, including £1,400 collected over night from journalists on the *Daily Mirror*. The *Mirror* Group Chapel has declared its full support for the magazine journalists, and will now consider taking solidarity action.

This demand for full back pay is a further factor in the negotiations, over which management is extremely obstinate. A straight occupation is on the cards, together with a right-to-work demonstration at the end of this week.

Donations and support to: *IPC* dispute, c/o Magazine Branch, NUJ, 314 Gray's Inn Rd, London WC1.



FREE ECONOMY STRONG STATE

The Tory Party claims that it is the party that defends the liberties of the individual against the domination of the overweening state.

Stuart Hall, a Professor of Sociology at the Open University, explains in his new pamphlet *Drifting into a Law and*

WE are now in the middle of a deep and decisive movement towards a more disciplinary, authoritarian kind of society. This drift into a 'Law and Order' society is no temporary affair; nor is it a mere backlash against the 'permissive excesses' of the 1960s.

It has its roots in the structural backwardness of the British economy, a fact which has been with us since the closing decades of the last century, only temporarily hidden by a brief period of 'affluence' after the war.

Governments in trouble, it might be said, always have a strong temptation to reach for discipline and regulation in times of social crisis. These are not times when human freedoms and liberties flourish.

But those in power today have the means of communication available to shape public opinion in such a way as to create a popular demand for 'more Law and Order'.

The popular press can give voice to the 'silent majority', representing it in its most virulently traditionalist

and authoritarian disguise, without a single memorandum passing from Whitehall to Fleet Street.

Thereby the drift to Law and Order secures a degree of popular support and legitimacy among the powerless, who see no other alternative.

Against this background, we must speak not only of moving towards an authoritarian state but also the development of *authoritarian populism*.

To raise the question of rights and civil liberties in such an atmosphere amounts to declaring oneself a 'subversive'.

When the Chairman of the Police Federation feels free to tell local policemen in Merseyside that criticisms of the police are 'mischievous or misguided', when a local man, Jimmy Kelly, has died while in their hands we have come to a dangerous pass.

When Sir Robert Mark, the last Metropolitan Police Commissioner, accuses the National Council of Civil Liberties in *The Office of Constable* of being a 'self-appointed political pressure group with a misleading title...usually trying to usurp the

Order Society that the policies of the radical right in allowing 'social market values (to) rip', rather than 'rolling the state back', do exactly the opposite and encourage a strong authoritarian state.

Below we reprint an edited extract from this pamphlet.

function of the democratically appointed agencies for the achievement of political change', that authoritarian climate is confirmed.

The radical right is militantly hostile to the creeping collectivism of the welfare state. But it has no hostility to the strong state. The new *laissez faire* doctrine in which market forces have free rein is, like the old *laissez faire*, not at all inconsistent with a strong disciplinary state.

In 'social market doctrine' the state should intervene less in some areas, but more in others. Its preferred slogan is 'Free Economy: Strong State'.

There is much talk within this doctrine of 'Liberty'. But here too 'Liberty' is highly selective.

It is the 'Liberty' of property and contract, of the free movement of capital, of unbridled market forces and of the competitive man of 'possessive individualism' to which this slogan refers.

It is not the 'liberty' of those who have nothing to sell but only their labour to withdraw. Make no mistake about it: under this regime the market is to be Free; the people are to be Disciplined.

WELFARE RIGHTS

'Supplementary benefit should be what it used to be known as in a less euphemistic era: assistance. It should be a safety net, strictly for emergencies, not a featherbed for every hard luck case around.'

Daily Telegraph

WITHDRAWAL OF LABOUR

'There is no such right known to law'

Lord Denning Master of the Rolls

EQUALITY BEFORE THE LAW

Sir Robert Mark, on the Shrewsbury pickets:

'They committed the worst of all crimes, worse even than murder, the attempt to achieve an industrial or



political objective by criminal violence.'

Sir Robert Mark on George Ward, the employer at Grunwicks:

'He courageously and successfully stood firm against politically motivated violence.'

Sir Robert Mark on pressures on the Metropolitan Police in 1973:

'72,750 burglaries, 2,680 robberies and 450 demonstrations.'

'Drifting Into a Law and Order Society' by Stuart Hall. Available from The Other Bookshop, price 80 pence.

LABOUR IN C

ON SATURDAY 31 May the Labour Party has called a special conference to discuss what programme it should adopt as an alternative to the harsh monetarism of the Tories.

With Labour's electoral defeat still fresh in party members' minds, the left wing of the party has the initiative. Despite Jim Callaghan's attempts to turn the conference into a rally, it seems likely that the National Executive's programme 'Peace, Jobs, Freedom' will go through without opposition. (There will be no chance for amendment either from the left or the right!)

The Labour Party, despite a decline in the active participation of rank and file workers, remains the mass political party of the working class. No other party has the affiliations of millions of trade unionists, nor can any other party count on receiving mass working class support at election time.

Socialist Challenge has no confidence in the Labour Party. It is not a fighting political party that organises its members in struggle to take over the running of the country and build a socialist society.

It is a party of reform, not revolution, whose overriding aim is to win concessions within the capitalist system rather than overthrowing that system. The last Labour government graphically demonstrated this fact.

Socialist Challenge does not believe it is possible to reform the Labour Party. We believe that a new workers party must be built that is under the direct control of workers.

But we will still support all those Labour Party members who are fighting to democratise the Labour Party today, all those who are trying to commit the Labour Party to building a socialist society, all those who are arguing that the party should break with electoralism and begin to use its influence to mobilise workers to actively oppose the Tory government today. The more active and aware Labour Party members become the more obvious it will be that a new party is necessary.

Here we print two articles. One from Tony Banks, a member of the Labour Co-ordinating Committee (a newly formed group in the Labour Party) and General Secretary of the Association of Broadcasting Staffs, who puts the case for a radical reform of the Labour Party. The second is from Alan Freeman who argues that while the new programme of the Labour Party is a step in the right direction it does not go far enough in elaborating a strategy for building a socialist society in Britain today.

Lobby the Labour Party one-day conference

Joint action now to kick out the Tories!
Fight the Tories' Employment Bill!
No cuts: support action against redundancies!

Assemble 31 May, 9am, Wembley Conference Halls
Wembley Park tube; Wembley Conference
British Rail station

Called by 31 May Lobby Committee

Supporters include Battersea and Wandsworth Trades Councils and Swindon and Hackney North Constituency Labour Parties.

BUILDING A MASS LABOUR PARTY

By Tony Banks

WHATEVER the overall state of relations between the Party and the trade unions, at the grass-roots level it is far from satisfactory.

The problem is not the number of union branches affiliated to Constituency Labour Parties but the number of delegates sent by those branches to the party general management committees and wards.

The result has been a decline in the influence of unions at local level and insufficient political dialogue between rank-and-file party and union activists.

Two reasons for this situation may be identified. First, the lack of influence of the Labour Party over national and often local affairs as perceived by many trade union activists.

Secondly, the growth in the 'governmentalisation' of the trade unions which has been such a pronounced feature of recent Labour governments and, until Thatcher, under the Tories.

Involved

Many trade union leaders obviously feel that with this high level of national contact and influence the need to be deeply involved within the Labour Party is unnecessary.

Activity in the affairs of local parties is thus too often seen by the unions at both national and local level as at best irrelevant and at worst a waste of valuable time.

The effect on the Labour Party should the drift continue will be disastrous.

If Labour is to develop as a mass party it must be based on the unions, and yet an increasing percentage of trade unionists are voting for parties other than Labour.

In addition the party needs to develop massive extra-parliamentary support if it is ever to bring about socialist change, which in turn requires a high level of political awareness within the working class.

In this latter respect the party has failed conspicuously.

The Labour Party has become far too parliamentary orientated nationally and at local level is often little more than an election machine. Winning elections is vital in any representative democracy but clearly it is not an end in itself.

Parliament can be used as an effective platform by socialists and as a means of achieving reformist measures but there is

no way that capitalism will be legislated out of existence or not require the active involvement of the working class in its overthrow.

Our need to build a mass party, therefore, is not simply to have a better election-winning machine but to develop an extra-parliamentary force which can be mobilised in pursuit of socialist policies.

Active

Labour will secure active working class support if it is seen to present a genuine alternative to capitalism and that those who join the party will be able to play their part in making policy which in turn will be implemented by a Labour government.

It is because this has not been the case, certainly since 1945, that the campaign for greater accountability within the party has been so overwhelmingly successful among rank-and-file activists.

Trade unions in particular should realise that they can pass all the resolutions they wish at the Labour Party conference but until the party is solidly based on an active and politically aware working class, in control of accountable public representatives, such resolutions will remain pious hopes.

Workplace branches as an integral part of constituency organisations offer one way of relating socialist solutions to the everyday problems of the workplace.

If the 1974 industrial strategy based on the National Enterprise Board and planning agreements had been given a better grounding within the trade union movement it would not have been possible for Harold Wilson to sabotage it so effectively.

Certainly, no major policies of the party should be simply

handed down from the top, and least of all should they be made by ministers, or shadow spokespersons, sitting on their backsides.

However, the formulation of Labour's industrial and economic policies for the next election will not wait upon the setting up of workplace branches.

The extension of public ownership, renationalisation and industrial democracy now under consideration within the party must involve the workers in those industries most concerned.

But the party has no machinery for consulting directly with shop stewards and combine committees and while policy discussions at national union level are vital they are no substitute for shop-floor involvement.

Despite all the obvious difficulties, the Labour Party must find a way round. The unions themselves could assist by organising factory meetings and encouraging detailed discussions on Labour's emerging policies in their branches.

Political action groups like that set up by AUEW-TASS party members in the British Aircraft Corporation offer another useful forum for consideration of industrial policies.

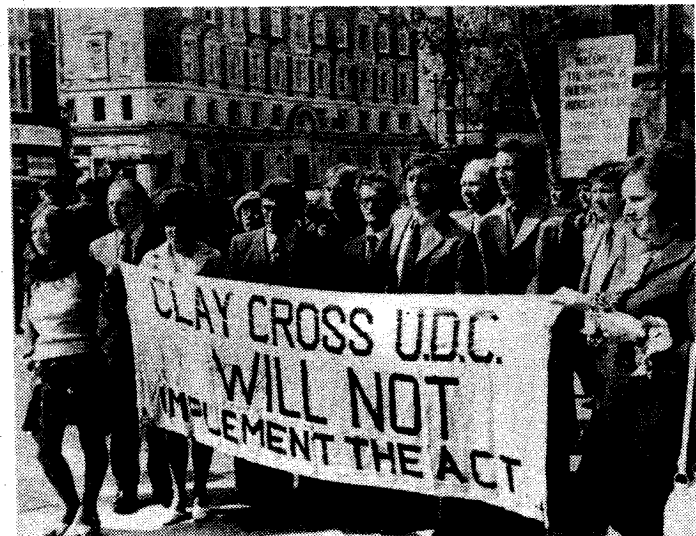
Rank-and-File

The Labour Co-ordinating Committee intends to play its part by organising meetings of Labour Party rank-and-file trade unionists to discuss socialist policies for industry. The Labour Party cannot simply rely on a three-week election campaign to gain support for its policies, particularly from those working people most affected.

At that stage it is too late, and the best we can hope to do is win by default. This can never be a substitute for the commitment to socialist policies that can be expected from trade unionists who are actively involved in their formulation.

It must be Labour's aim to achieve such involvement because without it we seem likely to repeat past mistakes against a background of declining support among working people.

The above is an extract from Tony Banks' article which appears in the May 1980 issue of Labour Activist, the organ of the Labour Co-ordinating Committee.



Kick

By Alan Freeman

THE National Executive bang and ends with what happen to a government

They open with a statement 'Peace, Jobs and... Their draft isn't short promises: planning; expansion; industrial cracy; redistribution of and even the 35-hour v

There's just one Will a new Labour go carry out these promises is a familiar ring to heard them in February when the last Labour ment came into office.

What wasn't in the then was a set of fighting for carrying out these b ises. This difference h made good.

Repeat

The only defence against a repeat of closing appeal for a effective party organ for 'socialist policies ported and understood electorate'.

Why won't the Capitalism is in crisis tionally as well as Even the mildest re meet violent resistance the multinationals, th tional Monetary Fur civil service in Whiteh

The Wilson gover ed in to this resista Went Wrong, the La own inquest on the g explains how big busi national banking, W the millionaire press c thwart Labour's mar ensure the right wing day.

Only the organis of the unions could h this. But they were the Social Contract, not any lack of vote tion, led to defeat.

How can we stop this situation? With p

CONFERENCE



Peace, Jobs, Freedom... and capitalism

'THE Tory strategy will fail because it is founded on false economic thinking. It is unfair. It will not work.' This is the verdict of Labour's new programme 'Peace, Jobs, Freedom'. 'Its failure will impose heavy sacrifices on the British people: industrial stagnation, social conflict and a poorer and more unequal society. We are told by the government — and the media which backs them — that all this is necessary. That there is no alternative to tough Tory measures. There is the alternative is democratic socialism. And it is to that we must now turn.'

Labour promises a new economic strategy based on public ownership, expansion and democratic planning. The central points are the following:

- 1) A commitment to the restoration and maintenance of full employment.
- 2) The promise of economic expansion, spearheaded by increased public expenditure.
- 3) To deal with inflation, co-operation with the trade unions is proffered and price controls will be introduced.
- 4) World trade will be stimulated by economic expansion the programme suggests, but Britain's manufacturing industries must be protected from foreign competition — import controls will be introduced.
- 5) Stricter controls will be introduced over international movements of capital along with plans to protect sterling from a run on the pound.
- 6) Planning agreements between the government, employers, and employees, should be established with the major industries in the economy. Companies ear-marked for public ownership include pharmaceuticals, medical equipment, microelectronics, construction and building materials, North Sea oil and all other industries that the Tories denationalise.
- 7) The Tory Employment Bill will be repealed and 'industrial democracy' will be promoted in both the public and private sector of industry.
- 8) A progressive move to the 35 hour week is promised in order to combat the effects of new technology and the economic crisis. Time off for study, longer holidays, earlier voluntary retirement and expanded training and retraining facilities are also suggested as ways of improving the quality of people's lives.
- 9) Fundamental reforms of the EEC are sought, full control of law-making and tax-gathering powers will be restored to the House of Commons. If satisfactory terms of membership are not won, the Labour Party will 'discuss' withdrawal.
- 10) Democracy will be strengthened in Britain by the abolition of the House of Lords, the consequent increase in the powers of the House of Commons and the introduction of a Freedom of Information Act.

The Labour Party commits itself to campaign for international peace through opposing the manufacture and deployment of Cruise Missiles and the neutron bomb in Britain. To halt the 'arms race' the Labour Party wants to breathe new life into disarmament negotiating through a comprehensive test ban treaty. It gives full support to the UN committee on disarmament. The programme ends by urging Labour Party members to take the programme and campaign for it boldly 'inside and outside' parliament.

Get the bosses out of the boardroom

Committee's draft starts with a paper. This is exactly what would be expected on their policies.

mobilise the working class in action against the capitalists. Instead we are presented with half measures and compromises whose aim is to duck the capitalists' resistance.

Let us take the most burning problem — jobs. One and a half million people are on the dole. This represents £46 billion per year of badly needed, idle resources. This waste happens because private owners will not and cannot invest in what society needs.

The NEC proposes planning agreements — negotiations with the owners about investment. But the CBI, the IMF and Whitehall made it clear to Wilson that investment is non-negotiable. In Callaghan's term of office the CBI said it would break off all relations with the government unless planning agreements were dropped.

This is not an idle threat. It would be the first stage in a Chile-style destabilisation. Brigadier Kitson's army is now training in Ireland for the second stage — courtesy of two Labour governments.

Defeat

We have to defeat the owners, not bargain with them. The NEC wants to establish 'statutory powers' to control industry. But who will get these powers? We need a statutory right for workers in every industry and city to take over production and investment in the public interest.

This means full workers' control — not 'participation' or 'tripartite management' which gets workers to share power with management and Whitehall. Otherwise workers' leaders will

simply be dragged into management schemes against the workforce — like in Leyland and BSC. If any control is left in the owners' hands, they will use it to conspire against the government and subvert planning.

The aim must be to remove private owners from the boardrooms — in the public as well as the private sector. A socialist policy should take on the multinationals, banking and finance, and any firm threatening redundancies, placing them under workers' control and taking them into public ownership without compensation.

It is equally useless to rely on the civil service in Whitehall — part of the capitalists' state. It sabotaged Benn's industry proposals. Whitehall is run by the rich, for the rich. It is accountable to no one.

Workers should place no trust in Whitehall or the managers of British industry, but rely on their own strength. The self-confidence of the labour movement can be encouraged now. Labour Party leaders could stimulate that self confidence by giving a political focus to trade union resistance to the Employment Bill, attacks on living standards, and unemployment.

This could encourage workers to campaign for the opening of 'bankrupt' companies' books so that the case for nationalisation could be made to the whole workforce. Labour leaders could go out and explain that the erosion of shopfloor power is an attack on the democratic rights of every worker in Britain. They could urge workers not to accept redundancies from new technology by pointing out that the work could be shared, and the working week shortened.

The right to work is a fundamental right that everyone in a modern society should be guaranteed. An economy that can't guarantee such a basic right

isn't worth protecting. Action now, by those workers who have jobs, is the key to stopping employers discarding labour at their whim.

Neither should British workers allow themselves to be cut off from workers in other countries — often in the case of multinationals they are working for the same employer — in the fight to protect jobs. Thatcher was surprised by the militancy of the all-out strike on pay in the steel industry. Think how powerful a European-wide movement for the 35 hour week would be!

Cuts in welfare facilities should receive the same treatment. It's all very well promising to 'increase public expenditure' in 1984 but people are being kicked out of old peoples' homes and hospitals now. The Labour leaders will be judged on how they fight now to protect the welfare state.

We cannot accept the NEC's proposal to 'plan out trade in manufactures' as serious. Of course if industry was planned, then trade could be planned — via a complete state monopoly on foreign trade. But under private ownership and with Whitehall in capitalist hands, 'planned' import controls would be counterproductive.

They would not solve the underlying problem of the bosses refusal to invest. Redundancy comes from the owners' need to rationalise production to boost profits — which they impose on both the private and public sector.

Import controls would amount to a workers' subsidy to ailing capitalists. We would buy higher priced manufactures from people who would use the profits not to save jobs but to save their own skins — just as the shipbuilders have done with fifty years of public subsidies.

At the same time protect-

ionism would attack the very people whose solidarity we need against the multinationals — workers abroad.

Most timid of all is the Party's programme for 'peace'. Seventeen years ago Labour Party conference at least had the guts to come out for unilateral nuclear disarmament.

The NEC statement, with America demanding that Britain participates as a European 'cop' in its war drive, refuses to mention this historic demand of the left. It glosses over Britain's membership of NATO and keeps absolutely silent on Britain's contribution to international tension — its occupation of the North of Ireland — while it does remember to condemn the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

Allies

The real reason is that the NEC refuses to break with Britain's imperialist allies. 'We will work together with all those who desire peace', it declares. But the American air forces' slogan in Vietnam was 'peace is our business'. They called their genocide 'pacification'.

The peoples of the ex-colonial world also want peace — peace from 300 years of foreign domination, enslavement and barbarous repression. There will be no peace until their just demands are met and until capitalism — the cause of war — is defeated.

Instead of 'negotiating' arms reduction with our American and European 'allies', and 'seeking reforms' to the EEC, we should fight now for immediate withdrawal from all capitalist military alliances, full support for national liberation struggles, withdrawal from the EEC and international workers' solidarity against imperialism.

This is the only road to peace, jobs, freedom, and socialism in our time.

LABOUR PARTY

Labour Party, and conference, to meet on Ireland

FOR the first time in many years the Parliamentary Labour Party is going to hold a special meeting on Ireland. Backbenchers will discuss the bi-partisan approach which, at the behest of the Labour leadership, the vast majority of them have been following since 1968.

The meeting will discuss the Tory proposals on the North of Ireland which will be published in the next couple of weeks. But Labour's official spokesperson on Ireland, Brynmor John, a former secretary of state in charge of Army recruitment, has said that he will oppose any vote at the meeting.

The initiative for the discussion has come from the backbench 'Northern Ireland Group' of MPs, whose chairperson is Jock Stallard. It is hoped that Stallard will be one of the speakers at a fringe meeting organised by the recently formed Labour Committee on Ireland at the special conference this weekend.

At the end of March the founding conference of the LCI was attended by representatives of 43 CLPs. A model resolution was agreed which, it is hoped, will be passed by as many Labour Parties as possible so that a full debate will be had on Ireland at the annual Labour Party conference later this year. Among other things, the resolution calls for the next Labour government to 'immediately begin the process' of British withdrawal from Ireland.

The fringe meeting this Saturday will be held at the Greyhound public house, which is just round the corner from the Wembley Conference Centre. It will be held at lunchtime.

Further details of the LCI can be obtained from 5 Stamford Hill, London N16.

Needed... a campaign to get Britain out of NATO

THE Labour Party has called a national demonstration against the siting of US Cruise missiles in Britain.

The protest will take place in London on 22 June.

The decision of the Labour Party to organise the demonstration will be welcomed by all opponents of US militarism.

The Cruise missiles are due to arrive in Britain in two or three years time and their use will be entirely controlled by the US. In effect the Cruise missile sites will turn Britain into a military colony of Uncle Sam.

But the missiles are only one tentacle on the octopus

that goes by the name of NATO, and while it is important to cut off the tentacle, it is the NATO beast itself which has to be opposed.

That is why Socialist Challenge, while building support for the 22 June demonstration, is also arguing that a necessary addition to the opposition to Cruise missiles should be the withdrawal of Britain from NATO.

All readers of Socialist Challenge and IMG branches are urged to build for the anti-Cruise missiles demonstration on Saturday 22 June.

No lessons learned from Corrie

THE manifesto being discussed at the Labour Party special conference this weekend does not have much to say about women. But we are told: 'The labour movement stands for fairness, equality and justice — and against all forms of discrimination whether on the grounds of race, colour, creed or sex.'

We are also told that the Tory government means 'attacks on women's rights'.

One essential issue of women's rights, that has been under severe attack since the election of the Tory government, is the right to abortion. But abortion is not mentioned in the draft manifesto.

Two weeks ago the National Abortion Campaign held its national conference and decided on three main priorities.

As an immediate campaigning priority the question of National Health abortion facilities was brought to the fore, with the aim of fighting NHS cuts and changing the NHS Act to make provision of abortion facilities mandatory on local health authorities.

It was also agreed to campaign for a commitment to positive legislation on abortion in the Labour Party manifesto, and to change the current position which makes abortion a 'non-party' issue allowing Labour MPs to vote how they like on abortion law changes.

The draft manifesto shows that the Labour Party NEC has not absorbed the lessons of campaigns like NAC and the Labour Abortion Rights Campaign. This is an issue that real lefts in the Labour Party should show themselves willing to fight on.

Those Labour Party members who are willing to fight on abortion rights will be attending the LARC annual general meeting on 31 May. Open to all Labour Party members who support women's abortion rights, it will be held in Lambeth Town Hall, cost £1 plus pooled fare, a creche and refreshments will be available.

Contact LARC at: Flat 1, 160 Rosendale Rd, West Dulwich, London SE21.



THE Labour Party has put itself at the head of demonstrations like this TUC-sponsored anti-cuts march last November. But why won't it lead an all-out fight against the Tory government?

So what are we waiting for?

By Dave Hudson

AFTER a year of Thatcher's scourging attacks on working class living standards, the special Labour Party conference this weekend will be greeted hopefully by many militants. But if they expect this conference to begin a real fightback against the Tory government then they are likely to be disappointed.

The discussion at the conference will be entirely around the draft NEC policy declaration which is seen as the manifesto for a future Labour government. There are no proposals for action now to roll back the Tory offensive.

The possible impact of the conference has also been blunted by the decision not to allow new resolutions or amendments to the NEC policy document. This compromise on the part of the 'lefts' will make the conference even less likely to rise above the level of 'talking shop'.

Of course after the performance of the Callaghan/Healey leadership in the last Labour government there is a pressing need for a full discussion of Labour's programme. This is not in dispute. But by concentrating solely on the question of the next Labour government the NEC sidesteps the burning need for clear political leadership in the struggles against the Tory government today.

Succeed

Waiting for the possibility of Labour being returned to office in 1984 is to court disaster for the working class. If the Tories succeed with their plans to drive down living standards, to limit trade union and democratic rights, to create mass unemployment, and to dismantle the welfare state then

the labour movement will have suffered a massive political and economic defeat.

1984 would arrive with a major shift in the balance of power in favour of the bosses — and would Labour necessarily win an election under these circumstances?

The timid policy of waiting for the 'constitutional' processes, pursued by the entire Labour left, is not an effective method of dealing with the Tories. The Tories were not given a mandate to take the British working class back to the horrors of the 1930s. Recent by-elections have already revealed a swing away from the Tories that could give Labour a 100-seat majority in the House of Commons.

The ruling class has always manipulated and subverted government through economic blackmail, both nationally and on an international level. It exercised pressure and constraint through the various institutions of the state and civil service, through the law courts and so on. It uses the mass media to manipulate the 'democratic processes' that the bosses' press itself loves to beat on about. That's why it was such hypocrisy for the millionaires' press to denounce 14 May as a 'day of shame', and an attack on democracy — the press barons make a mockery of democracy virtually every time their personal notepads go on

to the streets.

And on a world scale we know that if manipulation and pressure fails to work, then the ruling class is not afraid to abandon all idea of 'democratic processes' and turn to force — the solution that the bosses chose in Chile is not automatically confined to other parts of the world!

That's why it's not good enough to wait until 1984. The Tories have already lost the support of the mass of British working people, so we have to rely on our own strength and organisations to call a halt. The Labour Party, particularly those leaders of the Labour Party who consider themselves 'lefts', has a big responsibility to lead and organise the fight against the Tories.

Socialist Challenge supports the lobby of this weekend's special conference which is calling for joint Labour Party and trade union action against the Tories now. What is needed is an open and democratic conference to organise and plan this action, where all sections of the movement can put their point of view.

Ground

That the present Callaghan/Healey leadership will refuse to organise such a fight is obvious from their record. The policies of Labour in office under these leaders simply prepared the ground for Thatcher's austerity measures. Even in opposition they have put up a miserable fight. They supported some sections of Prior's obnoxious Employment Bill, such as state-financed compulsory ballots on strike action.

These leaders have to be pushed aside and replaced with those more willing to lead a consistent fight in defence of working class interests.

That's why a central task today lies in drawing together a new left-wing in the labour movement that is prepared to take on that fight now — to defend jobs, wages, and the welfare state against the Tory attacks.

Links

Activists in the Labour Party need to build links with militants in the trade unions who are prepared to fight. Such an organised left wing would have to fight to replace the right-wing leadership at every level of the labour movement.

Any serious attempt to rebuild the Labour Party as a mass, fighting organisation of the working class has to start with the minority of militant workers in the trade unions who want to start fighting back now; like the 250,000 who marched against the Tories on 14 May.

Moreover it's only through organising a broad-based left opposition in the unions that the Labour left can successfully combat the right-wing trade union block votes at annual conference.

It's those Labour Party militants who are interested in taking their politics into the broad labour movement, basing their activity on that of trade unionists, who can break out of the vicious circle of Labour Party politics. They can use this conference as a springboard to extend the fight for a left wing that really is ready and willing to take on the Tories.

AGENDA

This time Marxism from the horse's mouth

REPRODUCED here — an advertisement from last week's *Observer*, asking executives and company directors to shell out a mere £185 for a weekend course on Marxism.

Apart from showing the increasing need of the bourgeoisie to keep up with the growth of Marxism in the labour movement, it also casts an interesting light on the new and exciting ways in which Ken Gill is furthering the broad democratic alliance.

But we agree with Ken Gill and Management in Action Ltd on the urgent need for people to be better informed about Marxism. That's why we're organising a summer school from 12-18 July this year.

It won't cost you the world — only £47.50 for the whole week, which includes all meals, accommodation, snacks etc. We can't offer you Ken Gill and Harold Wilson, but in our view speakers like Ernest Mandel, Robin Blackburn, Margaret Coulson, John Ross and Charles Udry know more about it anyway.

Neither will our focus be 'how to respond to (combat) Marxism', but how to put it into action. In addition you'll be able to enjoy the films, sports and social activities which we've organised.

All you need to do is send £10 deposit to Dave Hudson, c/o PO Box 50, London N1 and pay the rest a couple of weeks before the school takes place.

A Weekend Seminar MARXISM AND MANAGEMENT

6 to 8 June 1980
The Lorch Foundation Seminar
Centre
Lane End, nr. High Wycombe
HP 14 3 JH

Programme:
"The British Labour Movement—Policies and Practice" Rt. Hon. Sir Harold Wilson, K.G. M.P.
"What is Marxism?" G. A. Cohen, Reader in Philosophy, University College, London, and author of 'Karl Marx's Theory of History.'
"How many reds under how many beds?" Robert Taylor, Labour Correspondent of The Observer.

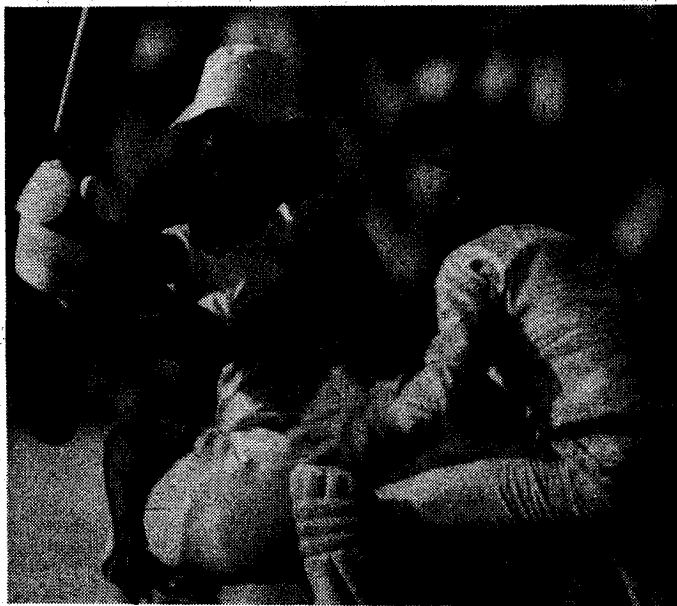
"Why I am a Marxist" Ken Gill, General Secretary of the Technical, Administrative and Supervisory Section of the A.U.E.W.

"How should management react?"

G. Lilywelyn Jones, Director of Studies, Management in Action Limited.
Inclusive Fees:
Residential: £185.00
Non-residential: £100.00
Enquiries and Reservations to:

Management in Action Limited,
121 St James's Drive,
LONDON SW17 7 RP
(01-767 5287 and
01-672 7166)

The net proceeds of this seminar will be given to help the remarkable work on diabetes currently undertaken by Dr. Derek Hockaday and his colleagues at the Radcliffe Infirmary, Oxford.



The Match of the Decade?



By Our Cricket Correspondent

TRIALS to select the Socialist Challenge cricket team for the first ever fixture against Socialist Worker in July (on Day One of the IMG Summer School) began in earnest last week. Several young — and not so young — hopefuls could be seen sweating it out at the first session in Highbury Fields. The venue is expected to move to the nets in Regents Park over the coming weeks.

We have been deluged with offers to play for SC from supporters in different parts of the country. However the team can only be selected after extensive trials and comrades wishing to play will have to come and perform at the nets.

In response to other questions the answers are as follows:

1. Yes, there will be a captain — we refuse to tolerate libertarian nonsense in this regard — and no tendencies in our team will not be given a proportional length of bowling or batting time.
2. The captain, however, will be elected and subject to recall at any time.
3. Naturally we will be fielding a mixed side.
4. All offers of cricket equipment (on loan, of course) will be gratefully acknowledged.

£6,000

THAT'S WHAT

WE NEED

TO BEAT

INFLATION

TWO weeks ago the IMG launched an emergency fund drive. Inflation is hitting us hard.

Inflation under Thatcher is now well over 20 per cent and for a revolutionary organisation it is even worse. All the things which we need — leaflets, posters, pamphlets, our newspaper — have gone up more than 20 per cent over the last year. Rent, rates, electricity and gas charges have all risen enormously. Meanwhile, our income has not gone up by anything like 20 per cent.

steel strike; and over the coming weeks we will be launching a campaign against the Cruise missile and British membership of NATO.

We are doing everything we can to reduce our costs. But there is one thing which we cannot afford to cut back on — our political campaigns. That's why we are making an urgent appeal to all our supporters and sympathisers.

Despite our financial difficulties we have collaborated with Revolution in launching the South Wales Youth March against Unemployment; we have thrown resources into the

Help us keep our paper at 16 pages. Help us ensure that we can sustain our political work. Make sure that Tory inflation doesn't cripple our ability to fight to bring the Tories down!

IMG 1980 CADRE SCHOOL

The school will take place between the 12th and 18th July 1980. A deposit of £10 will secure you a place, but the full £47.50 has to be paid in advance by the 31st of June, 1980. This will cover your accommodation, all meals, morning and afternoon coffee and the full programme of events. Detailed programme, reading lists and information regarding the venue will be received on registration.

MAIN SESSIONS

The main sessions are grouped into three parts: The Colonial Revolution, Workers States, and Europe.

1) Permanent Revolution and Strategy in the Third World.

Stalinist Global Policy from Yalta to Afghanistan.

The Cuban Revolution.
Revolution in Nicaragua.

2) Political Revolution in the Workers States — Hungary and Czechoslovakia (Debate on Afghanistan)

3) The German Revolution 1918/19. Revolution and Counterrevolution in Spain, 1936.

Revolution in Portugal 1974/5. The nature of the Coming British Revolution.

(debates on the Trades Unions in Late Capitalism, and State Capitalism)

OPTIONAL COURSES

As well as the main lecture course there will be a series of optional three part courses.

Two introductory courses are planned:

1) An Introduction to Revolutionary politics.

2) An Introduction to Marxist economics.

There will be two other subsidiary courses on:

3) Marxism and the Family.

4) Aspects of the history of the British Labour Movement.

I am interested in coming to the summer school. I am a member of the IMG/Revolution / I am a sympathiser of IMG/Revolution from

.....(Town)

Name/Address.....

.....

.....

I enclose a cheque/PO for..... towards the £47.50 cost of the school.

Please indicate which options you wish to take.

Note: It is only possible to take two options.

1).....

2).....

It would be very helpful if comrades would state their first preference on the application form provided. It will not be possible for comrades to attend more than two optional courses.



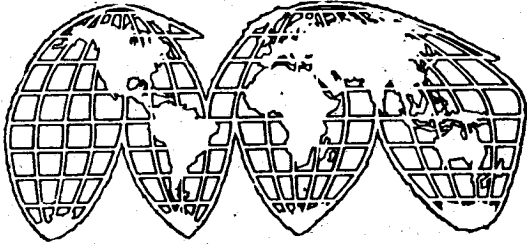
OUT now! *International*, the IMG's theoretical journal, price 85p.

This issue includes a reply to *Beyond the Fragments* by Valerie Coultas arguing that Leninism and feminism are not incompatible, and that socialists should challenge both male domination and bourgeois power.

Alan Freeman scrutinizes the Alternative Economic Strategy as popularised by the Labour left, highlighting the inadequate understanding this strategy has of workers, revealing the flaws in

the AES approach to tackling capitalist monopolies and pointing out how the Labour lefts underestimate the effects of capitalist sabotage.

Anna Libera, in a chapter from her book, *The Bitter Fruits of the Historic Compromise*, analyses the failure of the Italian Communist Party to seize power at the end of the Second World War and David Tettodoro examines the Thatcher government and argues against some of the more alarmist analyses fashionable on the left.



AROUND THE WORLD

SOUTH AFRICA

TO BE black in South Africa is bad enough, but to be a black woman is 'the worst of all possible worlds'.

This is the conclusion of a report on apartheid and sex discrimination issued in Switzerland last week by the International Labour Organisation.

The author, Francis Blanchard, documented how unsupported women in black homelands are denied the use of land and are assumed to be supported by a male relative, even if none exists.

The report said that only if a woman 'can prove total destitution' will she be able to apply for 'discretionary pauper's rations', and even these are 'medically insufficient to sustain healthy life'.

El Salvador

THE right-wing junta in El Salvador in Central America is continuing its campaign of terror. The acting Archbishop of San Salvador, Arturo Rivera y Damas, revealed last week that in the first two weeks of May 215 people had been killed by government forces.

He said that all the victims were members of the country's 'popular organisations'; many were peasants.

The El Salvador Green Cross has also testified to the killings.

United States

THE US Government exploded another nuclear weapon in an underground test site in Nevada on 22 May. It was the seventh such test this year.

Australia

THE attempt of the regional government in Queensland to enact horrific anti-abortion laws has failed.

Among the proposals in the Bill, which was defeated in Parliament last Thursday by 45 votes to 30, was a possible 14 year sentence of hard labour for carrying out an abortion.

The right-wing coalition government proposed that abortions would be limited to women facing death or suicide, or to women who had been victims of incest or rape.

Despite the Bill's defeat Queensland still has the most stringent anti-abortion laws in Australia.

Spain

JUAN Luis Cebrian, editor of the Spanish daily paper *El Pais*, is now serving three months in prison for criticising Spain's judicial system in an editorial published two years ago.

Cebrian was recently sentenced by a military tribunal under laws enacted by the Franco regime.

Two other editors are also facing prosecution for publishing reports of discontent among right-wing army officers.

Such officers themselves are treated leniently. Two weeks ago a colonel and captain were found guilty of planning a military attack on the residence of Spain's prime minister and of attempting to overthrow the government.

The colonel was sentenced to seven months imprisonment, the captain to six. As they had already served that length of time in custody they were released immediately. The military establishment then promoted the captain to major.

Hong Kong

BRITAIN's colony of Hong Kong is probably the most corrupt place in the world. Accordingly, the recent death there of Police Inspector John MacLeannan has aroused considerable interest.

MacLeannan was under investigation by his police bosses, not for being in the pay of gangsters, which would be normal for Hong Kong's 'law and order' representatives, but because he was gay.

Then he was found shot dead with five bullets in his chest.

The suspicion is that his own colleagues decided to punish MacLeannan. But at the inquest last week the police pathologist did his best to cover up the whole affair. He told the court: 'I cannot say whether the wounds were self-inflicted or done by somebody else.'



Mass uprisings shake South Korean dictatorship

MASS uprisings in a number of cities have shaken the US-backed dictatorship in South Korea. TARIQ ALI examines the background of a country ripe for revolution.

THE SOUTH Korean army should by now be the best educated in the world. It has spent more time in the universities than most of South Korea's students.

Divide

Ever since the United States intervened in the peninsula to divide Korea in 1950, the southern part of the country has been ruled by a succession of dictators of whom the first, Syngman Rhee, was also the most notorious.

Despite a pretence of democracy the Rhee regime was based on open repression of the mass movement and relied on coercion. The South Korean army was backed by a large number of US troops, whose main aim was to keep a puppet regime in power.

On 19 April 1960 there were massive demonstrations in every South Korean city against the rigged election results which had, as usual, returned Syngman Rhee to power. Since no opposition parties were allowed it was the universities and the schools which became the focal point of resistance to the dictatorship.

In a country where democratic rights did not exist and no demonstrations or public meetings were allowed it was not surprising that the campuses were utilised to spearhead the political opposition. The scale of the resistance surprised the administration. Rhee was forced to resign.

Liberties

In June a new constitution was adopted and free elections took place on 29 July 1960. A certain measure of democratic liberties now prevailed, but before mass organisations could spread their roots the military struck. On 16 May, 1961 the generals led a coup d'état and in July of the same year a new strongman emerged: Park Chung Hee.

Anti-government demonstrations were easily suppressed and Park consolidated his rule by the use of brutal force. For 18 years Park presided over one of the most brutal and corrupt

military dictatorships in the world.

The South Korean military regime received massive economic and military aid from the United States and the West. In return, South Korean troops fought on the side of the Americans in the Vietnam war.

Haven

At the same time South Korea was a haven for foreign investment, especially for multinationals. It provided a cheap labour force without trade-unionism. It offered the multinationals enormous profits and extremely low production costs.

From 1960 to 1977 the proportion of the labour force in industry rose from 9 to 33 per cent and the number of peasants decreased from 66 to 45 per cent of the total workforce.

This sharp increase in industrialisation and the growth of the urban proletariat created a new situation in the cities. The student movement discovered that it had a precious ally, and clandestine links began to be forged.

The assassination of Park Chung Hee by his former secret police chief in October last year brought the simmering crisis within the South Korean state to a head. Fearful that these divisions could spark off a mass movement, the United States (which has 30,000 troops in the country) 'recommended' that a measure of democratic rule was vital.

The roots of the present explosion extend back three decades, but its immediate cause was the failure of the post-Park regime to accelerate a return to an elected civilian government.

The main demands of the students are concerned with democracy. Kwangju, the city which is the focus of the uprising, is also the home town of the best-known leader of the democratic opposition, Kim Dae Jung.

The main difference between the present struggle and the one launched two decades ago is that the students are receiving support from the Korean working class. The stu-



dent struggle is consistently raising the slogan 'For the Three Rights of Labour' and the student-worker-peasant alliance has now reached explosive proportions as the Kwangju uprising indicates.

The Kwangju uprising is remarkable on every count. It represents the most advanced struggle in terms of uniting the workers with the students; it has already seen the masses arming themselves and combating the riot police and troops loyal to the new dictator, Chon Doo Hwan. At its peak the number of people fighting the troops numbered 200,000.

The Kwangju masses also seized the key points in the city and destroyed the radio station in an effective demonstration of their hatred for the heavily-censored pro-military media.

Options

At the recent talks between the chieftains of US and Japanese imperialism, Carter indicated his displeasure with the distasteful methods of Chon Doo Hwan. The Japanese leader, Ohira, concurred. But both powers have little option except 'displeasure' with the methods employed by Chon Doo Hwan. Their options are limited.

Carter knows full well what happens when support is withdrawn from corrupt dictators. The lessons of the February insurrection in Tehran are seared on his consciousness. The Japanese and American ruling classes can do little except support the main prop of the South Korean state: the army. The alternative, for them, is fraught with dangers.

Reality

It is true that by not backing the democratic movement they run the risk of a growing radicalisation. But there is another factor of some assistance to them — the character of Kim Il Sung's regime in North Korea.

While the existence of North Korea is regarded as a threat by the South Korean military, in reality the Kim Il Sung regime, in reality the Kim Il Sung regime, a grotesque parody of Stalinist Russia in the '30s, is not seen as a particularly attractive alternative by the South Korean masses. A North Korean Castro would have been somewhat different, but the existing regime presents no threat at the level of the masses.

As we go to press the crack regiments of the South Korean army have encircled Kwangju. There can be little doubt that they are planning a bloodbath, but their victory in the medium term is by no means certain.

The combination of the fight for democratic demands and the continuing economic crisis reflected in an 18 per cent inflation rate, growing unemployment and stagnant production is likely to remain explosive.

And if the struggle and the revolutionary forms that it has taken — in particular the raids on armouries, the capture of army vehicles and armoured personnel carriers, miners marching with explosives — spreads to the country as a whole it could begin to see rifts and mutinies inside the army itself.

The imperialists in Washington and Tokyo should listen carefully to the bells that are being tolled in Kwangju. For they toll not just for Chon Doo Hwan, but also for them.

DEFEND ARABS FROM

KHOMMEINI

By Firooz Shoostari

IT SHOULD come as no surprise that Thatcher came to the aid of Khomeini in freeing the hostages held by the Arab guerrillas in London's Iranian embassy. Historically Britain has been no friend to the Arab nationality in Iran.

Arabistan, named Khuzestan by the Shahs, is the main oil-producing area of Iran and lies on the Iraqi border. The people of the area are Arab, and traditionally hostile to the Farsi-dominated central government of Iran.

In 1921 a British-backed coup by an Iranian military unit, led by Reza Khan, founder of the Pahlavi dynasty of Shahs, overthrew independent government in several provinces including the Arabistan.

The new Farsi-dominated central government did not allow the expression of the national demands of any of the minorities inside Iran.

Independent Arab government and culture were destroyed and the use of the Arab language was banned.

A number of uprisings around national demands were crushed by the central government with the aid of British and American imperialism. British imperialism in particular had a vested interest in shoring up the power of the central government to ensure a stable regime. Up to 1951 all of Iran's oil was under the control of the British-owned Anglo-Iranian Oil Company.

Peasant

Arabistan is under occupation, its streets are patrolled by Chieftain tanks. It has been under occupation for 50 years. This occupation has been the precondition for the plundering of the oil wealth of Arabistan and the super-exploitation of Arab workers.

The development of the oil industry in the area did not destroy the mainly peasant character of its economy. In effect two modes of production existed and hence two forms of struggle developed.

The struggle today is a mixture of an anti-capitalist struggle by the oil proletariat and a struggle for national independence against the central government by the population as a whole.

The proletariat of Arabistan played a major



role in the struggle against the Shah and against imperialism in 1951 to 1953, when the holdings of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company were nationalised by the Iranian government under Mossadeq.

Since then the Arab oil-workers have developed to become the most conscious and experienced section of the proletariat in Iran. The strikes and militancy of oil-workers played a major role in finally overthrowing the Shah last year.

Now these same workers are struggling for their democratic rights.

The rest of the population of Arabistan did not become as highly organised as the oil workers, due to the isolation of peasant lives and because of the high level of political repression. However during the upsurge of popular

consciousness created by the revolution against the Shah they began to articulate their national demands.

An Arab nationalist organisation was founded called the Kanoon-e Farhangi-e Siyasi-e Khalgh-e Arab (political and cultural institution of the Arab people). From this starting point the whole nation was organised against imperialism and against the central government up to the overthrow of the Shah.

Four months after the Shah was overthrown Khomeini launched an attack on the Arab people. In an atmosphere of preparations for war in Kurdistan and growing attacks on the left, Arab nationalists in Arabistan organised a big demonstration demanding regional autonomy and cultural rights. Khomeini and General Medeni turned this demonstration into

one of the bloodiest events in the region's history.

Hundreds of youth, and older people, were left lying in their own blood in the streets of Khoramshar — mown down by tanks.

Following the demonstration fourteen members of the HKS (Iranian section of the Fourth International) were arrested and came very close to being executed. Their crime was to attempt to put forward socialist demands bridging the gap between the two sections of the Arab population.

New ways of fighting began to emerge among the Arab youth — roads, pipelines and railways were destroyed to disrupt the oil industry.

Last February a demonstration of 3000 people started out from the Arab area of Ahwaz, chief town of the province, and it was joined by non-Arab workers. They marched to the Ministry of Culture which was being picketed by large numbers of unemployed.

The demonstration demanded the release of Arab political prisoners and self-determination for the Arab nation within a free and democratic Iran, as well as general demands around land reform and against unemployment.

Khomeini reacted to this united demonstration of Arabs and unemployed by once more turning his guns on them.

Despite the repression, the Arab people continue their fight, even though many are arrested every day, often imprisoned, and even executed, without trial.

Support

These are the reasons that the guerillas took the hostages in Khomeini's London embassy. And why we have to oppose Thatcher in de facto lending support to Khomeini by using the SAS to kill them.

* Khomeini, Bani-Sadr and Thatcher are all reactionaries and we condemn what they have done.

* We condemn the SAS and Khomeini's Revolutionary Guard.

* We condemn the killing and persecution of the Arab nation both in Iran and in London.

* End the political relationship between Britain and Iran.

* For international solidarity with the anti-imperialist struggle of the Arab nation and with their demands for self-determination and democratic rights.



Black youth aren't playing games

THOUSANDS of black South African youth are on the streets in protest against the racist education system operating in the country.

The South African Government have replied with bullets and tear-gas. At least two black youth have already been killed after cops opened fire on demonstrators in a number of different towns throughout South Africa. Many other protesters have been seriously injured.

All this is taking place while the British Lions rugby team tours South Africa — warmly endorsed before the team left Britain by Dennis Thatcher. And ironically it is rugby which has once more highlighted the racist nature of the apartheid system. Last month Prime Minister Botha stepped in to ban two mixed-race teams playing in a school's rugby tournament.

Behind the protests of the last month is the continuing discrimination in the South African education system. The government spends only £30 a year on the education of each black youth, compared to £342 for each white. Tens of thousands of blacks have been boycotting their schools, and have taken to the streets instead.

Cape Town was the scene of the latest violence when on Saturday several thousands demonstrated in a shopping centre. Police baton-charged the youth repeatedly.

A few days earlier a black youth was killed and three people were seriously hurt in Bloemfontein in the Orange Free State. Police shot at demonstrators who replied by overturning cars and buses and stoning military vehicles and government buildings. Orders for the police to open fire on the youth were heard on police radios.

Police have also fired on demonstrators in Port Elizabeth and Batho. At the start of this month cops in Johannesburg invaded a black school in which pupils were demonstrating. Hundreds of arrests have been made and one of the demands of the youth is for the release of all those being held.

Strikers have also been victims of the latest waves of repression in South Africa. Black textile workers on strike in Durban over a pay demand were subject to a tear-gas attack by the police on Saturday as they were preparing to march on their factories.

ABERDEEN: SC sold Saturdays outside CAs — for more info ring phone Colin, 574068.

BATH: SC on sale at 1985 Books, London Road, and Saturdays 2pm-3pm outside the Roman Baths. Phone 20298 for more details.

BIRMINGHAM: SC on sale at The Ramp, Fri 4.30-5.30, Sat 10-4. For more info phone 643-0669.

BRADFORD: SC available from Fourth Idea Bookshop, 14 Southgate.

BRENT: SC supporters sell every Sat Morning at the Brent Collective Bookstall in the Trades Hall, Willesden High Rd NW10.

BRIGHTON: For info phone Nick, 605052.

BRISTOL: SC on sale 11-1, 'Hole in Ground', Haymarket. For more info contact Box 2, c/o Fullmarks, 110 Cheltenham Rd, Montpellier, Bristol 6.

CARDIFF: SC sales Newport Town Centre outside Woolworths 11-12.30; Cardiff British Home Stores 11-12.30. Also available from 108 Books, Salisbury Road, Cardiff.

COVENTRY: SC available from Wedge Bookshop. For more info about local activities phone 461138.

DUNDEE: SC available from Dundee City Square outside Boots, every Thursday 4-5.30pm, Friday 4-5.30pm, Saturday 11-4pm.

ENFIELD: SC available from Nelsons Newsagents, London Rd, Enfield Town.

Huddersfield: SC supporters sell papers every Saturday 11am-1pm. The Piazza. SC also available at Peaceworks.

LAMBETH: SC now available at kiosk Brixton tube, Oval tube, Herne Hill British Rail and Tetric Books Clapham.

NEWHAM: SC sale every Saturday, 11am to noon, Queen's Rd Market, Upton Park.

OLDHAM: SC sold every Saturday outside Yorkshire Bank, High Street. For more information about local activities. Tel. 061-682-251.

OXFORD: SC supporters sell every Fri 12-2pm outside Kings Arms and every Sat 10.30-12.30pm in Cornmarket.

STOCKPORT: SC sold every Saturday 1pm Mersey Square. Tel. 061-236 4905 for more information.

SWINDON: SC on sale 11-1 every Sat., Regent St (Brunel Centre).

TESSIDE: SC sales at Newsfare shops in Cleveland Centre and on Linthorpe Rd, Middlesbrough, and at Greens Bookstall, upstairs in Spencer Mkt, Stockton High St.

TOWER HAMLETS: SC supporters sell papers every Friday 5-6pm Watney Mkt, Sat 11-12.30pm Whitechapel tube, Sunday 10.30-12.00 Brick Lane.

WOLVERHAMPTON: SC on sale Wolverhampton Railway station 4.30-6pm on Thursday & Friday; Polytechnic Students Union Friday 12-2pm and Mander Centre, near Beatties, Sat 11am-2pm.

WOLVERHAMPTON: SC Public Meeting 'The Tory Promise of Tax Cuts and Prosperity' 2 June 8pm at Coach and Horses, Cannock Road, Wolverhampton.

LONDON: SC jumble sale. Ring Tessa on 01-359 8371 if you have any clothes, books, records or toys you no longer require.

SC SPONSORED DRY OUT.

John May has found a novel way to raise money for Socialist Challenge. Last year he raised £25 by giving up booze. Now he intends to repeat his performance and double his target — he hopes to go two months without booze this time rather than just one. His dry out starts on 31 May so you have plenty of time to rush sponsorship to him at 113 Kingswood Avenue, Park North, Swindon, Wilts.

BRENT SC supporters barbecue, Sat 7 June, 5 St Mary's Rd, NW10, 8pm, adm. £1 waged, 75p unwaged.

LONDON SC jumble sale, Sat 14 June, Essex Rd Library, N1, 2pm.

LAMBETH SC supporters mark the historic occasion of (possibly) the last ever party in a certain famous house in South London; (Herne Hill) by raising funds for Socialist Challenge. Adm. 50p, plus very cheap real ale. 8.30pm Sat 31 May. Details from SC sellers.

The SWP and 'unity in action'

MUCH has been written lately in the pages of Socialist Challenge on the subject of the Socialist Workers Party. I live in Bournemouth and for two years I subscribed to Socialist Worker and, with a small nucleus of other sisters, helped to form a local branch of Women's Voice.

We weren't doing badly considering that Bournemouth is a Tory bastion and, although there were only eight of us at the time, at least it was a start.

Because the Women's Voice magazine was never available to us until at least two weeks after it came out, I telephoned and explained to their 'office' that no one wants to buy stale news, so would they send copies directly to myself in order that I could distribute them as quickly as possible to our supporters. I also asked Women's Voice to make mention of the Poole and Bournemouth Women's Voice Group within the pages of the magazine so that isolated readers and other groups could contact us.

It appears that this proved beyond the capabilities of SWP/Women's Voice with the result that we all feel that there is something seriously wrong within the party.

We all put a lot of effort into it, and we asked for nothing except a bit of support from SWP/Women's Voice.

Jeannie Robinson and Shaun Doherty state in their letter (8 May) that they 're-affirm the commitment of both Rank and File and the SWP to the only kind of left unity that matters — unity in action.'

My answer to them is that actions speak louder than words, and if they don't believe me, they should come down to Bournemouth, preferably with some of their comrades, and see what sort of 'unity in action' exists in this part of the world!

I would add that this is not the fault of the Rank and File who are working hard and who depend to a large extent on the co-operation of brothers and sisters elsewhere. Is that too much to expect?

LOMOND HANDLEY, Poole

Rewriting the history of 1968

THE Communist Party didn't lead the general strike in France in May 1968 as Douglas Chalmers claims (letters, 23 May), nor was it spontaneous.

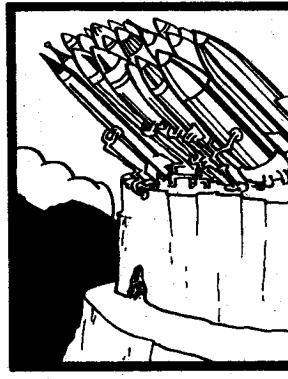
The first strike, which took place at the Sud-Aviation factory in Nantes, was led by a committee which included anarchists and members of the OCI (Lambertist Trotskyists).

The role of the French CP (PCF) was destructive. It organised strikes and occupations where only a few workers took part — its own supporters — rather than mass occupations involving all the workers.

Its demands didn't help workers. When the PCF-led trade union (CGT) announced the results of its first round of negotiations with the government, it was ignored; at the Renault Billancourt factory in Paris there were shouts of 'don't sign' (24 June), and the CGT was humiliated.

The history of the PCF is not so heroic as that portrayed by comrade Chalmers. He forgets to mention the bombings in Algeria carried out on the orders of the communist air minister Tillon which left 40,000 dead. L'Humanité, the PCF daily, commented: 'Those troublemakers have been taught a lesson they will not forget' (12 May 1945). In the midst of the revolt of 1968, Cohn Bendit was denounced as a German Jew in the same paper.

Today the PCF more or less accepts the French Government's attacks on immigrant workers — in the stations and tubes in Paris the gendarmes stand around, waiting for opportunities to harass immigrants, checking papers etc.



Yes, unity of the left must be built, but not unity of inaction proposed by the PCF and French Socialists, but unity in struggle.

TERRY SHEAN, Libertarian Communist Group, York

Never mind the language...

I HAVE felt compelled to write this letter about an article (8 May) in your bundle of toilet paper called Socialist Challenge.

The article I am referring to was called 'Why we left the Young Communists' by two arseholes known as Nigel (pisspot) Wilson and Martin (peabrain) Wright.

What I would like to know is how much you actually paid them to stop writing for Bulldog (the Young National Front paper) and write an article for Idiot's Weekly — sorry Socialist Challenge?

Your own inactivity speaks for itself. Here in Scotland Revolution must be almost non-existent. As for the Young Communist League, in my home town the YCL is the only political youth group. In Cumnock we manage to run a branch without help even from the Communist Party which is non-existent.

We are the only true left youth group in a district with a population of 46,000.

We are both fighting the same enemy so let's not fight each other by condemning each other's practices.

CAMPBELL VALENTINE, Cumnock Young Communist League

Upholding the cause of the Palestinians

THERE are not many articles on the Palestine question appearing in Socialist Challenge, but when one does appear it unfortunately turns out to be just another piece of straightforward 'balanced' reporting.

This is glaringly out of character with the other articles, indeed with the whole tenor of your journal.

Tom Marlowe's piece of 15 May is a case in point. Although headed by an eye-catching inch-high title, *West Bank Rebels*, and supported by a quarter page map (which, incidentally, is wrong as regards present Israeli lines of control in occupied Sinai), the 550-word article, spread over four columns, contains virtually no political analysis.

By contrast, Stuart Piper's visually less obtrusive piece on Brazil which appeared on the same page was far meatier, carrying more detail and analysis.

Far be it for us to tell you how to run your paper — you would rightly resent it, in the same way that Palestinians resent uninformed criticism from those not involved in their struggle — nevertheless it is felt that you will welcome some suggestions on how Palestinians would like to see their case presented by those whom we feel have their interests at heart.

For example, in the article quoted, a map scaled down to half the size would have left ample room within the same space allotment for both background information and analysis: a condemnation of imperialist-backed Zionist aggression coupled with upholding the right of the Palestinians to self-determination, including the right to return to their homes and the right to form their own state.

These are the most urgent demands of the Palestinians at this stage. Is it too much to ask a journal such as yours to popularise these just demands?

The Palestinian case has for long gone by default in the West, particularly among the left, sizeable sections of which thought, and still think, that Zionism is some kind of national liberation movement; that Christian Europe's guilt for its abominable treatment of the Jews can somehow be atoned on the altar of a Palestinian sacrifice.

Besides, there are strategic reasons for imperialism's support of Zionism and its continuing maintenance of Israel — an unnatural settler-colonial entity kept going by massive transfusions of aid extracted from American tax payers.

These are matters for urgent exposure if the people here are to contribute more effectively to combating imperialism's world-wide designs.

It is to be hoped that future articles in Socialist Challenge will redress the balance more heavily in favour of the Palestinians.

D SAGER, Free Palestinian Organisation, London

Fined for resisting police attacks

IN your 24 April issue you carried a report about the march to defend the Earlington family against police racism. We went to court on 21 and 22 April and, with the exception of my dad, who the police couldn't get anything to stick on, we have all been found guilty of assaulting the police.

McClean the magistrate didn't only fine my family for fighting

against police attacks but is forcing us to pay towards legal aid and costs. Why? Because we had organised a defence committee and the magistrate didn't like the publicity and support we had received from the community.

The defence committee is asking everyone who supports our fight against the police attack — and our right to fight — to help us to pay the £350 fines and costs.

If we don't pay them we will be sent to prison. Thank you for your help and support.

Please send donations to: Earlington Family Defence Committee, c/o 49 Railton Road, London SE24

TREVOR EARLINGTON, London

How we stopped the buses on 14 May

THE Day of Action on 14 May was a testing ground for the labour movement in Huddersfield.

As in many other areas, the trades council — heavily influenced by the Communist Party — was the central body co-ordinating strike action. But the CP secretary of the trades council, along with its president, had a passive attitude towards campaigning. They expected the full-time union officials to deliver the goods for them.

The International Marxist Group in Huddersfield had a different view of how to mobilise. Two trades council delegates, one from the Transport Union and the other from the Teachers' Union called for a meeting with all shop stewards in Huddersfield to cam-

paign for strike action and for flying pickets to be co-ordinated on 14 May. The CP leaders of the trades council did not see fit to implement this resolution.

The turn out on the day was therefore predictably low. Five hundred people marched through Huddersfield while the bulk of the workforce went into work. The trades council had not got out to the engineering and chemical factories in the town and argued that a political stand now was necessary against this government, if jobs and wages of British workers were to be protected.

The bus workers did come out, however. Labour Party militants and the IMG fought together to build for this strike action.

The Yorkshire Post tracked down bus workers in the local pub and, after offering free drinks to anyone who would speak out against the strike, the paper cobbled together a story headlined 'Bus workers revolt against strike call'. The Post demanded an immediate ballot but we decided to argue things out at the branch meeting where all the issues could be fully discussed.

The 60-strong branch meeting of the 9/14 TGWU branch agreed to strike but a further mass meeting was arranged to get everyone else involved. Bill Morris, the national passenger group secretary, trounced the right wing and the resolution to strike was endorsed again. On 14 May, 70 bus workers turned up to picket the depots in Huddersfield and 90 per cent of the buses were in the garage on the Day of Action. In York, too, the buses were not running.

It shows what can be done if you go out and argue for mass action against the Tories.

STEVE VOKES, 9/14 TGWU branch, Huddersfield

WHAT'S LEFT

RATES for ads to appear in What's Left. 5p per word or £4 per col. incl. Deadline: noon Sat. prior to publication. Payment in advance. 'LEFT-wing Communism' — An Infantile Disorder? World Revolution public meeting on the 60th anniversary of the publication of Lenin's pamphlet: Lenin's arguments, the replies by 'left communists' at the time and the importance of the debate for revolutionaries in the 1980s. Fri 6 June, 7.30pm, Star and Garter, 18 Fairfield St, Manchester 1.

GLASGOW: end police censorship on Ireland, smash H-Block, defend Hands off Ireland, public meeting. Thur 5 June, 7.30pm, McLellan Galleries, Sauchiehall St. Speakers from Sinn Fein and Hands off Ireland.

SOCIALISTS! Break the Routine — Show a Film! Discover the best in left films in Britain from the new Socialist Film Services Handbook, *Films for Socialists*. £1, including postage from Ken Hulme, Room 427, The Wool Exchange, Brushfield St, London E1.

REVOLUTIONARY Communist Papers — theoretical journal of the Revolutionary Communist Tendency. No 6 Khomeini's Capitalism: the imperialists close in. This issue of RCP surveys the development of capitalism and class in Iran and the relations with imperialism. It makes an assessment of the present regime, the growing imperialist tension in the Middle East and the prospects for socialism. 60p + 25p postage. Cheques payable to Junius Publications, BCM JPLTD (B) London WC1V 6XX.

RACIST terror in Newham — Fascists on the march — How to fight back? East London Workers Against Racism public meeting. Speaker: Maggie Pearson. Thur 5 June, 7.30pm, Lawrence Hall, 2/4 Cumberland Rd, Plaistow E13. Organised by the Revolutionary Communist Tendency.

MANCHESTER Revolutionary Communist Tendency Public Meeting: 'Fight Racism, Fight Nationalism, Build Class'. Thur 5 June, 7.30pm, West Indian Centre, Carmoor Rd, off Dickenson Rd, Manchester. Speakers include shop steward from Maple Mill, Oldham.

IMG NOTICES

LEYLAND national fraction. B'ham centre, 137 Digbeth, B'ham. Sun 8 June, noon to 4pm.

TGWU national fraction. Centre, Sun 6 July.

RAIL national fraction. Sat 5 July national centre noon to 4pm. Sun 8 June.

NUT national aggregate. Sat 31 May, 11am to 5pm, national centre.

NATIONAL GAY fraction. Sun 1 June in London. Venue to be arranged. Agenda: theses on gay liberation printed in pre-conference DB; perspectives for gay movement; allocation of work within fraction. A document on perspectives will be available from mid-May. Anyone wanting to be sent a copy and not on mailing list contact national centre.

NUPE national fraction, Sun 1 June, 12noon to 5pm, national centre.

AUEW fraction, Sat 21 June. Note change of date further notice later.

FRACTION leaderships aggregate, Sun 22 June, national centre.

NALGO London members meeting, Fri 27 June, 7.30pm, national centre; national secretariat, Sat 28 June, 11am to 3pm, national centre; national fraction, Sat 13 Sep, 11am to 4pm, national centre.

Socialism in the Eighties Tour

Speakers invited from Labour Party, Communist Party, and Socialist Workers Party

- 29 May Swansea Phil Hearse (IMG)
- 29 May North London Tariq Ali (IMG) Reg Race (Labour MP). Manor Gardens Library, 7.30pm
- 30 May Nottingham Phil Hearse (IMG)
- 2 June Preston Tariq Ali (IMG)
- 3 June Manchester Stephen Marks (IMG)
- 4 June Middlesbrough Valerie Coultas (IMG) Borough Hotel, Corporation Rd, 7.30pm
- 6 June Liverpool Phil Hearse (IMG)
- 10 June East London Phil Hearse (IMG) Ernie

Roberts (Labour MP). Northwold Primary School, Northwold Rd, London E5

- 11 June Leicester Stephen Marks (IMG)
 - 16 June South London Valerie Coultas (IMG) Brixton Town Hall, 7.30pm
 - 17 June Wolverhampton Steve Potter (IMG)
 - 20 June Cardiff Tariq Ali (IMG)
- Phone Socialist Challenge on 01-359 8180 with details of venue and other speakers if not included in this list

CHARTER

STOP THE ROT KICK OUT THE RIGHT

Conference for Rank and File Engineering Workers Holborn Library Hall, London Saturday 28 June 11am-4.30pm

Credentials from Jack Robertson, 265a Seven Sisters Rd, Finsbury Park, London N4

GET DELEGATED!

Equal Opportunities and Nalگو: A Day Conference on Problems and Solutions

A conference on equal opportunities and problems faced by women at work is being organised by the City of Liverpool branch of NALGO on Sat 21 June.

Open to NALGO members in the North-west and North Wales district. Creche available.

Speakers: Stella Smith, chairperson. EOC in NALGO; Hester Banks, legal advisor to National EOC.

Workshops to discuss women in NALGO, new technology, workplace

nurseries, maternity, and paternity provision. Application forms from: Vicky Rosin c/o NALGO, Duchy Chambers, 24 Sir Thomas Street, Liverpool 1. Tel. 051-236 1945.

Annual Conference of the Conference of Socialist Economists 'CAPITALIST OFFENSIVE — SOCIALIST RESISTANCE'

11-13 July Manchester Uni. Book: CSE, Dept. Sociology, Warwick Uni. Coventry

From Ronnie Scott's to Rockley Sands

EARL (Fatha) Hines plays jazz to a hushed audience at Ronnie Scott's — a big band plays 3½ hours of continuous dance music at Rockley Sands Ballroom in Poole.

ANN SWART was at both events and describes her reaction to the two cultures linked by the same music.

Ronnie Scott's sophisticated jazz club in Soho in London's West End has an atmosphere supposedly conducive to listening to serious jazz. The club is so expensive that it can limit its clientele to those who can afford to consider themselves dedicated jazz lovers.

The kudos the management has set up around their exclusiveness means that the club attracts the best musicians. These artists can be guaranteed the prestige of one of the most classy jazz clubs in Britain.

When the legendary Earl Hines, in his seventies, sat down and played his piano the hush that descended was real. The applause when it came was generated by honest appreciation and pleasure and was accompanied by mumblings of 'yeah' and 'Swing it, Fatha'.

The 'Fatha' handed on to the young, white and female co-workers in his band the skill, rhythm and craft learned in half a century of playing jazz. The evening showed that process in action: a worker handing on his trade. As Earl explained: 'I'm the Fatha and these, my co-workers, are the greatest young people I can find.'

The result, although lacking the real emotion I associate with Kansas City in the '30s, was a polished, skilful performance too high in entertainment value to have the excitement of spontaneous creative music. But hearing the old man is an experience I will remember with pleasure and will savour for years.

At Rockley Sands, a crushed caravan holiday camp on the mud flats of Poole harbour, the local branch of USDAW, the shopworkers' union, danced to two '30s-style big bands.

The ballroom is cheap out of season and over five hundred Co-op members attended the event. Since they couldn't afford (and didn't want) the luxury of the canned atmosphere of Ronnie Scott's, alcohol was used effectively to



induce an electricity which was tuned and extended by the bands.

To ensure the hall was full and the audience ready for a long evening before closing time, the ticket includes an hour of free wine from 7.30pm.

By the time the first band started I, like the rest of the room, was tanked up, uninhibited and ready for the ball. We were there not to listen to the music but to be enveloped by it, to be energised by it, to physically respond to the saxophone solos.

Applause was not for big names but for the technical competence and craft of the musicians' ability to extend the audience and give us the chance to escape the dullness of our working lives.

Given this set-up, the music of Basie and

Ellington was discernible only by familiar tunes.

The audience response, though, was what had given big bands their popularity 40 years ago. The dance floor was jammed with bodies swaying to the music. There was no pause for the sexist jokes of Ronnie Scott; just time to grab the wine you had stored in your pint mug while the soloist was introduced.

The connections between the '30s and now were seen not only in the music but also in the topics of drunken conversation, chiefly around the fear of unemployment for the shop worker, with the 1980s dimension of new technology leading to more and more deskilling.

Older workers talked of continual deskilling of their trade through the decades, the eradication of apprenticeships, and the fears of automation.

Two consecutive nights, two cultures, each alien to the other, linked by music generated from the ancient music of Africa; old workers recounting and handing on the knowledge of their craft.

Ronnie Scott's is a luxury I, for one, can live without, but however I felt about hearing 'Kansas City' played between 'Blue Suede Shoes' and 'Let's Twist Again', visiting our class at play was an exciting as well as a political experience.

Earl (Fatha) Hines would have been loved and appreciated by the audience in the ballroom but in a completely different way from the motionless (emotionless?) jazz lovers of Ronnie Scott's. The fact is that the Co-op workers could not afford him and jazz is too esoteric.

TV NAC: 2 new video films

The National Abortion Campaign, with the help of Liberation Films, has ventured into television. It has produced two video films, *You've got to be careful* which tackles the tricky area of sex, contraception, and abortion, and *A day-care abortion* which shows how such an abortion is performed at Professor Huntingford's clinic in Mile End, East London.

The first film is designed to provoke discussion among young people about the consequences of their sexual activity. Three women and one man talk frankly about the choices involved in parenthood.

These interviews in black and white are interspersed with a narrative, (in colour) about a young nurse, Karen, who discovers she is pregnant, cannot contact her boyfriend, Peter, and decides, with the help of her friend, to have an abortion.

Leonora Lloyd, mother of two, explains the dilemma of many women who find themselves pregnant: 'I do love babies but you cannot be selfish'. At 35, pregnant for the third time because the coil had let her down, it was not the right time to have a child. 'Life's not very just,' she explains. 'A lot of women get pregnant when they don't want to and a lot of women can't get pregnant when they do want to.'

Jan McKinley, at 16, also decided she didn't want to be pregnant. The interview with her drew out the naivety of young people engaged in their first sexual encounters:



"'You're on the pill aren't you?' he said to me. 'Yes, of course', I replied not wanting him to think I was not in the know. After that I couldn't go back to him when I got pregnant and admit that I wasn't on the pill!'

The interviews were fascinating, but when shown in schools the story of Karen and Peter grabbed the limelight. Why does Peter not contact Karen? Why did Karen, who was a nurse, get pregnant when she should

have known about contraception? Is it possible to get pregnant at any age? Was Karen right to reject adoption when she replied to her friend: 'After nine months I'd love it, I couldn't give it up!' This is what young people wanted to talk about.

The second film is aimed at medical students. Introducing the film, Professor Huntingford explains that most women know after about



six or seven weeks if they want to continue with the pregnancy or have a termination. A day care abortion is a simple way of having an abortion. It can be carried out close to the woman's home where a counsellor will listen to her reasons for wanting an abortion and enable her to make her own choice.

Elaine is given a local anaesthetic and the abortion takes place using vacuum extraction. The counsellor

stays with the woman at the head of the bed while Professor Huntingford chats to the woman to put her at ease: 'You know I've told you about the bee sting. Well it comes four times ...and the fourth and last bee sting ...this is the last one of the dilators.'

Professor Huntingford remembers Elaine's name and tells her what he is doing throughout the short operation. Comments by a man in the audience that Professor Huntingford was too patronising are dismissed by most of the women although they do agree that perhaps the film could have focussed a little more on the counsellor's role.

Elaine herself gives the impression that she is glad that the Mile End Clinic exists: 'I'd never have been able to cope with two children on my own ...I was thinking of leaving my rent for 3 weeks ...I didn't think it was going to be like it was.'

Both films help to demystify sex, contraception, and abortion and in doing so show how control over fertility allows women to lead freer and happier lives.

They both cost £22 to buy or £6 to hire. Decide which format you want, VHS or three-quarter inch U-matic, and ring Liberation Films on 01-450 7855. Teachers notes are supplied and ten comic strips are available for young people for an additional 50p.

The Under Review page would like volunteers to review plays in London. If you are interested ring Socialist Challenge on 01-359 8180.

Socialist Challenge

WHATEVER THE VERDICT, THE SPG IS

GUILTY!

THE coroner's jury at the Blair Peach inquest has decided that the anti-Nazi, who was killed a year ago when demonstrating against the fascist National Front, died by 'misadventure'.

The verdict was predictable. The jury was denied access to the police's own investigation into Blair's killing, and it was directed by a coroner who stated repeatedly his opposition to any verdict hinting at police involvement in the death.

And yet, even before the verdict was announced, the Special Patrol Group involved in the incident which led to Blair being killed had, in their own way, shown their guilt.

At the weekend Inspector Alan Murray, who was in charge of the SPG unit suspected of inflicting the fatal blow that killed Blair, announced his decision to quit the police. 'I've been worried about the behaviour of the senior officers investigating the incident', said Murray.

This resignation comes on top of the transfers and suspensions of other members of the SPG who appeared as witnesses during the inquest.

*PC Raymond White has been suspended since last June, just a couple of weeks after Blair's death. He was the driver of one of the two SPG vans whose occupants led the attack on Anti-Nazi League demonstrators. In court White contradicted the evidence of other SPG members who said they were in his van when Blair was killed.

*PC Anthony Richardson has now been transferred out of the SPG. Richardson admitted at the inquest that he chased a number of demonstrators into a cul-de-sac at the entrance of which Blair was struck down.

*PC Michael Freestone has also been transferred from the SPG. When Freestone appeared in court he was one of a number of police witnesses who claimed loss of memory. He said he didn't remember who was in the police van with him, he couldn't describe the demonstrator he had chased when he left the van, he couldn't remember who was in the van when he returned to it.

*PC James Scottow has now left the SPG. At Blair Peach's inquest he agreed that he swung his truncheon at anti-Nazi demonstrators and had used 'strong language'. He was the only SPG member who admitted to having seen and spoken to Peach. Scottow said he saw Peach sitting on the pavement and told him to get 'on your bike'.

Neither Scottow nor any other witness has offered one shred of evidence that Blair Peach was involved in any riot situation.

Yet despite this, the West London coroner, Dr John Burton, who is presiding over the inquest raised this possibility in his summing-up. He told the jury that they had to consider 'whether the police used reasonable

force' and 'whether Mr Peach was one of the rioters'.

Burton also told the jury that they could return any one of three possible verdicts — death by misadventure, unlawful killing or an open verdict.

He has made it clear that even if 'unlawful killing' is returned this would not necessarily mean that the SPG were the killers.

He has raised the possibility that Blair was killed by a demonstrator, although again no evidence has been heard in court to substantiate this allegation.

On the other hand a number of witnesses have testified that they saw Blair being attacked by the police.

*Socialist Challenge was visited by two officers from Scotland Yard last Friday. They wanted to know what evidence we had for stating that six SPG officers — Alan Murray, Raymond White, James Scottow, Michael Freestone, Anthony Richardson and Anthony Lake — were suspected by the police's own investigation department, CIB 2, of killing Blair.

Members of Socialist Challenge staff told the cops that, as the issue of our paper dated 20 March had stated, the information we published was based on a story in the Sunday Times.

When we asked the cops whether they had visited the Sunday Times, they said no. This suggests that the visit paid to us was a deliberate act of harassment.

WHO KILLED J.R.? WE WOULD HAVE!

IN the week when J.R. of Dallas — the capitalist everyone loved to hate — finally got his just deserts, we hope our supporters will be similarly inspired to help us bring down the curtain on the Tories.

A good week has just brought in £157 but we need more than that every week till the end of June to meet our target of £2,500. Just think of every pound you send to us representing another bullet in J.R. and all the other filthy capitalists like him!

Our thanks this week to:

R Haggie	£5.00
G Sullivan	4.00
L Emery	25.00
A Clark	1.00
D Herman	7.50
P Bennett	1.00
M Gudmundsson	3.50
H Wainwright	15.00
R Jeffery	5.00
Leeds IMG	40.00
P Shaffee	50.00
Total this week	£157.00
Cumulative total	£739.93

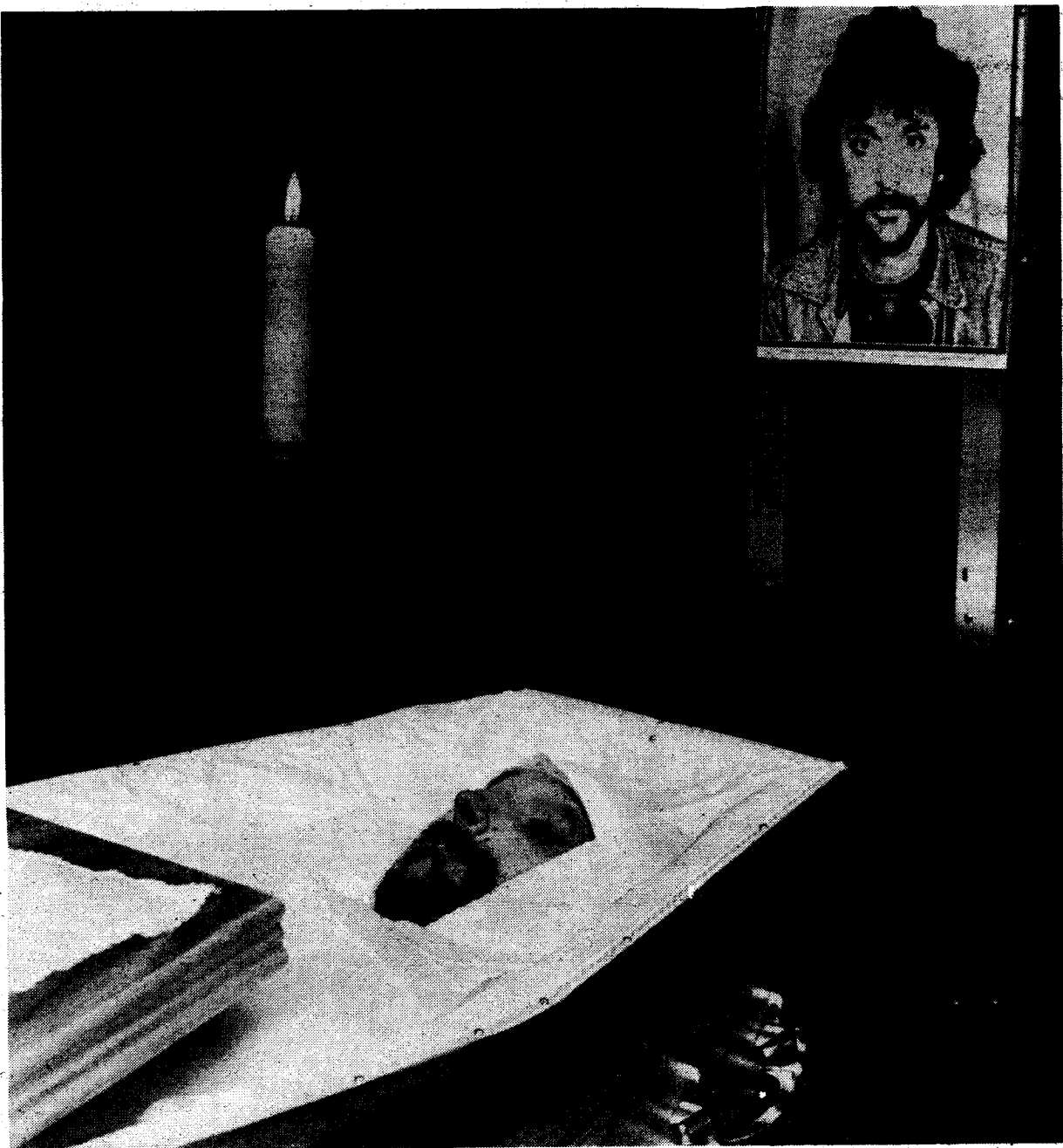


Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)

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Cheques, POs and Money Orders should be made payable to 'Socialist Challenge'.
Complete and return to: Socialist Challenge, 328 Upper Street, London N1