

# Socialist Challenge

## VICTORY TO THE MINERS!

By Ken Capstick,  
Parkhill delegate to Yorks  
Area NUM

IT IS now imperative that every other coalfield takes immediate strike action with their comrades in Wales.

They are the first coalfield to take strike action to protect their pits, their valleys and their communities from the onslaught of Margaret Thatcher's crazy monetarist policies.

It is not surprising that the South Wales miners have thrown themselves into the vanguard of the fight for jobs. The coalfield is one that has suf-

fered tragedy and misery throughout its history.

But it is also typical of the Welsh miners that they say unselfishly that they will not return to work until the threat of closure is lifted from every pit in the British coalfield.

The miners in Yorkshire, who voted 85 per cent in favour of

strike action on pit closures, are more than ready for the fight. The feeling in the pits is that now they have their coats off they want to get it over with.

It is crucial that the mood of the miners be given immediate leadership.

The lads at the pits are also expecting that others will fight side by side with them in this battle which they know is a direct confrontation with the government. Already the so-called 'Iron Lady' is showing signs

of fear and the government is offering to meet the NUM.

No such meeting should take place without first receiving from the government a clear undertaking that there will be no pit closures, except on proven seam exhaustion, and that there will be no loss of jobs in the mining industry.

But if the miners end up on strike and others join in their action there can be no retreat until all jobs are saved. And that means the end of Thatcher.

### Total stoppage in South Wales

By Paul Highfield  
and Barry Wilkins

'WE ALL want this to be a repeat of 1974 — the start of a movement to kick out the Tories.'

That's the shared view of three miners — Alan Price, Tom Watkins and John McCann — from Coegnant colliery, Maesteg in South Wales.

There was a spontaneous walk-out at their pit last Sunday when the miners learned that it is to be closed. Their action has sparked off a wave of strikes by the miners against the Tories' job-slashing policies.

By 6am on Tuesday the whole of South Wales NUM was out, and the Kent Scottish and Derbyshire areas had announced strike action from next Monday. The Victoria pit near Stafford walked out on hearing that it, too, was for the chop.

It was the action by the 425 Coegnant miners which began the landslide. They were rapidly joined on strike by 800 miners at the

Brynllw-Morlais pit near Llanelli, which is also threatened by the Coal Board axe.

South Wales NUM was obliged to bring forward its area conference to last Monday. The conference voted unanimously to bring out all 26,000 South Wales miners the next morning.

Emlyn Williams, South Wales miners' president told his area conference on Monday: 'There is no room for compromise. Our men would rather eat dirt than go back to work before the closure threat is lifted.'

Troops might be used, he said, but 'We have to fight and fight hard even if

we all end up in jail. We're fighting the battle for employment not only for miners but also for everyone else in South Wales.'

The pits under threat in South Wales are: Brynllw-Morlais, near Llanelli — 800 jobs; Aberpergym near Glynneath — 300 jobs; Coegnant near Maesteg — 425 jobs; Tymawr-Lewis, Merthyr — 680 jobs; Britannia in Gwent — 680 jobs.

The total jobloss is 2,885, not including administrative staff.

Emlyn Williams has appealed for support 'from all other trade unionists until the threat to every pit is withdrawn'.



# CLOSE THATCHER NOT THE PITS





## Five policies to fight the Tories

**WORKING** people in Britain today are fed up. After nearly two years of Tory rule the threat of the dole queue hangs over us all.

Margaret Thatcher's campaign for 'individual freedoms' has been exposed as support for the right of the bosses to treat workers as expendable commodities. Three million people have Thatcher to thank for the right to choose from 100,000 job vacancies.

The huge turn-out for the Labour Party's demonstration against unemployment in Liverpool last November and the swing to the left in the Labour Party are indications of a growing revolt. The flames of revolt must rise higher.

This coming weekend the Glasgow demonstration against unemployment, by mobilising many, many thousands, can thunder out a challenge to the Tories: Enough is enough.

In May the Liverpool to London March can focus the hostility against the obscene policies of the Tories and set in motion a nationwide movement to bring them down.

That movement must fight on five points:

### 1 Mass action to fight sackings

The miners have shown that workers want to fight against the loss of jobs and that they are powerful enough and determined enough to do so. They have answered every pessimist and cynic who says

## Socialist Challenge

Revolutionary Socialist weekly

PO Box 50, London N1 2XP

Phone 01-359-8189/8180 (editorial and distribution)

there is nothing to be done.

Strikes and occupations, like Gardner's, show the way forward. That's what stops sackings. That is what must be done at Talbot, Linwood. Otherwise the jobs will disappear. Governments and employers only start talking when they are confronted by mass action.

### 2 Fight for jobs not bombs

The priorities of Thatcherism make clear why we cannot tolerate such a government. As jobs decline, as the Health Service deteriorates, as industrial investment declines, the Tories jack up their expenditure on Trident and Cruise missiles.

This horrifying madness must be fought. We have to build CND and we have to fight Foot and the Labour Party leaders who want to scab on the Labour Party conference decision to support nuclear disarmament. Jobs not bombs must be our demand.

A good start in this campaign would be to build the Labour Movement Conference Against The Missiles in Manchester on 28 March.

### 3 Take the fight for democracy into the unions

The fight against the right wing in the Labour Party is part and parcel of the struggle against the Tories

— people like Williams, Owen and Rodgers only sabotage the anti-Tory campaign.

The struggle for democracy and accountability in the Labour Party has pushed it to the left, and enabled the rank and file to impose left-wing policies. But the fight is far from over, and Michael Foot shows every sign of siding with the right wing — hence his attacks on Tony Benn.

The best way to push the struggle forward is to *take it into the unions*. The essential props of the right-wing are people like Frank Chapple, Terry Duffy and Tom Jackson. They have to be taken on in their own strongholds.

### 4 Fight the cuts and the rent and rate increases

Heseltine's attack on local councils and welfare facilities is a giant step towards the destruction of the welfare state. But avoiding cuts by making rent and rate increases is no answer — they are just another attack on living standards. We should fight for no cuts *and* no rate increases. But there is no solution in one borough — only a nationally coordinated fight can succeed.

### 5 Kick out the Tories — for a Labour government

We can't wait till 1984 to get rid of the Tories! Like the miners in 1974 we have to mobilise a huge mass movement to isolate Thatcher and Co and make their government impossible. Foot may prattle about democracy and the ballot box — but 3 million unemployed can't wait!

# "Not a single pit will close"

Arthur Scargill's speech to miners lobbying the NUM executive last Thursday.

**WE HEARD** Ezra the executioner on 11 February giving out the forebodings of that sister of Nero in number 10, presiding over a collapsing economy.

Make no mistake about it, the present threats are part and parcel of an overall plan by the Tories. Thatcher has never forgotten the defeats of '72 and '74. But neither have we forgotten.

In the 15 years leading up to the strikes of '72 and '74 we had seen half a million jobs lost and 800 pits closed. Miners were turned into industrial gypsies, trailing round from pit to pit. We cannot ever let that situation re-appear.

We hear people talk about taking redundancy pay. But no one has the right to prostitute their jobs for a few pounds. No one has the right to sacrifice the job prospects of future generations.

Against the attempts by the Tory press to seduce miners into selling jobs, we must assert the lessons of the '50s and '60s. Then as now cheaper foreign fuel was the argument for closing pits. We were told that cheap Middle East oil was preferable to coal. Then what happened? The price of oil was

quadrupled. We have seen a similar mad-cap scheme with cheap coal imports. I recently went to the US to see the miners there. At first I was prevented from going by the US embassy, as an undesirable alien. Joe Gormley agreed! The visit showed up the nature of Thatcher's mad-cap scheme.

German coal is being shipped to the States at £45 a ton — subsidised to the tune of £35 a ton. Then the same ships are filled with US subsidised coal back to Europe — and particularly Britain.

To say this represents cheap imported fuel deserves prosecution under the Trades Description Act. We still import oil to the tune of £12bn for power stations, which has nothing to do with cheapness.

Ezra had admitted that 25-30,000 jobs are threatened and that 50 pits could be closed — and maybe more. The vote of 86 per cent of my membership showed what they thought of that. We will take action immediately if one pit is

closed. Bear in mind, in our ballot we never spoke of Yorkshire pits. There is only one coalfield — the British coalfield. We will strike if any pit is threatened anywhere.

Just before Christmas, at the Scottish Gala, I said that there was a hit list of 50 pits. Some members of the executive attacked me saying that no such thing was in the air. Who was right? Who was concerned about the future of the industry?

The national executive resolution today is a step in the right direction. But we need to state here and now that ballot or no ballot we are going out on strike to defend our jobs.

They say there is too much coal. So let's implement the proposal made by Sankey in the early '20s, for a 4-day

week with no loss of pay. Let's have retirement on full pay at 55. Let's stop working the equivalent of an 8-day week and ban all overtime.

If logic, eloquence, or justice could win our case, then some of us would not need to be here today. There is, however, only one way to win, and that is to demonstrate the unity and solidarity that we showed in 1972 and 1974.

At the end of the '72 strike I was asked to say what our most important victory had been. I thought about this for a while. Then shortly

after, I was crossing the street and this ex-miner in his eighties came through the traffic towards me and he shook my hand with tears in his eyes and explained that we had restored the dignity of the miners lost in 1926.

We will never give this up again. We will ask all trade unions, we will approach the triple alliance, to join with us in a battle the like of which we haven't seen before. There is no doubt that in this way we can save our jobs.

We can also bring about the conditions where we can force an early general election to get rid of this Tory government once and for all.

## What the militants say:

**Dave Douglas, Doncaster**

'The Tories are out for revenge for '72 and '74. There was a cabinet meeting last week which decided that nuclear power would be developed in Britain to supposedly prevent the miners from holding the country to ransom.

'They just want to break our backs and undermine our leadership of the whole working class that we established in '72 and '74.

'It's wrong of Scargill to argue for import controls. We should have a subsidy at the level of the competitors. This puts the heat where it belongs — on the Tories, not foreign workers.

'If you get cheap coal you get cheap steel — and then cheap cars. But that's not what Thatcher wants.'

ton. German coal by £24 a ton. So you have a crazy situation in South Wales of the best coking coal not being used for the steel plants, but inferior coal being imported. It's a crazy system.'

**Jim Cuthbert, Killock, Ayrshire**

'In Ayrshire in 1969 there were 18,000 miners. Today there are 3,500. Our pit employs 2,300 miners. It supposedly loses £9m a year. Although five new lines are opening up, no one is safe.

'The atmosphere is for a fight. We'll lead the rest against this government as we did before.'

**Keith Morris, Derbyshire area executive**

'WE ARE not going to let them do to us what they did to the steel and British Leyland workers. It's a total assault on the working class — it needs a total reply. If there's the leadership, there'll be the action. No question.

'As for the picketing laws — we say the law is an ass. All of us are prepared to go to jail if we have to.

'There was no fight on pay this time round, but Thatcher's fooling herself if she thinks we're scared. Jobs are much more fundamental than pay — there is no pay at all without jobs.'

**John Marshall, Blaenserchen, Gwent branch secretary.**

'What we need above all is a united fight. The basis is there, with a 4 to 1 vote in Yorkshire and the situation in South Wales. We decided nearly unanimously for a fight two months ago after pit-head meetings.

'This Tory government is after us. This is what the imports of large amounts of coal are all about. Either these imports are stopped or we want a massively increased subsidy.

'Our coal is subsidised by about £1.50 a



Miners lobby executive for fight against job loss

# STOP ALL COAL

a four-day week for miners and retirement at 55.

The miners' struggle can be a fight for the jobs and livelihood of the whole movement. With the victories of '72 and '74 behind them, many miners are aware that their strike can be an all-out fight to kick out the Tories.

## Boycott

Already the rail and road transport workers in South Wales, together with the seafarers, have pledged a complete boycott of the movement of coal. As the other areas strike this support must spread to every part of the country.

The national unions should make the support official. There should be no repeat of the shameful delays by transport union officials during the steel strike to give clear written instructions to their members.

The best solidarity that steelworkers could offer would be to boycott coal and turn the 'cripple' alliance into a fighting triple alliance.

## Claims

This alliance should be extended to the water workers and others like the civil service workers who are fighting for their pay claims. Solidarity rallies and demonstrations should be organised around the country by union district committees, trades councils and the Labour Party.

This will provide the basis for putting up miners involved in flying pickets and bringing them solidarity on the picket lines against the police and SPG attacks.

Picketing will be crucial in this strike. The Tory Employment Bill will be at stake.

The TUC has a Week of Action for Jobs in April. Whether this has any meaning at all will depend on what happens to the miners.

By Patrick Sikorski  
THE Tories are out to smash the miners.

The Coal Board claims that their decision to close up to 50 pits with the loss of 30,000 jobs is due to the cash limits imposed on the industry.

The real reason is that the Tories think that this is their best chance to defeat the miners.

There is no sound economic reason for closing 50 pits.

The recent World Coal Study estimated that the international coal trade will double or treble by the year 2000. The only good reason for shutting a pit anywhere in the world is if it contains no more coal.

## Future

Coal is now the fuel of the future. Oil prices have quadrupled and

atomic power faces massive development costs and political opposition.

So the Tories have been preparing for a confrontation with the miners. The Steel Corporation and the Central Electricity Generating Board have been deliberately switching away from NCB coal. There is a record 37 million tons stockpiled.

## Fight

But instead of vigorously pursuing the jobs fight, NUM president Joe Gormley has condemned South Wales miners for taking precipitate 'unconstitutional' action. He wants to talk to the Tories first about stopping imports of 8 million tons of coal and about increased redundancy money.

Import controls are no solution. The fight should be to turn the heat on the Tories by demanding that they subsidise coal to protect jobs, rather than spending it on missiles. Gormley should demand

## Solidarity action needed

By Barry Wilkins and Paul Highfield

INDUSTRIAL action by other unions is vital given that there are unprecedented stockpiles of coal inside the power stations and at pitheads.

The transport and rail workers have already pledged support to the South Wales miners. Not one ton of coal will be moved.

Steelworkers from the Port Talbot steel action group have organised a 'triple alliance' rank and file meeting for miners, rail and steel workers to mobilise support for the miners.

Tommy Lyons, acting convener of the Electricians' Union at the Port Talbot steelworks, believes the Tories' reduction of funds to the Coal Board is a cover for a direct political attack on the miners.

'It's time someone got the ball rolling against the Tories,' he said. 'Solidarity action is vital so that the strike bites immediately, unlike our steel strike last year.'

Port Talbot workers are asking why the Tories refuse to subsidise British coal, unlike their Common Market counterparts. British coal costs about £29 a ton to produce and receives a £1.62 a ton subsidy from the government.

German coal costs £41 a ton with a £14.85 subsidy, while French coal, at £45 a ton, receives a £17.96 subsidy. These subsidies are nine and eleven times greater than the subsidy in Britain.

The NCB claims that uneconomic pits have to close so that investment can be maintained for the future of the industry. But it has shelved plans to invest £600m to extract coking coal from under Margam forest, two miles from the steel works which relies en-

tirely on overseas coal.

So it looks like the Tories face their biggest challenge yet. The labour movement should realise the importance of this struggle and the consequences of victory and defeat.

If the Coegnant colliery where the strike wave began is closed the present Maesteg unemployment rate of 13 per cent will look quite reasonable. One of those 13 per cent is Paul Jones, recently made redundant from the Borg Warner transmission plant near Port Talbot.

He told Socialist Challenge: 'If these closures go through there will be no jobs left for anyone around here.'

'It's about time someone took on the Tories. The Labour Party and the TUC should stop talking and organise strike action to support the miners. The only way to get rid of the Tories is by general strike action.'

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So our paper is a bit smaller than the millionaire press. But it's got two things they haven't. It tells the truth about working people and it fights for their cause.

While the Tory press has been busy bashing the unions and the Labour Party, Socialist Challenge has:

- Exposed how Thatcher and Reagan's war plans are turning Britain into a number one nuclear target
- Revealed details of the secret connections between NATO and the Gang of Three
- Argued the socialist alternative to Thatcher's vicious economic policies, and organised solidarity with workers like those at Gardner's and Talbot-Linwood who are fighting for the right to work

- Championed the fight for women's rights, the drive for positive action for women's equality, and the movement that smashed Corrie's anti-abortion law.

- We have carried weekly on-the-spot reports of the workers' struggles in Poland — but not in the same way as the Fleet Street press, which uses Poland to attack socialism and British trade unions.

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- We have published detailed coverage of the wars that Fleet Street forgets, the resistance to Britain's rule in the north of Ireland and the civil war taking place in El Salvador.

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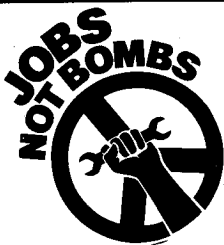
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# LINWOOD - OCCUPY

## THE LESSONS OF UCS

By John Parkinson, secretary Preston Trades Council, personal capacity

THE world car industry is in the grip of a massive crisis. UK sales are at their lowest level for five years, and last week sixteen major American car plants were idle.

Last year, Peugeot-Citroën made a loss of £140m, £20m of which is blamed on the Linwood plant.

So how can Talbot's Linwood workers fight to save their jobs?

Ten years ago a similar situation developed in the ship-building industry. The '60s witnessed a massive increase in the demand for shipping. Productive capacity had expanded enormously and as the 'boom' declined shipbuilders were looking to 'rationalise' their least profitable yards.

### Target

British yards, with their lack of modern technology and their bad siting, were a major target. Chief among these were Upper Clyde Shipyards, a company put together in 1968 to ward off foreign competition.

When the Tories were elected in 1970 they withdrew their support for the company which declared itself bankrupt, making 8,500 shipyard workers redundant and threatening the jobs of 20,000 other workers.

That's how the famous UCS 'work-in' began in defence of jobs. It received enormous support from the British working class: over half a million pounds was collected and 80,000 demonstrated in the streets of Glasgow in their support.

Two years later however the yards had been split up with 2,500 redundancies. Those still employed in the Marathon and Govan Yards had to forsake many trade union rights and ensure vastly increased productivity.

### Lessons

What went wrong at UCS, what lessons can be learnt for Linwood?

First, the occupation of the yards undoubtedly inspired enormous support from every section of the trade union and labour movement in Britain. As in the recent Gardner's occupation, ordinary trade unionists saw the dispute as being the movement's affair. The slogan 'Jobs not Bombs' was a powerful rallying cry.



UCS apprentices demonstrate

can force the government's hand. The UCS work-in signalled the end of the Tory's 'lame-duck' policies, which would have withdrawn all support from firms facing bankruptcies.

It prepared the ground for the massive anti-Tory movement which developed around the 1972 and 1974 miners' strikes.

To do this the Linwood workers, the miners and other sections of workers should directly challenge the Tory government.

### Militants

The leadership of the struggle — Communist Party militants Jimmy Reid and James Airlie, fully supported by the Scot-

### One in eight without a job in Scotland

OFFICIAL unemployment figures for January 1981 show 286,000 unemployed — more than one in 8 of Scotland's working population. These figures don't include 70,000 others on government 'employment' schemes.

20,000 young people are on Youth Opportunities programmes and 40,000 workers in Scotland are receiving compensation for short-time working. The figures do not include the many unemployed women who are not registered as unemployed.

Investment surveys suggest things will get worse. The Talbot Linwood closure could involve up to 10,000 redundancies in the West of Scotland. British Steel's Ravenscraig mill is threatened and up to 3,000 miners may face the sack from the Coal Board's pit closures.

The most important lesson is that unless an occupation is linked to a campaign which challenges the government and demands the withdrawal of support from firms facing bankruptcy.

tish TUC — refused to allow such a movement to develop.

When shop stewards were asked to support the occupation, they refused. The TUC's refusal to support the occupation was a major factor in the failure of the UCS.

'Many of us will think that nationalisation is the answer. Some might say bring down the government (greeted with rapturous applause). Well if shipbuilding on the Clyde is not saved perhaps this might happen.'

### Business

'But we are not in business at this stage to bring the government down or to indulge in political demagoguery from the right or left. We are here to preserve shipbuilding on the Clyde.'

Instead of harnessing the massive groundswell of anti-Tory feeling developing throughout the country — the most popular chant on all the demonstrations was 'Tories Out' — the STUC and the UCS shop stewards committee concentrated on winning the support of Scottish business people and churches.

### Praise

They were at pains to ensure that the creditors of UCS were not threatened by the 'work-in'. Even the official liquidator, Robert Smith, praised the shop stewards for the 'responsible' way in which they had acted.

From the start the UCS shop stewards and the STUC paraded the virtues of the Clydeside workers. They were 'moderate and hardworking' and prepared to do deals with any employer who could promise to save some of the jobs.

Instead of insisting that responsibility for the decline of the shipyards rested totally on the world slump and the 'anarchy' of the world capitalist system, they promised that the workers of UCS would work harder and forsake hard-won trade union rights to save jobs.

Instead of insisting on the nationalisation of the yards without compensation to their former owners, they negotiated with any profit-seeking, wage-cutting employer they could find. Even at the early stages of the fight in Linwood we can see these policies being put forward again.

### Restraint

The shop stewards are urging restraint while support is built up from the Scottish CBI, Tory MPs and local authorities. Jimmy Livingstone, the Transport union convenor, has promised full co-operation with the company as it goes on a five-day week for the last three months.

The STUC is concentrating on urging the Tories to force Japanese car manufacturers to come to Linwood and to penalise Peugeot-Citroën.

Our lesson from UCS is that occupations are a first step to saving jobs. But to save jobs in the long term they should be linked to the campaign to bring down the Tories and nationalise the industry.

## Linwood: savage attack on jobs

By Des Tierney

THE NEWS came through on Wednesday morning. The Talbot car plant at Linwood was to be shut with the loss of 4,800 jobs.

While the shop stewards were 'upstairs' getting the news from the management, the workers received a letter explaining the closure and the redundancy payments they would receive. An example was given — a forty-year-old worker with eleven years at Linwood would get £4,000.

### Payments

For a time it seemed that the management's plan was going to work — the immediate reaction of most workers was to calculate how much they would receive in redundancy payments. Many workers thought the only thing left for them to negotiate was a higher redundancy payment and then they would be off.

This mood didn't last long. Perhaps it was the thought of the 20 per cent unemployment in the town of Linwood or the other 286,000 Scottish workers already on the dole which changed their minds. The shop stewards met in the afternoon and decided to call a mass meeting of the workforce.

At the meeting the next day there was an overwhelming vote to reject the redundancies and to give the shop stewards the go-ahead to organise the fightback. Shop stewards convenor Jimmy Livingstone was quoted as promising as big a fight over Linwood as there had been at UCS.

It's already clear, however, that differences are emerging over how the fight should be taken up. The shop stewards committee is coming under pressure from the Scottish TUC to prevent any action at Lin-

wood which would lose the support of 'moderate' Scottish opinion.

The STUC hopes to force the Tories to provide jobs at Linwood through building a 'protest' movement from all sections of the Scottish population. Already meetings have been held with Tory MPs, the Chamber of Commerce and Scottish CBI representatives.

### Frighten

The trade unions will be expected to campaign without industrial action which, it is argued, would frighten off business people. And any campaign which is developed won't be allowed to develop into a campaign against the Tories.

The pressure is already being felt. The company's plans to run the plant 'flat-out' for the next three months have been accepted. Jimmy Livingstone, the TGWU convenor, has bragged openly about how 'responsible' the workers are going to be.

'We intend working normally,' he said, 'and we'll show them what throughput is. No one is going to point the finger at us. No one is going to say that we are the wreckers.'

Militant shop-stewards have a different idea. They are arguing for immediate industrial action. Peter Bain, a TGWU shop steward, told Socialist Challenge: 'We need to go into occupation as soon as possible — an occupation is the best way of developing solidarity.'

Massive support can be won in the working class throughout Britain if joint action with other sectors under threat like the mines and steelworks is linked to a campaign to kick out the Tories and to get Linwood nationalised.

The demonstration in Glasgow called by the Labour Party is going to be very important. Throughout the demonstration the workers at Linwood, the miners, and the steelworkers must be shown that they are backed to the full.



Greenock women vote to occupy

## Occupying to save jobs!

By Jean Mackenzie

'WE will stay as long as necessary to save every job — even if it means staying indefinitely.' That was the message from 200 women occupying the Lee Leisurewear factory in Greenock.

The workers have been sitting-in since 5 February when their American boss said the factory was to close. The management turned down the workers' proposal that work be shared between the

group's four factories in Britain.

The workers, members of the National Union of Tailor and Garment Workers, have received support from Talbot Linwood workers, and £500 from Lower Clyde shipyard workers. Local grocers are supplying free food and post office engineers have been asked to install a pay phone after management disconnected the factory's phones.

Greenock has 15 per cent unemployment and it's rising. Many families have more than one

member working in the factory and there are no other jobs in the area, especially for women.

The workers will march in Glasgow on 21 February. Their fight for the right of all workers, including women workers, to a job, and their militant occupation should be an example to the whole demonstration — and to the workers at Talbot Linwood in particular.

Messages of support to: Mrs E Monaghan, Convenor, 55 Cambridge Road, Greenock.



# TO SAVE JOBS



## The history of Linwood

By Roger Rankin

IT WAS in 1961 that the British car firm Rootes commissioned the Linwood plant. Now, twenty years and three owners later, it is to be closed. And in all that time, as convenor Jimmy Livingstone says, 'There's never been any real security here'.

Geoffrey Rootes explained at the time that they had wanted to build on one of their existing sites. But, 'Government policy changed and we were persuaded to start this new project in a development area'.

It was hoped that Linwood, together with the Ravenscraig steelworks, would become the centre of a new industrial complex in the West of Scotland, and that this might give it a long-term future.

But capitalists are stubborn people. They're not much interested in planning — they'd rather go for quick profits every time. So the sub-contractors, suppliers, and others stayed put in the Midlands. Linwood made a loss each year, and in 1967 Rootes were forced to sell out to the US-based Chrysler corporation.

In 1969 Chrysler built a new paint and machine shop to accommodate the incoming Hunter range. That was the last major investment at Linwood; it is now one of the most out-of-date car assembly units in the world. And it has continued to make a loss.

By 1975 Chrysler was in deep trouble under the impact of the world recession. It came to Britain and demanded £162m in public money and thousands of redundancies as the price of remaining in Britain.

The initial union response — at least at Linwood — was extremely militant. Shop stewards demanded that the Labour government nationalise the firm without compensation, and announced their intention to occupy the plant and seize all the company's assets if Chrysler pulled out.

But they were stabbed in the back by the trade union leadership, acting for the Labour government in the spirit of the Social Contract. The leading 'left' in the AUEW, Bob Wright, refused to back the nationalisation call and urged the stewards to 'play it cool' and try to understand the government's position.

## Ultimatum

So when the government then presented an ultimatum — 'accept 8,300 sackings or we'll close the lot' — the workforce not surprisingly knuckled under since they had no alternative to fight for.

That was the beginning of the end. Chrysler took the government's money and ran. In 1978 it sold its entire UK operation to the French company Peugeot.

Peugeot's reputation as a ruthless operator is second to none. Several of its French plants are policed by fascist-led company unions.

Just 10 days after the takeover a secret report commissioned by the unions from an economics study group, Eurofinance SA, pointed out that Peugeot's main interest was in Chrysler's dealer network. Car manufacturing capability, it forecast, would be drastically pruned.

But did the unions act on this report? Did they launch a campaign among their members for action to defend their jobs? Not at all.

Instead they gave the go-ahead for massive redundancies in the hope that this would somehow avert a catastrophe. Some 2,500 workers have already been paid off at Linwood in the last fifteen months. The inevitable result: closure of the plant.



Linwood workers — out of the gate for the last time?

## Import controls are no answer

By Pat Hickey,

TGWU steward, Rover Solihull

TWO weeks ago British Leyland announced the sacking of 2,000 workers at its Seneffe plants in Belgium. Last week, the French firm Peugeot announced its intention of sacking 4,500 at the Talbot plant at Linwood in Scotland.

In both countries, the demand for import controls is being taken up as a 'solution' to unemployment. The TUC General Council has asked affiliated unions to develop their own import controls policies and publicise them among their members.

The Transport and General Workers Union position is stated in *Import Controls Now*. This 52-page pamphlet is summarised in a 10-point 'Charter for Import Controls and Planned Trade'.

Nine of the ten points deal with import controls. Even the one point which deals with 'planned trade' states that 'pressure should be mounted for general planning of trade in addition to selective import controls by a mechanism of establishing import penetration ceilings on a rolling basis related to a policy of economic expansion'.

## Campaign

The campaign for import controls by the TGWU is not intended to confront the employers or the Tories.

Point three of the Charter states: 'In preparation for the ex-



Pat Hickey

pected "U-turn" in the government's economic policies the Labour Party and the trade unions should join together to mount maximum pressure on the government...

This whole approach is based on the belief that government policy is due to a mistaken faith in free enterprise and monetarism and that it is possible to force the government to 'change course'.

## Controls

But a closer examination reveals that import controls are not in the interests of the working

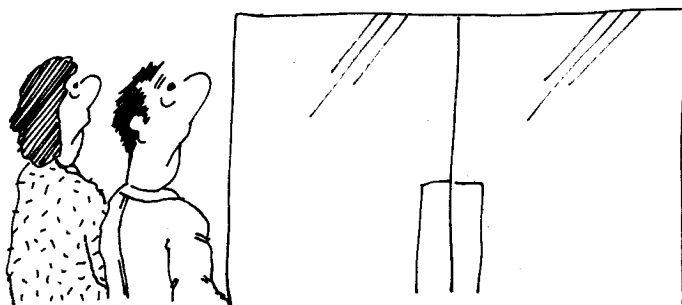
class. In a shrinking market, success means forcing competitors out of business. This will only be done by cutting wages, imposing speed-ups and sacking workers. Every success for an employer is won at the expense of the workers.

It is a battle that the working class cannot win without imposing its own solutions. If Britain imposes import controls, other countries will inevitably retaliate. Import controls do not cut unemployment, they merely export it — and then only in the short term.

## Racism

The openly nationalistic character of the TGWU's policy has its logical conclusion in the racism of George Wright's reference to the Honda Bounty, being built at Cowley, as a 'Yellow Elephant'. Such policies foster racist divisions, put-

## GLASGOW



ting unity with the employers above working class unity.

Import controls would have another effect which is not in the interests of the working class — they would increase the price of consumer goods, thus in effect acting as a direct tax on British workers in favour of British employers.

## Solution

A confrontation with the employers is inevitable in the long run. Any solution in the interests of the working class has to start from the position that workers are not responsible for the crisis.

Instead of demanding import controls, we should be starting a real fight for the 35-hour week. For many unions this is already conference policy, but conveniently ignored. Yet such a policy if imposed across the country could generate 750,000 new jobs at a stroke.

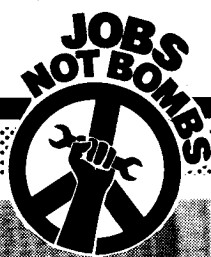
In addition to the 35-hour week, we should demand the nationalisation without compensation of all firms declaring redundancies or closures. And we should demand the indefinite extension of the short-time working subsidy to defend wages.

The nationalisation of bankrupt firms should be on the basis of the cancellation of all debts to banks and finance houses, and the firm's capital and equipment should be integrated into a national plan based on social need.

Finally we should demand *Jobs not Bombs* — we need a programme of public works, using the money spent on defence to build homes, schools and hospitals.

Such a programme would require the TUC to break with the policy of 'pressure' on the Tories and alliances with the employers towards confrontation with all those who oppose the interests of the working class.





## March for jobs

ON 1 May the Liverpool Trades Council march sets off to London. By the time it reaches the capital millions of people will know that the labour movement has had enough with dole queues and Giro cheques.

As the march wends its way south shop stewards committees, Labour Parties, Trades Councils, Labour MPs and Labour councillors, can turn out to greet the sisters and brothers who are fighting to save the future of working people. Everyone opposed to unemployment should support this march.



Jeff West

JEFF WEST secretary of the Stockport branch of the Boilermakers Union told *Socialist Challenge* what he thinks of the fight back against poverty and misery.

'After months of bad news — more redundancies and short-time working, and with ten per cent of our members not working — there are signs of a fight back.

section, and we are calling on local stewards to do the same.

'By fighting unemployment through occupations and massive demonstrations we can show people that we are strong enough to fight back.



Managers picket occupied factory at Lightin' Mixers, Stockport

## Schreibers workers in jobs fight

# How we fought... and WON!

### Glasgow

'At Lightnin' Mixers in Stockport the workers have occupied the factory to save jobs. As a result of the demonstrations in Greater Manchester and Liverpool, the turn-out for the demonstration in Glasgow can be even greater.

'The biggest factories in the town are all sending delegations. My own branch is sponsoring three unemployed members to go on the march.

The next step is to build the Liverpool to London march. We are going to try and make sure that when the marchers reach Stockport on 7 May we build the biggest possible display of solidarity.

'That's why my branch is sponsoring a number of our unemployed members to walk in the Stockport

'A young unemployed worker said to me: "All they offer us is a job picking daffodils in the Scilly Isles or a Career in the bloody army". I know what he meant, I'm an unemployed welder myself.

Unemployment does make you feel isolated. You start thinking there is nothing you can do. Now we have begun to see that this is not true. Gardners won. One hundred and fifty thousand angry people marched in Liverpool.

'We must make sure Lightnin' Mixers win. From Glasgow on to London via Liverpool, that is our slogan.

'We are beginning to build a mass movement that can set the ball rolling and get a government that will do something about jobs not bombs.'

Messages of support to Lightnin' Mixers workers to AUEW, 125 Wellington Rd Sth, Stockport, Cheshire SK1 3TY

PHIL DAVIES, Furniture Union (FTAT) convenor at Schreibers in Manchester, told *Socialist Challenge*, how the workers stopped a closure.

Before Christmas we received two offerings from management; a card wishing us well for the new year and a refusal to pay our national pay rise of £7 on the minimum rate.

Our boss, Chaim Schreiber, pretends to be a socialist. He said it wasn't his fault, it was Maggie Thatcher's.

But he's implementing Tory policies and



Phil Davies

GEC which owns the company, is a well known donor to Tory Party funds.

It all started with Michael Edwardes at Leyland — divide and

rule is the name of the game. They're all doing it now.

The Schreibers action committee put out a leaflet to the workforce saying: 'Considering all the broken promises and suffering of our members, the FTAT within Schreibers are saying enough is enough, and we the union members must be prepared to fight for our basic union rights.'

'We have over the years made many friends in the trade union movement and we call on their support. We should look at the victory of the workers at Gardner's as a shining example of workers solidarity and their slogan — unity in action — should become our slogan.'

ed our case. We visited Tom Macafee, Gardner's convenor, got agreement from the docks about boycotting his goods and had meetings with other FTAT convenors all over the country.

Schreibers management knew we were winning the argument over closure. Everyone knew that if Gardner's could win by occupying, then so could we. Everyday we had mass meetings to run the dispute. In the third week of the dispute management called us in for a meeting.

Chaim Schreiber said it was the saddest day of his life. The company had lost orders for all its plants because of our action. Regrettably he said that he was forced to keep the plant open! We were over the moon, another victory like Gardner's.

But our problems weren't over. Management sent in a troubleshooter, Mr. Southan. The day he arrived he told us to stop having so many meetings as they lost the company so much production. Within ten minutes we had stopped the factory and marched through Trafford Park for a mass meeting.

We voted unanimously for no interference in our custom and practice. Again management climbed down.

Southan's next move was to ask — that is, tell — me and the Schreibers' convenors at four other plants to

resign. Again we stopped work and held a mass meeting which called for a go-slow until I was recognised.

In fact the shopfloor voted not to recognise Southan! Every time he went on the shopfloor, everyone downed tools.

After a national meeting at the weekend we were set on an occupation. On the Monday, we leafleted Schreibers in Bolton, urging them to join us in the battle.

### Workers

Once again the management reeled. I was recognised as convenor. The strength of the workforce had increased enormously. The message went up on the lines: Schreibers 0, Workers 2.

Now we're going on further. We have a coach going up to the Glasgow demo. Two weeks ago we had 150 on the torchlight march against unemployment in Manchester. And a number of us are joining Farnsworth Labour Party, where the MP is a supporter of the Council for Social Democracy.

I don't think there's a problem putting the Labour Party in at the next election — the problem is will it have socialist policies? I agree with the idea of Jobs not Bombs. That's why I'll be a delegate from the FTAT executive to the CND labour movement conference.

## Talbot stewards back Polish workers

BELOW we publish part of a leaflet produced by the TGWU shop stewards at Linwood or Poland and the Tories' Employment Act.

How the Polish strikers would have been caught by the Tory Employment Act:

What would have been the position of the Polish shipbuilding workers who were on strike in Gdansk and other parts of Poland if they had been subject to the Tory law of industrial relations, including the new Employment Act, or to the Tory government's draft code on picketing? They would have placed themselves in a position of liability on at least six counts.

1. It could be argued that they were not acting in contemplation of furtherance of a trade dispute. They also had political objectives.

2. Some of the workers broke their individual contracts of employment by striking without

proper notice.

3. Some of them occupied the premises in which they work.

4. Workers communicated information or have been peacefully persuading others to abstain from work at places other than where they themselves work.

5. Some of the workers engaged in secondary action, not protected under provisions of section 17 of the Employment Act.

6. Workers on strike assembled at shipyard gates in excessive numbers to control the entrance and for the purpose of persuasion. The draft Tory code states that, as a general rule, picketing will be limited to six and 'frequently a smaller number will be sufficient'.

The TGWU Linwood support all workers who struggle for unions free from state control.

### Closure

Then came the bombshell. On 12 January Schreiber announced the closure of the plant. After lunch we had a mass meeting. The workforce didn't want any more bullshit. There was a unanimous vote for a fight and we immediately slowed down production.

Schreiber blamed the recession for the closure, but we saw it as new technology. His profits were still high — £4.3m in 1980. After a few weeks our action had cost him £1m in lost deliveries — we'd cut production to 70 per cent.

We had also publicis-







# HOW THEY SHOT BE

I would say it was about eight o'clock in the morning. Both Bernadette and I were in bed, asleep. Our youngest child was in bed with us, although I didn't know that at the time. Sometimes he cries at night so we bring him in to bed with us.

I heard a noise at the front door, and it woke me up at once. I jumped out of bed and ran to the window. I opened it, looked out and saw two men at the door.

I couldn't get a good view of one of them but I could see he was swinging something at the door. Now I know it was a sledgehammer.

The other man was about a step behind him. He was wearing a blue, knitted or woollen mask. It covered his head and face, and ended at his neck.

I ran back towards the bed and shook Bernadette. She was half-wakened anyway, with me jumping out of the bed so quickly. But I still shook her and told her to get under the bed.

I don't remember what exactly I said to her. Something like, 'There's men at the door' or 'There's boys at the door'.

## Children

I ran out of the bedroom, into the front room and towards the door which leads into the front porch — or hall you would call it. On the other side of the porch is the children's room and I wanted to try and get there.

I got to the length of the inside door of the front room, but by then the boys were actually through the front door. All I could do then was try and hold the inside door.

So I held it, trying to stand at an angle so that they couldn't shoot me through the door. Then they hit that door — a thump a couple of times. It bounced back but then closed again.

At right angles to that door there's a small window, we call it a jamb window. One of the boys put this handgun up to the window and fired in at me. The shot missed me by a good bit, but I knew I couldn't stand there anymore, trying to hold the door.

I turned round and headed for the door which opened into the kitchen. I was trying to get to the back door, trying to get out of the house. But the first man broke through the front room door. He fired at me again, as I was closing the kitchen door. But the shot missed me again.

## Point blank

Once through in to the kitchen I got to the back door. It was locked but I managed to turn the key and then reached down to open a bar at the bottom of the door. As I bent down the gunman came halfway through the kitchen door and started to fire at me.

The first bullet hit me in the back, then the second one hit me in the arm, near the shoulder. That took the main artery away. The blood started to gush, jumping out of me.

By now he was just a couple of feet from me, firing at point blank range. The next bullet hit me in the head. It didn't do me much harm, in

## Exclusive: Michael McAliskey's own story

**ON 16 January this year the socialist world was stunned with the news that, early that morning, Bernadette McAliskey (Devlin) and her husband Michael had been victims of an assassination attempt.**

**For a few days Bernadette hovered on the brink of death. Then, after her condition stabilised, questions started to be asked.**

**Was the British army watching the McAliskey home when the shooting took place? What was the truth about their 'rescue' by the army? Why had the Royal Ulster Constabulary refused Bernadette and Michael a firearms licence? What were the exact circumstances of the shooting?**

**Now, for the first time anywhere, Socialist Challenge is able to provide the answers. Early last week we received a message that Michael McAliskey wanted to tell his story in the pages of Socialist Challenge. GEOFF BELL flew to Ireland and met Michael somewhere in County Tyrone.**

**Michael is now out of hospital and, apart from some numbness in the right arm, is completely recovered. Bernadette, too, is well on the mend and hopefully will be out of the hospital soon.**

**As Michael's dramatic story makes clear, the McAliskies have enjoyed a remarkable escape. No one is better able to tell of that escape than Michael, the only eyewitness who saw everything that morning. Here then is his story.**

fact I thought at the time it had only grazed me, but as it turned out the bullet did lodge in my head.

The next bullet hit me in the back again. That was the one that came out through my stomach. It did the most harm.

At that, I decided to play dead. I let a big 'ah' out and collapsed in the corner. He left then. Whether he had no bullets left or whether he thought I was a goner I don't know, but he left.

## Bernadette

At this time nobody had gone near Bernadette, but then they went for her, one or two of them I'm not sure. The next thing I heard was more shooting. I now know she was standing up when they shot her — again at close range, about two or three feet away.

She had put the child under the bed, or was putting him under the bed, when they shot her. They fired seven or eight shots, something like that.

They had been very cool on the job. They had made a lot of noise when they were at the front door. They had been shouting, going berserk. Whether they had been psyching themselves up at that stage I don't know, but once they had come into the house they had been very, very quiet.

They had never spoken at all. The man who shot me never made a sound, apart from the gunfire. They still never spoke when they shot Bernadette. Never said a word.

Then the firing stopped and all went completely quiet. They went out the way they came, through the front door. They left content: as far as they were concerned we were dead.

When they left I was still lying on the kitchen floor. I caught hold of the handle of the back door with my good arm, the one that hadn't been shot. I pulled myself up and looked through the window of the door.

I wanted to see what they were driving and then I saw their car parked right behind mine. I could hear the two boys who had come into the house. They were talking to each other. I couldn't make out exactly what they were saying.

Something like 'Are you right boys' or 'C'mon boys'. The third fellow came across to meet the other two. He had been cutting the telephone wires outside the house. I dropped down to the floor again. I had just landed when I heard the English voice.

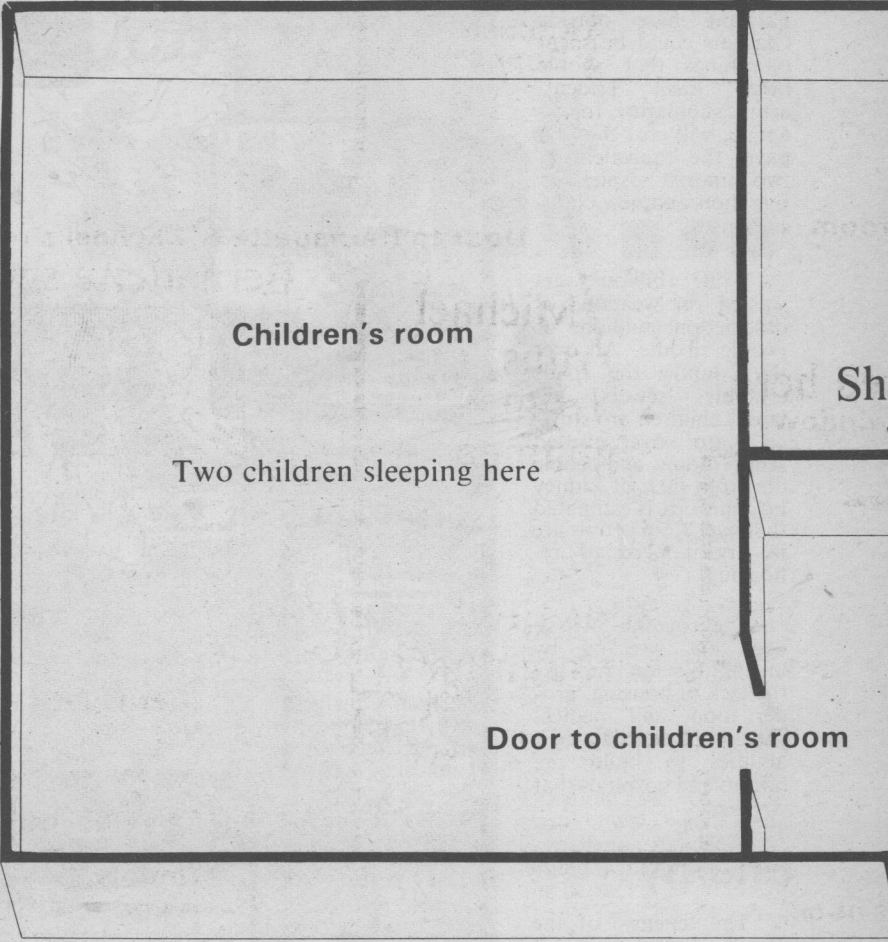
## Army

'Get your hands up against the wall,' was the first thing he said. Then he said: 'Get your hands on the top of your head.'

I thought they were nabbed at that stage, but I was confused with the English voices coming on the scene so quickly. Then the English voice again shouted: 'One of you bastards move and you're dead.' I thought then they were definitely caught, but I was still a bit confused as to the exact situation.



Michael and Bernadette McAliskey



I got hold of a towel and started trying to tie a tourniquet around my injured arm, but with only one hand I couldn't manage it. I was getting a bit weak so I started to crawl towards the front door, near where the phone was.

I reached the phone and stretched out for it. But I was too weak; my arm dropped away and I collapsed onto the floor by the front door — where I had been in the first place when they came in.

I shouted through to Bernadette to ask her how she was. She said she had been badly hit and was bleeding from the chest. Then I shouted through to Roisin, our eldest daughter, and asked if she was alright. She said she was, and I asked if our younger daughter Deirdre was okay, and she was, too. I told them to stay where they were.

After a short time an English voice came to the front door, into the hallway.

He shouted: 'Is there anybody in there?'

At this stage I wasn't sure whether it was somebody who had come to finish me off, so I didn't answer. He shouted again: 'Is there anybody in there alive?'. I still didn't answer, and then he shouted a third time. 'Do you realise who it is, it's the British army. Is there anybody in there?'

## Blankets

I don't know why (laugh) but I still kept quiet. The children didn't say a word either. Then Bernadette shouted out: 'Here, here'.

There were two soldiers at first, then another one came and they went to come through the front door, but I was on the floor, blocking it so they could only open it four or five inches. One of them said: 'There's somebody lying behind the door.'

I had a peep out of the corner of my eye and saw his gun. It was one of those big

SLRs. Then I got a look at him. His face was blackened and he had one of the camouflage outfits on him, not the normal soldier's uniform.

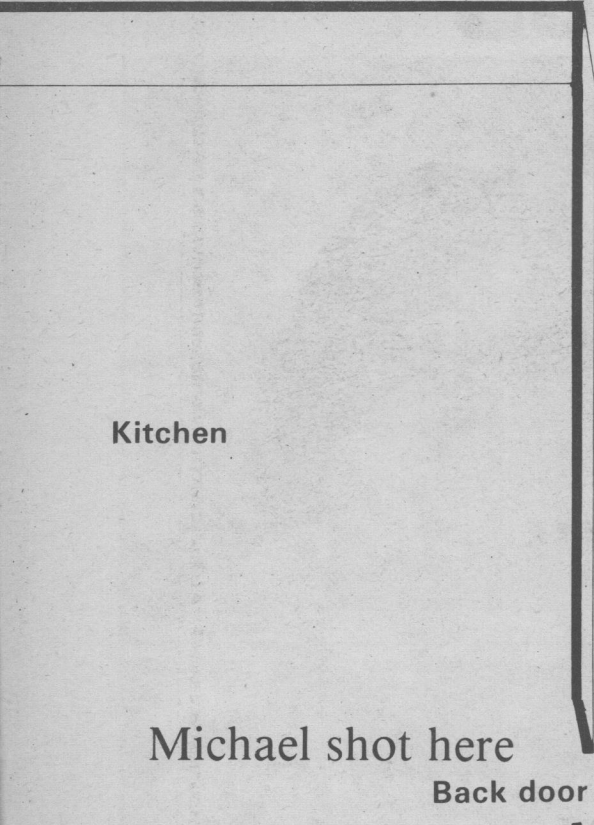
Two of them squeezed past me and went in to Bernadette. Then one of them came back and asked me if there was a phone. He said the radio was out of action, or something. I told him where the phone was, but he was dead.

They left again after that. They seemed in a bit of a panic. They went outside and I crawled in to the room where Bernadette was. I was beside her talking, but I couldn't stand the cold, I was shaking, vibrating, freezing.

Bernadette had plenty of blankets round her. She pulled them on her after she had been shot — not before she had been shot, like the newspapers have said. I got hold of the bed and pulled myself onto it. There was one blanket left and I got the



# BERNADETTE AND ME



## McAliskey weakens after UDA attack

### Police 'laughed off' murder threat

MICHAEL McAliskey has now revealed that approximately two months before the assassination attempt, the north of Ireland police — the Royal Ulster Constabulary — visited Bernadette and him to tell them that an attempt would be made on their lives.

some new information, that we were top of some hit list. But they laughed it off.' Michael has also detailed how the RUC had refused the McAliskeys a firearms licence. 'We first applied for it in 1974. The local police agreed, but the application went through the RUC headquarters and it was turned down there.'

But, says Michael, the RUC was unwilling to attach any importance to the threat. Michael reveals: 'The police warned us of the attack about eight weeks ago. They laughed it off, saying "don't pass any remarks about these things".'

### Unarmed

Michael had permission to purchase a shotgun, and was in the process of doing so around the time the attack took place. But even if they had had a shotgun it would not have been an adequate defence: because of the presence of the three children, Bernadette and Michael could not have left a loaded shotgun around the house.

### Threat

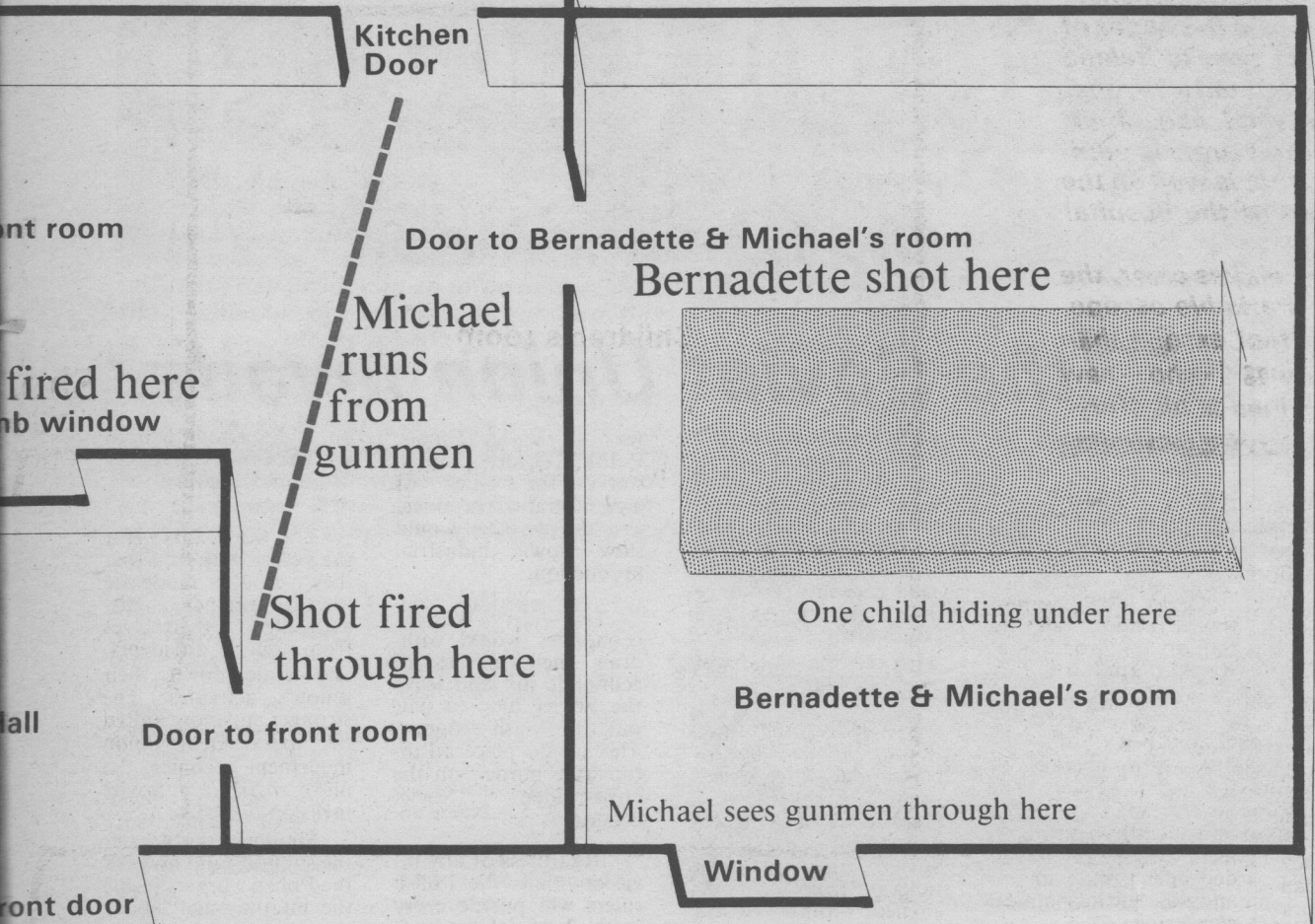
'It was the first time the police had ever come to us to tell us about a threat. We've had threats ourselves many a time — bullets through the post and that sort of thing. But that was the first time the police ever came to us.'

A loaded pistol would have presented less of a difficulty. The police knew all this and, says Michael, the knowledge would not have been confined to the RUC: 'Obviously, the gunmen who came knew we had no weapons. You don't come battering on a door if you think you'll be met by a gun. They must have been very, very sure we had nothing.'

'In fact they even said where the threat was coming from. That's the amazing thing.'

'There's only one way they could have known that — and that was through the police.'

'We had always assumed that if we were to be attacked it would come from the local area. But when the police visited they specifically told us the threat was coming from the Belfast direction, which of course was where it did come from. 'They told us they had



## The role of the British Army

AS Michael McAliskey's story makes clear, there were two separate units of the British Army involved in the aftermath of the shooting.

First on the scene was a four-man squad with English accents; a little later Scottish soldiers arrived.

There is no mystery about this second batch of soldiers: they were based locally, on a regular tour of duty. What is not so clear is who the four soldiers were who first arrived on the scene. Michael has his

suspicious: 'The English soldiers must have been very near. I heard later that they had been dropped out of a helicopter the previous evening about three-quarters of a mile away.'

'The police have told me since that these soldiers were "a distance" away from the house; that they saw the car coming up the lane and were suspicious. And then, the police said, the soldiers moved towards the house.'

'There's a particular spot, about 60 or 70 yards away from the house, where there's a lot of

bushes, and I was told that's where they were when they heard the shots.'

'But the police have given me no real idea where the soldiers came from, or what they were doing there — maybe they don't know themselves. Looking at it every way, I can't see that those soldiers were anything but SAS.'

A further mystery concerns the actions of the English soldiers once they had arrived. Michael now estimates that it must have been 20 to 25 minutes after the first batch of soldiers arrived on the scene that the second group appeared.

Neither Michael nor Bernadette were given any emergency medical treatment during this period.

It is also unclear how the Scottish soldiers were summoned to the scene.

### 'Why I went to Socialist Challenge'

'I WENT to Socialist Challenge to tell what really happened because the truth of the matter is that it is the only paper I do support.'

'It's the only left paper I read and feel at one with.'

I told Bernadette what I was going to do in coming to you and she agreed it was a good idea.'

Michael McAliskey

According to Michael, 'I have since learned that the Scottish soldiers arrived while the English ones were on the phone asking for help. There was some talk of a flare going up, but that hasn't been confirmed.'

Bearing in mind that the Royal Ulster Constabulary had given a definite warning about the attack approximately eight weeks before it happened, Michael sums up his feel-

ings this way: 'There's just a possibility that they knew it was going to happen and they decided to kill two birds with one stone — have us done in, and catch the boys who were doing it.'

'The army saved our lives alright, but they came after the boys had left. If we had been dead then, we wouldn't have had lives to save.'



# The Polish workers struggle for power

**THE new Polish premier, General Jaruzelski, has called for a 90-day halt to industrial action.**

**Leaders of the independent trade union movement Solidarity have replied that they reserve the right to use strikes to defend dissidents or in the event of an unsatisfactory outcome to negotiations with the government on other disputed matters.**

**DAVY JONES looks at the demands of the Polish workers and farmers, the threat of a Soviet invasion and how to build support for the Polish workers in Britain.**

WHEN the Polish workers launched a wave of protests against meat prices last summer they could scarcely have realised that within months the gaze of the world would be on their struggle for power.

Since then every struggle to extend their rights and improve their living standards has brought the workers into conflict with the authorities.

They have fought to have their own unions, free from state control. They have argued for the right of the union to publish its own newspaper and for access to the state-controlled media.

## Democratic

Further, they have demanded that dissidents should be allowed to express their political views without harassment, and for the sacking of corrupt officials. Most importantly they have insisted on their right to take action to fight for their views.

These basic democratic demands are not dissimilar to those raised by workers in Britain and other capitalist countries. But under the bureaucratic system in

Poland they have an explosive logic.

Though capitalism has been overthrown in Poland the bureaucratic rulers enjoy a complete monopoly of political power. All the economic and political decisions are taken without any democratic involvement by the Polish workers.

**When the workers begin to fight for their rights the power of the bureaucrats begins to crumble.**

Some militants have expressed doubts about the Polish workers' struggle. They argue that the independent union movement might lead to the restoration of capitalism. But none of the workers' struggles has demanded this.

What the workers demanded is a say in the running of the country, and improvements in their living standards at the expense of the privileges of the bureaucrats. Such demands would strengthen workers' power — they would not lead back to capitalism.

## Church

Nor should the involvement of the Catholic Church prevent



Polish miners, like their British comrades, are in conflict with their government

socialists from supporting Solidarity. Historically the Church gained its prestige by helping to protect some dissidents against the government's security police. But now the Catholic hierarchy's own interests are increasingly coming into conflict with the workers' struggle for power.

## Changes

For decades workers throughout the world have been told that the only choice of political system is between capitalist 'democracy' and Soviet totalitarianism. But the Polish workers are charting a third course. They are fighting for socialist democracy and workers' power.

## Will the Soviet Union invade?

By Davy Jones

The threat of a Soviet invasion of Poland is real enough. The Soviet army was sent into Hungary in '56 and Czechoslovakia in '68, when the Kremlin felt its model of 'socialism' was threatened.

Moscow certainly disapproves of the newly-won liberties of the Polish workers. The Soviet leaders know that bureaucratic control is incompatible with independent trade unions and the right of political expression.

There are, however, three factors against Soviet intervention. The

most important is the massive support which the new union movement, Solidarity, enjoys. An invasion would meet the resistance of millions of Poles, including probable military resistance from sectors of the Polish army.

A terrible bloodbath would be likely.

Secondly, an invasion would have huge international repercussions. It could lead to a breakdown of 'detente' with the West and the Soviet Union's political isolation from the 'non-aligned' third world countries.

Then there are the economic consequences

for the Soviet Union. Polish farmers could starve the cities of agricultural produce, and the workers would slow down industrial production.

The Western economies would withdraw their billions of economic aid and leave the Soviet bloc to bale out the Polish economy. This would place an intolerable burden on the crisis-ridden Soviet economy.

Regardless of any invasion plans the Polish rulers will pursue every method of taking back the gains made by the Polish workers since last summer. They will put

up a desperate fight to win back their monopoly of political power.

The worst advice for the Polish workers is that they should moderate their demands, disassociate themselves from political dissidents, and scale down their union's activities. The stronger and more united the independent union movement becomes, the more difficult a Soviet invasion becomes.

Similarly the greater the support built now for the Polish workers inside the international labour movement the higher becomes the political price of a Soviet invasion.

## What you can do to help Solidarity

★ Affiliate to the Eastern European Solidarity Campaign at 10 Park Drive, London NW11.

★ Organise within the unions and the Labour Party to win donations to the EESC solidarity fund to send equipment to the Polish workers and build a solidarity campaign in Britain.

★ Support the resolution passed by Birmingham South district AUEW to raise funds to send a small printing press to Solidarity

## DEMONSTRATION Hands off Workers' Poland

15 March, 2pm

Hyde Park to Soviet embassy

called by Labour-Poland solidarity committee

in Poland. Send donations to: Polish appeal, c/o 137 Digbeth, Birmingham B5 6DR.

★ Send resolutions through union bodies for the union leadership to invite speakers from Solidarity to national union conferences this summer. Already the General & Municipal Workers'

Union and the National Union of Students have issued such invitations.

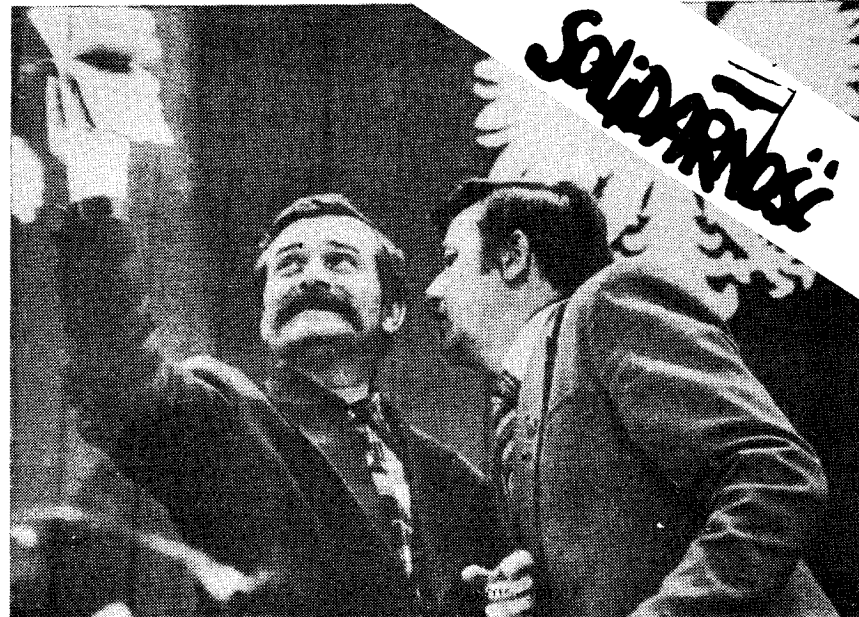
★ Twin your factory or workplace with a corresponding workplace in Poland and invite speakers from their independent unions over to Britain.

★ Organise within the unions and the Labour

Party for the trade union and Labour leaders to give greater support to the new independent union movement, and to urge a labour movement delegation from Britain to Poland.

★ Discuss with the local Communist Party branch about involvement in solidarity work for the independent union movement. If they decline, organise a public debate with them.

★ Get your union or Labour Party branch to order bulk copies of *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe*, especially the latest issue on the Polish events. Available from: Box 23, 136 Kingsland High St, London E8.



Lech Walesa brandishes the money raised by Austrian trade unionists



# Women's Rights



Self-defence class in Saltley

JACKIE Hudson is a black belt in karate and she teaches self-defence to women-only classes in Birmingham. She hopes to set up a countrywide network of women's self-defence groups.

Socialist Challenge talked to her.

'I first took up karate as a joint hobby with my husband but it finally brought about my divorce because I did better at it than him. Watching instructors performing appealed to my sense of art.

'When I was learning karate some of the men refused to take me seriously. I was fighting a bloke in front of a Japanese instructor and

## Women's self-defence is no offence!

the guy was just slapping me around, playing about, and I scored a half point against him with a karate technique.

'The instructor praised me for it. Of course the guy lost face and after that he began to take me more seriously. But he still lost the fight and he was a black belt at the time and I was only a green (half way to a black belt).

'Teaching karate as a woman also causes some problems. The male teachers allow you to teach short period begin-

ner courses. There are exceptions — my instructor is one. He wanted to come along and see some of my all female long-run classes in Birmingham.

'The male students don't like to be taught by a woman and a lot of them hate to fight a woman claiming it's unfair because there's "nowhere to hit".

'Most people outside karate don't believe there's such a thing as a female black belt. (Jackie got hers in 1978). People come into my

shop (Giko, Martial Arts in Birmingham) and when they find out I'm a black belt the men start prancing around saying "Oh, don't hurt me, don't hurt me!"

### Hit'em

'A lot of women don't realise the weapons they have at hand when it comes to defending themselves. You get questions like what if I've got heavy shopping and the simple answer is "Hit 'em with it".

'Also women say they couldn't bring themselves to hurt anyone. But when you make them realise that this person is actually trying to hurt you and deprive your kids of a happy, healthy mother they're quite willing to learn how to protect themselves.

'Anyone can do self-defence. I like to make it as unregimented as possible. The exercises are only minor ones but they get you in trim and keep you fit. Fit enough to be able to run faster than your attacker which is the object of the exercise — to hit and run.

# Sexual harassment at work — exploding the myths

SEXUAL harassment is a serious and widespread problem affecting women in the workplace. In Canada, the National Union of Provincial Government Employees (NUPGE) has produced an information pack that explodes the myths surrounding this subject and offers advice to workers and their unions on how to fight back.

According to NUPGE, sexual harassment is an expression of authority — usually a male supervisor who has the power to retaliate if his victim refuses to comply with his demands. Attitudes created by traditional sex roles contribute to the persistence of this problem.

### Myth 1: sexual harassment is not very common.

Recent surveys have shown that 80-90 per cent of women in the labour force have experienced sexual harassment at some time in their working lives.

### Myth 2: woman invite sexual harassment by their behaviour and/or dress

Sexual harassment is an expression of power. Generally it is not sexually motivated. Harassers may misinterpret behaviour or dress as being 'enticing' in order to justify their aggressive actions.

### Myth 3: women who object have no sense of humour

This implies that harassment is 'harmless fun'. It is not: it is degrading and humiliating.

It is important to make a distinction between an office flirtation, where the interest is mutual and where no intimidation is involved. When the interest is one-sided and instigated by one in authority, it becomes harassment.

### Myth 4: sexual harassment doesn't hurt anyone

Besides the threat to economic security, sex-

ual harassment can severely affect the victim's health, through tension, anxiety, anger, fear and frustration.

Psychological effects often show themselves physically as headaches, ulcers and other nervous disorders.

### Myth 5: a firm 'no' is enough to discourage any man

This statement ignores another more serious myth — that a woman's 'no' means 'yes'. As long as this myth survives women have no credibility in refusing sexual advances.

### Myth 6: women often make false claims of sexual harassment

Victims face a credibility problem. False claims are the exception, not the rule, yet because they receive such attention, legitimate claims are automatically questioned.

Women who report abuse are subjected to ridicule, disbelief, accusations of entrapment and further humiliation.

Reprisals may follow, ranging from creating intolerable working conditions to firing and black-listing the woman as a troublemaker.

This is very effective and it's unlikely that most women would venture to make false claims.



Photo: Joanne O'Brien

## Sexual harassment: the solutions

### WHAT CAN I, AS A UNION MEMBER, DO?

**Support the victim:** don't fall into the trap of blaming her. Approach her and offer support. Tell her that solutions are available and refer her to the shop steward.

**Discuss at union meetings:** organise those concerned and use your union to raise the issue at a policy-making level.

**Tell your union officials:** and if they don't respond remember them at election time.

**Equal rights committees:** many unions have such committees that could deal with the issue and recommend further action.

### WHAT IF I'M THE VICTIM? Don't ignore it.

**Approach your shop steward:** s/he can act as a mediator and approach the harasser on your behalf. S/he can also assess what other action can be taken.

**Keep a record:** every incident should be recorded with time, place, what was said or done. This can be used in building a case.

**Arm yourself:** make a record of your work in case of reprisals. Harassers often use the excuse of poor work for firing an employee who will not comply with their sexual demands.

**Don't feel guilty.**

The pack gives an elaborate outline of policy statements, educational campaigns, legislation, legal assistance, counselling, training of shop stewards, monitor-

A 32-YEAR-OLD Paddock Wood man who beat up his wife during a row at their home was given a conditional discharge by Tunbridge Wells magistrates last week.

He was told that had the victim not been his wife the penalty might have been more severe.

From the Kent and Sussex Courier

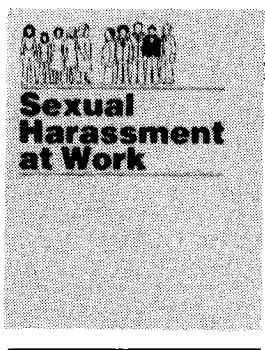
ing systems and the role of the union in fighting for social change.

It also takes up the solutions that are available to women who fall outside trade union protection.

Action in Britain on this issue is much less developed than in North America, but no one can doubt that the scale of the problem is just as immense.

Sexual Harassment at Work is available from the National Union of Provincial Government Employ-

ees, 265 Av Carling Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario, K1S 2E1, Canada.



## Compulsory

'Women gain a lot of confidence from these courses, hopefully not to the point of overconfidence. I think that local authorities should set up self-defence classes all over the country and make it a compulsory subject for girls at school.

'You've got to be careful about carrying weapons to defend yourself because you might find yourself attacking an innocent person. I prefer women to use their hands and feet.

'The law as it stands — which prevents married women having any redress from sexual violence in the home — is disgusting. Most of the attacks seem to come in the home, from the husband, husband's friend or father.

## Difficult

'These are very difficult to bring up as a subject either within the family or outside, so consequently you don't realise how much is going on until you speak to the people who are suffering and then they start opening up.

'If women can defend themselves then the lack of laws to protect them won't matter so much. My aim is to have a register of ladies-only self-defence groups throughout the whole of Britain with competent people teaching women seriously.'

If you're interested in self-defence ring Jackie on 021-773 9247 and she'll help you find out about local classes.



# Labour Party



## Post Office engineers push for democracy

**BRYAN STANLEY**, general secretary of the Post Office Engineering Union, and the union's sponsored MP, John Golding, have been to the fore in the moves to overturn the Wembley conference decision.

At that conference the POEU supported a proposal for MPs to have half the votes in electing the Labour Party leader. **JOCK CAMPBELL**, an elected member of the union's delegation, told Socialist Challenge about the POEU leadership's style of

democracy.

**JOHN** Golding rules the roost with the delegation. If something happens at conference, he'll rush off the platform — he is on the party NEC — and talk to Stanley. Then we more or less have to do certain things.

Six members of the union delegation are elected from the floor of the POEU conference, and seven are appointed by union leadership. When it comes to a vote, there's no chance of the left winning it. The vote at Blackpool was 10-3 on every

issue.

Apart from the general secretary, all the delegates should be picked from the floor of conference.

In the delegation, they go through a form of what they call discussion but if it's democratic discussion you're looking for, you won't get it.

We voted for Shirley Williams on the NEC, for example, and we asked our delegation how they could vote for her when on the Common Market and incomes policy she was opposed

to the union's policy. They couldn't explain that to us. They voted for Shirley Williams because she's a right winger, pure and simple.

There has never been a discussion at union conference on political matters. They've never even asked us to submit any suggestions about issues that were known in advance.

● *The POEU Broad Left will be backing resolutions for this year's union conference calling for support for the 40-30-30 decision.*

# The battle for democracy in the Labour Party

## NUR leaders condemn Weighell

**SID WEIGHELL**, general secretary of the National Union of Railwaymen, is among the union leaders anxious to give MPs a majority vote in the election of the Labour Party leader.

He would be happy, he had said, to 'spit in the eye' of anyone who supports the 40-30-30 decision taken at Wembley. The following statement is from 13 members of the NUR's national executive.

'We wish to dissociate ourselves from the recent unwarranted and scurrilous attacks by our general secretary, Sidney Weighell, on members of the Labour Party and its National Executive Committee.

'We consider that these abusive statements, given pro-

minence by the news media, are not only harmful to our union but also to the trade union and Labour movement as a whole.

'We wish to make it clear that Sidney Weighell's utterances are made solely in a personal capacity, not as spokesperson for the National Union of

Railwaymen as they certainly do not reflect the total opinion of our membership.

'We wish to add that, as affiliates of the Labour Party, we are deeply concerned that the statements made by our general secretary could lead to misunderstanding and acrimony at a time when all our resources are needed to attack the policies of this vicious government.'

John Milligan, John Cogger, I Williams, R Rutherford, J Nicolson, H Sealey, P Lindsay, G Revell, J Dunn, A Ritchie, F Kaler, K Turton, A McArdell

## Audrey Wise on the battle in USDAW

### 'It's very healthy that the Labour Party is being debated in the union'

*THE delegates at the Labour Party's special conference last month had barely left Wembley when right-wing union leaders began planning to overturn the new method of electing the party leader.*

*Their version of democracy in the Labour Party is matched by their own lack of accountability to union members.*

*AUDREY WISE, former Labour MP and currently the Broad Left presidential candidate in the shopworkers' union, USDAW, told Geoffrey Sheridan about the moves to challenge the right in the union.*

**The successful resolution at the Wembley conference, for a 40-30-30 vote on the party leader and deputy leader, was put on the agenda by the USDAW executive. Therefore the union's general secretary, Bill Whatley, has no authority to cast doubts on that proposal, as he has been doing.**

I presume the executive will stand by its resolution. It has no reason not to, and it will be hypocritical and foolish if it backs down

If some people expected the proposal to be defeated, that's tough. The USDAW delegation to the Wembley conference voted unanimously to support the 40-30-30 proposal the day before the

conference, and a majority of the elected delegates were wholehearted in that support.

USDAW members should be calling on the executive to stand by its position, but there is no indication so far that it will be doing otherwise.

Decisions by the union's annual conference are regarded as a mandate to the delegation attending Labour Party conference. The delegation itself decides only where there is ambiguity, or an issue is not directly covered by conference policy.

A resolution to the next USDAW conference seeks to ensure that elected delegates are in a majority in the delegation.

It is very healthy that the Labour Party as such — its structures, procedures, and so on — should be debated in the union. This happened for the first time at conference last year. It means a much greater tie-up between policies and how to get them implemented.

## Militants

Until now the conference has never discussed individuals in the Labour Party. There has never been a mandate on whom to support for the party NEC, for example. With the electoral college, there will be a focus for casting a vote for individuals — the leader and deputy — and I'm sure this will lead to a keener interest in the party.

I am in favour of the union exercising a block vote at Labour Party conference, and that this vote should be cast in its entirety rather than splitting it by casting votes in to the for-and-against position in the union. If the latter were adopted, it would be tantamount to saying that USDAW could not have a say as a union.

While I want to protect the block vote, I am also in favour of increas-



Audrey Wise

ing the weight of the constituency parties, so that they have voting parity with the unions.

The constituencies are not made up simply of individuals, but also of affiliated union branches. The CLPs are federated bodies, and increasing their vote would act as a counterweight to the centralised vote of the unions nationally.

I don't think at this stage that the developments in the Labour Party will have a direct impact on democracy in USDAW. The nearest we come to that is taking up the composition of the delegation. An issue such as the election of full-time union officials may come about for other reasons.

The problem in USDAW is that the executive is elected every two years, and we don't do very well with that. We could get an indigestion of elections.

At the moment we are in the middle of elections — for the executive, divisional councils, and delegations — and while the Broad Left is saying that the executive acted in the best interests of the union over the decision on the Labour Party leadership, left candidates are opposing the existing executive members in every division.

I am the Broad Left candidate for USDAW president, calling for £80 for '81, a 35-hour week, maintenance and improvement of staffing levels, and the full participation of women.

● *Note to USDAW members: The deadline for voting is 2 March. The union rule book stipulates that branches have to meet to allow members to vote.*

## Oxford CLP carries on witch-hunting

By Mike Picken, Oxford CLP

**THE** witch-hunt of socialists in Oxford City Labour Party continues.

Two years to the day after Socialist Press supporter Ted Heslin was expelled from the party, the general management committee in January refused to accept an instruction from the national executive to reinstate him.

By 53 votes to 32, the GMC voted not to readmit Heslin until an NEC speaker had explained how the party was to implement its instruction, issued in May 1980! Last Monday the GMC decided not to consider the matter before April.

Heslin is not the only target of the witch-hunt. Other Socialist Press and Socialist Challenge supporters have been excluded from membership.

On Monday the GMC refused to endorse the short-listing of Dave Whitfield as a prospective

candidate in the city council by-elections. According to the local press, Whitfield was rejected because of his 'association with the Workers Socialist League and Socialist Press.'

But no evidence was presented for the allegation, which isn't surprising since Whitfield does not sell any newspaper. The reason for the attack, as the Oxford Star pointed out, is that he has been a prominent defender of Ted Heslin.

It so happens that ex-MP Evan Luard, who is one of the signatories of the Council for Social Democracy appeal opposed the application for membership of Socialist Challenge supporter Peter Grant on the unfounded grounds that Grant's allegiance was to 'another political party'.

We need a campaign throughout the Labour Party against bans and proscriptions, and against the wreckers who support the Council for Social Democracy.



# Stop US threat to El Salvador

By Phil Hearse

'WE haven't finally decided what to do in relation to El Salvador,' said US secretary of state Alexander Haig last Sunday, 'but we are prepared to do anything necessary to prevent a Communist takeover.'

In other words, the US government is prepared to invade El Salvador to prevent the victory of the left-wing guerrillas who are fighting the regime.

To back up the 'Communist takeover' argument, the US is stepping up allegations that the Soviet Union is supplying the rebels with arms. There is no evidence to support this.



15,000 demonstrated for FDR in Frankfurt

## Death squads

Recent raids by government soldiers in El Salvador have discovered back-yard factories which the fighters of the FMLN (Farabundo Marti Liberation Front) are using to manufacture rockets and bombs. The automatic weapons used by the FMLN fighters are readily available on the illicit arms market throughout Latin America.

The repression being carried out by the right wing junta continues unabated. Last week, 21 leading academics from the University of San Salvador were arrested, including the rector. Eight of them are being held by the

Jon Snow commented on Monday, 'They are unlikely to be seen again'.

Every day dozens of bodies of workers and peasants are found dumped in the capital San Salvador and the countryside as the right-wing death squads do their work.

In the east of the country FMLN guerillas have carried out a number of attacks aimed at securing their bases in the area. Eleven bridges have been blown up, the two main roads severely damaged, and power stations blown up.

Representatives of the FMLN and the FDR (Revolu-

tionary Democratic Front) say that these measures are in preparation for a new wave of the offensive.

Although the huge supplies of American and NATO weapons being flown to El Salvador have so far prevented the regime from being completely overthrown, the junta and its backers must fear that defeat is inevitable if the civil war goes on.

## Solidarity

While the junta is totally isolated in El Salvador, the reactionary forces in the area are banding together to

defeat the revolution.

Guatemala's powerful army crossed the border into El Salvador several times during the recent offensive to attack the FMLN fighters. The Honduran army is poised on the El Salvador border.

But behind them all stands the United States and its threat of intervention. In the coming weeks and months a gigantic movement of international solidarity has to be built to prevent the threat becoming a reality.

**Picket US Embassy — No intervention in El Salvador!**  
Friday 20 February at 5.30pm, Grosvenor Square, London W1.

## Tune in to death

WORRIED about getting caught short with the bomb on your way home from work? Relax. Now you can buy your own portable fall-out shelter, manufactured by the well-named Aftermath.

When the sky lights up and your friends start vapourising, you slip smartly into your silver foil blanket.

Then you eat your iron rations and switch on the radio — which presumably will give you a burn-by-burn account of the big bang, interspersed with hit tunes like Chopin's Funeral March.

After the blast, the firestorm, and the fallout, roll up your blanket and catch the first 68 bus home.

There is one small snag. Aftermath does not tell you that its shelter is designed for one-megaton bombs, while most bombs are now in the two- and three-megaton class. So if you get the

## The Insane Society



Slippery Sue

Photo: GM COOKSON (Socialist Challenge)

calculable funds'.

Thus inspired the bowler hatted brethren are launching a programme of 'public works' to build a bridge — modelled on the original London Bridge — to link the City to the sites created by the collapse of London dockland.

Tired city 'fiddlers' who have spent a hard day robbing the working class and the peoples of the third world can save themselves all of 10 minutes walk — the present bridge is 400 yards away — by using the new bridge.

By recreating the old architecture and the old traditions, the City can show that the thieving upon which Britain's wealth was built is still alive and well — all financed from 'charitable funds'.

wrong sized bomb, you may not be around afterwards to claim your money back.

YOU thought the City of London did not care about history and culture just because its

councillors fought against the preservation of Billingsgate fish market? How wrong can you get.

The City has just discovered the Old Bridge Estate Fund, which the New Standard says has 'in-

SLIDING at breakneck speed down the slippery path of the British Road to Socialism, NUPE official and ex-NUS President Sue Slipman has landed in the Council for Social Democracy.

Sue, who condemns socialist parties as patriarchal, can now unite with super-feminist, Lord George Brown, who might have been on the last women's demonstration if a heavy session the night before had not left him feeling a bit rough the next day.

Always keen on 'broad democratic alliances', Sue can also unite with anti-abortionist Shirley Williams against the sectarian pro-abortionist left.

But Sue and Shirley have met before — you could almost say they are old buddies. Despite the fact that Williams as Minister of Education was axing jobs and banging up overseas students' fees, the then Communist NUS President could not conceal her admiration for the minister.

This 'objective' approach had its advantages and Shirley was not unappreciative. In 1977 when Sue left the NUS, she got a job as a research officer at the Department of Education and Science.

## Where you can buy Socialist Challenge

ABERDEEN: SC sold Saturdays outside C&As — for more info ring Colin, 574060.

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 4.30-5.40, Sat 10-4. For more info phone 643-0669.

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

BRIGHTON: SC sales regularly every Sat outside Open Market, London Road, from 11am-1pm.

BRISTOL: SC on sale 11-1, 'Hole in Ground', Haymarket. More info from Box 2, c/o Fullmarks, 110 Chiltonham Rd, Montpellier, Bristol 6.

BURNLEY: SC on sale every Sat morning 11.30-1pm St James St.

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.

CHESTERFIELD: SC supporters sell outside Boots, Marketplace, Saturdays 11.30am-12.30pm.

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.

EDINBURGH: SC sales every Thursday 4.15-5.15pm Bus Station, St Andrew Square; Saturday 11.30-2pm East End, Princes St. Also available from 1st May Books, or Better Books, Forrest Rd. More info on local activity from SC c/o Box 6, 1st May Bookshop, Candlemaker Row.

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

GLASGOW: SC sales every Thur/Fri 4.30-5.30pm at Central Station. Also available at Barretts, Byres Rd; Clyde books, High St; Glyve Bookshop collective, Cresswell Lane; Hope Street Book Centre.

HACKNEY: supporters sell SC every Saturday morning at Ridley Road market E8.

HAMILTON: SC on sale 8-11 every Sat, outside County Bar Almada Street, every Sat outside Safeway 1.30-5. For more info contact Paul, 17 Clyde View or John at 54 Eliot St, Hamilton.

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

KILBURN: SC sales every Sat, 10am in Kilburn Square.

LAMBETH: SC available from Village Books, Streatham; Tethric Books, Clapham; Paperback Centre, Brixton; Oval tube kiosk. Also sold Thur and Fri evenings and Thur mornings outside Brixton tube.

NEWCASTLE: SC on sale every Sat 11-1pm outside Fenwicks. Also available at Days of Hope bookshop, Westgate Rd. For more info ring Phil or Pete on Newcastle 737507.

MANCHESTER: SC supporters sell 11-1pm Sat at OLDHAM outside the Yorkshire Bank, High St; at BURV in the shopping precinct and at Metro Books; at BOLTON in the town centre; and in MANCHESTER outside Peter's Square and at Grassroots and Percivals Bookshop. Tel: 061-236 4905 for further info.

NEWHAM: SC sales 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 5151.

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 Way. Can be delivered weekly; phone 483 8909 (evening), 236 4905 (day).

SWANSEA: SC sales outside Co-op, Oxford St, 11am-1pm, Saturdays.

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

TESSIDE: SC on sale Sat lunchtime in the Cleveland Centre, and in Newfare, Linthorpe Road, Middlesbrough, and outside Woolworths on Stockton High Street.

WULVERHAMPTON: SC sales on Thur/Fri at Poly Students Union from noon-2pm and British Rail 4.30-6pm; an Saturday near Beatties, town centre from 11am-2pm.

Is your town or city mentioned above? If not, send in details to this sales column.

## SC Events

MANCHESTER: Forum on 'Detente — can it work?' Sat 28 Feb, 7.30pm. Speakers from Socialist Challenge, Communist Party, Labour Party. Venue: UMIST Renold building lecture room 7, Sackville St.

NORTH WEST: School on 'Socialism, Pacifism and War'. Sessions on Reagan, Thatcher and the War Drive; Socialism and Pacifism; lessons of the anti-Vietnam war movement and CND. Sat 28 Feb, 10-5pm. Venue: UMIST Union, Sackville St, Manchester. Open to all SC supporters.

IRISH LIBERATION: fraction on Sun 1 March. Details to follow.

ABORTION: Day school on 1 March. Ring centre for details.

ANTI-RACIST: national fraction on Sun 8 March at national centre.

SOCIALIST CHALLENGE: organisers' fraction on Sat 14 March at national centre.

SOUTHERN AFRICA: solidarity fraction on Sunday 8 March in Manchester. Contact Dale on 01-359 8288.

NORTH WEST: missiles fraction for all those active in the campaign on Sun 1 March 11-5pm at Manchester.

What's Left

RATES for what's left. 5p per word or £4 per col. Incht. Deadline: noon Sat. prior to publication. Payment in advance.

SOCIALIST Action public meeting: A socialist strategy to fight unemployment. Wed 18 Feb, 8pm at the Roebuck, Tottenham Court Rd, London W1.

SPARTICIST Class series: Womens Liberation through socialist revolution. Venue: North London Polytechnic, Kentish Town Site, Prince of Wales Rd, TV Room, 6.30pm, Tues 24 Feb. LSE, Houghton St, London WC2, Rm S 300, 6.30pm, 19, 26 Feb, 5 March (Thursdays).

1. Why socialism is the road to womens liberation — the lessons of the October revolution. 2. Women and Islam — the 'Iranian Revolution'. Acid Test, 3. Womens Liberation and the Leninist Vanguard party. (Further info 01-278 2232).

TATYANA MAMONOVA, Russian feminist dissident exiled for her part in production of 'Samizdat' journal, 'Women and Russia', speaking at: Digbeth Civic Hall, Birmingham, 26 Feb, 7.30pm; Woman's Place (women only), 48 William IV St, (Strand Tube) London, 1 March, 7pm; Queen Elizabeth House, 21 St Giles, Oxford, 2 March 8pm; South Bank Polytechnic, Rm 7, London Rd, Bldg, (Elephant and Castle Tube), 23 Feb 7pm.

REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST TENDENCY public meeting: Strikes in Poland, Russia and Hungary; demonstrations in the Baltic republics. What are the forces behind the opposition movements in East Europe? Frank Richards speaks on East Europe Reports. Sat 28 Feb 7.15pm, Friends Meeting House, Easton Rd, NW1.

NUPE: All Rank and File members (especially delegates), meeting to discuss forthcoming national conference. Manchester, Sat 28 Feb. Contact John Hill on 061-449 8470.

**Other**  
**THE BOOKSHOP**

Sheila MacLeod  
**The Art of Starvation**  
Virago, £2.95

At the moment one in every two hundred young women is starving herself — possibly to death. Sheila MacLeod shows how this is a reaction to a society that imposes a 'feminine' role on young women. By telling the story of her own adolescence, Sheila explains some of the controversy and mystery surrounding the illness anorexia nervosa.

Tony Wilkinson  
**Down and Out**  
Quartet, £2.50

This book was written from a diary kept by Tony Wilkinson during the month that he lived on the streets of London as a 'down and out'. He discovered that attitudes and conditions have changed little from the days of Dickens and that the welfare state still has an attitude of 'blaming the victim'.



## Black workers call conference

By Raghieb Ahsan

ABOUT 80 black trade unionists from the West Midlands attended a Commission for Racial Equality-sponsored conference to discuss black workers and the trade unions. The composition of the conference was overwhelmingly male manual workers.

They discussed the day to day problems at work, unemployment, low pay, employment in certain categories of jobs, worse conditions for black women workers and so on. After criticising the unions for lack of positive initiative they rejected the idea of separate black trade unions.

The conference unanimously agreed that the way forward for black workers was to organise as blacks within the unions as well as at a national level. It decided to set up a black workers association and elected a steering committee of 4 men and 2 women to organise a national conference of black trade unionists, and caucuses within the trade unions.

## Asians take on Labour right

By John Schweik

THE Labour Party in Brent is not quite what it was. In recent months more than 500 Asians have joined the three constituency parties which make up the North-west London borough, and they are determined to challenge racism.

An initial move was to demand that Brent council, controlled by Labour, should remove its accounts from Barclays Bank, one of the financial props of the white regime in South Africa.

When the proposal was put by councillor Phil Seeley, a West Indian, 18 right-wing Labour councillors abstained on the issue, while the council leader, John Lebor, voted with the Tories against any transfer of the bank accounts. The proposal fell.

## Drive

Behind the membership drive is the Asian Labour Party Association, formed last December with the aim of eliminating the oppression of racial minorities and of gaining proportional representation for minorities in local and national government.

The Brent Indian Association has played a leading part in the new group, and the borough was chosen as a test area, where Asians have formed an alliance with the Labour left.

A meeting of the Stonebridge ward where candidates were to be chosen for the council elections turned out to be the largest selection meeting in Brent Labour Party history. Of the 60 people at the meeting, 42 were Asian, a West Indian and an Asian



## Glasgow marchers defy Loyalist assault

By Charlie Baird

IN A tremendous show of solidarity, and in spite of severe Loyalist harassment, over a thousand supporters of the H Block and Armagh political prisoners

marched to Glasgow's city centre on Saturday.

The march, called by Glasgow H Block/Armagh committee, was the largest demonstration against British policy in Ireland that had been seen in Scotland in recent years.

The composition of the demonstration —

mainly pro-Republican youth — made the point that there is a large pool of working class support for the prisoners in Glasgow.

Unfortunately the march also saw a large mobilisation of extreme Loyalists, numbering over 1,000. They pelted the marchers with bricks, bottles and smoke bombs.

Fighting broke out between the police and the Loyalists at the end of the march, with over 130 Loyalists being arrested.

The Glasgow Troops Out Movement had a sizeable contingent on the demonstration, and is now in a good position to consolidate support for the coming hunger strike.

Campaign Against Racist Laws

## National Demonstration Against Tory Nationality Bill

Sunday 29 March in London

For details write to: CARL, c/o Lansbury House, 41 Camberwell Grove, London SE5.

## SUPPORT Black Peoples Day Of Action DEMONSTRATE On March 2nd 1981

Assemble at 10am at

Fordham Park next to Moonshot Community Centre Pagnell Street London SE14

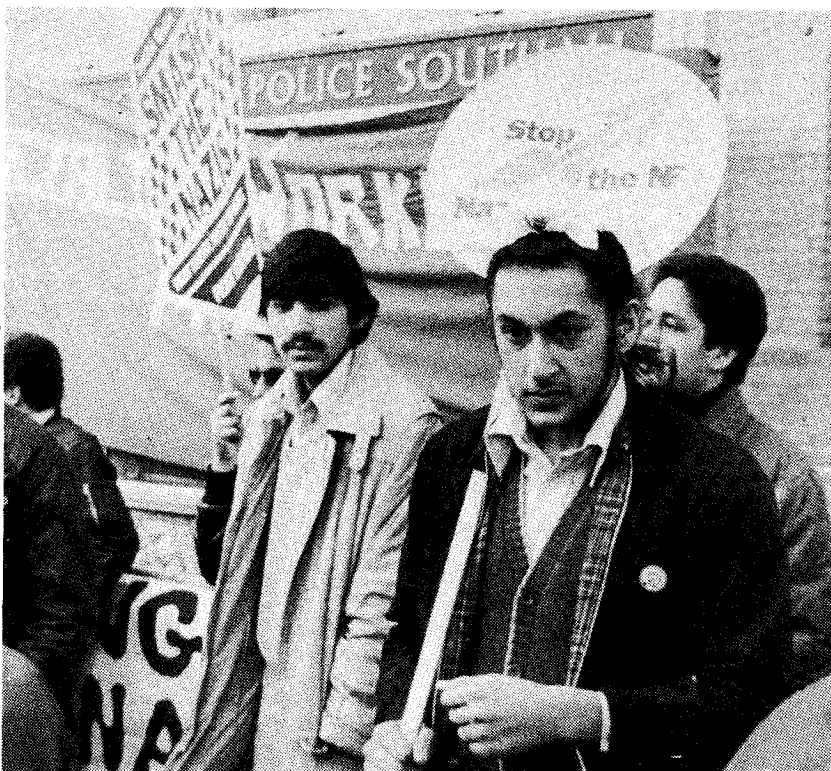


Photo: PETE GRANT (Socialist Challenge)

PICKET in Southall against cops who beat up the victims of a racist attack

were put forward as candidates.

The Labour right, which runs the council, is becoming nervous, according to Subhash Patel, co-ordinator of the new association and a full-time worker at the Brent Indian Association's community centre.

## Grant

Since 1978 the centre has received an annual grant from the council, but the decision over the grant for 1980-81 has been delayed by some four months and there is a possibility that no money will be forthcoming for the present financial year.

Has this anything to do with the role that Asians are now playing in the local Labour Party? 'The thought never crossed my mind,' Len Snow, chairperson of Brent education committee told Socialist Challenge. 'If anything I'd want to help them because of the work they are doing for the Labour Party, but the grant is a council matter.'

## Links

Subhash Patel says that the Asian Labour Party Association has links in Islington, Camden, Lambeth, Wandsworth, Birmingham, and Leicester.

At the local level the

association wants to take up housing, education, and other issues affecting ethnic minorities. Nationally, it wants the immigration laws repealed. Brent is just the start.

The association can be contacted at: 36 Cecil Avenue, Wembley, Middx. Tel. 01-902 5993 or 01-902 3131.



## Anger grows in Southall at fascist meeting plans

The so-called 'Southall riot' of two years ago may be repeated. The National Front Constitutional Movement (led by führer John Tyndall) is planning to hold a meeting in Southall during the coming GLC elections. Their stated intention is to carry out this provocation on 23 April — two years to the day from the police attack on Southall when teacher Blair Peach was murdered.

Hatred of the NF by Southall's Asian community has been fuelled by the growing number of violent attacks on black people. Last Saturday Southall police station was picketed after two policemen went so far as to beat up the victim of one of these racist attacks.

## Teachers back suspended NUT militants

SEVERAL teachers' associations in London are now calling for the full reinstatement of the eight members of the National Union of Teachers who have been suspended from the union for supporting the Lambeth council workers' strike on 4 February.

The associations — local NUT branches — represent teachers in Lambeth, East London, Hackney, Wandsworth, and Newham.

The teachers who have been suspended by the right-wing leadership of the union have been asked to appear before a national disciplinary committee this Friday.

The hearings will be held during working hours, obliging the teachers to disclose to their employers the reason for their absence. This will lay them open to victimisation.

Among the eight are three union militants, Dick North, Dave Picton, and Bernard Regan, who were candidates in the Inner London Teachers Association (ILTA) this month. Their suspension was prompted by the concern of the right wing to bring about their defeat in the election.

## Campaign

The right mounted a determined campaign, including a circular issued by the NUT national president, Peter Kennedy, attacking election statements made by the left candidates.

The ILTA results were: vice president — King 2,510 votes, Regan (Socialist Teachers Alliance) 2,206; treasurer — Yardley 2,507, Picton (STA) 2,227; general secretary — Richardson 2,592, North (Rank and File) 2,131.

The returning officer, Heather McKay, who is a declared Richardson supporter, refused to accept the

ballot papers of more than 370 voters, because she was not prepared to allow extra time to check their membership records.

This procedure has never been carried out previously, and the records happen to be in a chaotic state.

A further 180 ballot papers were not accepted because of minor technical errors.

## Recount

Observers for the left candidates at the count say that the overwhelming majority of the recounted votes were for Regan, Picton, and North. At least two of the scrutineers who decided on the validity of the ballot papers had circulated a statement in Southwark support the right-wing candidates.

The left candidates are demanding a recount and the validation of ballot papers by independent scrutineers.

Attacks by the right are not confined to internal union affairs. In Leicester and Southampton there are moves to block militants taking office in local trades councils.

A lobby of NUT executive members has been called by the ILTA Eight Defence Committee, to be held at the union HQ, Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, London WC1, on Fri 20 Feb, from 4.30pm.

Donations and messages of support to the defence committee, c/o 12 Albion Drive, London E8. Speakers are available.

## Ford drivers' strike

By Pat Sikorski

UNION officials and convenors at Ford Dagenham last week gave the company a free hand to smash a strike by 440 of their own truck drivers.

The drivers struck more than three weeks ago when Ford broke an agreement guaranteeing them runs to Genk in Belgium, when necessary.

In defiance of the Dagenham Panel of Ford union officials and convenors, pickets shut down the industrial estate. Eventually, the officials were forced to negotiate on the drivers' behalf.

On Tuesday 10 February a settlement was reached which conceded some of the drivers' demands. This was the first victory in the fight to keep jobs at Dagenham in the past year, during which time 5,000 have disappeared.

The refusal of Silcock and Collins car transporter drivers to cross the pickets — regardless of what the Dagenham Panel said — was decisive.

However, at the start of the Fords' strike eight

Silcock drivers were sacked for obeying shop stewards' instructions to return to their depot for a branch meeting.

The Silcock drivers started picketing, demanding re-instatement without strings. But at a stormy meeting following their own return to work, Ford drivers were instructed by Ron Todd, chairperson of the trade union side of the Ford national negotiating committee, to cross Silcock pickets.

## Scabs

The Ford drivers' response was to strike indefinitely to support re-instatement of the eight.

To add infamy to treachery, the Dagenham Panel asked shop stewards committees to endorse a resolution which simply said: 'To carry on working



## Allied Breweries sack 1,000

**THE giant Allied Breweries company has closed Ansell's brewery in Birmingham, sacking 1,000 workers.**

The closure is the latest management tactic in a dispute with the Transport and General Workers Union which dates back to last summer.

At that time Allied Breweries demanded 130 redundancies at Ansell's, which it owns, but strike action forced the company to abide by the decision of an independent enquiry which eventually recommended nine redundancies.

Management wasn't satisfied with this or with the fact that 'only' 25 jobs had been lost by the end of last year. So it tore up existing agreements on staffing levels and work practices. On 13 January the workers took the only option left open to them and walked out.

Management responded by refusing to negotiate until the workers returned on its terms. Then on 9 February Allied Breweries announced the closure of Ansell's.

While union officials have called this closure 'a bluff', Sir Derrick Holden-Brown, vice-chairperson of the company, has said the decision is 'irrevocable'.

Given the present depressed state of the brewing industry, which recorded a 3.8 per cent fall in production last year, this statement needs to be taken seriously — and confronted.

Certainly Allied is not a company facing financial disaster. Its pre-tax profit for the year ending 1 March 1980 was £133.1m, of which the beer division contributed just under half.

In the 28-week period up to 13 September 1980 a further profit of £34.8m was recorded by this division.

Negotiations between Allied and the Transport and General Workers Union have now taken place. But the results are unclear and the sacked workers need all the financial assistance they can get.

Donations and messages of support to: The Strike Committee, Ansell's Club, Aldridge Rd, Perry Bar, Birmingham.

## sabotaged

no matter what that means. 'What that means' became all too clear last Thursday and Friday. Fleets of scab lorries were shipped into the Dagenham estate to do Ford drivers work, break their strike and force them back to work.

## Union

Normal delivery drivers were told to cross pickets on pain of their own jobs. Week-end overtime was sanctioned to load scab drivers in plants where short-time working has been rampant for nine months.

This strike-breaking operation had the complete support of the union officials. The officials claim that their concern was Ford's threat to again lay-off 20,000 workers without pay.

These officials have done nothing to fight the lay-offs and loss of wages which have suffered for a year. Instead, when Dagenham assembly plant picketed against unpaid lay-offs 18 months ago, Ron Todd instructed the stewards to lift

# Sell-out in seafarers' dispute

By Celia Pugh in Cardiff

**FRIDAY 13 February was certainly unlucky for British seafarers. National Union of Seamen executive members called off industrial action in order to arbitrate with the General Council of Shipping.**

NUS general secretary Jim Slater claims a victory because owners are prepared to enter negotiations on increased overtime

rates. Bitter seafarers from the foreign-going, deep-sea sector reject this as a 'phoney victory'.

Year after year they have seen nationally agreed pay deals whittled away to nothing as owners cut and manipulate their overtime.

The central issue for these seafarers is basic pay. They regard the decision by union officials to negotiate on the employer's original offer of £70 as a total sell-out.

The officials have ditched the

union claim for a £80.43 basic rate of pay. Musa Nogan, NUS national executive substitute member, told Socialist Challenge: 'We have seen a systematic shattering of our claim by an invisible hand at head office. No meetings have been held to agree to change the claim or end the action.'

'This deal makes a nonsense of democracy. We now have to organise ourselves in the membership in a unified way to use our collective weight to challenge Slater and the national executive'.

# Locked-out for fighting fare rises

By Chris Nash  
TGWU 3/111 branch

**THE SIGN at Winterstoke bus garage in Bristol reads: 'We are locked out because we refuse to rob the public'.**

The message is displayed at our picket line, and it sums up the struggle which has Bristol's buses off the road.

The reason there are no buses, and the reason busworkers have been locked out is because we refuse to implement new fare rises and to accept cuts in jobs.

The dispute came to a head on Sunday, 8 February when Bristol Omnibus Company issued new fare books. These sought to put into effect the third fare rise in a year.

## Journey

They would have meant, for example, that a four-mile journey would have cost over 50p.

The bus company tried to introduce the new fares despite knowing that the bus branch of the Transport and General Workers Union had voted not to implement the rises.

At 4am on the 8

February management started to suspend all those workers who refused to accept the new fare books. By that evening nine had been sacked and as many as 300 suspended — everyone who had turned up for work.

The next day management told union branch secretary Mike Hall that the busworkers would only be allowed to return to work if they implemented the new fares.

## Depots

When Mike said the union members would work on condition that the suspensions were lifted, that those sacked were reinstated, and that

the new fares would not be introduced, he too was suspended.

By mid-day the entire passenger transport workforce had been locked out. All bus depots were immediately picketed.

Two days later, on Wednesday 11 February, TGWU national passenger trade group secretary, Bill Morris chipped in with his advice. 'Unite' and save jobs he

said — by implementing the fare rises.

## Mood

The 800-strong mass meeting shouted him down. The mood was clear — that we refused to allow the fares to go up and that this would be the best way of stopping management's plans to sack 500 busworkers in May and cut the city services by 50 per cent.

We have received overwhelming public support for our struggle. One Labour councillor backing us blamed the Tories for not providing sufficient money for the bus service.

But four years ago the then Labour-controlled Bristol council sold its half share in Bristol Omnibus against union advice to instead take over the half the council didn't own.

The struggle over fare rises wasn't unexpected. The union branch had taken its non-implementation decision in January. At that time TGWU official Bill Morris had supported this policy. But he did nothing to back it or to fight for such a tactic nationally.

Nevertheless an action committee to support the busworkers fight has been in existence for five weeks. The major focus for the struggle will be on 21 February when Tony Benn, the local MP, will be one of the speakers at a mass rally in Bristol's Corn Exchange.

All the many local protests against cuts and unemployment will be raised at the rally and, it is hoped, brought together in a united campaign.

Support, including money, for the busworkers should be sent to Brother Wolfe, TGWU 3/111 Action Committee, Transport House, Victoria Street, Bristol 1.



Photo Socialist Worker

# REVOLUTION

FOR A UNITED REVOLUTIONARY YOUTH ORGANISATION



The new issue of REVOLUTION is out now!

For all youth fighting the deadly policies of the Tory government, there are articles on building Youth CND, the special Labour Party conference, the revolutions in El Salvador and Nicaragua, the age of consent, violence against women, Ireland, fascism, and lots more.

Get your copies (10p each, 25p each including p&p) and more details about Revo from PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

UNEMPLOYMENT is the one that is booming' at the moment. With 2.4m officially registered as unemployed, and at least another half a million not registering, Britain is in the worst economic crisis since the thirties.

The effects of this recession are making a hundred times worse by the policies of the Tory government. The crisis is the fault of the capitalist system in which we live, as the bosses carry out their endless search for more and more profit.

Yet it is us, the working class and youth of Britain who are being made to pay for the crisis. Through unemployment and cut spending on health, education and social security, it is our lives that are being threatened, while the bosses sit pretty in their mansions, with access to private medical care and public schools.

Everyone who wants to fight unemployment should be there.

The Scottish TUC is organising a march against unemployment from Glasgow on May 1st. This massive job march from London to Glasgow will be the start of a series of similar marches.

The South East Region TUC is organising a month of action against day of strike action and a demo of 20th the over the Liverpool march arrives in London.

The trade union leaders must provide answers to the bosses' talk of no money, threats of bankruptcy, wage cuts and closures. The unions must stop any more workers being thrown onto the dole.

When the unions must 'talk' with the bosses, the unions must 'talk' with the workers. The TUC has been talking about a 35 hour week for years, but when it comes to negotiations it always finds the time to lead an all out fight for a 35 hour week.

It is time to lead an all out fight for a 35 hour week against British industry, a national overtime ban and worksharing, all without loss of pay.

This is the 'boom' industry likely to lead to the biggest boom of all.

The Tories are pouring billions of pounds into the development of nuclear warheads, with the signing of the 1983 and the procurement of the old gen.

This even more than the growth in unemployment, poses a threat to the future of every person in the world. For example, Reagan has announced that the US is going to resume spending on nuclear bombs in preparation for 'theatre' wars in Europe. The neutron bomb is the ultimate capitalist weapon. It kills people but leaving buildings, machinery and factories standing.

get involved in your local Youth CND group. If there isn't one in your area set one up. Join the thousands already actively opposing the Tories' deadly policies.

An important event coming up soon is the CND Labour Movement Conference Against the Mines, on March 29, and is supported by the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party and the Communist Party. If you are in a trade union or LPS get delegated to attend the conference.

It is the same Tory government cutting money for jobs that is in-weapon. It is the Tory government that is saying Jobs come before BOMBS! The fight for jobs and against bombs is the same fight. The Tories have got the wrong priorities. They are working in the interests of the bosses — it is the minority whose greed is for profit alone.





# NO JOBS NOT BOMBS

**Socialist  
Challenge**



*Socialist Challenge Meeting*

**Jobs not bombs**

Speakers: Pat Hickey, TGWU steward, Rover Solihull; Denny Fitzpatrick, POEU Westminster; Stewart MacLennan, Branch Chair CPSA, DHSS Glasgow North & Central Scotland

*Stalls, Food and Books*

**Glasgow 21 Feb**

2.30pm, Dixon Halls, Dixon Avenue (off Victoria Rd), 5 mins from Queen's Park

Michael McAliskey's own story

**'HOW THEY SHOT  
BERNADETTE AND ME'**

*World Exclusive!*