

Socialist Challenge

STOP PRESS

FRANCIS HUGHES Murdered by Thatcher

'The IRA are fighting for their national freedom, and their prisoners are as much prisoners-of-war as our soldiers in Germany in the war. If we want to see an end to violence, we should get out.'

Ken Livingstone, newly-elected leader of the Greater London Council

★ National Day of Regional Actions
23 May

★ National Demonstration
London 13 June



MARCH, OCCUPY FIGHT FOR JOBS

THE storm clouds are gathering for the Thatcher government.

After ten weeks of selective strike action for a decent wage the three major civil servants' unions are now committed to all-out strike action at the end of this month or early next month.

In the local elections, Labour has swept to power in six metropolitan centres and taken hundreds of council seats from the Tories. The latest opinion polls predict a landslide victory for Labour if an election were held now.

And the People's March for Jobs has become a national focus for all workers struggling against unemployment. But the bosses' of-

fensive is continuing. As we go to press it has been announced that BL are to close the Rover Solihull plant, with hundreds of redundancies. Deputy convenor Pat Hickey told Socialist Challenge: 'This is the crunch, only a mass occupation of the plant can save our jobs now'. Every section of the labour movement must support the Rover workers.

Thousands of workers joined the People's marchers in Sheffield and Manchester last week, including those who took strike action at over a

dozen factories in Sheffield.

The marches were led by workers in struggle at Laurence Scott's occupied plant in Openshaw, and those from Plansee Tooling from Rotherham.

The People's March reaches its crescendo in London on 31 May when 100,000 are expected to greet the marchers.

In the last week workers have shown

they are prepared to take action to get rid of the Tories. Now is the time for the union and Labour Party leaders to spearhead this movement.

They could start by endorsing the call made at the Liverpool send-off for the People's March for 29 May to be a day of general strike action in London as the march reaches the capital.

INSIDE: How Sheffield and Manchester greeted the march, and the occupiers — at Laurence Scott — who went to join it.

LONDON 31 MAY MARCH FOR JOBS

Me-tooism

IT HAS been a long, long time since there was a more sickening spectacle than that performed by Messrs Foot, Concannon and Rees on the occasion of the death of Bobby Sands.

They chorused their approval for the determination of Thatcher in driving the Irish MP to his death. Merlyn Rees even appeared on television to boast that it was he who had abolished political status in the first place. It is a reminder of just how imperialist-minded and arrogantly British is the leadership of the Parliamentary Labour Party.

What now needs to be determined is whether Foot, Concannon and Rees uttered their death cheers with the support of the Labour Party as a whole. There are indications that they did not.

In parliament Patrick Duffy, who was once a Minister for the Navy, savaged Foot's 'me-tooism'. Nearly 30 Labour MPs have signed a Commons motion calling on Thatcher to make concessions to the political prisoners. Labour MPs at the European Parliament endorsed the call of the socialist group for a more flexible attitude by the British government.

Where does Labour's national executive stand? Just before the end of the first hunger strike a badly attended meeting of the executive called for concessions on 'humanitarian grounds'. Whatever the phraseology, the men and women who make up the executive wish to use when they meet again on 27 May they need to disassociate the Labour Party from the pronouncements of Foot, Concannon and Rees.

A lobby of the meeting on 27 May would be one form of pressure on the NEC. Resolutions from Labour Party wards and general management committees condemning the leadership of the PLP would be another. A resolution is suggested below, and the moving of it should be the first priority of all socialists in the Labour Party in the next couple of weeks.

At the moment the preoccupation of many rank and file Labour Party members will be to celebrate the results of the local elections, but take this example: in the local government constituencies of Hackney North, South, and Central there are twice as many voters as there are in the parliamentary constituency of Fermanagh and South Tyrone. The three Hackney seats were all won by Labour last week, but even the combined vote of the three candidates fell short of that received by Bobby Sands.

Sands resolution

This ... calls upon the national executive committee to disassociate the Labour Party from the statements made by Michael Foot and Don Concannon on the issue of the Irish hunger strikers up to and after the death of Bobby Sands MP.

We call on the national executive to condemn the bipartisan approach to Ireland as followed by the Parliamentary Labour Party in conjunction with the Tory government.

On the issue of the prisoners we call on the national executive to support the position adopted by the Scottish TUC which urged 'immediate government action to ensure that the hunger strike in the Maze is ended', on the grounds that the 'demands put forward by the prisoners have wide support from sections of the trade union and labour movement and of wider sections who see them as humanitarian demands'.

Socialist Challenge

If you would like to be put in touch with Socialist Challenge supporters in your area or would like more information fill in the form below

Name.....

Address.....

Age.....

Occupation/CLP (if any).....

Send to: Socialist Challenge, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

'Militant' - as British as they come

On Sunday, several hundred took part in a demonstration in Staines, just outside London, the constituency of Humphrey Atkins.

By Geoff Bell

First, the bad news: Bobby Sands' hunger strike produced a 'dramatic escalation in sectarian tensions in Northern Ireland'.

Now the good news: 'Derry youth are on the streets for the same reasons which drove young people in Brixton to violence.'

These observations come from recent articles in the *Militant* newspaper. They, and the philosophy which lies behind them, are worthy of attention.

It is one thing for the leadership of the Labour Party to have taken the scandalous position it has on the hunger strike, it is more shocking when the self-proclaimed 'left' in the party travels along a similar path.

Militant describes itself as 'the Marxist paper for Labour and Youth'. There are some people who, mistakenly, think Marxism is only about 'contradictions', so perhaps it is to prove themselves good 'Marxists' that *Militant* expresses the obvious contradiction apparent in the above quotations.

Riots

For, if the youth of Derry and Brixton are rioting for the same reasons, which are, says *Militant*, a 'reaction to the terrible conditions of high unemployment', then how could such motivation lead to 'sectarian tension': especially as *Militant* argued, just a week before Bobby Sands died, 'until recently, there was little enthusiasm for the hunger strike, even in Catholic areas'.

Indeed, on 1 May, when Bobby Sands was days from death, *Militant* assured its readers that 'to the fore in Northern Ireland' were 'strikes, occupations, anti-Tory demonstrations' unconnected with the hunger strike.

What is being described here is not what is happening but what *Militant* would like to happen. The newspaper shares with the British ruling class an exasperation with the Irish national question, a wish that it would go away, and a desire to replace it with the good old bread and butter issues of British politics -- jobs, wages and houses.

Repression

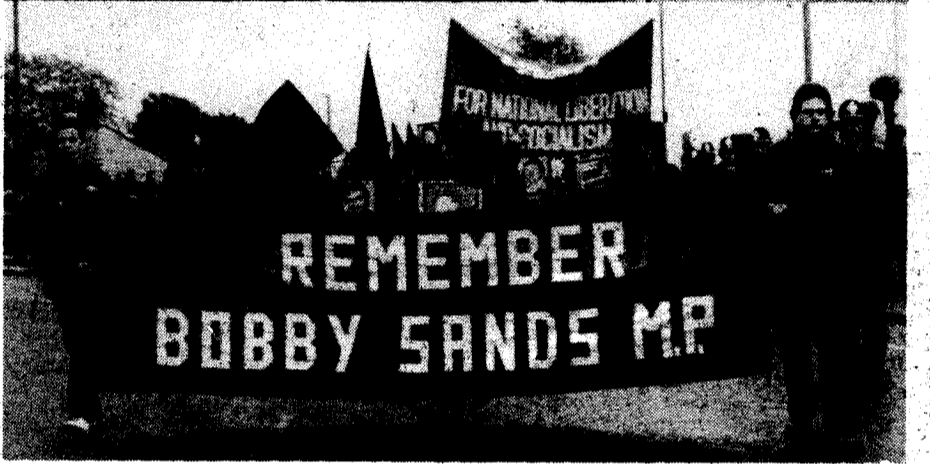
Even when repression is so clearly directed against the nationalist population -- as is the case with the H Blocks -- *Militant* pretends otherwise.

Thus, a year ago *Militant* argued, 'H Block, like all aspects of repression is really a class question. But if the labour movement does not take it up it will be championed by bigots who will turn it into a sectarian issue'.

The labour movement in the north of Ireland, which the *Militant* frequently reports is so powerful, did not take up the H Block issue and so, a year later, *Militant* claimed the H Block committees which were leading the struggle were 'sectarian based' and 'sectarian organisations'.

Sectarian

It is true that those who make up and support the H Block struggle tend to come from the same Catholic background. But this does not make the struggle 'sectarian'. An organisation is judged not



on the religion of its participants but on what it stands for politically, and how it organises.

The H Block campaign has, by and large, been organised in an open, democratic manner, and has no other basis except support for the prisoners' five demands.

Its leaders, such as Bernadette McAliskey, have gone on record as saying they would support political status for Loyalists. Indeed Bernadette has said she would grant it to those who attempted to assassinate her.

Despite criticising Bernadette and others for their 'sectarianism', the *Militant* is not nearly as

generous. The newspaper has argued that not all the IRA or Loyalist prisoners should be given political status, that those who are guilty of 'sectarian' acts should be treated as criminals.

Given *Militant's* definition of what is 'sectarian' that does not give much hope for the majority of prisoners, but what is particularly pernicious in this approach is the even-handed condemnation *Militant* gives to both Loyalists and Republicans.

No distinction is made between the politics of the Republicans who fight against British imperialism, British repression and

for Irish majority rule; and the Loyalists who are against majority rule and are for imperialism and repression of the Irish national majority.

Neither does *Militant* explain the traditional Marxist view that unconditional political support should be given to all struggles for national self-determination, whatever the methods employed.

Nor does *Militant* acknowledge James Connolly's assessment that the labour movement in the north and throughout Ireland would be divided 'while partition lasts', and that the smashing of partition is a precondition for working class unity.

Instead, for *Militant* the 'urgent need' is 'the building of a Labour Party in Northern Ireland', which would provide a 'fighting class alternative' to the 'dead end methods of the Provisionals'.

Control

In other words the Irish people should drop their demands to control their own country, workers in the North should endorse partition by forming a party confined to the six counties, and should follow the lead of the good old British workers and 'struggle against the policies of the Tories, and for jobs, homes and decent conditions'.

How dearly Margaret Thatcher and Michael Foot would like to see such restricted Labour v Tory politics in the north of Ireland.

Fortunately, the Irish people have not given up their struggle for self-determination in 800 years, and neither the guns of the British army or the muffled pops of the *Militant* are likely to force them to today.



In Britain, a number of building sites closed down on the afternoon of Sands' funeral. These included two of the largest in London -- Thames Barrier and Kyle Stewart.

On the day Bobby died about 500 people picketed Downing Street in the evening (above),

before being moved on to Trafalgar Square.

Other action included a two-hour strike by NUJ members at the headquarters of NALGO; the disruption of a meeting in Oxford, addressed by Keith Joseph, and the occupation of a number of colleges.

The world weeps for Bobby Sands

THE French newspaper *Le Monde* commented after the death of Bobby Sands:

'His memory and recognition of the meaning of his sacrifice are heavy with an emotion that several times this century has aroused the passions of the world against Great Britain.'

The passions of the world were indeed roused. In Poland, Lech Walesa of Solidarity called Bobby Sands 'a great man who sacrificed his life for his struggle'.

In France, the Socialist Party declared: 'We render homage to the courage of this militant who sacrificed his life for his cause. Our party condemns the inflexibility of Mrs Thatcher and her inhuman attitudes.'

In Portugal, members of the national parliament observed a minute's silence and the newspaper *Popular Daily* asked: 'How much longer can Britain retain the inglorious distinction of being the only country in free Europe to hold part of the continent as a colony.'

Other press reaction included the comment from the mass circulation *Hindustan Times* in India that 'never had such an incident occurred in a civilised country', while the *Hong Kong Standard* criticised Thatcher's 'continued inflexibility'.

In Mozambique, the semi-official daily newspaper *Noticias* said that it was 'a simple and indisputable fact' that Bob-

by Sands was 'a political fighter'.

The Italian daily *La Repubblica* said of Bobby Sands: 'One can only be impressed by the power of the passion, rage, love and suffering that expressed itself in this long, patient, meticulous exercise in slow death.' It went on to call for Irish unification.

The Iranian government is to name a street after Bobby Sands, while South Africa's main black-run newspaper, the *Sowetan* described him as 'a hero'.

Reaction was particularly angry in the United States. The Longshoremen's Union, which has 110,000 members, refused to handle British goods for a day. The Massachusetts state legislature followed the lead of the New Jersey assembly and passed a resolution hailing Bobby Sands' sacrifice and condemning the British government, while the New York Democratic congressman Mario Biaggi called the government 'morally bankrupt'.

Such then was the judgement of the world on the death of Bobby Sands, and the judgement also, in the words of the French Communist Party, of 'Mrs Thatcher and all the English Conservative and Labour colonialists whose hands are covered with blood after the assassination of Bobby Sands'.



The funeral procession — 100,000 marched

THE GREAT ANGER

By Gerry Foley, Belfast, Monday

ANGER is continuing to increase and spread throughout Ireland in response to the Thatcher government's contempt for the feelings of the Irish people.

What else but contempt is it to continue to claim that the Republican prisoners are criminals in face of the massive display of sympathy for Bobby Sands that has been seen here in the past week?

Nearly a fifth of the entire nationalist population of the north or Ireland marched on the Sands funeral processions.

The enormous mass of people completely jammed the Falls Road. It is doubtful whether it would have been physically possible to assemble a larger crowd in west Belfast.

But the British forces tried to humiliate even this vast assembly by diverting the march around a group of about 30 members of the Loyalist para-military Ulster Defence Association.

There could hardly have been one of the near-

ly 100,000 marchers who did not leave the funeral seething with hatred and bitterness towards a government so relentlessly determined to trample their feelings under foot.

Heroic

Bernadette McAliskey summed up what must have been the feelings of many when she said:

'Bobby Sands' heroic sacrifice and the response of the British government have assured the continuation of the struggle against Britain for another generation at least, if we do not win in this one.'



Bobby Sands, MP

Unexpectedly large demonstrations throughout Ireland marked the day of national mourning for Bobby Sands.

About 10,000 people marched in Tralee, about 7,000 in Sligo. As many as 5,000 came out in

Limerick, their numbers swelled by workers at the Alcan plant — the largest factory in Ireland — who walked out en masse during the demonstration.

In Waterford, 3,000 took part in a rally called by the trades council and the H Block committee.

In the southern border counties most businesses and industry closed down. There was a general shut-down in Drogheda, the major industrial centre between Dublin and the border. A rally of 5,000 workers accepted with acclamation a call for a general strike.

Crowd

The Dublin area has been slower to move, among other things because of its sheer size. But there are signs that support for the hunger strikers is deepening.

The protests in Dublin have drawn in quite a number of youth between

the ages of 13 and 17. They made up about 60 per cent of the crowd who gathered in Dublin city centre the evening Sands died.

Elsewhere in Ireland's capital 3,000 young women workers at the *Jinelle* clothing factory walked out; many bus drivers and cleaners struck, and altogether about 30 factories shut down. In Naven, near Dublin, the mines were closed.

Burnt

In Belfast young people throughout the Catholic ghettos have been drawn into violent forms of protest, both by their feelings of outrage and by what appears to be a deliberate policy of provocation by the police and army.

Streets are littered with barricades and burnt out vehicles. The nights are turbulent with the sound of stone throwing and the firing of rubber bullets.

But so far these uncontrolled protests have had the effect of mainly wearing out the ghetto population.

Such problems were at the centre of concern at the emergency conference of the H Block/Armagh Committee held here on Sunday night.

Bitter

It decided that the decisive task at this stage is to force the southern government and trade unions to support active protests, and thus open the way for mobilising the entire Irish people against imperialist repression.

Following the meeting the H Block/Armagh Committee announced that it intends to support candidates against leading government figures in the southern general election.

As the temperature rises in Ireland the extension of international support becomes more and more important, to assure the Irish people that they can win, and to help stop their anger from boiling over to futile outbreaks of rage, or bitter resignation.



Derry sit-downs back the hunger-strikers



Bernadette McAliskey at the funeral



Sands' sister and mother follow the coffin

Car workers rally to Benn

By Mick Archer

TWO resolutions supporting Tony Benn's election challenge have been passed by branches of the Transport Union in Birmingham.

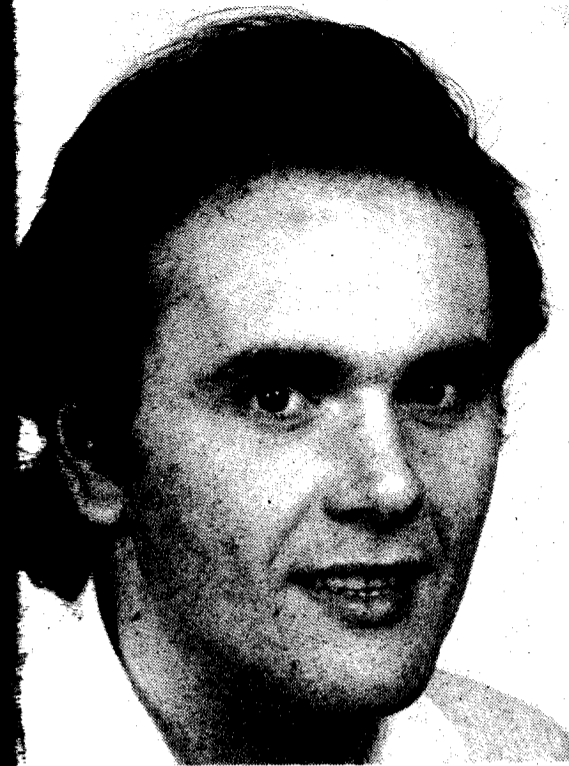
The TGWU 5/908 branch, which consists mainly of BL Longbridge workers, has registered its support for Benn in a resolution which was put up by sacked BL steward Jim Denham, a Socialist Organiser supporter, and by Socialist Challenge supporter Grant Keir.

TGWU 5/909 branch, based on the Rover SD1

plant, went a bit further.

Pat Hickey, deputy convenor at the plant and a Socialist Challenge supporter, successfully proposed that a resolution of support for Benn should be forwarded to the union's district, regional, national and executive committees.

The resolution also calls for Benn and Healey to be invited to the TGWU's biennial delegate conference, and for a vote to be taken there on how the union's block vote should be cast in the deputy leadership election.



ALBERT BORE, Birmingham councillor: Tony Benn's candidature is a means of keeping in the forefront of debate the various tactical issues which Benn and others have championed over the past few years.

'I will be doing whatever I can to see that support is gained for his election campaign in his area.'

CP's 'realism' over Benn

By John Parkinson

AFTER a month or so of telling us that the election of Tony Benn as deputy leader of the Labour Party would be a boost to the Tories, the right wing and the media have woken up.

Far from welcoming a further consolidation of the Labour left, the Tories launched attack after attack on the left in the run up to the council elections and following the ballot victories. After all, it might catch on.

With this new surge of intelligence and realisation flooding through the right, we should not hesitate to examine how the left has dealt with the complex strategic and tactical issues at stake in the deputy leadership election, given that is a straight right-left fight within the working class.

The shock of choosing between Benn and IMF axed Healey was a bit much for the Communist Party, for example. Anxiously looking over his shoulder at the risky statements of left leaders Moss Evans and Alan Fisher, CP members and TASS general secretary Ken Fisher declared to north-west activists that Benn's candidature would place at risk the gains the left has made.

Certainly the left challenge has woken up sleeping dogs of the social contract. Thus Tribune Michael Foot has once more joined the ranks of the Healeyites.

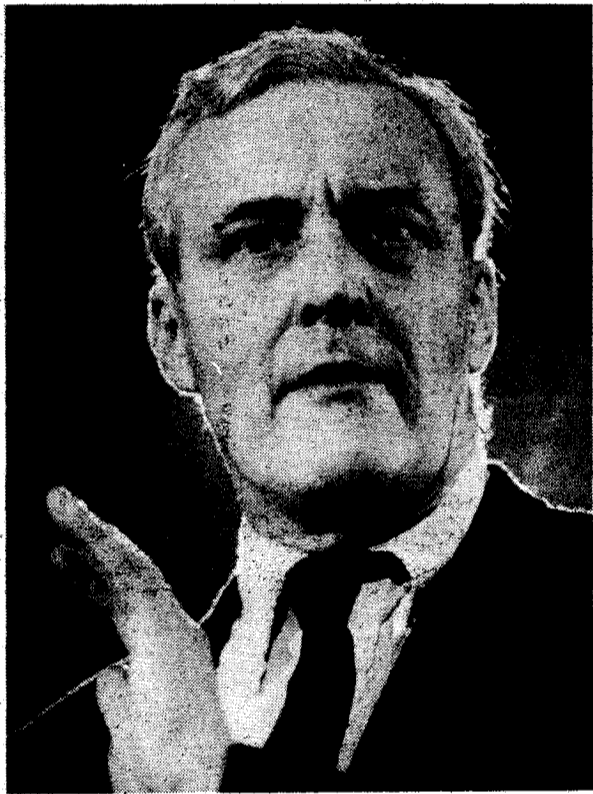
Ken Gill's sophisticated explanation of Tony Benn's strategic failing was that 'Benn doesn't really understand the unionists. He's not realistic.'

Fortunately the grass roots support for Benn's challenge to Healey was not slow to jog Fisher's radical heartbeat at the Scottish TUC. In his stormy if belated reply for what? demand of the Labour right, he must have resolved many late-night tactical arguments at CP Q.

In a swift about face, Scottish miners' leader Mick McGahey threw his weight behind Fisher's position.

As the Communist Party grapples with itself over its attitude to the Labour Party, the minds of many of its activists must be working overtime to explain how, from being a loyal opposition, it will become faithful if slow and hesitant followers.

The problems of realism are difficult indeed.



Shell Carrington shop stewards back Benn

THIRTEEN shop stewards at the large Shell works in Carrington near Manchester have endorsed the labour movement appeal backing Tony Benn in his campaign for the deputy leadership of the Labour Party.

The new signatories include the production and craft convenors at the Shell Carrington works.

They put their names forward after Transport and General Workers' Union shop steward Pete Graham addressed a stewards committee meeting last week.

The 6/200 branch of the TGWU has passed a resolution backing Benn — there was just one abstention — and this has now been forwarded for consideration by the district and region.

Pete Graham told Socialist Challenge that the stewards saw no alternative in Denis Healey. 'Healey was the minister responsible for going cap in hand to the IMF under the last Labour government, and for implementing the policies they wanted.'

'His budgets chopped thousands of millions of pounds off the social services and, of course, it was Healey who was so closely associated with the 5 per cent pay norm.'

'But we didn't vote simply to oppose Healey,'

Graham explained. 'We voted to back Benn's candidacy. Not only has he raised policies which a future Labour government should implement — he's also raised the important issue of accountability in the Labour Party.'

'We want to go on from here to win accountability in the union, too.'

The latest signatories to the declaration include two stewards from the occupied factory Laurence Scott's, and: Bob Owens, chairperson TGWU Region 6; Ian Stewart, TGWU full-time officer; Colin Barnett, secretary NW TUC; D Grieves, TGWU convenor Diamond Shamrock, Eccles.

The following union representatives at Shell Chemicals, Carrington have signed the appeal: F Green, TGWU convenor; Paul Broadhurst, TGWU dep. convenor; Ian Brown, craft convenor; G Hollowell, chair JSSC. Shop stewards: M Hilton, Pete Graham, J Browne, P Robinson, T Whittle, F Tingle, Ken Austin, B Duckworth.

Dennis Barry and Frank Stubbs, AUEW shop stewards, Laurence Scott, Openshaw; Harry Gorton, press sec, Salford Trades Council.

'We'll change mind on the

Scargill tells People's March

By Patrick Sikorski

THE biggest demonstration so far in support of the People's March took place in Sheffield last Friday. Some 10,000 workers flooded into Sheffield led by 500 South Yorkshire miners and workers from Plansee Tooling in Rotherham, who have been on strike for 10 weeks against closure.

The largest contingent on the march came from Shardlow's engineering factory where 800 workers struck for the day. Other contingents came from BSC plants at River Don, Stocksbridge and Rotherham, and from Bone Craven, Davy Lowy, Firth Brown Tools and Firth Brown Engineering.

Behind over twenty union banners came more contingents from every branch of the public services, building and

engineering workers, and students.

Rab Bird, an AUEW shop steward in Sheffield, told Socialist Challenge that over the last year the union had received notice of 25,000 engineering workers made redundant or on short-time working.

And if Hadfield's 1,900 redundancies go through more than 4,000 jobs in private steel-making will have been lost. There are now 40,000 workers unemployed in

Sheffield.

The leadership of the engineering district committee claim that political solutions are needed to the growth of unemployment. At the same time they refuse to mobilise industrial action to defend jobs, which is the only way to win any political solutions in the workers' interests.

Lead

The tremendous support for the demonstration in Sheffield showed that workers will follow any lead in fighting unemployment, as well as calls for alternative policies.

Bill Innes, chief steward on the eastern leg, told the rally in Sheffield:



Manchester workers greet People's March

By Patrick Sikorski

MORE than two thousand workers supported the Manchester to Stockport leg of the People's March last Thursday.

Workers occupying the Laurence Scott factory in Openshaw led the march, followed by contingents from the shop stewards committees of National Supply, Mirlees-Blackstone, two Ferranti factories, GEC Openshaw, Maseys, BAC Woodford, Fairey's and Manchester Direct Works.

Frank Salt, confederation of engineering unions' convenor at Ferranti's Moston told Socialist Challenge: 'We believe in this sort of demonstration.'

'It brings home the message to everybody whether they are in work or out that mass unemployment has to end. The message to the Tories is clear — the

majority of people have had enough of them.'

'We're organising a coach from the factory to London on 31 May. In Manchester Laurence Scott has to be made another Gardner's.'

Ferranti's Moston held a mass meeting of 150 workers on the gates the day before addressed by a delegation from the march.

Fellow convenor Tony Purtil from Ferranti's Cairo Mill added: 'We've got to break down the isolation that unemployment brings and build solidarity with them. The TUC nationally isn't doing much. We think they should be organising a national unemployed workers' union.'

'We've got to get rid of this government by any means necessary.'



Ferranti workers on the Manchester to Stockport march

Labour Party School

Sat/Sun 23/24 May

Day 1

Formation of LP & developments to 1945/
Election of 1945 Labour govt and rise &
decline of Bevanism

Day 2

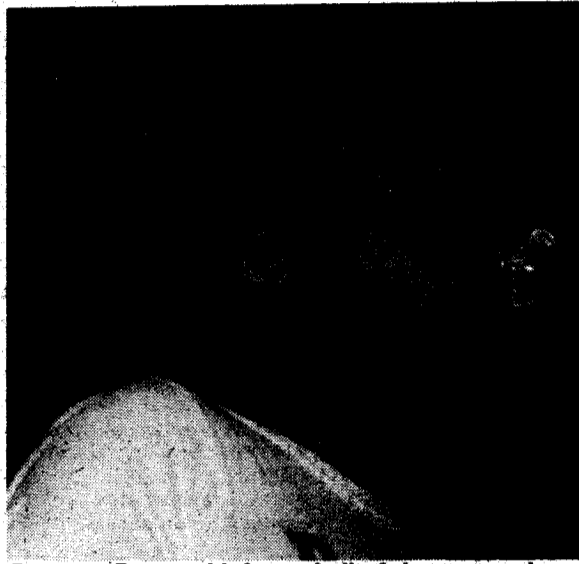
Rise of new LP left & Bennism/ Tasks for
socialists in LP now

Workshops

History of LP women's sections/ 1931 LP
split/ Labour League of Youth in 1930s/
LPYS in 50s & 60s

School open to Socialist Challenge supporters. Admission by ticket only. Price £2.50 for both days or £2 single day. Limited places available so apply urgently to local Socialist Challenge organiser. All applications must enclose payment, cheques to 'The Week'.

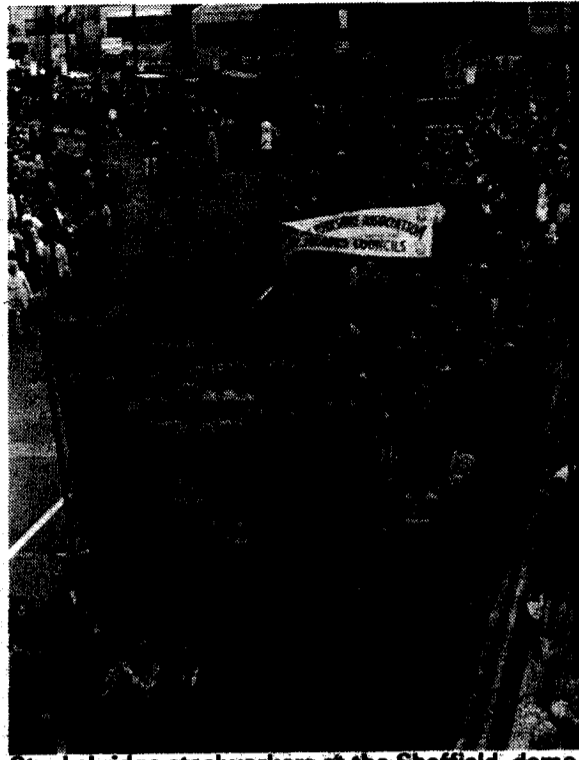
the government's streets'



Brennan Bates, chief marshal of the eastern leg

City Hall that the London march on 31 May should bring out hundreds of thousands of people. And

chief marshal of the eastern leg, Brennan Bates, argued that a shorter working week was



Stocksbridge steelworkers at the Sheffield demo

needed, along with proper jobs for school leavers and facilities for women.

Blanche Feather, vice-chair of the Trades Council, added that the slogan of the Council's women's subcommittee was 'a

LIVERPOOL TO LONDON 1-31 MAY
ON THE MARCH AGAINST THE
TORIES

woman's right to work', but since 1975 there had been an increase in women's unemployment of 200 per cent. She added:

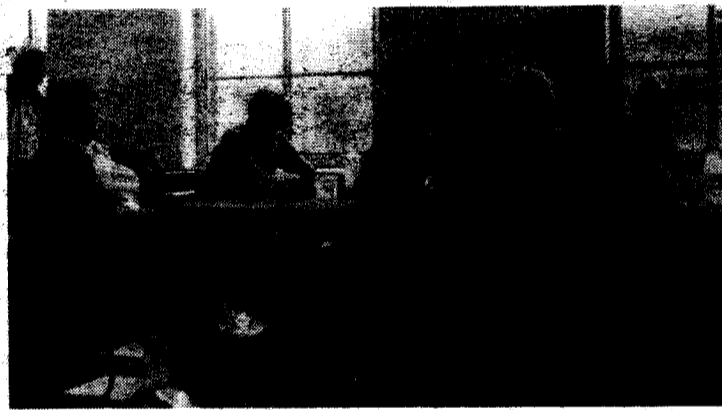
Creches

'There is no liberation without employment, and there is no right to work without proper facilities which means creches and nurseries. These were plentiful during the war when women were needed for work.'

Despite the presence of three church leaders on the platform Arthur Scargill declared: 'Unemployment is not an act of God. It's a matter of government policy. If we think that we'll change the Tories' minds through eloquent speeches we're living in cloud cuckoo land. It will be done on the streets.'

All photos: PETE GRANT (Socialist Challenge)

'We want these jobs for ourselves and our kids



Laurence Scott's workers in occupation and on the Manchester march



THE battle lines hardened over the last week in the fight by 650 Manchester engineering workers to keep open their factory, Laurence Scott and Electromotors.

Every worker received a letter by recorded delivery 'confirming' that management considered them sacked for having 'repudiated' their contracts of employment.

Official

Meanwhile the AUEW, APEX and ASTMS made the action official so every worker replied to the local managing director, RW Nash, refusing to accept the sackings.

Now the campaign is on for widespread labour movement support. Following a visit by a delegation from the People's March For Jobs Laurence Scott's workers were well to the fore in the 2,000 strong demonstration which escorted the march on its way from Manchester to Stockport.

Dispute

The 3000 workers from the other main factory in the group in Norwich have also pledged support though they are also in dispute with their new boss

Arthur Snipe.

Some 93 workers at the Norwich factory were given half an hour's notice of dismissal. The workforce has already agreed to boycott all work from Manchester and is planning further action at a mass meeting this week.

The only sour note was when 25 stewards visited the unions at Snipe's parent company Mining Supplies in Doncaster. The union there is weak and they drew a blank.

Prevent

This is the sort of subservience that Snipe would like to see in all his newly acquired factories, and which Tom Clare, a

senior steward, is determined to prevent happening at the Manchester factory.

'We want these jobs for ourselves and our kids. This factory isn't going to close,' he told Socialist Challenge.

Tom Clare and convenor Bob Penchion are confident of victory. They

Motors

are sitting on an estimated £2¼m of motors and still taking delivery of more from customers desperate to have them serviced.

They have received telexes addressed to 'the strike committee' from exporters who stand to lose contracts to vital export markets like Nigeria. All enquiries about these and the 120 motors for the Admiralty are referred to Arthur Snipe.

The JR of Doncaster

THE financial press has called Arthur Snipe 'hard man', and 'tough nut'. The workers have other descriptions of him, most of which are unprintable.

Master of the hunt in his native Yorkshire, Snipe made his fortune from providing equipment to the coal industry. Last year he awarded himself a 33 per cent pay rise (up to £25,640) and made over £180,000

Laurence Scott's convenor Bob Penchion (right) outside the occupied factory

in the same year just from a 2p share dividend. We're beginning to find out just what really does go into the price of coal. According to a 1975 profile of him in the Colliery Guardian Snipe has worked his way up from nothing. Apparently he started work at the age of 14 in a Yorkshire colliery trimming empties to his father's stall - if so, he's certainly put his humble origins behind him and is acting as a true blue representative of the bosses.

DIARY OF A JOBS MARCHER

MONDAY: we marched twenty miles from Warrington to Salford. There's a good turnout to greet us and a whole array of speakers including the north west district organiser of the Communist Party and John Deason from the Right to Work Campaign.

It's pouring with rain, our feet are tired from waiting, so after the tenth speaker we're glad to hear from a couple of marchers, Elsie Broad from Royal Pride and Phil Davies from Schreiber's.

A WRP marcher gets up to speak and begins to denounce the march. He's grabbed by the throat and removed from the platform.

TUESDAY: the day that Bobby Sands dies. At first the SWP give out black armbands, then they back down and agree to take them off or march without their green uniforms behind the march.

On Tuesday evening we are guests at the Manchester New Century Hall where the Haughton Weavers entertain us. It's a big event. We end up dancing round the hall singing the marchers song: 'We want work, we don't want dole'.

WEDNESDAY: a 'rest' day. I go to Royal Pride and watch Mr Novak entering the factory. The next day he gets a police escort to 'protect' him. A delegation goes off to a St Helens glass factory which was missed as we passed through.

Grenada televises a busload of marchers arriving at Laurence Scott's, occupied to save jobs. The workers come out on the street to greet us.

On to Ferranti's where we're given VIP treatment, including roast lamb and pineapple fritters. We talk to the workers in the factory. Maureen explains she is on the march with her son. She feels strongly about how unemployment affects young people.

The heavy collection box showed the potential interest among employed workers for the People's March.

The second 'Democratic Assembly' takes place. A debate about allowing Tories to speak on the platform allows the Communist Party to outline their concepts of the march and the broad democratic alliance. They argue that Tories should be allowed to speak to exploit contradictions inside the government.

The assembly decides against allowing political representatives of the Tory party to speak. Marchers point out that the Tories are responsible for everything we're marching against.

'Colonel' Barry Williams rules the Democratic Assembly like a headmaster. The pupils - us marchers - are only allowed a limited freedom to express our views.

THURSDAY: we leave Manchester for Stockport with the biggest send off since Liverpool. One Ferranti steward expressed the view that it would have been even better if strike action had been called by the trade unions.

Thursday evening finds us at the Poko Poko club, chicken and chips, waitresses and free drinks. The comedians intend to come on in drag but after the row about the sashes for a woman's right to work the organisers realise it would be in bad taste.

Cathy from Lee Jeans sings, she's very good. The Quads, who are marching, sing: 'Got to get a job'. The People's Marchers fill the stage.

It's an inspiring evening that ends with the announcement that Labour has won Manchester, Cheshire and the GLC. 'Maggie, Maggie, out, out, out', rebounds around the room.

FRIDAY: we are now in Cheshire and Macclesfield. It's much posher here. Left wing speeches from Labour Party members and anyone actually fighting for jobs are definitely the most popular. Marchers are still not being encouraged enough to speak in my view.

SATURDAY: a van goes to Wembley. We are told to build support for the People's march. We are all ready to watch the Cup Final at Congleton Labour Club, but to our disgust we are thrown out.

Marketing the Social Democrats

Julian Atkinson looks at Shirley Williams' new book *Politics is for People*

THE hard-eyed realities of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) are obvious enough. There is total loyalty to NATO, the Common Market, the capitalist system, incomes policy and market forces. These policies are advanced under the code names of peace, internationalism, pluralist democracy, fairness and decentralisation.

The well-worn contents are then packaged as 'new' and 'breaking' the mould'. The nearest that the Social Democrats have come to being specific — 'Twelve tasks for Social Democrats' — show how entirely wedded they are to Denis Healey-style monetarism.

We are told that unemployment cannot be defeated by spending. An incomes policy is required of unprecedented severity: it is suggested that an inflation rate of 8 per cent would only allow wage rises of 4 per cent.

In the autumn of 1978 when Jim Callaghan faced

an 8 per cent inflation rate he offered a princely 5 per cent norm before he was engulfed in the 'winter of discontent'.

The radical edge of the SDP is briefly exposed in the formula that 'the state should lean to equality', and then resolutely sheathed again with the moderate afterthought that this inclination must not be oppressive and that in a period of recession there is little scope for redistribution.

The authentically new strain in the SDP is found in those afterthoughts. There has been a decisive break with the welfare reformism of Anthony Crosland. The SDP is

engaged in a zero-cost crusade of reformism without reforms.

Since the Labour Party, in opposition at least, has failed to recognise that reforms in a full-blown capitalist crisis risk raising working-class expectations to a dangerous level, the SDP has set itself the task of wrecking the Labour Party.

The aims of these shop-soiled professional politicians, whose main background is that of apparatchiks in the party apparatus or state executive, have to be carefully packaged and marketed.

The first attempt to give an intellectual gloss to

the enterprise was made by Dr David Owen with his book 'Face the Future'. It was a failure: a muddled and diffuse book which seemed to have as many authors as the Bible.

But it contained one good joke: Owen claimed to be in the libertarian socialist tradition of communist revolutionary William Morris — it was the way he told it.

The Shirley Williams book is more successful and has a clearer aim. It is a raid into Slipman/Polly Toynbee country. There is a layer of people who were vaguely radicalised in the late 1960s and early 1970s while students.

They got good jobs and then Emma and young Mark came along. A growing dogmatism on the value of wholemeal bread was mirrored by an increasingly adult and mature agnosticism on politics. *Politics is for People* has its sights on this target area.

Manic

Much of the rhetoric of Mrs Williams is taken from the right wing of the ecology movement with its call for a zero-growth economy. Everything is dealt with by a manic reasonableness that renounces that extremism of pushing or pulling a door to open it, but moderately persists in attempting to slide into the wall to which it is hinged.

Mrs Williams starts from the point that rapid or even steady economic growth is no longer possible. Old style politics were about promising more: 'Now, however, the very foundation of the debate is shattered'.

These changes are not temporary. The crisis is not one of capitalism, she is particularly clear on this point, or rather of 'industrialism' itself.

Governments, we are told, cannot bring back full employment or better social services. They have to explain how circumstances have changed and what are the new choices. This means less promises and more warnings.

Cosy

The hinge concept which enables her to speak radical thoughts with no radical action is that of 'decentralisation'. This is a favoured code-word for the SDP. Horam and Owen use it to mean market forces.

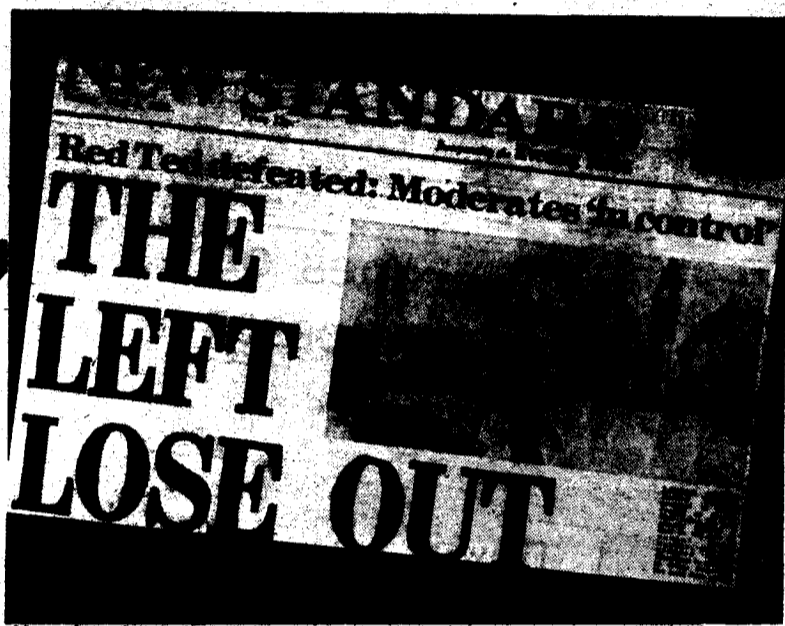
Williams uses it as an exercise in talking down expectations of what any government can do in a manner not totally different to that used by Tory ideologues.

But it is also a way of getting closer to traditional middle class politics as when she suggests that both big employers and big labour hinder us from finding institutional solutions to the present crisis.

The book contains few specific solutions to actual problems, but rather creates an ambience of caring concern. If I were not afraid of appearing extremist and wasn't partially made merry by the cosy Christopher Robin niceness of Mrs Williams I would be tempted to call her a dishonest shit.



County council elections LABOUR GAINS, CLASS POLARISATION



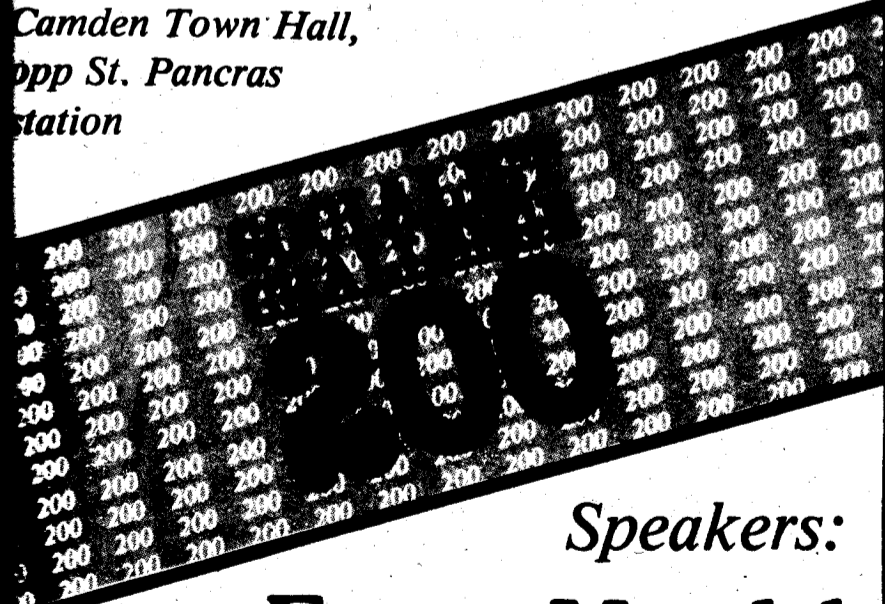
How London's 'New Standard' responded to Labour's GLC victory

FORUM

Socialist Perspectives for Europe

200th issue anniversary meeting
Fri 22 May 8pm

Camden Town Hall,
Opp St. Pancras station



Speakers:
Ernest Mandel
Ken Livingstone

Hall opens at 6.30pm with displays on women's movement; anti-nuclear struggle; Irish liberation struggle; struggle of youth; Polish crisis; El Salvador and Turkey
Buffet available with rolls, cakes, tea and coffee.

p&p Socialist Challenge, PO Box 50, London N1.

By Phil Hearse

'FAR LESS than was forecast' and a 'disappointment for Labour'. These were typical press comments after Labour's sweeping gains in the County Council elections last Thursday.

Even Robert Mackenzie, operating his swingometer with unusual vehemence after midnight on BBC 1, insisted that the swing to Labour was only around 4 per cent in London, and 5 per cent in the rest of the country.

This figure was of course a fraud, based on a comparison with the 1979 General Election, not with the last County Council elections in 1977. If that comparison was made, the swing was around 12 per cent in London and 15 per cent in the other Metropolitan areas.

By 1am on BBC 1, Bob Mackenzie was scraping the barrel for a 'disappointment for Labour' line: 'if the swing in London were repeated in a general election, Labour would only just get a majority'.

Industrial

All this covered up the reality that nationally Labour won nearly 1,100 seats from the Tories on the metropolitan County Councils. But the most decisive victories were in the key industrial areas, hit by unemployment:

Manchester 106 seats were contested. Labour won 78 and in the process gained a staggering 52 from the Tories.

West Midlands 104 seats contested. Labour won 74, in the process gaining 50 from the Tories.

Merseyside 97 seats contested. Labour won 56 as against 27 for the Tories and 14 for the Liberals — this is an area of strong Liberal support. Labour gained 31 seats from the Tories.

Greater London 92 seats contested. Labour won 50 gaining 21 from the Tories. In anybody else's terms but those of the Tory press, this is what would normally be called a 'landslide'.

Knight

But the result in London was full of lessons. Labour didn't win such a crushing victory as might have been expected because the Tories were able to strongly mobilise their vote in the suburban areas. The campaign of the Tories, waged around the slogan of 'Keep London out of the Red', and predicting a Marxist dictatorship if Labour won, was certainly successful in getting out the middle class vote.

This campaign was waged with extreme viciousness by London's only evening paper, the *New Standard*. The *Standard* in particular waged a below-the-belt campaign against Lambeth Council leader Ted Knight, who was defeated in Norwood.

Soc Dem

Knight suffered not only from the *Standard* campaign, but also from the intervention of 'Social Democrat' right winger Stephen Haseler, who by taking 3,000 of the votes, mainly from Labour,

deprived Knight of victory.

The *Standard* weighed in again the day after the election with the astounding front page headline: 'The Left loses out', gloating over Knight's defeat and predicting that right-winger Andrew McIntosh would be elected Labour leader of the GLC.

Livingstone

In fact, left-winger Ken Livingstone was elected decisively — 30 votes to 20 a few hours after the *Standard* hit the streets. Livingstone himself gained a sweeping victory in Paddington, with a 12.4 per cent swing to defeat the Tories.

The election results revealed a nation-wide class polarisation. The decisive proletarian areas swung to Labour. But in the South East, and the county shires the Tories were able to keep up their vote.

Battles

Now the scene is set for a battle royal between the Labour Councils and the government. The Tories have been quick to suggest that Environment Minister Heseltine will introduce legislation to prevent high spending by the county councils.

The only way to carry through the radical programme of fare reductions, house building and more social spending that Labour promised in its manifestos is to organise a massive campaign of national action against the Tories. To rely on rent and rate increases will just set the scene for future Labour defeats.

Nasira, Nasareen,
Jaswinder and Cynthia

Home Office persecutes black women

THE TORIES have just cut short the parliamentary debate on the Nationality Bill which black organisations, many churches and some Labour MPs have denounced as racist.

But this bill is only the latest of several laws enacted by both Labour

and Conservative governments which discriminate against black people. Under the Immigration Rules it is easier for a woman to come into Britain than a man. A man can only gain entry if he has a wife or fiancée who is born here and a UK citizen (this usually means white).

Wives and fiancées can join any man settled here regardless of his citizenship status.

The official reasoning is that women are supposed to be dependent on men and therefore should live in the man's country.

Children

If the Home Office discovers that a woman from another country has been deserted or separated it looks for technicalities to justify her deportation.

Any children born here are citizens and in theory cannot be deported. But the government imposes a terrible penalty on the children — separation from their mother or involuntary repatriation.

The latest Nationality Bill proposes to 'legitimise' this position by refusing the right of residence to children who don't have a parent who is either a UK citizen or 'settled' here.

Jaswinder Kaur who has just lost her appeal against deportation came to Britain in 1975, married a man who subjected her and their son Manjit to years of battering.

Beaten

Eventually her husband was imprisoned for these assaults. Jaswinder found that he has previously been married and had forced his first wife to commit suicide. Later the husband was deported for being in the country 'illegally'.

The Home Office says: 'Her only ties with and



Nasira and friends in July 1980

basis of stay in the United Kingdom were through her husband and she has furnished no grounds for remaining here independently of him.'

Under the Immigration Act a wife can be deported with her husband, as she is considered to be dependent on him even though she is being beaten up by him.

Nasareen Achtar arrived in 1977 married to a UK citizen. She was forced out of their home when she was eight months pregnant.

and Conservative governments which discriminate against black people.

STEVE COHEN looks at how racist laws, combined with official views of female dependency, threaten four women — Nasira Begum, Nasareen Achtar, Jaswinder Kaur and Cynthia Gordon — with deportation.



She then learned that a previous wife had, as in Jaswinder's case, committed suicide.

Phone

The Home Office wants to deport Nasareen on the grounds that her marriage is invalid because it took place over the phone.

Many hundreds of Pakistani marriages are undertaken like this and Nasareen has a valid marriage certificate.

The Home Office want to deport her because she is black and has been deserted not because of any technicality.

When she appealed to an Adjudicator he agreed with the Home Office representative's remark that she could not possibly have considered herself married as she let herself be beaten up and thrown out while pregnant'.

Irrelevant

Nasira Begum's case is perhaps the most reveal-

ing. She came from Pakistan in 1976 and married a few months later.

The police delivered a deportation notice three years later. They did so on the grounds that her husband had been previously married and not divorced.

Her ignorance of this marriage was regarded as irrelevant, and even though the police had insufficient evidence to prosecute the husband for bigamy, the Home Office were not dissuaded.

Although Nasira won her appeal before the Adjudicator the Home Office have taken it to the Immigration Appeals Tribunal and the case continues.

Nasira is presently working in a refuge for battered Asian women.

A further illustration is the case of Rhazia Khatoon who has lived here for several years, having fled from Kenya.

She married Abdul Jacob who was on a visit to this country from Malawi. She is pregnant.

Because she isn't a citizen born here she is being forced to leave her family and go to Malawi if she wants to remain with her husband.

Cynthia Gordon came from Jamaica in 1960. She lived here 12 years and had two children. Her mother in Jamaica became ill so as an only daughter she went to care for her mother and as a single parent took her children with her.

Defence

After her mother died in 1977 Cynthia brought her British-born children back but the Home Office want to deport Cynthia on the grounds that she has surrendered her settlement by being away more than two years.

All these women show the anti-woman, anti-black bias of British laws and institutions.

They are fighting for the right to live in this country with their children. Already a number of black, women's and labour movement bodies are engaged in their defence.

They cannot win by their own efforts alone.

Coventry blacks fight back

By Howard Green and Anna Reese

THIS WEEK, at least seven more racist attacks took place in Coventry, and black people turned out en masse for the funeral of Satnam Singh Gill, the Asian student murdered on 18 April.

A rally in the precinct last Saturday asserted the right of black people to walk through the streets unmolested.

At a meeting last Friday called by the Community Relations Council, involving the police, lord mayor and others, black youth distributed a long statement asserting their right to walk the streets unmolested, and their determination to organise self-defence against racist attacks.

The end of the statement read as follows: 'We as young black people in this city reserve the right to walk through the streets unmolested. So skinheads and racists beware; leave us alone and we'll leave you alone; but if you attack any of our brothers and sisters again then we declare war... if you want this city to remain peaceful then the message is clear. LEAVE US ALONE. We are dead serious.'

'If the attacks on our brothers and sisters continue then Brixton might look like a tea party to what will happen in Coventry.'

This statement caused such horror among the assembled dignitaries that they attempted to confiscate it so that 'racial harmony in Coventry is not disrupted'. But it is a myth that racial harmony can be built on the submission of the black community to racist violence.

In reality the establishment is more worried about the fact that the black community is starting to fight back. West Indian and Asian youth will not wait for official sanction or backing from elders, the ORC or the labour movement before taking action to defend their community from racist violence.

Practical support for these moves towards self-defence need to be developed inside the black community and labour movement.

We must demand that the leadership of the labour movement takes action, but we cannot afford to wait for them — we have to take this issue to every street and every doorstep.

Socialists must pull out all the stops for the national demonstration on 23 May called by Coventry Committee against Racism. Black youth are right to be angry — we must pull out the stops to support them.

Demonstrate
Saturday 23 May
Assemble 1pm Edgewick Park
March to Coventry Precinct
Called by Coventry Cttee Against Racism
Supported by ANL and NUS nationally

Support these women

Anwar Ditta's campaign to bring her children to Britain has provided the example of how black people can fight and win against racist immigration laws.

Nasira's campaign has won support from the North west and South west TUCs; the trades councils of Manchester, Stockport, Bury, Bolton, Blackpool and Southport; several LP branches; she has been adopted as an honorary member of the National Union of Students.

Jaswinder's campaign has the support of Leed's Muslim, Sikh and Hindu Temples and Asian youth movements in Bradford and Manchester.

● Contact their defence committees for petitions, leaflets and make donations to:
Friends of Nasira Begum, 595 Stockport Rd, Longsight, Manchester M20 2CC, phone 061-225 5111

Friends of Jaswinder Kaur
LAP Box JK, 29 Blenheim Terrace, Leeds LS2 9HD

Friends of Nasareen Achtar
59 Ashworth St, Rochdale

Cynthia Gordon Action Group
14 Gradwell Walk, Moss Side, Manchester

● Order the video 'A deportation of convenience' made by the Friends of Nasira to show at meetings.

● Write to Timothy Raison at the Home Office, 50 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1 and send copies to their MPs: Gerald Kaufman (Nasira); Keith Joseph (Jaswinder); Cyril Smith (Nasareen); and George Morton (Cynthia).

● Demonstrate for Jaswinder
16 May Leeds, assemble 2pm Banstead Terrace, Leeds 8

● Demonstrate for Cynthia and Nasira
6 June Manchester, assemble 12.30 at the corner of Princess Rd and Moss Lane East, Moss Side. For coaches from London phone Satnam 01-485 6672

● Vigil
15 June, London. Nasira's appeal will be heard. Assemble 1pm at the High Court, Strand opposite the Immigration Appeals Tribunal.

EARLIER this year, television journalist and newscaster **JON SNOW** sent back a remarkable series of reports from the civil war in El Salvador.

Jon Snow was the 1981 'Television journalist of the year' for his reporting of the Iran/Iraq war. Phil Hearse spoke to him about his impressions of the El Salvador conflict.

The Duarte regime came to power in El Salvador in October 1979 promising reforms, particularly land reform. Did you find any evidence that the land reform has been carried through?

I would just qualify the statement that the Duarte regime came to power in October 1979. The coup in '79 which removed General Romero had a lot more optimistic aspects to it than the present regime — these were whittled away by resignations and assassinations.

In '79 the junta had a number of progressively minded people, including importantly a man called Cordoba, who was the minister of agriculture. He was the architect of the agrarian reform.

His intention in October '79 was to carry out a very comprehensive land reform scheme which, in a period of five to ten years, would have dispersed all the land owned by 200 wealthy families — into the hands of co-operatives and into the hands of small tenant farmers.

Some 300 farmers were seized by the junta after October '79, and handed over to worker-based co-operatives to run for themselves. I visited one of these co-operatives at a place called La Labore, and in fact it was working extremely well.

There were about 1200 workers with an elected committee running the project, who had about 6000 dependents living with them on the farm, growing sugar, coffee and sugar cane — a prize example of the kind of scheme which Cordoba had in mind.

Unfortunately Cordoba was assassinated four months ago — that has had a very substantial effect on the whole impetus for agrarian reform. Even the government agency running the land reform admits that out of the 300 farms only about six are working.

The impetus for agrarian reform has more or less completely collapsed. Although Duarte talks about land reform there really isn't any evidence of it being put into effect now.

Indeed when I was there in February Duarte announced that the second phase of the land reform was to be postponed indefinitely.

What was your impression of the standard of living of the ordinary people?

The thing about El Salvador is the contrasts between the rich and the poor that are so acute. There is a very sizeable middle class in El Salvador, some of whom are extremely well off — the richest of whom have tended to flee the country and are now holed-up in Miami, leaving managers looking after their affairs.

The middle class tends to be concentrated in the main centres of urban population. They are people who run shops, garages and businesses and who are really quite well off.

But contrasted with them is the vast majority of people who are landless and living below anything we would recognise as the poverty line.

They suffer from acute malnutrition. The infant mortality rate among the peasantry, which represents 80 per cent of the population, is very high indeed.

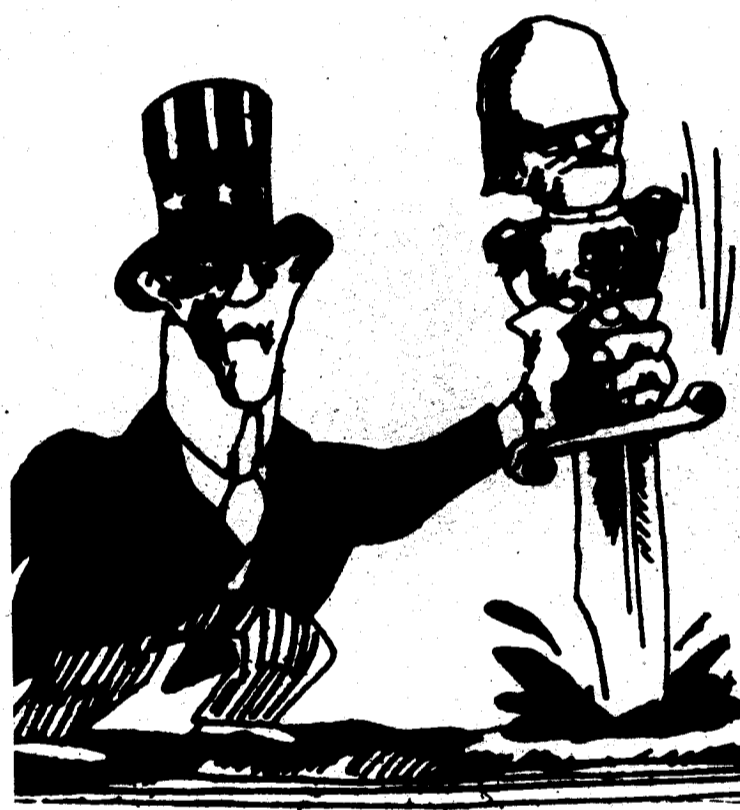
I think it is the presence of this large middle class which is slowing up the revolution in El Salvador. The parallels which people have attempted to draw between El Salvador and neighbouring Nicaragua are not precise, because the Nicaraguan dictator Somoza ran what was really a one-family dynasty, who had its hands into everything and who paid the National Guard to defend that control.

In El Salvador it is much more diffuse because of this very large middle class, which is terrified of revolution. The process of revolution is therefore being very seriously slowed down.

The evidence is everywhere that the vast majority of the population is hungry, ill fed and are not profiting at all from the original hopes that people had in the October '79 coup.

Did you find any evidence of the activities of the right-

EL SALVADOR: 'A PROTRACTED STRUGGLE'



wing death squads? What is the evidence that they are linked to or part of the National Guard or the army?

The killing in El Salvador while I was there was running at the rate of 30 to 35 civilians per night. I gather that is still about the going rate even now.

These people are not the victims of the combat — the number of people who die in El Salvador as the result of the fighting in what is a limited civil war is very small. The vast majority are just civilians who are simply taken out and 'disposed of' during the hours of darkness.

The victims can be found by the roadside in any urban area of El Salvador. Certainly you can find up to a dozen bodies in specific areas in San Salvador.

They are left there at regular intervals. Even in country areas you find groups of bodies dumped at the roadside. As for who is responsible for these killings, the evidence is overwhelming that whoever is killing these civilians is not being hindered in doing so by the armed forces.

There has now been a curfew for some months between the hours of 7.30pm and 5.30am. The bodies are already out by 5.30 in the morning. The curfew is very strongly policed by the National Guard and by the army. All the evidence is that the army is aware that these killings are going on and is doing little or nothing to prevent them.

they are obviously at odds with current US State Department thinking.

Often the struggle is presented as a conflict between left wing and right wing 'extremists'. What evidence of popular support for the FDR (Revolutionary Democratic Front) and the FMLN (Farabundo Marti National Liberation armed forces) did you come across?

As I said earlier, there is a substantial middle class in the urban areas. Where they are strong, the support for the FDR is not so obvious, largely because people in the urban areas who do support them are very fearful of coming out and expressing that support.

The result of even a hint

FDR is very strong.

If you go to an area which has been recaptured from the guerrillas — we went to several — you will find that the farms and the homesteads are completely deserted, there is no local population, no sign that the people had welcomed the army, that in any sense the army had 'liberated' the area quite the reverse.

Whereas in countryside captured by the guerrillas, we found farmsteads and homesteads fully occupied, and food freely supplied to the guerrillas by the population. In turn the guerrillas supplied medical aid and assistance to the peasantry. There was a complete inter-

Whether the army and the National Guard are themselves involved in the killings is less easy to pin-point. What is certain is that right-wing death squads are inter-mingled with the armed forces.

You can visit army-controlled centres where civilians, heavily armed civilians, mix with troops. You can see them travelling in trucks with the troops, and policing whole towns.

There are the towns of San Sebastian and San Stephan — two towns within 40 miles of San Salvador — which are policed solely by right-wing gunmen, who admit to belonging to an outlawed group called ORDEN, which was banned by the junta in October 1979.

But it is widely accepted that ORDEN still exists, and that large numbers of ORDEN members are given free range to operate both in the rural and urban areas unhindered by the armed forces.

And you can turn up at a place like San Stephan, and there is no sign of an army presence whatsoever. The whole policing operation is carried out by these civilian gunmen. I have no doubt in my mind that they play a major role in the nightly killings.

This is not just my view, it is the view of many officials at the American embassy who are horrified by what is happening in El Salvador. They will tell you this quite openly, but won't go on the record because



that you are related to, or possibly seeing, or even in touch with anybody who is sympathetic to the FDR leads to the risk of assassination. Thus in the urban areas it's very difficult to quantify what the support for the FDR is.

In the countryside it's much easier to be perfectly specific about what the support is. Five weeks of journeying across the country in El Salvador certainly indicated to me that support among the peasantry for the

Photomontage

D



Mexican socialists fight for ballot rights

By Fred Murphy

NEARLY 1,400 supporters of the Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT), Mexican section of the Fourth International, attended a rally in Mexico City on 5 April to demand that the Lopez Portillo government grant the PRT ballot rights for the July 1982 federal elections.

Among the enthusiastic crowd were striking car workers, peasants and farm workers who had travelled throughout the night to attend the rally, shanty town dwellers fighting government-ordered evictions, teachers and university workers, and dozens of activists from the Revolutionary Communist Youth (JCR), founded by young PRT members in 1980.

In addition to leaders of the PRT, the rally was addressed by Rosario Ibarra de Piedra, leader of the National Front against Repression (FNCR) movement.

Ibarra de Piedra first became active in the fight for human rights in Mexico after the April 1975 police kidnapping and subsequent 'disappearance' of her son Jesus Piedra Ibarra.

Bloc

The PRT has announced that if it wins ballot status it will present Ibarra de Piedra as its candidate for president in 1982. The party has proposed to other parties and organisations on the left that they form an electoral bloc in support of her candidacy.

The central focus of such a campaign, the PRT says, would be the campaign to fight repression and extend democratic rights in Mexico.

International solidarity with the PRT's fight for legalisation and ballot rights was voiced by striking coal miner David Ferguson, who represented the US Socialist

Workers Party, and the well-known Peruvian revolutionary Hugo Blanco, who was elected last year to the Peruvian Congress as the candidate of his party, also called the PRT.

It will be difficult for the Mexican government to justify continued denial of ballot rights to the PRT. The party has fulfilled the electoral laws requirements: submission of 65,000 signatures, activity as a 'political association' for well over a year, and representation of a distinct position in the country's political spectrum.

Rising

The PRT is preparing for the 1982 elections at a time when struggles by the workers and peasants are on the rise in Mexico. During the first ten months of 1980, the country experienced 75 strikes involving some 150,000 workers, the majority in the car, steel, rubber, textile, telephone, paper and mining sectors.

In the countryside, small farmers, Indian communities and landless labourers are resisting the government's moves to turn more and more land over to big capitalist agriculture and thus liquidate the agrarian-reform gains fought for and won during the Mexican revolution of 1920-21 and during the Cardenas presidency of 1934-40.

The rise of class struggle was reflected in the presence on the platform of trade union representatives from the Oaxaca meat workers, the Copiillo henquen (sisal) workers, the university workers of Nuevo Leon, and the workers of CONA-SUPO, a state food-distribution enterprise.

Messages in solidarity with the PRT's ballot fight and in support of Rosario Ibarra de Piedra's candidacy were received from the textile workers' union at the Textlamex factory; from the workers at the Datsun factory at Cuernavaca, and from the Goodyear rubber workers.

From Intercontinental Press

relationship between the people and those doing the fighting.

The other interesting thing was that the fighting tended to be done by people who were local to that area — they hadn't been imported. Some of the commanders tended to be middle class and imported from urban areas.

We went to four guerilla camps in the heartland of El Salvador and the people there were from the local areas.

Did you see any direct evidence of US involvement in the struggle?

No direct evidence of US manpower being deployed on the ground. Advisors do undoubtedly travel the country, and move from army base to army base, but whether they're deployed in the front line is open to doubt.

On the other hand while I was there there were plane loads of hardware coming in daily, which I saw landing at the local military airfield in San Salvador.

The US aid is in the form of infantry equipment, artillery equipment, helicopters and intensive training — and training outside the country too at the School of the Americas.

I visited this school in Panama where I found 74 cadets under heavy training in what is described as 'human

rights' methods of operation.

Quite what this means is obscure, but apparently it's lecturing on how to raid a village 'decently' and respect the individuals that you find there.

But I don't think Americans are involved in combat. I think the US involvement's in tactical advice, weaponry and training. But it's critical, obviously.

One of the propaganda lines of the Duarte regime is that during its last offensive the guerillas suffered an absolutely crushing defeat and no longer exist except in very remote areas. What do you think of this?

There's no question that the guerillas do control substantial areas of the country, some of them quite near San Salvador.

We visited a stronghold sixty miles from San Salvador in which there were four major guerilla military camps, in which there were a total of around 1000 guerillas, in an area which the army claimed to have previously cleared.

The guerillas' 'final offen-

sive', from talking to the guerillas themselves, seems to have been a sort of temperature-testing operation. It could have succeeded, but the guerillas were themselves not adequately trained or organised.

The guerillas don't seem to me to be well enough equipped to defeat the army because of the weight of equipment coming in on the other side. But neither is it at all likely that they can themselves be defeated.

So it's going to be long struggle?

My own feeling is that if things stay as they are it's likely to be a very protracted struggle. Duarte himself has very little power whatever.

The junta of which he is president is basically a military machine and is entirely dominated by the army and the Minister of Defence, General Garcia. On its fringes it is linked with the right wing death squads.

The junta is at war with the left, and to pretend, as does the US administration that the junta is in the 'middle' between left and right is absurd. Duarte is in a sense just a 'respectabilising' force used as a kind of front for the army.

It's still possible that there could be a right wing coup to get rid of Duarte. If that happened then international support for the junta might be removed. But as things stand at the moment it's going to be a protracted struggle.

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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. Andrews Square and bottom of Waverley steps 4.30-5.30; 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.
GLASGOW: SC sales every Thur/Fri 4.30-5.30pm at Central Station. Also available at Barretts, Byres Rd; Clyde Books, High St; Glasgow Bookshop Collective, Cresswell Lane; Hope Street Book Centre.
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 Elliot St, Hamilton.

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BANGOR: every Saturday 10-12 centre.
CARDIFF: every Sat in Bute Town 10.30-12. Also available 1-0-8 Books, Salisbury Road.
NEWPORT: every Sat in town centre 11-12.30
PONTYPRIDD: SC sales every Saturday outside Open Market 11-1pm.
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England
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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
OLDHAM: SC sold every Saturday

SC Events
MARINGEY: Public meeting, 'Can Ireland unfree ever be at peace?', 7.30pm TU Centre (Old Library), Brabant Rd, Wood Green, N22. Speakers from TOM and Geoff Bell (Socialist Challenge).

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RATES for What's Left. 5p per word or £4 per col. inch. Deadline: noon Sat. prior to publication. Payment in advance. Phone 01-353 8180.
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UCW Broad Left public meeting on 5th May at 7.30pm, Hotel Metropole, Kings Rd, Brighton. Speakers: Tony Benn MP and Pete Dodd, Broad Left UCW secretary.
HANDS OFF IRAN! Socialist Action forum. Speakers include Terry Viney, editor of Socialist Action, 8pm Roebuck, 108A Tottenham Court Rd, London W1.

International Marxist Group notices
NATIONAL LESBIAN/GAY Frac-tion 16 May National centre 11 am. All cdes welcome even if not active around this question. Main item: perspectives document, orientation to labour and womens movement. Pool-ed fare. Childcare if there is advance notice, and accommodation. Ring Jamie on 01-637 2249.
IRISH fraction jointly with Revolution Youth. Now on Sun 31 May at national centre.

Revolution Youth notices
BRANCH Organiser's fraction on 16 May 11am at UCL students unions, Gower St, London WC1 n. Euston station. Note: writing and speaking school planned for 17 May postpon-



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International

Polish militant: 'Internal democracy is a necessity for our union'

By Davy Jones
POLAND hits the headlines less often these days. You may have heard about the granting to Solidarity of its own TV and radio programmes, and the developing crisis within the Communist Party.

Less well-known is the massive debate within Solidarity following the calling off of the proposed general strike at the end of March. The debate has centred round democracy within the union and the role of the national leaders of the union movement.
 This week we publish extracts of an open letter sent by Andrzej Gwiadza, a leading member of Solidarity's national committee, to Lech Walesa. In future issues of Socialist Challenge we hope to publish other contributions to the debates within Solidarity.



Workers at the Lenin shipyards in Gdansk

I'm writing this open letter to you to raise some of the most important issues at stake in Solidarity. The Founding Committee for Free Trade Unions on the Baltic Coast was set up three years ago on 30 April.

I'd observed the methods and arbitrary decisions of the government, and the weakness of the workers. The source of the problem was demonstrated by the degrading and paralysing fear which gripped society.
 The aims of the free trade unions, of which we were both members, were to break this grip of fear, to gain and defend the right to develop our ideas freely, and to organise ourselves to realise these aims.

They believed us in the August strike and that led to the foundation of Solidarity. How distant seems the handing out of leaflets to the masses, working out statutes, finances, norms, constant negotiations with the government...

Democracy

It's clear that Solidarity, encompassing many of the aims and values of the Free Trade Unions, gives us a historic opportunity. But it also symbolises a movement for moral revolution, which has become the precondition for any possible social change. Every shadow cast over the unions is a painful blow for every Pole.

Truth

Their realisation demanded collaboration between the intelligentsia and the workers. The formation of KOR (Workers' Defence Committee) ended the period of isolation during which divided protests — the students in 1968 and workers in 1970 — were doomed to fail.

In working for KOR we saw our chief responsibility as defending every single person against repression. It was the fundamental point of our work. I've always been for telling people the truth.
 There were many real differences between us: Anna Walentynowicz was a believer, whereas Bogdan Lis wasn't and he was in the Communist Party, and Bogdan Boruszewicz was in KOR.

Promised

We talked with everyone. We never promised people too much. We told them they'd achieve that which they fought for. Moreover we told them that no one can give you democracy; it lies in the hands of the people. Perhaps that's why the people believed us.

Internal democracy is a necessity for our union. Antidemocratic infringements, internal obstacles, constant battles and pressures leads one to conclude that throughout the whole union there is emerging a tendency which has abandoned our democratic aims.

If the union fights with methods imposed by its fulltimers then it is bound to lose. My responsibility is to speak out about this, given that my name, alongside yours Lech, Anna Walentynowicz's and several others, became a symbol for those who fought for a free trade union during the August strikes.

How the general strike was called off

ON 19 March the military police violently ejected Solidarity militants from a municipal building in Bydgoszcz, seriously injuring dozens of people. The national commission of Solidarity on 23/24 March threatened a general strike from 31 March unless those responsible for the Bydgoszcz attack were punished and other demands of Solidarity were met. On 27 March a four hour warning strike took place. On 30 March after protracted negotiations with the government Gwiadza and Walesa postponed the strike.

This was an accident. Our rights aren't greater than anyone else's, but our responsibilities are. It's our fault that people's respect for a symbol has been transformed into the right to contravene democratic union rules by making unilateral decisions.

Let's explain clearly. The memorandum of 31 March calling for a postponement of the strike in practice called it off.

Wise

Without resurrecting the whole issue, was this a wise decision to take given that we were in no way empowered to make such a decision? When the negotiations with the government dragged on we

should have convened the union's national committee.

Broken

I'm partially responsible for that decision. I was unable to stop an autocratic decision being taken without due consultation with the proper union body. If we look honestly at the events for which we're responsible Lech, then we must admit that the democracy of the union was broken.

I know that we could unearth a thousand and one reasons for why it happened. But I also know that internal union democracy is vital. Its guarantee is complete honesty and an unfettered flow of information.

Its grave is suppression of criticism and censure of material written for internal circulation. Every union member should exercise their right to make criticisms and equally abide by the union's decisions. Union discipline requires allowing everyone the right to give their opinion on the issues at stake.

Criticisms

This is the difference between ourselves and totalitarian organisations. I state that criticisms of

the chairperson or vice-chairperson of the union's national committee is a normal occurrence. Otherwise the union is run autocratically and the whole question of deciding on statutes loses any meaning.

Influence

Certain individuals have a decisive influence, but because they aren't controlled or limited by responsibilities they aren't averse to manipulating the situation. We must say this out loud so that our union doesn't turn into a blind alley or disregard the ideals we've been fighting for.

As the vice-chairperson of the national committee I feel responsible. This is why I tendered my resignation on 1 April. It wasn't an act of desertion, but was made under the influence of the national committee's decisions.

I'll continue to fulfil my functions as long as the NC recognises this to be legitimate.

I'll stand down when the democratic ideals, in whose name this union I helped to found, are betrayed. I await the same declaration from you Lech.
 Andrzej Gwiadza

Just doing our job, guv

By Bob Pennington

THE campaign to discredit the forces of law and order goes on and on. Now the liberals in Southall are complaining that demonstrators were knocked around after the picket of a National Front meeting that did not happen.

When the picket finished the demonstrators started to go off home, but suddenly other police arrived and arrested six of the demonstrators. This is what has got the liberals all upset.

They do not realise that our brave police have to face violence every day. When you lot go to the factory, or the office, the cops have to walk into a police station and see some suspect being kicked around the cells.

There is no way you can breed a race of 'hards' unless coppers are trained to get stuck in. In Southall the police had to do their



Met Pol Commissioner McNea

training. If the pickets don't get stropky, the police have no alternative but to beat them up and arrest them. Our police have to practice at doing their job.

Inquest

Provoking the police on the picket line is bad enough, but calling them liars in court is another thing.

At the inquest on the Deptford fire, six young black witnesses withdrew the statements they made when they were interviewed by the police. The statements would have conveniently put all the blame for the deaths on black people.

Delroy Saunders told the inquest that Detective Sergeant Cork told him that he 'would break his neck if he did not make a statement' and

Wayne Downer said he had been told: 'You're not going to come out of this station until you tell us what we want to know.'

Why these people complain about this I will never know. If they said what the police told them to say, then someone could be blamed for the deaths in the fire.

Okay, maybe it would have been the wrong people, but at least it would make sure that unsolved crimes do not litter up the police records. If it could be 'proved' that black people started the fire then those white racists who probably did throw the fire bomb could be left to go free and unharassed so that one day they can join the police force and work a beat in South London.

Another slanderous attack has been made against our coppers, this time in the Finsbury Park area north London.

A young black woman was knocked down on a crossing on the night of 18 April. The professional protesters are complaining that the police have done nothing to investigate this.

How do the police know she was knocked down? The fact that she has two broken legs, a broken hip, head and face injuries, and was lying in the road when the ambulance took her to hospital proves nothing. The police can't jump to hasty conclusions.

Her friend Patrick Pond told the police that a parked car with two white men inside suddenly speeded up and drove right at them when they were on the crossing. But that is only what he saw. You cannot spend public money investigating eye-witness evidence like that.

That is why the police have done nothing yet to pursue the matter and although Rhoda is willing to give evidence they have not called any witnesses. To reassure an over-hasty and rather excitable public, Scotland Yard says it will 'act as soon as possible'.

Disarming the world

IT'S encouraging to read that Brian Heron has now caught up Fenner Brockway, who warned in December 1980 of probable attempts to substitute the World Disarmament programme for CND's demands for unilateralism (23 April).

Yet it still seems to me that Heron misrepresents (unintentionally, I'm sure) the World Disarmament Campaign's 'only policy plank' — general and complete disarmament of the whole world, conventional weapons as well as nuclear weapons. He fails to give a short direct quotation from the final document of the UN special session on disarmament of 1978.

The British representative joined 148 other national representatives in committing their government to help 'mobilise world public opinion for meaningful disarmament and for world disarmament by agreed stages'.

Do Brian Heron and comrades seriously imagine that they are in a position to persuade a greater number of people to oppose Cruise missiles than the number that WDC aims to reach by its political and military consciousness-raising in UN associations, local peace campaigns and many church congregations throughout the world?

In Japan, for example,

25 million trade unionists have apparently signed the WDC petition.

Of course, it is wrong to approach all conflicts with a simplistic bleating for 'peace', and the machine guns and hand grenades of Third World Liberation fighters are likely to be the final items on any disarmament list.

But Heron seems unaware that the West may well be planning to initiate a pre-emptive 'limited' nuclear war on the USSR. In this nightmare Heron considers it a 'dangerous blind alley' to mobilise a 'demand for disarmament by hundreds of millions so insistently that no man, no nation can withstand it'.

To mobilise public opinion against international nuclear and conventional war is not in my opinion, a 'worse than useless strategy'.

It is aimed at neutralising 'that fatalism which is part of the poison of Tory hawkishness', and at creating an alternative ideology which will be essential to achieve the first stages of unilateralist strategy by Britain (and, we hope, by other countries in a process of unilateralist emulation) — unilateral nuclear disarmament and unilateral abandonment of NATO and the EEC.

F H PORTER,
Oxford

Don't cut off dole money

IF civil servants are to defeat the Tories they must mobilise the active support of the rest of the working class, employed and unemployed.

Militants in the civil service unions should therefore advance a line which unites the whole working class in a struggle for a general strike to kick out the Tories.

Socialist Challenge has argued for all-out strike action in the dispute, including by those running the computers which pay out unemployment and supplementary benefits. This would cut across such unity.

The non-payment of benefit would cut across such unity.

The non-payment of benefit would create a large group of desperate, virtually penniless unemployed people and their

dependents who would be dangerously receptive to anti-strike and to some extent anti-union propaganda. They would hardly be likely to join in solidarity actions.

There are already divisions between the unemployed and Department of Health and Social Security workers, because the department operates reactionary rules against claimants without much apparent opposition from the DHSS unions.

Hitting the unemployed is not the way to win the strike. Socialist Challenge seems to have forgotten that revolutionary socialists have to fight for the unions to champion the demands of all the oppressed. Any other strategy leads to defeat.

SANDY McBURNEY,
Castlemilk Claimants' Union, Glasgow

Letters letters Letters Letters LETTERS

Conservative Manifesto

By Kathryn Hobson

In the interests of the nation
And to beat inflation
You must accept our explanation
Of the economic situation.
It's the fault of unionisation,
Disputes of demarcation,
And wage negotiation.
So give up the expectation
Of an end to exploitation
And regard your degradation
As a sort of expiation
For the sin of wanting more participation;
Ideas above your station!
We have a strong detestation
Of political excitation
And democratic protestation
In the form of peaceful demonstration.
We view with consternation
Left-wing Parliamentary infiltration
And workers' agitation.
So just accept with resignation
That our aim is conservation
Of capital concentration.
With industrial modernisation
And manpower rationalisation
We'll continue wealth creation
And profit accumulation.
We'll reduce the population
By preventing immigration,
Perhaps introduce repatriation.
Then with arms proliferation
And nuclear escalation
We'll provoke a confrontation
Which could end in radiation!
And this process of alienation
Is called simply — Thatcheration.



Tory wet St. John-Stevas in 1950 (top) and Geoffrey Howe in 1945

Of police informers and their inventors

YOUR paper is right to defend Socialist Organiser and Socialist Press against the Workers Revolutionary Party's legal action, and to publish the long list of individuals and organisations slandered by this vicious sect. The list, however, omitted one name — that of Gery Lawless.

In the summer of 1972, in the course of his work as a journalist, Gery was given a statement which claimed responsibility on behalf of a Provisional group in Britain for the first IRA firebombings in London. He publicised this, and on legal advice went to the police to make a statement about how he came to obtain the statement.

At this time the Provos in Ireland were reluctant to admit that they had a group operating in London, and the exact origins of the statement were not verified by them. Using this, and building on it a tower of lies, the WRP newspaper, Workers Press, slandered Lawless and over a period of some months accused him of being a police informer and of inventing the statement to witch-

hunt Republicans in Britain.

Gery was at this time a member of the International Marxist Group and the campaign was also used to try to discredit that organisation. In the light of subsequent events Lawless's story not only seems credible but reasonable; but of course there has been no retraction by the WRP.

A feature of the campaign against Lawless was the skill with which lie, distortion and half-truth were woven together; these skills were to be more fully utilised against Joseph Hansen and George Novak of the American Socialist Workers Party.

It is important that the working class movement recognises the ruthlessness with which this organisation pursues its slanders, and the Lawless case is an important example of the techniques which they use.

BOB PURDIE,
Belfast

No disruption by the SWP

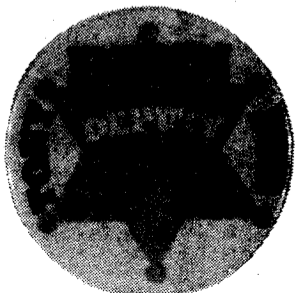
A BRIEF comment on Alasdair Beal's letter (30 April). In talking about the CND Labour Movement Conference in March he wrote: 'Many delegates were furious at the Socialist Workers' Party threat to disrupt the proceedings if it didn't get its way.' He also implied that the discussion of resolutions at the conference was a waste of time.

There was no SWP threat to disrupt the conference. SWP members who were delegated to the conference were there to make a serious contribution to the debate. The proposal that motions from trade union branches should be put to the conference was put forward by union delegates, and overwhelmingly endorsed by the 702 delegates.

Certainly, time which could have been used to work out a trade union strategy for CND was wasted. I would argue that this was because time and again, most notably over the speaker from Lee Jeans, the conference organisers were out of touch with the wishes of the majority of the delegates.

It was a great pity that one of the motions passed, which concentrated on building CND at work, could only receive brief discussion because all the resolutions were considered late in the day.

PETE CANNELL,
Luton W9



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INTERNATIONAL
DAY OF ACTION



16 MAY 1981
CONWAY HALL
RED LION SQUARE
LONDON WC2

Women will decide... the world over

By Tessa van Gelderen

WOMEN in Britain do not have the right to choose whether to continue a pregnancy. But the defeat of the anti-abortion Corrie Bill last year was a tremendous boost to carry that campaign forward, here and in other countries.

Throughout the world women are continuing the fight to defend their gains and to oppose anti-abortion laws.

The National Abortion Campaign has planned a day of discussion and entertainment on 16 May to mark an international day of action 'in solidarity with women around the world fighting for the right to control their own fertility.'

Just a glance at the situation in a number of countries shows that this fight still has a long way to go.

In the *United States* a 'Human Life' Bill is being tabled in Congress which states that life begins at the moment of conception.

Thus all abortion and many forms of contraception which work after conception — for example the coil — would be defined as murder.

A Congressional committee set up to gather testimony from doctors and scientists on when human life begins was disrupted by women's groups; part of the mass support that is growing against the Bill.

In *Ireland* all family planning and counselling clinics are required to obtain a licence under the 1980 Family Planning Act.

The Well-Woman Clinic and the pregnancy Counselling Centre in Dublin, which refer

women to Britain for abortions, have been intimidated by the police.

In *Canada* therapeutic abortions can only be given on the approval of a committee of at least three doctors. Most women who do not live near a big city find it very difficult to get an abortion.

In *Holland* the restrictive abortion bill was passed on 28 April by a majority of just one vote.

The Dutch abortion campaign — We Women Demand — is determined that the new law will not affect the practice of abortion in Holland.

The International Day of Action will highlight a number of the struggles of women for abortion and contraception and against forced sterilisation.

1.30 Speakers from Britain, Ireland, Holland, Greece and Spain.

3.00 Isabel, a singer from Spain, plus sketches.

3.30 Speakers on the USA, Latin America, the use of Depo Provera in Africa and Asia, reproductive rights and abuses in Namibia (by members of SWAPO) and on the position of women in China.

5.00 *Blood of the Condor*. Film about the US Peace Corps attempt to sterilise Bolivian Indian women.

6.30 African dinner, £1.50 plus cabaret.

7.30 International music, theatre and dance.

'We shall not be moved'

LEE JEANS workers, the large majority of them women, have now been occupying their factory in Greenock, near Glasgow, since 5 February. Support for the occupation continues to grow.

Representatives from most of the major Scottish trade unions attended a rally at the factory on 30 April, the official closure date.

Strike action has been promised by the miners' union in Scotland. At the Fire Brigades Union conference next week moves will be made to stop all fire cover for VF properties, the owners of Lee Jeans.

However, the leadership of the workers' own union — National Union of Tailor and Garment Workers — is playing a disgraceful role. At its annual conference a fortnight ago, no proposals were made for escalating the struggle.

Instead the delegates from Lee Jeans were astounded to hear their leadership blame the workers themselves for frightening off potential buyers for the factory by their militant stand.

Ellen Monaghan, the senior steward at Lees, says: 'This is just another way of putting the blame for the situation here on to the workforce. If we hadn't taken the action we did we'd all be out the door by now and there would be no chance of saving the jobs.'

The NUTGW leadership has presided over the loss of 100,000 jobs in the past ten years. It has a 'sweetheart' agreement with the factory owners to push the blame for this situation on to foreign workers.

Its main campaign, hand in hand with the employers, is to demand the introduction of import controls. The occupation at Greenock is an embarrassment, and it wants to prevent other sit ins.

Up to now the Lee Jeans workers have refrained from calling for a boycott of Lee Jeans in shops and at the ports. Without the full support of their union leadership, they will have to appeal to rank and file dock workers and transport workers to support them in this.

As well as financial support and messages, militants should call for their union to boycott Lees' products.

Messages of support and donations can be sent to the Treasurer, Lee Jeans shop stewards committee, 45 Brougham St, Greenock, Scotland.

The message from Lee Jeans:

Occupy to

By Tessa van Gelderen

IT WAS a good week for Mary and Cathy from the Lee Jeans occupation. They toured many workplaces in the London area — where they found lots of support — and they were the star attraction at the Festival for Women's Rights Against Tory Attacks on the weekend.

Last week started with a visit to Jacobi and Bratt, a garment manufacturer. Cathy Nicoll and Mary Harley, who had come down from their occupation in Greenock, near Glasgow, spoke to women on the shop floor.

As members of the same union, the National Union of Tailor and Garment Workers, the women were sympathetic to the struggle of Lee Jeans workers.

There was a discussion on how the occupation could be won, and a collection was taken.

Buses

Wednesday saw Cathy and Mary on the trail in the Southall, West London area. Chiswick Works, which maintains London Transport buses, was the first stopping off point.

The response of the shop stewards there and in Action Works next door was to be repeated throughout the day: news of the occupation had reached the south which was now beginning to face redundancies on the same scale as the rest of the

country.

What the women at Lee Jeans were doing was seen to be the only way to fightback. They had to be given full support from trade unionists.

Touch

Everywhere we went, stewards and convenors would put us in touch with other workplaces. At all the factories money was forthcoming from shop stewards committees and collections sheets were handed over with promises of more cash to follow.

Shop stewards and convenors were meeting us straight out of meetings with management on redundancies.

John Inwood, convenor of Trico, where the workers had won an equal pay dispute after a bitterly-fought strike in 1975, summed up the feeling that was prevalent as we toured around: 'We've accepted redundancies but now we've told management that any more and we're in dispute. So we're grateful for what you're doing in Greenock.'

South

'The rate of redundancies is higher in the south now than anywhere else because there is no one left to make redundant. People are beginning to realise there's no jobs to go to down here.'

After visits to EMI, Fords Langley (where management threw us off the site) and Fidelity, the day ended with a £100 donation from a Post Office Engineering Union branch — London North Central Internal — and £40 from Ealing Trades Council.

Site

A visit on Thursday to a Kyle Stewart building site at County Hall was not so successful — the workers there were on half-day strike in memory of Bobby Sands!

Friday began with breakfast on the Thames Barrier site. Cathy and Mary spoke at a stewards meeting and were told that Lee Jeans workers were the only ones fighting unemployment.

Gate

The stewards collected £50 among themselves and they will be organising a gate collection from the 1,400 workers on site this Thursday. Mary and Cathy also met women shop stewards who work in the canteen at Thames Barrier.

Then it was over to Hackney in East London to meet Micky Boulter,

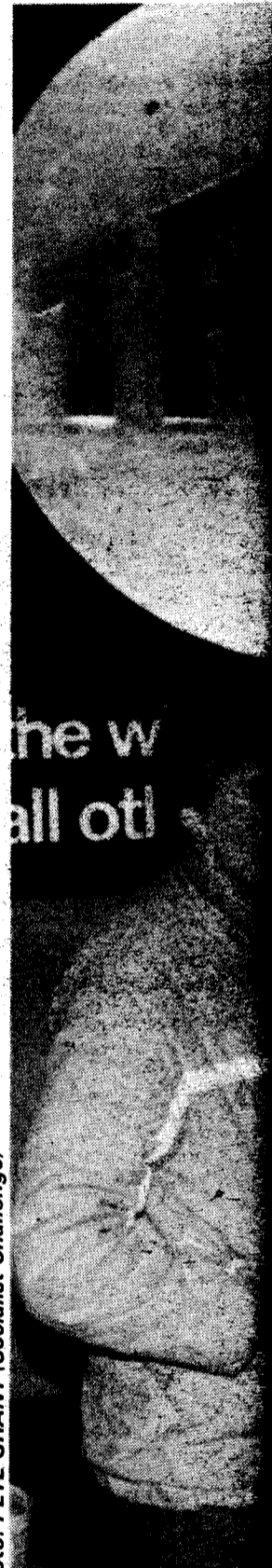


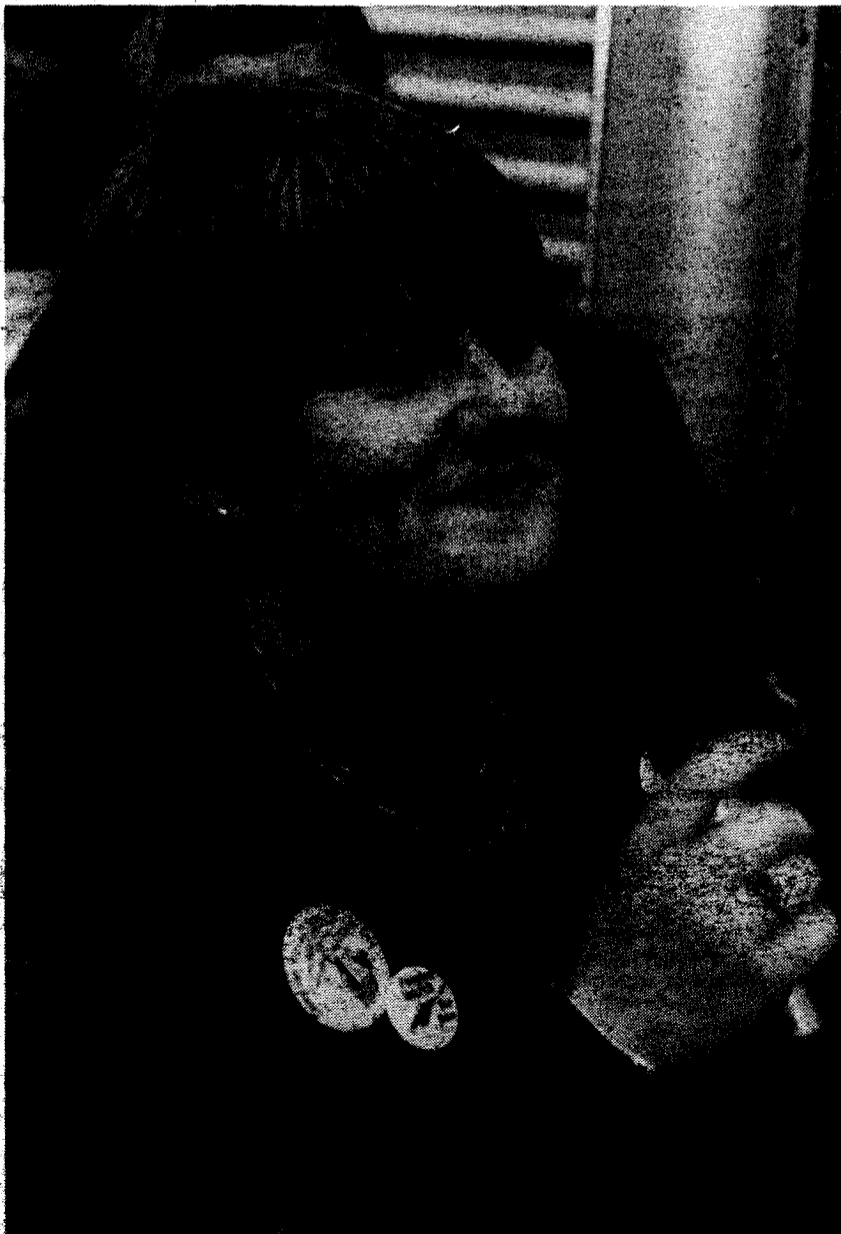
Photo: PETE GRANT (Socialist Challenge)

Lee Jeans workers Mary Harley and Cathy Nicoll with Trico convenor John Inwood, who told them: 'We've accepted redundancies but now we've'

convenor of British Oxygen. He pledged financial support and pointed out that it was crucial to get action to stop the movement of goods, through the docks and so on.

His union, the transport workers, could play a vital part in this.

BOC workers are facing threats to their jobs. Micky told Mary and Cathy that they should go down to Edinburgh, which was one of the threatened BOC depots, and tell them to follow the example of Lee Jeans and sit in.



Cathy Robertson, from Lee Jeans, speaking to the People's March in Stockport



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save jobs



told management that any more and we're in dispute. So we're grateful for what you're doing in Greenock.'

Right: in the Lee Jeans occupation.

It had been an exhausting week for the two Lee Jeans women but they considered that the tour, which was organised by Socialist Challenge, had been very successful. Everywhere they had visited, workplaces were organising for when the People's March for Jobs hits London.

Mary and Cathy want to be part of the Lee Jeans delegation that will lead the march on the last leg of its journey. Lee Jeans workers will be heading that march because they lead the way in the fight for jobs.

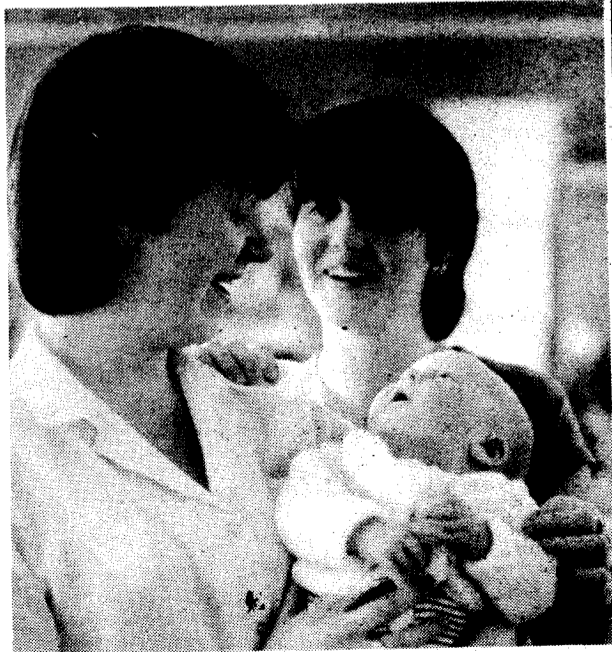


Photo: JILL POSENER

2,500 say:

Women must fight the Tories

By Terry Matthews

The fight for jobs was one of the most important issues raised at the Festival for Women's Rights Against Tory Attacks. Cathy Nicol received the longest and loudest applause when she spoke of the fight of the workers at Lee Jeans to save their jobs.

The rally at the end of the day was the grande finale of what had been a festival and celebration of women struggling for their rights on every level.

Workshops on organising in the trade unions and the Labour Party; on racism and imperialism; cuts in the welfare state; on violence against women; on sex roles and sexuality, took place alongside exhibitions, stalls, theatre and music.

It was hectic and

crowded at times — 2,500 people attended the festival, the vast majority of them women — and there was almost too much to take in.

The need for women to organise a fightback against Tory attacks which particularly affect women, was the dominant theme.

As Judy Watson, one of the Festival's organisers, told the rally, women were now 40 per cent of the workforce but their wages were only 72 per

cent of men's.

The fight for women's jobs, she argued, 'is fundamental to the fight against sexual divisions in society.'

'Some people might accuse us of wanting jobs for women at the expense of men, but the fight for women's jobs is a vital part of the general fight against unemployment.'

The rally ended with a call for the TUC and the Labour Party to organise a demonstration for a woman's right to work.

The festival was an experience not to be missed. It showed what women organised together could achieve; that our strength lies in such organisation, and taking that into the labour movement as a

whole.

It gave many women an understanding that our own concerns are not isolated from the fightback against the Tories and the attacks on women whose choice to work, to have children and so on are gradually being eroded.

Perhaps the day can best be summed up in the words of Elsie Broad, one of the strikers from Royal Pride in Salford, who has been on strike for eleven weeks for union recognition:

'When I went on the People's March,' she said, 'I went on for Royal Pride and I didn't think about women's rights. But now I'm definitely there fighting for women's rights.'

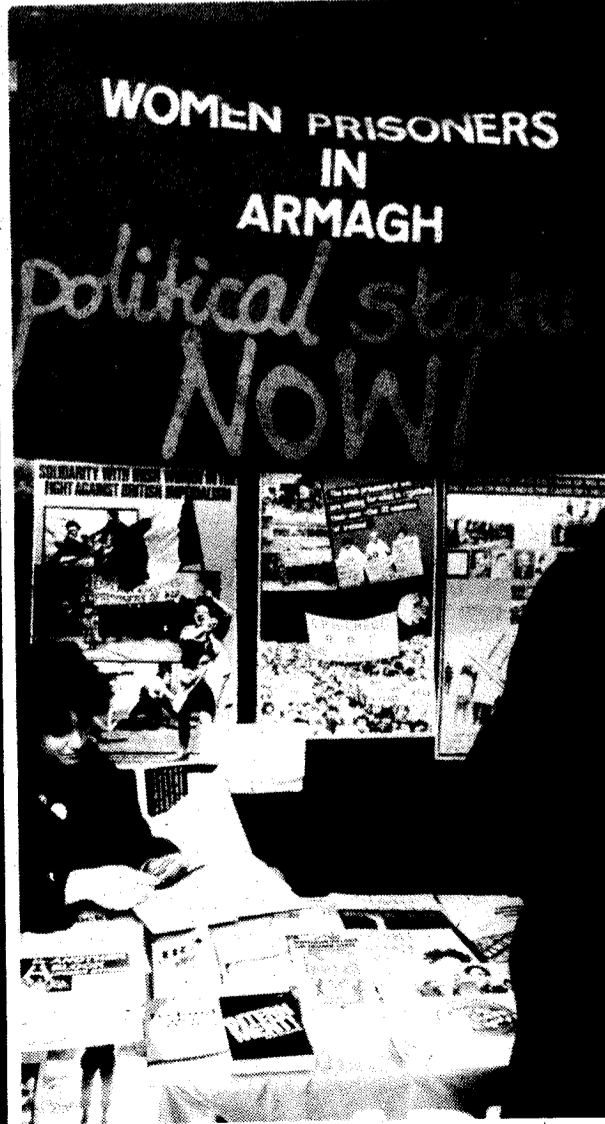
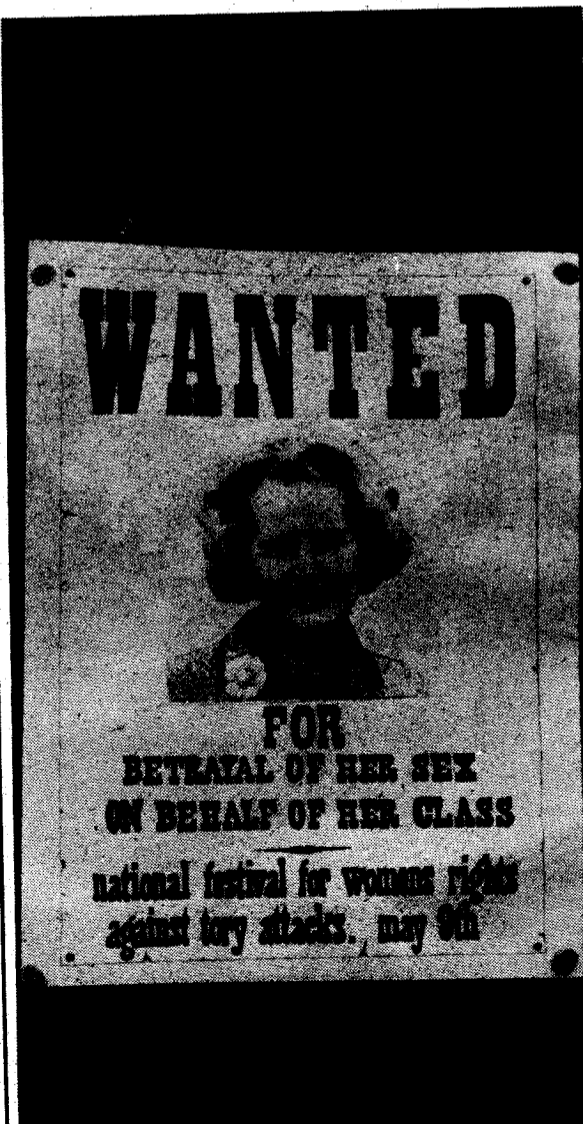


Photo: JILL POSENER

On display at the Festival for Women's Rights Against Tory Attacks on the weekend



CND - 'The government should ban the bomb not the march'

by Toni Gorton

SCOTTISH organisers of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament are continuing to build support for their annual march from the Polaris submarine base at Faslane to Glasgow despite the three-month ban imposed by Strathclyde police.

Fifty thousand people on the march will be a loud declaration to Thatcher and her gang that their attempts to get political protest off the streets won't be tolerated.

In London CND announced on 5 May that it is taking action in the High Court arguing that the current blanket ban on marches in London is illegal.

CND point out that in the last two months seven CND marches had been caught by bans on marches in London, Leeds and Strathclyde.

'We appreciate the problem which faces the police,' says Bruce Kent, CND general secretary. 'But we think they are being unreasonable in asking for the banning of all marches instead of those which actually are provocative and likely to cause violence.'

'CND marches are peaceful,' he adds. 'We depend on marches to bring to the attention of the public, the media and parliament, the growing concern about massing of nuclear weapons.'

'We think the government should ban the bomb — not the march.'

Harriet Harman, legal officer of the National Council for Civil Liberties, who will be acting as CND's solicitor, says:

'The Public Order Act was enacted to deal with public order problems, yet bans are being used to prohibit entirely peaceful marches.'

'The police and the Home Secretary have the power to ban just those marches which cause serious public disorder and leave peaceful marchers free.'

'The Home Secretary has now stated that he accepts that the Public Order Act allows selective and limited bans.'

'Never before has there been such a High Court action. It is based on the London ban but will have implications for Scotland as well.'

Streets

Patricia Hewitt, showed that between 1950 and 1980 bans had been used nine times, while already in 1981, eight bans had been imposed for periods of up to three months.

'There is a growing feeling among politicians that politics should be restricted to the ballot box and writing letters to MPs and the newspapers', she said.

'CND wouldn't be able to function unless it was able to go onto the streets with its message.'

'The government is seeking



London May Day march 1981 — will police let it happen in '82

wider powers to control political activity and it believes that public reaction will be dulled by a succession of bans.

'This is a major case, we intend to defend and restore the right of assembly and we're delighted to represent CND in this case.'

An application for a hearing in the High Court will be made this week, and if the hearing is granted then all bans will become null and void.

The focus of the case is the Young CND 'Schools against the Bomb' march which has been caught twice by the bans, planned for 17 May in London.

Bruce Kent points out how frustrated people were becoming with printing leaflets, booking coaches and trains and having to cancel again and again. 'The expense is enormous especially for people who don't have much money anyway.'

Asked whether CND would

defy the ban he said that 'CND was not willing to consider illegal action until after the case was won or lost in the courts.'

Despite this cautious and possibly disastrous approach CND is the only organisation outside the Labour Party and the TUC that could bring out sufficient numbers to successfully defy the bans on the streets.

Selective

The NCCL and CND are not challenging the use of selective bans; they do not say for instance that each provocative action by the National Front could be prosecuted under the Race Relations Act. Certainly they don't call for the labour and black movements to confront the NF on the streets.

Can anyone believe that Thatcher will ban the activities of the right-wing while defending the rights of movements like CND who are opposed to a central plank of her platform?

The fact that one of the earliest selective bans in 1961 was against the Committee of 100 is an indication of whom bans, whether selective or blanket, are used against.

We must continue to argue against all bans and to build for a really big demonstration in Scotland on 6-7 June.

Ask your labour movement bodies to defend the right to demonstrate by contributing to the legal costs of the 'High Court Action. Send donations to CND: Marches Appeal, 11 Goodwin Street, London N4.

Under Review

The best work on Shelley yet published

By Tony Goss

THIS noble attempt at revitalising Shelley among the 'left' is the result of Paul Foot's personal preoccupation with the poet for the last few years.

Foot admits to his feelings towards the subject in his introduction, and the impression that he is totally immersed in the topic pervades the whole of *Red Shelley*.

In direct contradiction to all that our enlightened educational establishments would have us believe, the author contends that Shelley was far from being a romantic. In fact he was a revolutionary, a pre-socialist (although Foot is quick to make the distinction between what he describes as 'levellism' and socialism). The distinction is necessary.

Shelley lived through almost the exact period covered in EP Thompson's marvellous work, *The Making Of The English Working Class*, the era of the Industrial Revolution which brought capitalism into the world.

Atheist

He could not, therefore, have been a scientific socialist and his life-long contradictory views on reform versus revolution reflect this historical context.

Nevertheless, Foot's evidence to refute the standard view of Shelley as merely a romantic idealist is strong, based as it is on the poet's own work.

Foot is at pains to show that Shelley was an atheist (for which crime he was expelled from Oxford), a republican and a feminist. In all three he was consistent — to the extent that all his most revolutionary characters are women atheists who fought church, state and monarch.

He also attempts to explain Shelley's contradictory ideas on reform and revolution. It is here, perhaps, that we find the book's greatest failing.

Probably due to his personal esteem for Shelley, Paul Foot tries to prove that there was no real contradiction.

Lacking

Shelley either kow-towed for the sake of being published, or was so ostracised by society that a tendency towards reformism was bound to occur. This is a very simplistic explanation and one is left feeling that something is lacking.

The book is best when Foot is either using Shelley's own words to confound those who would claim him as a 'romantic', or, as in the last section, he is looking at the effect of Shelley's work on the socialist movement since his death.

Red Shelley is probably the best book on Shelley yet published. For anyone who wishes to gain some understanding of the power of literature in building towards socialism — this is essential



reading.

As Foot put it: 'If that poetry can inspire (hundreds of thousands of people) to write and talk with a new energy, a new confidence and a new

splendour, then there is no telling what might happen.'

Red Shelley by Paul Foot. Sidgwick and Jackson, £5.95. Available at the Other Bookshop 328 Upper St, London N1.

TESS - the whore and the wife

By Judith Arkwright

TESS is a film worth seeing despite the romantic and sensationalist trailers. Polanski's film version of Thomas Hardy's novel is true to the spirit of the book even if overglamorised and slick.

It portrays a young woman living in a farming community in the 1880s. This was a time when agriculture was rapidly becoming mechanised and taken into the hands of a few wealthy landlords, often with devastating effects on the community.

The tragedy of Tess is that she comes from the old world but she is part of the new, and Hardy uses her situation to expose the hypocrisy and harshness of the new society.

Hardy was a socialist. Without romanticising rural life he was critical of the effects of industrialisation on human life and the money-centred values of the new capitalism.

Harshness

In this story, Tess's family is uprooted and has to camp in the town. Her father dies of drink due to the harshness of life and the machinery introduced into the farms is so noisy that the workers can't speak to one another.

Tess faces a choice between Alec D'Urberville, who offers her money and material comfort in exchange for sexual services, and Angel Clare, whom she loves.

When Tess marries Angel she admits to her previous rela-

tionship. Angel declares that she is not the innocent girl he married and abandons her.

The two men in the film illuminate the two roles that women are obliged to play — on the one hand the whore, and on the other the innocent wife whose sexual services are for the exclusive use of the husband. The conflict between them tears Tess apart.

Like a lot of women, she blames herself and her destiny: 'I was born bad, I have lived bad and I shall die bad.'

Rebellion

Her fatalism was part of the old way of life, but in the new world there is also a strong sense of an all-pervading power — that of machines and money, which individuals can neither fight nor avoid.

Capitalism was there to stay and everyone was forced to adapt.

But, alongside Tess's fatalism and passivity are the sparks of rebellion against her treatment by men.

Hardy's writing caused great scandal in its day. *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* was labelled as 'disagreeable, ridiculous and affected', but it was a tragic exposure of the new capitalist values and the institution of marriage.

Repression grows in Turkey

'WE have been tortured for the past three months,' said one 20-year-old defendant as a mass trial of Kurdish militants opened in Diyarbakir, Turkey on 13 April.

Washington Post correspondent, Metin Munir, reported that he 'appeared barely able to stand'.

The Turkish military prosecutors are demanding death sentences for 97 of the 447 defendants who are accused of trying to 'annex' the south-east region of Turkey, where at least 8m Kurds live.

The chances of their being found not guilty can be gauged by the conviction last month of former minister of public works Serahittin Elci, who was sentenced to 2½ years

imprisonment for 'secessionism' on the basis of such statements as 'I am a Kurd. There are Kurds in Turkey.'

Kurds make up about one-fifth of the population of Turkey. The trampling of their national and democratic rights has been too long ignored by the governments of both East and West.

The Kurdish nation comprises part of Turkey, Syria, USSR, Iraq and Iran, and any struggle for its re-establishment seriously disrupts the balance of power in the Middle East.

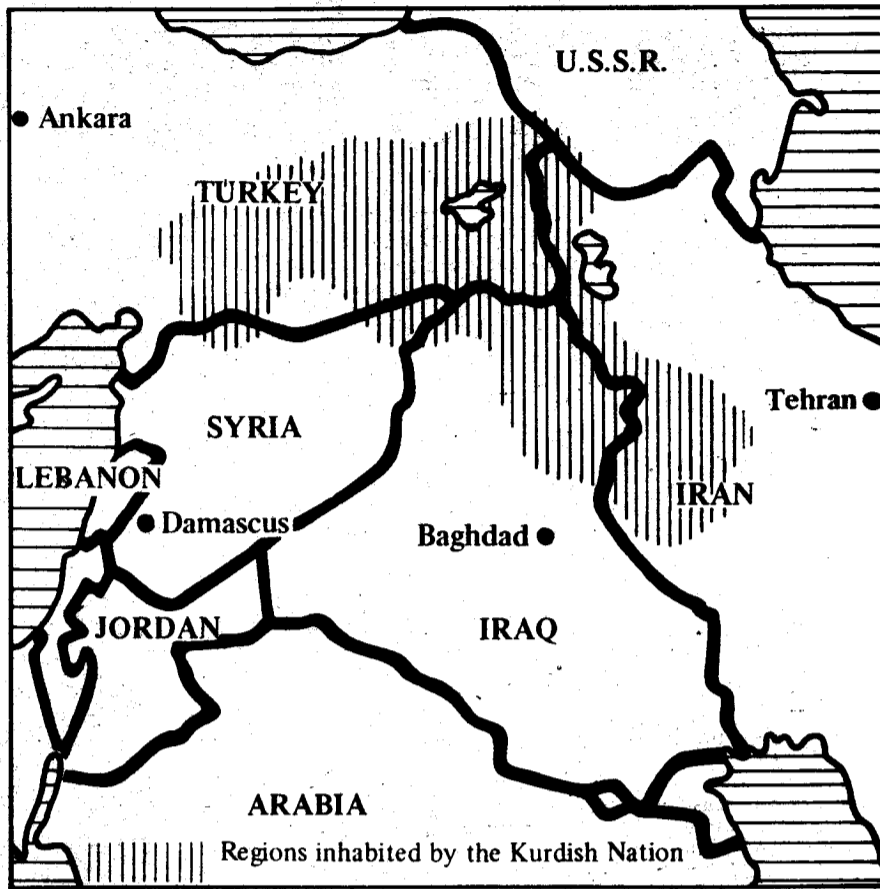
The Turkish working class is facing the fiercest ever attack on its organisations and leaders. Since the military coup last September, all independent trade union activity has been suppressed by the junta, and there are 60,000 political prisoners. The focus of this repression is another trial - of the entire leadership of the radical trade union

federation DISK.

This week the Council of Europe meeting in Strasbourg will debate whether to expel Turkey from membership. The country is under the heel of a vicious dictatorship which dissolved parliament and all political parties on seizing power. But that doesn't mean expulsion is certain.

As a recent press statement on the sale of fighter planes to Turkey by the Reagan administration noted: 'US military officials regard Turkey as an indispensable ally on the southern flank of the Atlantic alliance, particularly with growing instability in the Persian Gulf region.'

In Britain, the Turkey Solidarity Campaign has just produced an 80-page dossier on the junta in Turkey, and will provide information and speakers. It can be contacted at BM Box 5965, London WC1N.



Pergamon strikers need print backing

By Carol Russell, Pergamon striker

OXFORD Labour Party has given its support to the strike by journalists at Pergamon Press, which is now in its 11th week.

This might not seem exceptional, but this particular Labour Party is not in the habit of supporting anything that resembles industrial action, and among the local party executives is Robert Maxwell, the former Labour MP and boss of Pergamon.

As a self-proclaimed socialist, whose company made £6m profit in 1980, Maxwell precipitated the strike by refusing to make an agreement with the NUJ for the past three years, and then sacked the strikers, who are officially supported by their union.

Support from print workers is vital to the success of our action, but it is an uphill battle to secure it. NGA members who sup-

port the strike forced the holding of a chapel meeting to discuss taking boycott action, but strikers were excluded from the meeting, which voted against the action.

We have visited print-workers in Fleet Street and elsewhere to gain support, but the NGA leaders - who have been sanctioning redundancies around the country - have given no meaningful backing.

The journalists' union is now having formal talks with the NGA over a merger. Activists in the two unions need to promote solidarity as an essential ingredient of a fighting union, otherwise the merger will be nothing more than a marriage of bureaucracies.

Labour council suspends teachers

SIX teachers are threatened with suspension from their jobs for taking official union action. They are employed by the Labour-controlled borough of Barking and Dagenham.

The six are NUT members at Dagenham Priory comprehensive school. Since 27 April they have been refusing to take classes previously taught by another teacher, who left without being replaced. They are supported by the NUT's national action committee.

The employers' response has been to treat the matter as a disciplinary case against 'disobedient' teachers.

The case has serious local and national implications. Locally, this council is also threatening to sack up to 60 teachers. The union is preparing to respond with strike action.

Nationally the 'Dagenham 6' are the focus for a crucial test of the NUT's ability to defend its own members. The

employers cannot be allowed to dictate union strategy on fighting the cuts.

The next step in the case is a school governors' meeting on 19 May, which will decide whether to suspend the teachers. The NUT action committee has indicated that it will back a strike if the suspensions go ahead.

Barking NUT has called for a mass lobby of the governors' meeting at 6.45pm next Tuesday.

Messages of support to: Ken Jones, Secretary, Barking NUT, Barking Abbey School, Sandringham Rd, Barking, Essex. Messages of condemnation to: Cllr S Cole, Chairperson, Education Cttee, Town Hall, Barking, Essex.

Leyland workers resist speed ups

By Geoff Morris

LAST Thursday 1600 workers at the giant BL Longbridge plant voted decisively to take strike action, despite calls from the plant convenor Jack Adams to go back to work.

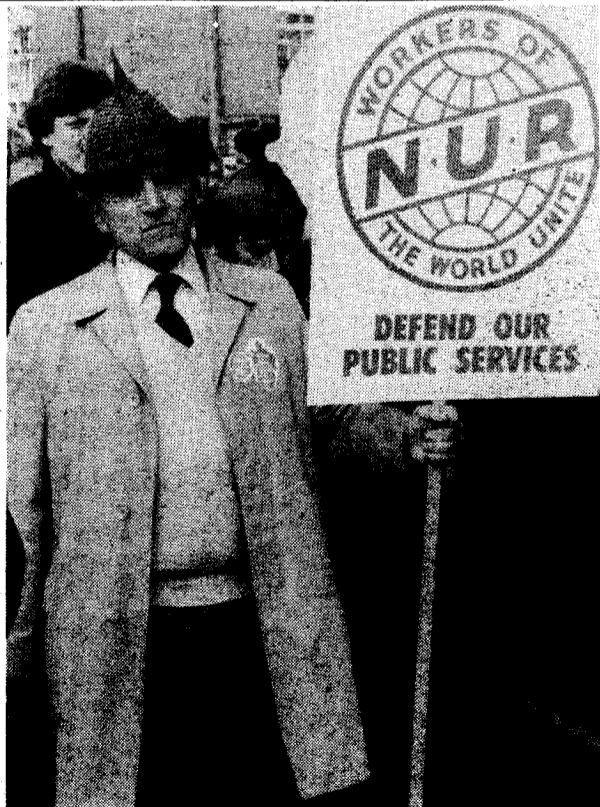
The dispute arose from the increased levels of production of the Mini Metro demanded by management. The track speed went up from 25 to 31.5 cars an hour at the beginning of last week, with only minor additions to the labour on the tracks.

The unions took a weak-kneed position from the start, even agreeing to lift an overtime ban in addition to the increases in productivity.

It was the disciplining of two sets of workers for taking too long to complete the extra work that led to the vote for strike action. However, the problems of the union's leadership remains.

The fact that the strike took place despite the call to work from the joint shop stewards works committee indicates a deepening of the anger and frustration of the workforce at Leyland and their willingness to take action to defend their conditions of work.

This is what union leaders and militants should be building on to revive belief in the ability of the unions to win major concessions from management.



Fights Benn instead of the bosses

NUR leader on wrong track

SIDNEY Weighell, general secretary of the National Union of Railwaymen, is attracting a lot of media attention for his campaign against Tony Benn's bid to become deputy leader of the Labour Party.

But many NUR members wish that instead of devoting

his energy to acting as a mouthpiece for Labour's right wing, Weighell would concentrate his efforts on pressing the union's wage claim.

The claim is for a 'substantial increase', whatever that means. British Rail has offered 7 per cent, and London Transport 6 per cent.

Instead of mobilising union members against these insulting offers, the union leadership has agreed that it should go to arbitration.

South Wales workers celebrate May Day

By Helen Slyomovics, Cardiff North Constituency Labour Party

THE TRADITIONAL celebration of May Day by workers was combined with another tradition in South Wales - fighting unemployment. Last Friday, Will Paynter, former president of the South Wales National Union of Miners and Emlyn Williams, the present president were among the speakers on 'Unemployment in Wales in the thirties and eighties', at a meeting held jointly by Maerdy lodge of the NUM and Llafur, the society for the study of Welsh history.

Banner

Will Paynter urged support for the Peoples March for Jobs, while Emlyn Williams said that the miners' strike of last February had had the potential of developing into a general strike to kick out the Tories.

Declared Emlyn, 'We will fight over closures and take to the streets to see that this government never returns'.

To reinforce the miners' determination to fight the Tories, Ivor England, secretary of Maerdy lodge, presented a new lodge banner to replace the one destroyed in scuffles with the police during a picket of Margaret Thatcher's visit to Swansea in July 1980.

BOC workers fight closures

THREATENED with job losses and closures, British Oxygen workers are working to rule. Forty depots unanimously voted last week to take this action.

The north, east, and west regions are already implementing the decision, although in the south only Hackney, Letchworth and Southampton are working to rule.

Workers at a number of depots are refusing to supply gases to those areas not supporting the industrial action.

Management has responded by sending home all those who work at the plants in Bristol, Bilston, Southampton, and Polmairie in Scotland.

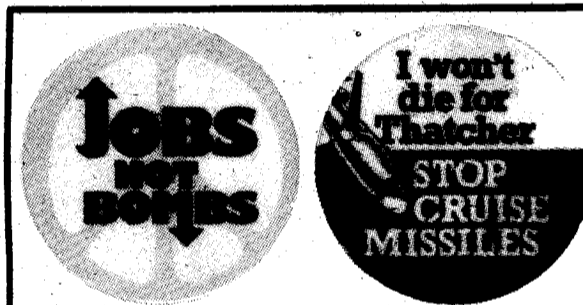
At issue are threatened closures in Crewe, Edinburgh and Cardiff. Rumours are rife that other plants may be shut down.

The fight against redundancies comes at a time when BOC workers are putting in a claim for a minimum £25 a week wage increase. They are also demanding longer holidays, a better shift allowance, and a reduction in the working week.

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No dole money for Anwar Ditta's family

THERE IS no sign of any end to Anwar's problems. Her husband, Shuja, sacked from his job, is not receiving any unemployment pay.

His ex-employer claims that in going to Pakistan for the children he resigned his job.

Shuja insists that he requested unpaid leave for four weeks. The DHSS has chosen to accept the employer's word. Support messages and donations can be sent to Anwar Ditta Defence Committee at 127 Crawford St, Rochdale Lancs. Or ring Rochdale 39832.

Socialist Challenge

CPSA votes for 5-day strike

By Peter Perkins

THE Civil and Public Services Association conference last Tuesday voted, against the advice of its right wing executive, in favour of an all-out five day strike by civil servants in pursuit of their 15 per cent wage claim.

The CPSA, with almost 450,000 members is overwhelmingly the largest of the civil service unions, which represent in all some 500,000 members. The proposal from the CPSA

conference for an all-out five day strike will be discussed at a meeting of the civil service unions on 26 May.

So far, the civil service unions have limited strike action to short term 'guerilla' action at airports, computer centres and other important government installations.

The successful conference resolution also called for indefinite stoppages at all ports, airports and the passport office prior to the five day strike.

The civil servants' vote represents a growing bitterness and frustration at the lack of government response to their demand for 15 per cent. The Tories have refused to negotiate, giving a 'take it or leave it' answer to the civil servants' claim, offering a paltry 7 per cent.

Civil servants have been particularly infuriated over the government's announcement that an 11 per cent pay award is being made to the armed forces.

But the traditionally moderate leaderships of the civil servants' unions have been extremely reluctant to call all-out action.

The debate at the CPSA conference last Tuesday was extremely heated. The fight wing executive made a determined attempt to prevent the resolution from going through.

There was uproar when executive member Marion Chambers challenged anybody who thought they had the support of their members for all out strike action to come to the rostrum.

Immediately more than 100 delegates rushed forward as Chambers' demagoguery blew up in her face.

But there is now a very real problem facing the civil servants — what to do next if the five day strike doesn't work. It looks increasingly as if only an all-out indefinite national stoppage will win civil servants' demands.

HISTORIC OPENING FOR FRENCH WORKING CLASS

By Paul Lawson

THE CLEAR-CUT victory for Francois Mitterand in last Sunday's second round of the French presidential elections opens up a huge opportunity for the French workers.

Mitterand cannot carry through the Socialist Party's programme of limited social change without a majority in the Assembly.

Mitterand will now dissolve the assembly and declare a general election to be held in the next few weeks. The struggle is on to elect a Communist Party-Socialist Party government.

During the period leading up to the general election, the Communist Party will continue its campaign for the maximum number of ministers in the government. The Communists argue — rightly — that they have been a significant force in the election of Mitterand.

An SP-CP government implies the right of the Communist Party to have ministers — and to share the responsibility for implementing a programme which in all essentials is the same as their own. The Socialists on the other hand will attempt to minimise Communist presence in the government.

The enormity of what has happened should not be underestimated. If a Communist Party-Socialist Party government comes to power, it will signal not just an upheaval in France, but a change in the politics of the whole of Europe.

Mitterand's victory is

undoubtedly a response to the deepening crisis of French capitalism — just as in Britain, recession and unemployment is the order of the day. The workers are being forced to pay for the bosses' crisis.

The election of Mitterand — and even more the election of an SP-CP majority in the assembly — will create the expectation amongst the whole French working class of decisive steps towards socialism. It is inevitable that such expectations will be translated into a massive workers' mobilisation to gain their demands.

But a left wing majority will create panic in ruling class circles. It is significant that French customs officers were on Sunday night given special instructions to be vigilant in preventing the export of capital and other valuables. But in the end, the flight of capital cannot be prevented by customs officers!

Faced with even a limited programme of nationalisations, the proposal to nationalise the banks, a wealth tax and higher taxes on dividends, a left-wing government can expect a furious campaign of sabotage from the bosses.

Mitterand's problem will be this. His programme, despite its radical measures, is not a programme which breaks

decisively with capitalism. It is not a programme which is capable of overcoming the resistance of the bosses — only the mobilisation of the workers can do that.

Neither the Socialist Party nor the Communist Party — despite demagogic threats from Marchais — have a programme which will take the power, economic and political, out of the hands of the bosses.

The question is: will Mitterand become the French Allende? Allende in Chile was precisely crushed between the sabotage of the bourgeoisie and the mass struggle of the working class. A strategy for victory must involve using the struggle and vigilance of the masses to crush the bourgeoisie.

For a year now the LCR has been waging a campaign for 'unity in the struggle'. This campaign must now be turned to a struggle to impose the workers demands on a government which claims to speak in their name.

The French workers face an historic opportunity for socialism; only the revolutionaries can lead this struggle through to its conclusion.



Giscard — and Bokassa

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