

Socialist Challenge

INSIDE: Miners presidential election -- special supplement produced and written by militants in the NUM

HANDS OFF THE UNIONS!



NORMAN TEBBIT has unfurled the Tories' package of trade union 'reforms'. It adds up to a major onslaught on the whole union movement, sweeping away legal immunities enjoyed by the unions since 1906.

The proposals include a sliding scale of damages up to £250,000 for which employers

can sue the unions; the outlawing of 'political' strikes and international solidarity actions; and a massive attack on the closed shop. These are the proposals which Tebbit thinks are essential to a 'civilised' society.

Far from being 'civilised' they are designed to strengthen the employers' hands in crushing any labour movement fight back against unemployment, speed up and wage cuts. This new anti-union law should be fought tooth and nail by the labour movement.

A start can be made by supporting the Laurence Scott workers, now in the seventh

month of their fight to save their jobs. Six LSE workers have been served with injunctions forbidding them to picket the Doncaster factory of their boss, Arthur Snipe. They face the prospect of enormous fines under the Tories' 1980 Employment Act.

Every trade unionist should defend the Laurence Scott workers' right to picket effectively. Labour movement delegations should build the LSE workers' mass picket of the Doncaster plant next Monday and every Monday thereafter.

The fight of the LSE workers against the Tories' anti-union laws is a fight for the whole labour movement.

SUPPORT LSE PICKET



Photo: GM COOKSON

Tariq Ali, trying to make his voice heard in the Labour Party

TARIQ ALI, former editor of *Socialist Challenge*, has left the International Marxist Group and applied for membership of the Labour Party.

His decision has already attracted the attention of the media and the right wing of the Labour Party, and led to calls for him to be excluded. Denis Healey immediately announced on BBC's *Newsnight* programme that 'the line had to be drawn somewhere' over so called 'entrism'; the *Daily Mail* editorialised in its usual venomous anti-labour movement tones that Tariq was a 'political rat joining a sinking ship'; and the *Morning Star* waded in with a report likely to strengthen the witch-hunters that 'his move is part of the group's long-standing general strategy of entering the Labour Party.'

Tariq is not the first person to have their membership of the Labour Party questioned because of their associations with far left organisations. Elsewhere on this page we report on other right wing witch-hunts against supporters of *Socialist Challenge* and *Socialist Organiser* in the Labour Party.

We defend Tariq Ali's right and all those in a similar position to be members of the Labour Party. And we call for an end to the situation where right wingers inside the Labour Party can organise openly in anti-labour movement bodies like the NATO-backed Committee for Transatlantic Understanding, while left wingers are persecuted because of their association with progressive campaigns and left wing organisations.

Those who fight for a Labour government committed to socialist policies are gaining increasing support in the trade unions, the mass movements, and within the Labour Party itself. The loyalty and commitment of such people, including comrade Tariq, is not in doubt.

The same cannot be said of many of the old right wing of the Labour Party, some of whom have already left to build the anti-labour movement Social Democratic Party, and many more of whom threaten to do the same.

According to the *Observer* George Cunningham, MP for Islington South, who comes up for reselection this week, and who received some 66 votes in last week's Shadow Cabinet elections, refused to assure his own right wing supporters that he would fight the next general election as a Labour candidate. No one has called for his expulsion from the party.

Frank Field MP for Birkenhead has led witch-hunting moves against local Socialist Challenge supporters in the Labour Party. Yet he called on MPs who were not reselected to stand against official Labour candidates at the next election. The danger to the Labour Party and the labour movement as a whole comes from such people.

Every LP activist and socialist should defend the right of Tariq and all socialists to come into the party.

More generally Socialist Challenge stands for an end to all bans and proscriptions against far left organisations which are used to witch-hunt the whole of the left in the Labour Party. Only in this way can a potentially deadly weapon be removed from the hands of the right wing, and the way be opened for the Labour Party to become representative of all currents of opinion Marxist and non-Marxist in the working class.

All Socialists, whatever their differences with comrade Tariq, should campaign in support of his right to be inside the Labour Party.

Shadow Cabinet

Right tightens grip

By Ray Clarke

'WELL-BALANCED' was Denis Healey's comment on the outcome of last week's Shadow cabinet elections. He had every right to be pleased. The new parliamentary leadership has an even stronger right wing majority, 10-5, than before.

What was most noticeable in the results was the success of those Labour leaders who have been in the forefront of attacking the party left as a whole, and Tony Benn in particular. Top of the poll came Peter Shore, Gerald Kaufmann and Roy Hattersley, all members of the right wing *Solidarity*.

And the 'left' who made the most progress in the poll was Neil Kinnock, who has specialised over the past year in stabbing Benn in the back. It was Kinnock who co-ordinated the abstentions of Tribune MPs in the deputy leadership contest which secured Healey's victory.

refuse to confirm that they will stay in the Labour Party, as Islington South MP George Cunningham who received 66 votes in the Shadow cabinet elections, has refused to do before his reselection?

The Labour leadership and their right wing allies don't inspire any confidence among working people of their commitment to radical change and socialist policies.

Even John Backhouse, who stood for Labour in Crosby on the basis of campaigning for left policies, stood little chance of halting the SDP bandwagon with the millstone of the national party

leadership round his neck.

The right wing of the party have signalled an all-out attack on the left with their vilification of Benn and their witch hunting moves against the far left.

Gone

Gone are the appeals for unity for the sake of the party. Instead the parliamentary leadership is taking the Labour Party down the road to electoral suicide as it clings stubbornly to the worn-out policies of the last two Labour governments.

It is time for the left in the Labour Party to get organised. Nationally and locally socialists should fight to turn the Labour Party into a mass campaigning party against the Tories, and to commit the next Labour government to socialist policies.



Photo: LAURIE SPARHAM (IFL)

Eric Heffer, prisoner of a right wing Shadow Cabinet

Despite

But the most startling result was for one of the 'losers' — Tony Benn. Despite the appeal from Michael Foot for MPs not to vote for him, Benn secured the support of a quarter of the parliamentary party.

Benn rightly refused to accept Foot's insistence on Shadow cabinet 'collective responsibility' over and above party policy. Eric Heffer who was elected will now find himself a prisoner of this right wing Shadow cabinet which ignores conference policies and the wishes of the party.

No wonder the Labour Party gets annihilated in every national and council by-election.

Why should working people vote for a party that does not carry out the policies its members vote for? Why should they bother to vote for a party whose leadership really supports the same policies as the Social Democratic Party (SDP), if you can vote for the real SDP?

Why should they vote for a party whose MPs



Neil Kinnock specialises in stabbing Benn in the back

Birkenhead CLP witch-hunt defeated

By John Nolan

THE ATTEMPT by right wing supporters of Frank Field, MP for Birkenhead to witch-hunt Socialist Challenge supporters in the local party has ended in defeat.

Two Socialist Challenge supporters were called to attend a special executive meeting last Friday to 'explain themselves' over a Socialist Challenge leaflet which was distributed at a Labour Party public meeting.

The leaflet, which called for support for Tony Benn and attacked cuts, rent and rate rises was alleged to have been put out by the International Marxist Group.

On Thursday before the EC, Socialist Challenge supporters put a

motion to a packed meeting of Oxten ward in Birkenhead, which accounts for nearly one third of the total CLP membership, rejecting attempts by any section of the party to witch-hunt other party members.

The motion, supporting the right of members to fight for socialist policies in the Labour Party, including through the sale of papers like *Socialist Challenge*, *Militant Socialist Organiser* and *Tribune*, and calling on the EC to withdraw the at-

tack on 'the right of party members to fight for their ideas', was passed unanimously.

At the special EC Socialist Challenge supporters were not even called to attend. The witch-hunt resolution was withdrawn, and the Socialist Challenge resolution carried, and passed on to the GMC.

The right wing arguments were exposed as a bureaucratic attack designed to split the Labour Party by witch-hunting members out of the party. The arguments of the left that open, democratic political struggles for socialist policies in the Labour Party are the only way to build a mass united party were unanswerable.

Frank Field MP now has to attend a special meeting in Birkenhead on



Photo: GM COOKSON

Joan Lester, the new Shadow minister for women and social affairs

10 December to explain his letter to *The Times* on 7 October calling on MPs who are not selected to stand against the official Labour candidate and to take 'loyal members of the Labour Party' with them.

Field has resigned as

front bench junior education spokesperson. He announced at the weekend that he had done so to give him more time to conduct further attacks on the *Militant* and other left wing newspaper supporters in the Labour Party.

Ted Heslin back in Oxford Labour Party

OXFORD Labour Party members voted last week to readmit Ted Heslin into the local party after a three year battle against the local right wing witch-hunters.

Though Heslin undertook not to repeat the critical statements against the party that the national executive had criticised, Eric Heffer from the NEC made it clear that this did not exclude selling papers such as *Socialist Organiser*.

Not everyone in Oxford Labour Party was happy with the 57/29 vote on Heslin. Included among the notable dissenters were Lord McCarthy, shadow spokesperson on industry in the Lords, Olive Gibbs, former CND president, and Bill Conboy (sic), vice principal of Ruskin College.

Stop the missiles

Zero option road to peace?

By Phil Hearse

IN A CAREFULLY staged fanfare of publicity, beamed direct by satellite to the whole of Europe, President Reagan has made his proposal for the zero option — that the US will agree not to station Cruise and Pershing missiles in Europe in exchange for Russian removal of a variety of intermediate missiles. This proposal comes at the same time as the US administration, in the shape of Al Haig, is making open threats to take military action against Nicaragua, Cuba and the revolutionary forces in El Salvador. How do these things fit together? Is Reagan's appeal a genuine attempt to seek weapons reduction in Europe? Already Michael Foot has pronounced the American move 'much the most sensible proposal to be made by the United States for some time'.

The proposal of the United States comes from a position of weakness, not a position of strength. Despite its fraudulent and manoeuvrist intention, the 'zero option' is bound to cause division inside the ranks of NATO strategists. In that sense it is an immense gamble by Reagan.

Many Western experts, committed to the doctrine of limited 'theatre' nuclear war, and decisive military superiority over the USSR, believe that Cruise and Pershing missiles are essential. But given the Soviet refusal to make any positive counter-proposal, however, the US is likely to have its cake and eat it. They will be able to site their new missiles while arguing that the Soviet failure to respond to their initiative made this essential. The Soviet bureaucrats are handing the Americans a propaganda coup free of charge.

It is this danger that the anti-militarist movement in Europe must address itself to. The escalation of the arms race comes from the United States. Behind the cover of their phoney peace proposals they will step up the propaganda campaign against all those who oppose their missile plans.

CND and the other European anti-militarist movements must escalate their campaign against those plans in response, for no Cruise and no Pershing — not for any reason, not at any price.

The truth of the matter is that the United States is facing considerable difficulty both in maintaining the grip of its right wing allies in Central America, and in dealing with the upsurge of anti-militarist sentiment in Europe.

The conflict in El

while many European governments continue to put pressure on them to engage in genuine arms negotiations.

The 'zero option' proposal is a fraud. In exchange for the US not siting its Cruise and Pershing missiles, the Soviet Union would have to give up its intermediate nuclear missiles, including those stationed in the Soviet Union itself. While the United States maintained its sea-borne and air-borne capacity to strike at the Soviet Union from European waters and airbases, the USSR would be deprived of the means to effectively retaliate against US military targets in the European theatre.

As German peace

movement leader, Gert Bastian has pointed out, the Soviet Union has good grounds for arguing that there is already a balance of intermediate nuclear weapons in Europe. Bastian argued that any genuine proposal for disarmament would involve proposals for reduction of existing nuclear weapons.

Nonetheless, the response of the Soviet Union vividly illustrates the incorrect approach of the Soviet bureaucrats to the question of defence of the Soviet Union. They rely entirely on attempting to match weapon for weapon the military build-up of the United States, instead of maintaining a minimum of necessary defensive capacity, in addition to appealing to and mobilising the anti-militarist potential of the world workers' movement.

Brezhnev's response to the American proposal is at best leaden-footed. In rejecting the US proposal as just a fraud, and refusing to make any counter-proposals of their own, the Soviet Union does nothing to maximise the influence of the European anti-militarist movement. To expose the American manoeuvre it would have been sufficient to respond by proposing as an alternative a nuclear free Europe — 'from Poland to Portugal'.

Mobilise against the US threat

Extracts from the declaration by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, 15 November 1981

THE US RULING CLASS, together with its allies in Central and Latin America, is preparing a qualitatively new level of military action against the deepening revolutionary struggles of the workers and peasants of Central America and the Caribbean.

Spokesmen for American imperialism such as US Secretary of State Alexander Haig and Secretary of Defence Caspar Weinberger, state that the moves being actively considered include:

- use of troops from Argentina and other Latin American dictatorships in El Salvador, together with a qualitatively expanded force of US 'advisers' and massive new shipments of military material to the Salvadoran junta.
- attempts to blockade Nicaragua by sea and land, including an escalation of military action by the Honduran armed forces and Somozista units that operate out of Honduras.
- a 'show of air power' directed against Cuba, and a 'quarantine' of Cuban shipping to stop the alleged arms flow to El Salvador.

A four-week US naval manoeuvre in the Caribbean involving dozens of warships and hundreds of planes began on 30 October. The announced site of the final exercises for 'Operation Readex' is the Puerto Rican island of Vieques.

This campaign has reached a new crescendo following the spectacular military and political blow struck by the FMLN on 15 October when they destroyed the strategical-

ly important Puente del Oro bridge over the Lempa River. It was alleged that such a professional action could only have been executed by special strike force of Cuban troops secretly flown into Nicaragua and infiltrated from there into El Salvador.

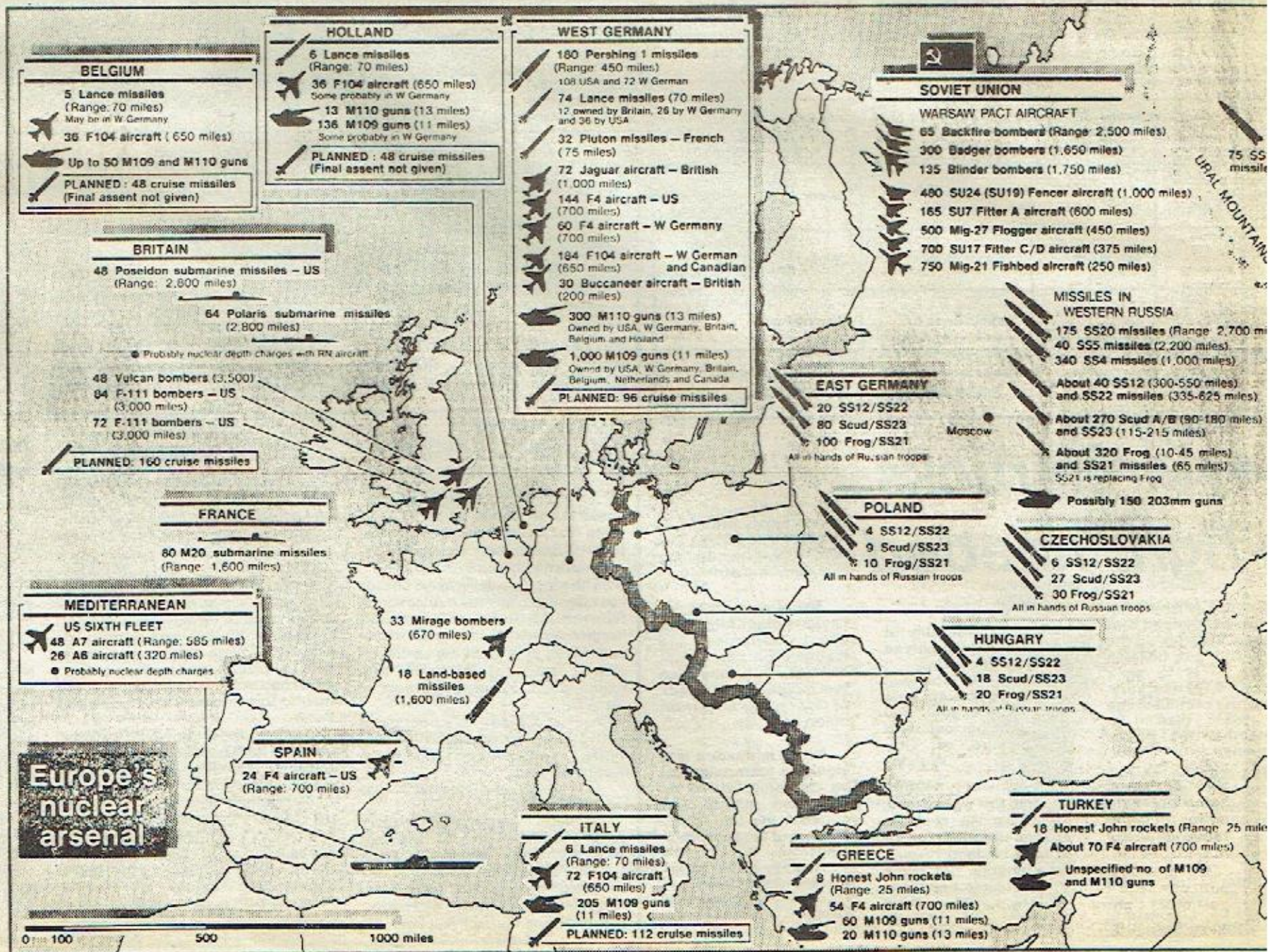
Behind the dangerous moves by Washington, is one simple fact: all else has failed to halt the revolutionary upsurge in Central America.

Despite massive military aid the brutal dictatorship in Salvador, despite the murder more than 11,000 people in the first nine months of 1981 alone, the Salvadoran military has been unable to stop the advance of the FMLN. The US rulers are now convinced there is no way to stop the creation of a workers' state in Nicaragua short of outside military intervention.

The circumstances are reminiscent of other moments in history such as the eve of the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in April 1961, and events leading up to the Gulf Tonkin provocation that preceded the escalation of US aggression in Vietnam in 1964.

The imperialist warmakers cannot ultimately be stopped until workers of their own countries succeed in taking power out of their hands. But they can be deterred. That is why a massive response to their threats is important now before they move.

The workers' movement, solidarity organisations, the anti-militarist movement, all have responsibility to help get out the truth about Washington's moves and to work to mobilise the broadest possible response. The time to act is now!



Leyland workers 'escalate to win'

By a TGWU shop steward, Longbridge

THE three week old dispute at British Leyland's Longbridge plant in Birmingham is to escalate following a militant and emotional mass meeting on 22 November.

The dispute, over management plans to impose yet more cuts in labour levels and rest allowance time, has now been made official by the three unions involved — transport, engineering and sheet metal.

Plans are going ahead to cut off the supply of engines to BL's other major mass production factory, Cowley in Oxford.

Management has held back from imposing the new working conditions on Cowley in an attempt to isolate Longbridge. But

once the supply of engines to Cowley dries up, the Cowley workers will be in a position to join the strike and re-establish solidarity with Longbridge.

Although the workforce have been at home during the dispute rather than on the picket lines, the feeling of strength that emerged during the pay dispute earlier has convinced many workers that it is possible to win this time.

When Cowley joins the dispute our hand will be

further strengthened as we are adamant, that it is we, the workers who have to suffer the present working conditions, and not our national officials, who will negotiate the settlement on our terms.

Once again, Leyland workers are proving to all working people that despite the beating we have taken at the hands of Edwardes, and, to their everlasting disgrace, our national officials, we have the will and the capacity to take on Edwardes and his Tory backers and win.

Messages of support and solidarity should be sent to Works Committee/Joint Shop Stewards Committee, BL, Longbridge Birmingham.

Tea breaks around the world

ALL car workers around the world take breaks from the gruelling demands of their jobs. Some of the breaks are simply the result of 'custom and practice' and some the result of local or national agreement.

In the case of Britain, the bosses are trying, with the connivance of union officials, to claw back these vital minutes from the workers.

How do British workers fare compared to their counterpart elsewhere?

	Hours worked	Lunchbreak	Other breaks
Peugeot-Talbot FRANCE	8hrs 15 min Mon-Thurs 7hrs Fri	1hr unpaid	48min on Mon-Thurs 34min-Fri
Fiat ITALY	7½ hrs 5 days	30 min unpaid	40min
JAPAN	Labour law states that employers shall grant total breaks of at least 45 minutes to all workers working more than six hours and breaks totalling 60 minutes for all workers on eight hours or more.		
Daimler-Benz Volkswagen WEST GERMANY	8½ hrs	30min unpaid	64 min
USA	40hr week	30min paid	25min
Def Trucks HOLLAND	8hrs	30min unpaid	30min unpaid
Ford UK	8hrs	meal break times variable but unpaid	engine plant 60min body & assembly, 55min

Leyland trucks — a fight needed

THIS week Michael Edwardes announced that Leyland Vehicles — the truck and bus division of BL — is to sack another 4,100 workers. This is the second stage in his plan to dismember the public company.

The changes he has announced go some way towards the Tory plans to reduce LV Ltd to an assembly-only operation.

Under the latest plan, 1,855 jobs are to go at Leyland, Lancashire; and 1,365 at Bathgate,

Scotland.

Tractor assembly at Bathgate is to be hived off to a private firm.

Some 140 jobs will go at the Albion axle plant at Glasgow; 740 more will be lost with the closure of Guy works, Wolverhampton.

Leyland Vehicles is organised on a completely different basis from Leyland cars. Traditionally truck workers have been less militant and more isolated. An entirely separate combine com-

mittee exists but it has not met since 1978. The task now is to convene this combine at once.

Many workers at the Leyland plant feel bitter about Edwardes, the wages offer and redundancies, but they also feel isolation and a lack of clear leadership from union officials.

What is needed is a vigorous campaign to be mounted within all the truck plants and outside in the trade union and labour movement.

Already the Lancashire Association of Trades Councils and Preston Trades Council have pledged help.



BL workers saying what they think

COVENTRY: ACTION SPREADS AGAINST

THE Coventry strike of public employees against cuts in pay and conditions of service is now in its third week.

The transport union, TGWU, has called for a day of strike action in sympathy with NUPE and against the cuts. Already the teachers union,

the NUT, has voted to support the appeal.

The cuts proposed by the Labour-controlled local council are wide-ranging in affect; from a ten per cent reduction in school cleaners' hours and wages to a rundown of school meal services and price rises.

These cuts are the alternative to a 'no cuts, no rates rises' campaign by the Labour group on the council to answer Heseltine's new legislation on local government.

Here three reports show how the fight is being organis-

NUPE strikers determined to stay out.

By Maureen Shevlin

IT IS clear that the council is determined not to give in to NUPE's demand that it withdraws the letter sent to NUPE members changing their terms of employment.

The education department already has extensive plans to counter the effects of the strike action. School headteachers were instructed to obtain school keys from the caretakers and to familiarise themselves with school alarm systems in advance of the strike.

A letter was sent to school meals staff, asking them to come into school during the strike to cook food which could be frozen.

This divide and rule tactic has fallen flat on its face.

The local Tory rag, the *Coventry Telegraph*, has tried to convince workers in local engineering firms that NUPE members are in some way privileged, because they have 'a no compulsory redundancy' agreement. This is despite the fact that over 300

school meals jobs have been lost in the last year and school kitchens have closed.

The local media has also tried to whip up hysteria about large pickets and school students going on the rampage in the town centre because they are not at school.

John Butcher, Tory MP for Coventry West, has even suggested that parents volunteer to go into school to clean them.

Despite this, last week students of Tile Hill College came out to stand with the pickets, and teachers at two secondary schools came out for an hour to join the strikers on the picket line.

Collections for the NUPE strikers hardship fund have been held in local factories, as well as in schools and council offices.

Resolutions have been passed at the Coventry Southeast and Coventry Southwest Constituency Labour Parties calling on the council to resolve the dispute by withdrawing the letters and restoring the cuts.

Coventry Trades Council adopted a similar position.

NALGO branch officers refuse to give a lead

By Val Jones

BY THE time you read this article the outcome of the special general meeting of the Coventry local government branch of NALGO will be known.

If the meeting has not instructed NALGO members working in the areas effected by the NUPE strike to respect NUPE's picket lines and the branch officers to organise a voluntary levy, the local NALGO branch officials will no doubt be breathing a sigh of relief.

If the meeting supports the call for a day of action in support of NUPE they will reluctantly call members out.

The branch officers of Coventry local government branch of NALGO sent out a letter of advice a couple of weeks ago which leaves it up to

Secret talks weaken Ford pay fight

By Mick Drake,
Dagenham assembly plant

SECRET talks between senior union negotiators and management are undermining Ford workers' claim for a £20 a week wage increase and a 35 hour week.

Two weeks ago the company offered a 4.5 per cent increase on basic rates and attendance supplements, conditional on acceptance of an 'Efficiency Payments Plan', plus a fixed efficiency payment. This would be withdrawn at any plant where the company considered that a group of workers were in breach of the terms of the scheme.

This offer was rejected and union negotiators maintained their recommendation for an all-out strike from Wednesday 25 November. However, while there were hardly any report back meetings for the shop floor workers, national union officials entered into secret talks with the company.

Anger

Chief union negotiator, Ron Todd, claimed secret talks were necessary 'to examine the scope of further possible negotiations and decide whether there is any point in the two sides coming

together again.'

This excuse rings hollow as further talks had already been set for Monday 23 November.

But the damage has been done. The widespread anger which greeted a company bulletin issued on 9 November outlining details of the Efficiency Payments Plan has been dissipated.

Stories about the secret talks have appeared in the popular press claiming that Ford will offer seven to eight per cent and the strike threat has been withdrawn.

There have been no official union statements

distributed on the shopfloor to counter this speculation.

Thus, the big danger now is that when talks break down on 23 November, snap mass meetings the following day will split on the question of a strike which has been allowed to drift towards the Xmas holiday.

Union officials will then blame the shopfloor, and not their own poor leadership, for the outcome.

Sacked

A series of recent disputes at Dagenham show what will happen as Ford presses ahead with its efficiency drive which aims for total control over line speeds and working practices.

Only last Wednesday the nightshift in the body and assembly plants returned to work following a week long strike by welders who were demanding the reinstatement of two workers sacked for alleged clocking offences.

This determined action forced Ford to reduce the



Ranks of cars just off the line at Ford's Dagenham

sackings to five day suspensions. But local union officials signed an appalling document on discipline giving the company a free hand to sack or suspend workers for clocking offences. These include 'doubling up' or

other such work practices which create additional unauthorised time off the line, or even going into another area of your own plant to see a mate without a foreman's permission.

Under Ford's Efficiency

Payments Plan, disputes and unpaid layoffs over matters like these — as well as basic questions of job mobility, demarcation and new technology — will be two a penny.

So whatever manoeuvres of union officials, the choice at mass meetings is still between fighting head Ford's onslaught on wages, or fighting war on the company terms.

'Not prepared to let them get away with it'

THE fight of the 390 Staffa workers to keep open their factory in East London is now in its ninth week.

The dispute which is officially backed by all the trade unions involved is solid. Brian Grogan spoke to Jim McCulloch, the convenor of the staff union, ASTMS, about the stage the strike has reached.

I think everybody is now clear that this is going to be a long fight. The story so far is one of continuing broadening of the support. We are overwhelmed by the response from the Labour movement.

Grant

The most recent evidence of this is the backing we have received from a number of MPs. At the last count 27 had signed an early day motion demanding the government withdraws the grant of several millions of pounds which the Staffa management have used to destroy our jobs.

Unfortunately, our local MP, Bryan Magee, has basically backed management. This is scandalous when you consider that the closure of Staffa will remove 30 per cent of the manufacturing jobs in his constituency.

All that he has advised is that we take the money offered and run. But my people all want jobs.

The latest situation is that we have tried to re-

open negotiations with management. But they have insisted on us first agreeing to the move to Plymouth. This we refuse to do. We want an open agenda.

Last week the management moved out some machines. These were not the specialised ones needed to continue making the Staffa motor. Having tested the water and having got away with it we are expecting them back to take the specialised machines.

This, we are not prepared to let them get away with. We must devise some means to stop it. We are approaching the unions at every firm that is capable of doing the job.

Picket

We are approaching the unions at national and steward level appealing to them to black the work. But if this isn't enough then we intend to call a large picket to assert our rights in the matter.

The next stages of the

battle will centre on the intensification of the picketing, the extending of the blacking and building on the support in the labour movement to get the government to block the grant.

We are very confident of victory.

What you can do to help

● Join the lobby of Leyton LP GMC on 27 November at 7.30 at 70 Grange Park Road, E10.

● Organise donations and collections

● Put yourself on the mass picket telephone tree

● Get speakers to your organisations

● Join the mass pickets on Monday and Wednesday mornings at the front gates.

● Demand your local MP and trade unions sponsor the national campaign to stop the Tory relocation grant and join the appeal for a national embargo on Staffa products.

● Keep the pickets company — bring biscuits or some cans of beer.

Phone the AUEW strike committee on 01-539 0886 and ASTMS on 01-520 4902 ext 3.

Donations and messages of support should be sent to Chris Newsom, 39 Somers Road, Walthamstow E17.

STAFFA - Labour M split

By Toni Gorton

FOLLOWING the successful meeting in House of Commons where Stan O shadow spokes for industry, pledged support for the Staffa strike for jobs, Labour MPs have split what line to take.

Local Leyton Bryan Magee, put forward an early day motion to parliament which argues for a better deal for the workers in their redundancy settlements.

In contrast, another motion drafted by Roberts, MP Hackney North quon won wide support on the government to review its decision to continue with the million grant to the plant to Plymouth and to keep the plant at its present site thus keeping the jobs of 390 workers.

Not only is this now an issue in parliament but it is becoming an issue in the Labour Party who the early stage reselecting their Labour workers.

Staffa workers' labour movement activists will be lobbying the General Management Committee, Leyton Party on 127 November call the GMC to make MP support the demands of the strikers.

THE CUTS

ed in the unions. It is essential that the labour movement as a whole support the NUPE strike. The call for a day of action will not only bring the council to the negotiating table, but also help create the conditions for a united fightback against Heseltine.

members as individuals to decide for themselves whether or not to cross picket lines.

They also say that if NALGO members choose to respect the picket lines they will not receive any financial support, from either the city council or NALGO.

Such advice is encouraging NALGO members to undermine NUPE's strike by crossing the picket lines.

This is in spite of the request from the NUPE divisional office in Birmingham that all trade unionists should respect NUPE's official picket lines.

NALGO's branch officers have not seen fit to make donations to the NUPE strikers hardship fund, or to organise collections throughout the membership on behalf of the NUPE members.

Support to NUPE strikers hardship fund, c/o Jo Little, NUPE office, Southfields School, East Street, Coventry.

Teachers vote for strike action

By Hazel McGrath

AT THE general meeting of Coventry NUT last week, teachers voted to support the call from the TGWU for a day of strike action in sympathy with NUPE and against the cuts.

Teachers know that it could be their turn next. Well over £3,000 has been collected in support for the NUPE strikers' hardship fund and in many secondary schools teachers have given a day's pay.

The general meeting voted almost unanimously to donate £1,000 from the NUT's local fund to the NUPE strikers.

A further motion to ask the NUT headquarters to review its instruction to members to cross picket lines was overwhelmingly carried, reflecting the anger among teachers about having to cross NUPE picket lines.

Teachers are also angry about losing over 100 posts by compulsory redeployment and a freeze on vacant posts.

The council has cut back school maintenance and the supplies of books and stationary for use in schools.

They have also cut the number of supply staff to cover teachers who are absent, as well as free school meals for teaching staff, in return for school meal supervision.

The NUT and the other teachers' unions have agreed to a joint 'no cover' policy which the NUT is carrying out in over a hundred schools.

To highlight the cuts in the number of teachers, students will be sent home if a member of staff is absent for more than one day.

Solidarity stand elections

by Jones

WIK KURON, the prominent dissident, has come under fire from the Polish authorities. His flat was raided last weekend when a meeting was taking place of persons involved in the Clubs Self-Governing Republic, an embryonic new political organisation.

This clampdown by the authorities against political activity comes as the independent union movement is organising contesting elections against the Communist Party.

In next February's municipal regional elections draw near the independent union movement is organising the right of the ruling Communist Party to draw up the list of candidates. In both Silesia and other regions Solidarity has called on union members to nominate their own candidates for the elections.

In the prospect of popular candidates standing against the party terrorising the ruling bureaucrats. One suggestion is that party candidates would receive as little as two per cent of the poll in open elections. The Communist Party is in deep trouble already without such suggestions. Party sources have admitted that it has lost as much as 40 per cent of its membership since the strike wave began.

nsor

The national talks between the government, church and Solidarity also raised the question of censorship and union access to the mass media. Last week the first of a series of union members went on strike for allegedly breaching censorship regulations.

An activist from Czestochowa received a one year suspended jail sentence and a fine of 3000 zlotys (highly equivalent to two weeks' wage salary) for publishing 'illegal articles' in the union journal. The man was known as the 'Teddy Bear' as the offending poster portrayed Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev as a giant teddy bear.

In the economic crisis Solidarity's national conference called for the establishment of a second chamber of the Polish parliament, a Council and Economic Council based on the workers' self-management system. The government responded by offering to set up a consultative council comprised of hand-picked representatives.

Students

While most of the strikes around the country over the food queues have now ended, in the last few weeks students have led major struggles against the government. There has been a wave of occupations and strikes across the country which culminated at Radom Engineering College.

Members of the Independent Students Association (NZS) and Solidarity-affiliated members there were protesting over the re-appointment of the college rector Michal Hebda. The students' wave of protest has now led to include the demand for a new education law.

While the bureaucrats desperately seek some form of political compromise to draw Solidarity into co-operation for the crisis, the Polish workers, farmers and students are developing their own solutions to the problem. In the developing clash between these two competing powers, the labour movement in this country is lining up full square behind the workers.

Will troops safeguard Catholics?

By Bridie Ryan

THE LABOUR Party national executive policy on Ireland, passed at the October party conference, declared: 'We wish to see unity between the two parts of Ireland, based on agreement and consent.'

This expressed the common view that Irish unity can only be achieved if it is acceptable to the Unionists. But as recent events have shown the Loyalists are part of the problem, not the solution, to Irish unity.

It was the sectarian reaction of the Loyalists to the democratic wishes of the nationalist community, expressed in the civil rights movement, that led to the British Army's intervention in the North of Ireland 12 years ago.

In the run-up to and immediately following that intervention 1,820 families fled their homes in Belfast. Of those, 82.7 per cent were Catholic. In all, 5.3 per cent of all Catholic households in the city were 'displaced', compared with 0.4 per cent of Protestant families.

The arrival of the British Army was supposed to signal an end to such rampant intimidation. But within five months of that arrival, the troops were themselves attacking the Catholics, specifically a ghetto in the Ballymurphy district in Belfast.

Within a further five months the Army had imposed a 'curfew' in Catholic areas in West Belfast, and in August 1971 the troops were used to implement internment without trial, aimed exclusively at the Republican community.

A total of 15 nationalist people were killed by Loyalists and 'security forces' before the first death of a British soldier.

The nationalist community has always suffered such repression because the North of Ireland state was set up on a sectarian basis, being artificially created to ensure a Protestant majority. Britain has always backed this 'majority'.

In 1922 the RUC and the exclusively Protestant 'B' specials were given arms and military personnel by the British. In 1950 RUC members were trained in the techniques of repression by the British Army, and supplied with automatic weapons by the War Office.

For the past 12 years the presence of British troops in the North of Ireland has done nothing to bring about a peaceful solution. On the contrary, in the form of armed forces, money and administration, the British presence has been used to strengthen Unionism and to bolster partition.

But unfortunately many in the British labour movement remain to be convinced of this argument. That is why the Labour Movement Conference on Ireland on 27 February next year is a valuable initiative.

This conference has been called by the Labour Committee on Ireland and the Committee for Withdrawal from Ireland. Already 11 MPs, including Tony Benn, have sponsored the conference.

The present situation in Ireland is a good opportunity to raise the conference in the Labour Party and trade union bodies, suggesting sponsorship, donations and delegations.

Further details of the conference from: Conference Arrangements Committee, 1 North End Rd, London W4.



The Loyalist private army the Tories backed — The Ulster Volunteer Force parade with guns in 1913.

Monster of the

By Geoff Bell

THE SPECTACLE OF James Prior warning the Loyalists about law and order, asserting the primacy of parliamentary democracy, and declaring the Tory government 'will use the full force of its authority against those who do not respect the rights of others', is deeply ironic.

For, what the Tories are now faced with is a monster of their own creation. It is a monster that was built and fed in the years 1911 to 1914 when the Tory opposition in parliament lent their vocal, financial and political support to the type of actions which Ian Paisley is leading today.

The Ian Paisley of those days was Sir Edward Carson, a former Irish Solicitor General and Tory cabinet member. In 1911 he became leader of the Irish Unionists. At the time, all of Ireland was under British rule, but the Liberal government led by Henry Asquith, under pressure from the Irish nationalists in parliament, was proposing to modify this arrangement.

The government's intention, as expressed in the Third Home Rule Bill, was to establish a devolved parliament in Ireland which would have limited powers to deal with Irish affairs, although it would still be subservient to Westminster in many important matters.

Even this strictly limited form of Irish self-government was opposed by Edward Carson and his Unionists.

Consequences

The Unionist upper class in Ireland feared the consequences of Irish democracy. The Protestant workers in the North east of Ireland feared the loss of the relative privileges they enjoyed over the Catholic working class.

Consequently, when Irish Home Rule became a possibility the Unionists under Carson responded with anger. Edward Carson told a 50,000 strong 'parade' of North of Ireland Unionists in September 1911: 'We must be prepared, in the possible event of a Home Rule Bill passing, with such measures as will carry on for ourselves the government of those districts of which we have control. We must be prepared...the morning Home Rule passes, ourselves to become responsible for the government of the Protestant Province of Ulster'.

The 'Protestant Province of Ulster' was not an accurate description. The then nine counties of Ulster were equally divided on Unionist/Nationalist lines, which approximated to the religious divisions. Nevertheless, what Carson was threatening was the seizure of power in Ulster by the Unionists. It was tantamount to rebellion — against the British parliament, against laws passed by that parliament, against the 'King and Country' to whom the Unionists were meant to adhere.

Covenant

For the next three years that rebellion grew in deeds and words. In September 1912 nearly 500,000 Unionists signed the 'Ulster Covenant' by which they pledged 'to use all necessary means' to 'defeat the present conspiracy to set up a Home Rule parliament in Ireland'.

In January 1913 the Unionists' private army, the Ulster Volunteer Force was set up. During the next 18 months it drilled openly and imported arms while the Unionist leaders made plans to establish a provisional government if the Home Rule Bill was passed.

Such then was the nature and scope of the Ulster rebellion of 1912-14. But where the Unionists derived their political strength from, and what allowed their revolt to go unpunished was the support they were given by the British establishment, and particularly by the Tory Party.

Conservative leader Andrew Bonar Law put it this way in July 1912: 'There are stronger things than parliamentary majorities...I can imagine no length of resistance to which Ulster will go in which I will not be ready to support them.'

George V

One tactic was to put pressure on the new King, George V. In May 1912 Bonar Law in a meeting with the King told him it was his duty either to refuse his assent to the Home Rule Bill or else to dismiss the Liberal government. The advice was repeated on a number of occasions during the next year.

By September 1913 George V had nearly been won over. In a letter to Prime Minister Asquith in September 1913 the King ominously warned the Liberal leader that he, George V, had a 'residual' right to dismiss the government. Eventually the monarch

backed down, but the Tories' attempt to use George V to over-ride parliamentary democracy and the King's willingness to go along with this at least for the time, indicated the seriousness with which the Tory establishment was determined to back the Ulster rebels.

Equally dramatically, the Tory



The Ulster Defence Association n



Socialist Challenge

In this special supplement militants in the National Union of Mineworkers discuss the policies needed to defeat the right wing and take forward the fight after the miners presidential election.



A fighting programme for the NUM

By Jack Lavin

AS EVERY miner knows, coal sales have slumped. The stockpiles grow day by day. This situation has been deliberately created by the Tories whose economic policies have caused the closure of hundreds of factories up and down the country.

Consumption of coal fell by over 12 million tons in 1980 and has fallen even further in 1981. The Tories and the NCB have seized the opportunity to attack the miners, to try to force them to shoulder the burden of a crisis they have not created.

Industrial action forced the NCB to withdraw its closure list of 23 pits in February, but already this year seven pits have closed, and 6,000 jobs have been lost. The Coal Board's long term plan is for a small number of 'super-pits' with high productivity. This would mean further job losses in the industry.

The strategy of the Board and the government is to try to divide us and force through job losses face by face, pit by pit, area by area. They want us to think that if we allow 'uneconomic' pits to close, if we increase productivity, then our jobs will be safe.

Productivity

This is exactly what we were told in the 1960s: productivity increased by 4 per cent a year but we still lost more than half a million jobs. The lesson of our industrial action in 1972, 1974 and 1981 is that the only way to defend jobs is by militant struggle.

We have to take the offensive, to fight for demands that can unite our union — young and old, face workers and surface workers, miners in 'profitable' and 'unprofitable' areas.

A four day week with no loss of pay and retirement at 55 with full pay would defend our jobs and create thousands more for the young people on the dole in the coalfields.

Four days a week down the pit is enough! Forty years is enough! Since 1974 miners' wages have

fallen behind the rate of inflation. According to the *Yorkshire Miner* the basic rate for a face worker would have to be increased to £165 to restore it to 1974 levels.

The productivity bonus scheme was intended to buy off the miners. But it hasn't maintained living standards and has been used as a wedge to divide the workforce.

Living standards should be restored to the 1974 level on the basic rate. Wages should automatically be linked to a price index drawn up by the union and miners' dependents.

A rate protection scheme should be brought in operation to ensure that anybody who is moved to a less well paid job due to industrial disease or injury does not suffer financially.

Compensation

The Coal Board's answer to our demands is that there is no money in the kitty.

We are still paying interest on 'compensation' to the old coal owners. In addition, in 1980-81 interest repayments to the big banks came to £1,000 per working miner.

In 1979-80 the Board spent over £1,500m on plant, materials and work done by private contractors. Massive wastage has resulted in millions of pounds being spent on machinery which is left idle, or invested in faces or seams which are closed down shortly after.

The crippling burden of interest repayments has to be ended and the contractors and suppliers should be nationalised.

The NCB is still run by the ex-coal owners. Their priority is to make profits rather than to serve the needs of working people.

If the bosses can't run the industry without pit closures, falling real wages and the high cost of coal to working class families, then we will take over ourselves. We need to end the present stupid situation where the nationalised coal, gas and electricity industries compete with each other.

The oil industry should also be nationalised as another necessary measure in the development of a planned energy system under workers' control. Such workers' control would require full access to all the facts.

Let us end the secrecy surrounding the NCB's deals with private contractors, the banks and big business. Let us see the books — and see how many fingers — and whose — are in the till.

The fight for a workers' solution in the coal industry is only part of the fight for a socialist solution to the economic crisis. The weight of the NUM must be thrown behind the campaign for a Labour government committed to socialist policies, a Labour government as loyal to its class as the Tories have been to theirs.

Over and over again we have seen the majority of our union's leaders ignore or defy conference decisions. Policies such as the four day week are of little use unless the leadership is prepared to fight for them.

The election of Scargill will be a big step forward in breaking the right wing's domination. The next step should be the reform of the NEC to end the situation where representatives of a majority of miners are in a minority on the NEC.

This should be linked to a campaign for regular re-election of officials. A socialist leadership in the NUM will only have the full confidence of the membership if it is accountable. No full-time official should receive a higher wage than that of a face worker.

If we are going to defend our jobs and living standards, if we are going to fight for a fair deal for retired miners and youth on the dole, we will inevitably come into confrontation with the Tories as we did in 1974.

Joe Gormley and Co. would run a mile rather than lead such a fight. They were all too well aware that a miners strike at the same time as BL workers would almost certainly have brought down the government. That is why the NEC agreed to a month's adjournment.

The election of Scargill would be a big step forward in the fight for a leadership in the labour movement that will stand up to the Tories. The NUM has the power to lead the fight for united labour movement action against the Tories.

And only fighting socialist policies will ensure we win.



For the full claim

By Ernest Wakefield
Mansfield Colliery NUM

THE miners should fight for the full claim and give a lead in the battle against the Tories.

The bosses are laughing all the way to the bank as the unions are picked off one by one and workers are forced into taking cuts in their living standards.

This country is still one of the richest on the planet, but the bulk of the personal wealth is still in the hands of the super-rich to be invested where they see fit.

Inflation is little more than a latter-day capitalist trick to cut workers living standards and boost profits. Every time our union accepts a pay increase below the rate of inflation we are accepting a wage cut.

Until such time as the workers own the means of production and the wealth we produce, we should refuse to accept any reduction in our living standards. Our wages should be index-linked. This would put an end to the pay rises which are in reality a cut in real wages. Pay rises above that would be the

real rises in the battle to redistribute the national cake.

Had the miners' 1972 pay increase been inflation-proofed, our basic would be 50 per cent higher than it is just to maintain our purchasing power. The current Tax and Price Index is running at 15.2 per cent and the rate is unlikely to fall as the Tories have no intention of introducing price controls or a price freeze.

Miners should also lead in the fight for a four day week without loss of pay — Chapple and Duffy never will. A four day week would help to reduce mass unemployment. Instead of expensive stockpiling of coal and premature closure of pits as at present with the capitalist orientated recession, new pits would have to be opened creating more jobs not only in mining but also in the ancillary industries and trades.

Finally we have to fight for a rate-protection scheme and retirement on full pay. We cannot allow the leadership to go on flouting conference decisions on this issue.

'LEADERSHIP IS THE CRUCIAL QUESTION'

Trevor Bell — Long on talk, short on action

By Graham Naylor
Bilthorpe NUM

ONLY 30 miners turned up at Bilthorpe Miners Welfare to hear Trevor Bell give his presidential address. The reason for the low turn-out — according to Bell — was the competition from 'Crossroads' and Meg's dilemma.

After listening to the address other reasons became apparent. Heavily promoted as a moderate, miners responded to his fighting policies by staying at home to have their brains bored out by 'Crossroads'.

Bell opened by saying right away he didn't want to abide by conference decisions. The reason is that they are only guidelines so that clever officials know when to go forward or retreat. Bell wants three year wage deals to remove the yearly confrontations over the wage negotiations.

It was pointed out that governments, when elected, could change the terms of the agreement. This happened with 'The Plan for Coal' and led to the February strike, this year. Bell assured us that if this happened he would of course then call for militant action. Shades of Duffy and the BL sell-out.

Bell went on to condemn Tony Benn and told us that the labour movement needs a broad-left-of-centre Labour Party to regain the immortal lost centre ground. He ridiculed Tony Benn (and most of the labour movement) for wanting to regain control of North Sea oil.

Mish-mash

The rest of Bell's speech was made up of a mish-mash of policies which have been supported by the NUM for some time now but have never been won because leaders like Bell have refused to fight for them. These consisted of early retirement (at 55), a rate protection

scheme, larger subsidies and good old import controls (which should never be won).

He said the NUM needed a new image to encourage the public to use more coal. The union should be talking to the Tories and big business and getting them to see our point of view.

Bell called for three year wage deals because he said it would get the other unions off our backs. He was upset by the idea of weaker unions looking to the miners for a lead. We must win the argument, Bell said, as in '72 and '74, but forgot to mention that it was strike action that won the argument.

Tory

Bell emphasised that we must talk to the Tory government despite the fact that he admits there is no chance of the government changing direction.

Trevor Bell and the other right-wing candidates would lead the miners to the same place as Duffy and Co have led the BL workers — low wages, worsening working conditions and complete humiliation. What we need is a fighting union that will help fight for a socialist society — until we get that miners should vote for Arthur Scargill.

TYRONE O'SULLIVAN, secretary of Tower lodge,

What would a victory for Scargill in the Presidential election represent in the NUM?

Scargill is one of the most progressive, socialist leaders that we've ever had in the NUM. Under a Scargill Presidency the benefits of miners would definitely increase much more substantially than under Gormley. Scargill would shift the whole union to the left.

Gormley and Daly have shifted to the right while in office. But Scargill has a consistent record of upholding miners' interests over the last 10 years.

Other workers will learn that they will never save their jobs and industries by accepting low wage increases. The improvements in wages and conditions under Scargill would set a shining example of what socialist leadership can achieve.

We have to keep the Duffys and the Trevor Bells out. The crucial question in the trade unions and the labour movement is the question of leadership.

And not just leadership, but also solidarity in struggle. Workers from Lee Jeans, Laurence Scott, and Staffa, have all been to this pit and received the support of the lodge, and from other lodges in South Wales too. In 1977 the right-wing in the NUM forced through the productivity and incentive payments scheme. How far has this divided the union, and made a united fight more difficult?

The unity of the union has been destroyed by this scheme. The National Power Loading Agreement (NPLA) remains in force, and maintains the basis for unity. This national wages structure was a massive breakthrough for the union in the late 1960s.

It was when we become a real,

South Wales NUM, spoke to Barry Wilkins.

united, national union, the NLPA was won mainly by the leadership of Will Paynter. I know a lot of people criticise Paynter for not doing more to resist closures and redundancies. But he was trapped and isolated in a right-wing NEC.

After the industrial action in February defeated the government and the National Coal Board (NCB) it is clear that they have changed tactics. Now they intend to close pits by what Emlyn Williams (President of South Wales NUM) calls 'slow strangulation' — starving pits of investment and recruitment. How can this be prevented?

We should tell the NCB and the government that if they have not produced, by the end of December, a proper programme of investment and recruitment to develop the industry, we will start a national strike in January. In South Wales alone we have lost nearly two thousand jobs in 1981.

The reserves at Margam are so extensive that a major new development there could provide up to 5,000 jobs. It will need a national strike to force it under this Thatcher government.

Miners leaving on early retirement or due to sickness are not being replaced. If we have a national strike over pay this winter, then demands for this programme of investment and recruitment must be included in that strike.

Scargill argues that the introduction of a 4-day week would create another 55 thousand jobs in the industry. How and when do you see a 4-day week with no loss of pay being achieved?

This has to come. With new developments in technology this is the only way to avoid massive increases in

unemployment. I believe that we will win this during the next Labour government, provided it has a good majority. And then this will provide a powerful example to workers in other industries.

So what role do you think that miners can play in political struggles, for example, for unilateral nuclear disarmament, and the fight for the next Labour government to carry out real socialist policies?

Unilateral nuclear disarmament should be made a major issue in the NUM and in the Labour Party. There will need to be industrial action to stop these nuclear missiles coming to Britain, and the miners should be at the forefront of this. This will need to be campaigned for in the NUM and the rest of the labour movement.

Labour must be our government. We will always fight for a socialist government. We don't want another Labour government like 1974-79.

The manifesto must be brought under the control of the party and the NEC, and then a left-wing NEC can make sure that the government carries out socialist policies. And to counter the power of the financial institutions we will have to nationalise them.

But how can workers make sure that the next Labour government will carry out these kinds of policies which are in their interests. Shouldn't the labour movement be ready to impose socialist policies on it by industrial action?

If we have a good majority, with Tony Benn as prime minister or deputy, then I don't think that will be necessary. But if it is necessary, then, yes, I accept it. After all miners can't be expected to ease back for five years while a Labour government is in power. That was the Gormley way.

Solidarity with Scotts ...

'WE fraternally appeal to the mineworkers to black these motors.' This was the closing remarks of John Tocher, Manchester Secretary of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions (CSEU), at the National Solidarity Conference for the Laurence Scott Strike.

It was seven months ago when the 650 engineers at Laurence Scott said 'Enough is Enough' and occupied their Manchester factory against closure by its new owner: Arthur Snipe of Mining Supplies, Doncaster. Snipe, who made his name producing coal cutting equipment, took over the Laurence Scott group in what has emerged to be an asset stripping operation.

Laurence Scott has become a symbol of resistance. Arthur Scargill is amongst many who've recognised this. In a message to Laurence Scott workers he said: 'On behalf of Yorkshire's 68,000 miners, I extend our best wishes and support to all workers at present in dispute with Laurence Scott who are fighting for the right to work, not merely for themselves, but for all other workers in Britain as well.'

Miners across the country have supported the strike, in spite of Gormley's attempt to back Boyd and Duffy.

Now a fresh and more alarming assault on all trade unionists has taken place. The picket of Mining Supplies, Doncaster launched, following the solidarity conference, now faces a challenge under the 1980 Employment Act.

Six of the Scotts stewards have been instructed by the High Court not to attend the picket line. This is a massive challenge to what Arthur Scargill correctly calls 'effective picketing' in the heart of Yorkshire.

There can be no doubt the Laurence Scott strike is a fight for all our futures. In the same way that engineers came to the backing of miners at Saltley Gate in 1972, now miners should stand with Laurence Scott workers on the picket line and by blacking the motors.

The first steps towards this has been taken by the Brodsworth NUM lodge. Pickets have been billeted in the miners' welfare hall and the miners have joined the picket line. The Doncaster panel is blacking new Mining Supplies and Laurence Scott products.

The key Carrcroft workshop is blacking deliveries of scab drivers from Mining Supplies. The South Wales NUM executive will be hearing a report from vice president, Des Dutfield, on the question of blacking after a delegation visited the solidarity conference.

Such actions of unity should ensure that Laurence Scott workers can force Snipe to the table and prevent a damaging attack on picketing.



Scargill led the miners' delegation at Grunwick mass picket — he should do the same for Scotts

1972 and 1974 - the years of the miners

By R Hall, formerly from Warsop Colliery, North Derbyshire NUM

IN 1966 the National Coal Board and the National Union of Miners accepted the National Power Loading Agreement (NPLA), a vicious productivity deal which reduced wages, and cost many jobs.

Simultaneously the ratio of officials to workers dramatically increased. However NPLA did bring the NUM a long way from its federalist geographical structure, towards a national union.

The years of the Wilson government (1964-70) were a disaster, particularly for Britain's miners: 250 pits closed and 150,000 jobs lost. The first fightback occurred in 1969 when rank and file miners from Yorkshire came out on unofficial strike in support of the demand for shorter hours for surface workers.

mingham engineers coming down that road, and the naked arm of state oppression.

Triple

It was ordinary miners who led the way. This time the triple alliance didn't break down, the miners weren't left on their own and above all the sense of dignity had been restored to the mining community, wiping away the bitter memories of 1926.

From all sections of the organised working class, rose one voice — the voice of solidarity.

Contrast

By sharp contrast, 1974 was an entirely different strike with the very future of the Tory government at stake. It was of course initially an economic strike, but very quickly everyone came to realise it had been transformed into a political strike.

However, in comparison with those 'heady' days of 1972, it was a much tamer affair. The TUC had accepted restrictive picketing and Joe Gormley was not now in his first year of presidency.

The same solidarity was there, but the NEC was now firmly in control, and mass picketing was the exception not the rule. Heath called an election on 'who rules Britain' and the working class gave its answer.

Flying

It was personally an illuminating experience, with bus loads of flying pickets from Yorkshire having the audacity to stray from their area, and descend on the local pits. The unofficial strike movement collapsed for the lack of coherent leadership but it demonstrated to the National Executive Committee and the rest of Britain that the pressure was building up.

Explode

This pressure exploded in 1972. The massive confrontation with the Tories was a last gamble — there was nothing left to lose. Who can ever forget the mood of optimism and excitement at the confrontations at every colliery and power station in Britain? Or at Saltley coke-depot — the psychological turning point of the strike.

One will never forget the sound of pipes, and the sight of thousands of Bir-



The battle of Saltley Gate

and with Staffa Scargill for President

THE WORKERS at Staffa in Leyton, East London have been out on official strike since 29 September. Although they do have the backing of their unions, the AUEW and ASTMS in their fight to save 390 jobs, they still need the full support of the entire labour movement.

The equipment produced by Staffa workers is used in the mining industry. Like Laurence Scott, here is an ideal opportunity for miners throughout the country to show support for workers in struggle. The NUM should black all Staffa goods.

For further information contact Chris Newsom, AUEW Strike Committee, 39 Somers Road, London E17. Tel: 01-339 0886.

What to do

● Black Laurence Scott and Mining Supplies products

More details from Laurence Scott strike HQ 061-231-4434

● Black Scab Drivers

Particularly Armitages and Eldridges. For a full list, telephone Strike HQ.

● Defend Effective Picketing

Join the 24 hour picket line at Mining Supplies, Carrs Hill Estate, Doncaster. Every Monday there will be a mass picket.

● Financial support

Send to Laurence Scott Workers Appeal, G Fryer, 20 Roundcroft, Romiley, Cheshire.

● Get the truth out

Order copies of the second issue of the Scotts strike bulletin for your lodge/branch. Bulk order accepted. 5p a copy (postage free).



KEVIN BARRON from Maltby NUM a member of the Yorkshire executive committee of the NUM, interviewed by Socialist Challenge.

What do you think are the key issues in this election and why are you supporting Arthur Scargill?

I believe that we have to change the leadership which has collaborated with the Coal Board and devastated the mining industry. The leaders of the last 15 to 20 years have lost us half a million jobs through pit closures.

Arthur Scargill's record in Yorkshire shows, unlike other candidates, that employment cannot just be maintained, that it can be expanded. We've had new pits in Yorkshire when other areas have had pits closing.

For example, in Maltby, we have £130m investment to sink a third shaft. Some areas haven't had that investment in six pits, let alone one. Expansion hasn't just been because of reserves, other areas have them too, but because of determined opposition to closures.

The Productivity Scheme which Scargill opposed has led to different payments throughout the industry, to the detriment of the majority of miners. Scargill's opposition to the Early Retirement Scheme was correct. We still haven't got early retirement for surface

workers.

We are now the lowest paid coal miners in Europe, yet with the highest productivity. The right wing's main candidate, clerical representative Trevor Bell, has never held office in the NUM, only the clerical section. The other two candidates are only 'Stop Scargill' candidates, and their abilities are as dubious as the clerical representative.

Do you see any comparisons between the presidential election in the NUM and the deputy leadership contest?

Certainly. The issues in the NUM elections can be paralleled to what is happening inside the Labour Party. Do we want a leadership whose policies are determined by the economic system, or a leadership whose policies are determined by the membership?

One of the issues in the deputy leadership campaign has been accountability. It's a major issue in the NUM, and I'm sure with Arthur Scargill's election it will become a feature at national level, just as it is at area and local level. For example, at a local level in Yorkshire all committee men and officials are elected every two years.

Socialist Challenge

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DURING the miners' strike against pit closures last February one of the most popular demands was for government restrictions on coal imports.

'Millions of tons on the stockpiles; millions of tons imported.' 'British miners' jobs are threatened by the flood of cheap foreign coal.'

It seems simple. And the solution - import controls - looks obvious. But are things really so straightforward?

A quick glance at the recent history of the coal industry shows that imported coal is not the main threat to miners' jobs. In the 1960s, Britain was a net exporter of coal. But in the same period the number of collieries fell from nearly 700 to around 300. In 1959 in South Wales there were 93,000 miners; by 1969 the figure was 40,000.

The millions of tons of coal on the stockpiles, are not caused by British coal being replaced by imported coal. The real cause is lack of 'effective demand'. In other words, we need all the coal we can get.

Cost

But the collapse of industry, low wages and poverty pensions mean that no one can actually afford to buy it. That is why thousands of old people literally freeze to death every winter.

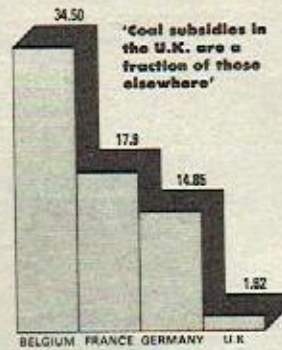
The immediate effect of import controls against cheaper, highly subsidised foreign coal would inevitably be a rise in the cost of coal to British working class families. Next would come the inevitable retaliation.

Countries finding their coal sales to Britain stopped would erect similar barriers against British products. We should reject the idea that British miners' jobs can be safeguarded at the expense of foreign miners or workers in other sectors of British industry.

The bosses wouldn't hesitate to use import controls to divide the working class. Closures in the steel industry would be blamed on 'expensive British coal' and the workers who mine it. What chance then of a fighting alliance between miners and steel workers?

Solidarity

And in any future coal strike why should Belgian or French miners show the same solidarity they did in 1972 and 1974 when they refused to scab on the NUM?



The big weakness of import controls is that they are based on class collaboration. The demand for import controls assumes that the most important question is nationality, not class.

Import controls imply that a Welsh miner has more in common with Thatcher or Derek Ezra than with an American miner. It is Thatcher and Ezra who threaten miners' jobs.

We should put the blame where it really lies

Job losses: are import controls the answer?

By Mick Kelly

and call for a socialist alternative to import controls.

We should demand a subsidy on coal production at least equal to that in Belgium and France (about twenty times the present level) financed by the cancellation of the NCB's debts to the big

banks.

The stockpiles should be reduced by making coal free to old age pensioners. A crash programme of useful public works could use every ton of coal dug. Such policies would defend miners' jobs and other workers' living standards by making coal

cheaper.

The bosses and bankers created the coal crisis - they should pay for it. Import controls on the other hand would put the burden on the very people who miners have to win to their side to fight for socialism - the workers of all countries.



Photo: CHRIS DAVIES (Report)



The price of coal

By Kevin Pettinger, Bolsover Colliery, North Notts NUM

I WORK in the powder magazine on the surface at the pit. Until 1977 I was a 'headings' man on top rate. Then at the age of 23 I had a heart attack down the pit. At the time I was on £49.50 a week.

At a stroke, my money was cut to £38. Not surprisingly perhaps, my next heart attack came soon after! My living standard has drastically dropped through inflation.

This week's pay packet brought home £83. Last week was a 'good' one, I had £115 on my wage ticket. Mind you, I had to put in 60 hours for it. I shudder to think about men who have to bring up kids on that sort of money.

There's a lot of talk now about £100 for surface workers. Quite honestly we'd need £100 take home to keep up with prices.

Now that I'm on the surface I see a lot of old men who've had to come up from underground due to illness or injury. After years on the coal face they've seen their wages cut.

Some of the older men receive a disability pension from the Department of Health and Social Security. But as soon as they do a bit of overtime to keep their wages up - then it comes off the pension.

The NUM should fight for a proper rate protection so that no one loses out as a result of injury or disability.

I'm only 27 now. Unless there is a radical change, by the time I'm 50 I'll be polishing the pit managers' boots for 50p a time. And the Sun tells me I'm a highly paid miner!

We don't choose to go down the pit. My only option is the dole. And what could I do with £22 a week? I'd be better off if we took strike action for decent wages.

The system as a whole stinks. Whether it's down the pit or on the battlefield it's us that have to fight the bosses' wars. There's not many bosses in society. But they've got the whip hand at the moment.

With a proper lead we could change the system and run it on our own behalf.

Mountain of Despair Valley of Sorrow
Hundreds of miners from one village
PNEUMOCONIOSIS THE DEADLY DUST
THEY TOILED TO DIG THE NATIONS COAL AND BREATHED THE DEADLY DUST. BETRAYED ONCE MORE. DENIED THE DOLE BY THOSE WHO HELD THEIR TRUST THEY ARE NOT HERE AMIDST THE THROG THEIR HEALTH IS TOO IMPAIRED. WE MARCH FOR THEM TO RIGHT THE WRONG SO THAT THEY MAY BE SPARED.

The British Army and the strikes of '74 and '77

By Tom Marlowe

MONDAY's 'Day of Action' was the third attempt at strike action undertaken by the Loyalists in seven years. On the two previous occasions the British authorities, including the Army, showed little willingness to take on the Loyalists.

The first strike was in May 1974. It had two aims. One was to bring down the 'power-sharing' government of the North of Ireland, led by Unionist Brian Faulkner and Gerry Fitt of the Social Democratic and Labour Party. The other aim was to prevent the establishment of a Council of Ireland, a move which had been agreed by the Unionists, the SDLP and the British and Irish governments as part of the 'Sunningdale' agreement of December 1973.

The strike was called by the Ulster Workers Council. It was backed by a number of Loyalist politicians, including Paisley.

The strikers were taking on the Labour government of Harold Wilson, and its Northern Ireland Secretary, Merlyn Rees. Wilson went on television to denounce the strikers as 'spongers', but this verbal assault was the most vigorous opposition offered by the government to the strikers.

The Ulster Defence Association openly controlled the streets of Belfast and other areas, setting up road blocks and carrying clubs to dissuade strike-breakers. Only at a very late stage was the Army used to move essential supplies, and even then on a very limited operation.

BBC television in Northern Ireland was allowed to operate a system of 'balance' — when Rees attacked the strike in a special broadcast, the strikers were given equal time to reply.

Labour MP Paul Rose was to later write that the government had a 'failure of nerve' over the strike. This was true, but there is no doubt that even if Merlyn Rees had wished to take on the Loyalists, he would have found it difficult.

The clearest evidence on this was an article later written in the magazine of the right-wing Tory Monday Club. In this an Army officer maintained that the government had decided to try and use troops to smash the strike but leading Army officers had refused to implement the orders.

The 1974 strike was completely successful, so, when the tactic was tried again by the Loyalists in 1977, the Labour government and its secretary of state, Roy Mason, adopted a different approach.

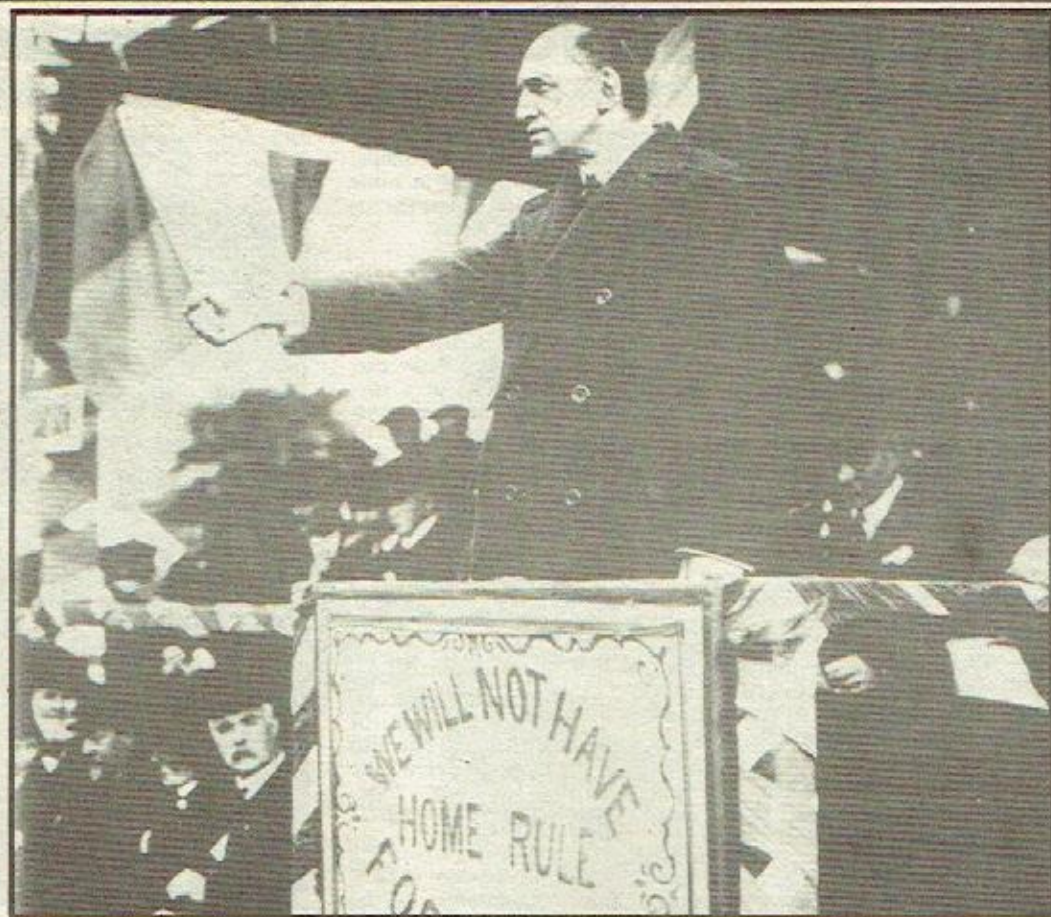
Both the Army and RUC were more actively deployed in 1977. But the circumstances were different. One of the aims of the strike was to bring back the old Stormont parliament. That would have amounted to handing over all authority in the North of Ireland to Ian Paisley.

This Mason couldn't agree to. The strike was defeated ... or was it? For the second demand of the strikers was for greater 'security' measures, and to this Mason capitulated.

He agreed to increase the numbers in the RUC, to provide them with better weapons, to increase the strength of the Ulster Defence Regiment and to increase the activities of the SAS.

These proposals were based on a detailed memorandum which had been previously presented to Mason by the Official Unionists.

The concessions Mason made were enough to persuade the majority of Loyalists that strike action was not necessary.



Edward Carson

Tories own creation

Leaders considered the option of using the House of Lords to so disrupt the British Army that it would leave the Ulster Volunteers unchallenged in Ireland.

ment figures such as Lord Robert Cecil, Lord Halsbury and constitutional expert Professor Dicey, was for the Tory-dominated House of Lords to either vote against or amend

the Army Annual Bill, by which parliament voted the necessary money to pay the wages of the Army.

Two ploys were suggested by the Tory and Unionist leaders. One was to vote against the Bill, the other was to amend it so as to exclude the Army being used in Ulster. In the end,

neither tactic was put into operation, mainly because a number of Tories considered that meddling with the very existence of the Army was too

dangerous.

Unable to tamper with the Army in this way, the Tories and their friends in the military establishment decided on another approach: to spread military disaffection, even mutiny by Army officers. Prominent in this conspiracy were Bonar Law, General Wilson, director of military operations in the war office, General Paget, commander-in-chief of the British Army in Ireland and General Gough, commander of the Third Cavalry Brigade.

General Wilson was a fanatical Unionist. He also served on a government war office committee which discussed how the Army would be employed in Ulster in the event of the rebellion coming to fruition. All these secret discussions he reported to Bonar Law who in turn passed them on to Carson and the Unionists.

Paget adopted a more direct approach. At a meeting with his senior officers in Ireland on 20 March 1914 he attacked 'those swine' in the government, and while not promising that he would mutiny, encouraged his officers to do so.

Mutiny

One, General Gough took the hint and organised a mutiny at the Curragh barracks near Dublin. Gough, his three colonels and 55 of his officers declared that they would not move against the Loyalists if instructed to do so. He was immediately backed up in London by General Wilson. Bonar Law used the mutiny to put further pressure on the government. He told Asquith: 'It was the certainty of British support which had made the strength of Ulster resistance.'

In the end, this resistance proved successful. Although the first world war interrupted the confrontation in Ireland, even before the war started the Liberal government had capitulated to the Unionists and Tories, and agreed to some form of partition.

In achieving this, the Loyalists had threatened rebellion, they had bought arms, often with money supplied to them from British establishment circles. They had openly declared their willingness to defy the wishes of the British parliament.

In doing all this they had been backed by the Tories who had conspired with the King, the House of Lords and British Army officers to similarly defy the wishes of parliament. Out of this conspiracy the Unionist State in the North of Ireland was born.

Strategy

The plan, as developed by Bonar Law, Carson and leading establish-



Marching in Belfast in 1974.



Women in Nicaragua

The following interview with **GLENDAMONTERREY**, a central leader of the Association of Nicaraguan Women (AMNLAE), was obtained in Managua on 22 September. The interview was conducted in Spanish by **MATILDE ZIMMERMANN**.

The Nicaraguan revolution is famous for the involvement of women fighters — both in the mountains and in the urban insurrections. How have the lives of Nicaraguan women been changed by the revolution?

There have been big changes. We think there are still problems with the degree to which women are incorporated into the work force. This isn't because women don't want to work, or because the government doesn't want us to. The problem is the overall lack of jobs. And it is still sometimes true in our country, that when there are two people for only one job, the job is given to the man.

We still have the situation where women do certain types of work, the

types that require less physical strength, and generally earn less than male workers. To a certain extent this is a problem of our industry itself, which is very underdeveloped.

This is beginning to change, because women are getting more organised and participating in a more active way. Women are more organised now than we were a year ago.

Could you talk about some of the special problems of women industrial workers in Nicaragua?

It is our opinion that the women of Nicaragua, besides being doubly exploited, are also doubly heroic. Our women get up in the very early hours, take care of all their children's needs. The big majority here are single mothers. Then they go to work and come back in the

afternoon to yet more housework.

And these compañeras, when they do not also work outside the home, get no recognition for their domestic work.

The fact that they are working hard is not recognised by men, by their families, or even by society. We think that this type of work must gradually be changed into collective work and must be seen as socially valuable by the rest of Nicaraguan society.

I guess AMNLAE's biggest campaign this year has been to recruit women to the Sandinista People's Militias (MPS). What has been the impact of women joining the militias, on their families and on the women themselves?

Organising women into the militia reserve battalions has not yet been what you would call easy. I gave a speech in Jinotega in which I explained how hard it had been — not so much to organise the

women as to win acceptance from the husbands, the families, and in some cases from compañeros within the military.

Participation in the militias began on a massive scale in mid-1980. But then it consisted of exercises that were done certain afternoons or a certain day of the week, outside the normal hours of work or school. It was hard work, but women did it, and they found ways to fit it into their schedules.

But the reserve battalions were something else again. They meant going off to the mountains for two or three weeks. They implied a commitment of a different scope — not just in terms of physical training but also of readiness to defend the country at any time, against any type of aggression.

But women have shown themselves to be capable of being reservists. There are five women's reserve battalions that have gone out so far. There were also young women who went out in the student reserve battalions. And women who participated in the mixed battalions of men and women reservists.

One thing we have noticed with the women's battalions is that the participants are not necessarily young, not necessarily students, but rather compañeras from the barrios, housewives, members of the Sandinista Defence Committees (CDSs).

We don't yet have a concrete plan for our work with women workers and



Glenda Monterrey

peasants. But we're studying the situation, making tours to study the special problems of factory and peasant women, listening

to their concerns. And perhaps for 1982, or for the national conference of AMNLAE in November, we will be able to begin to

lay out the lines of our work with these sectors.

Reprinted from *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*

Bradford 12 show Tory hypocrisy

By Chris Guthrie

FEW black people would have been surprised by the Home Office report on racial violence brought out on 17 November.

It's hardly news that Asians and Afro-Caribbeans are subjected to daily harassment ranging from verbal abuse to the petrol bomb put through a letter box that killed a young Asian woman and her three children earlier this year in East London.

The Home Secretary, William Whitelaw, can call for a more 'informed' and 'sensitive' police force to give greater priority to reports of racist attacks but he promises very little to deal with right wing groups.

Of course, the 'climate' that he says these groups create are not created by them at all, but by a society in crisis aided and abetted by Her Majesty's racist Tory government.

The racial motives of the Home Office as they try to deport black women like Shirley Graham and others; the violence of the police as they raid factories in search of 'illegal' immigrants; and the sustained harassment that young blacks get daily from the police, is not referred to.

Certainly Whitelaw doesn't say that black people have the right to defend themselves.

The twelve young Asians known as the Brad-

ford 12 are a case in point. They were active against

racist harassment by the far right. They also fought the Home Office and the police for the right of Anwar Ditta to bring her children to Britain. They were also active supporters of similar campaigns.

Following their arrests in July, they are threatened with spending the rest of their lives in jail because, according to the police, they discussed using petrol bombs to

defend the black community.

Although they have pleaded not guilty to the charges of 'conspiracy' and although they are not charged with actually using petrol bombs, five of them stayed in jail for five months after being refused bail.

In contrast, white racists in the same town have readily been given bail when charged with petrol bombing houses of black people, and have received light sentences for physically attacking black people.

In addition to being held so long without bail, one of the conditions placed on all the defendants is that they do not go to any public meeting or engage in any political activity.

This clearly shows the political nature of their cases and the necessity of joining their defence campaign.

Charges

On 15 November support groups from Bradford, London, Leeds, Manchester, Sheffield, Leicester and Birmingham set up a national mobilising committee to build a

national demonstration in Bradford on 12 December, calling for the dropping of all charges against the Bradford 12.

There can be no reliance on Whitelaw and the police to defend black people — it's up to black

people themselves with the aid of the labour movement.

Join the demonstration and send resolutions of support and donations to London Support Group, c/o 54 High St, Southall, Middlesex.

Public Meeting

Thursday 26 November

Millan Centre, 59 Trinity Rd, London SW17

Organised by South London Support Group

STOP DEPORTATIONS

MUMTAZ KIANI and her two young British born daughters, Nadia and Attia, are threatened with deportation under the Immigration Act. Mumtaz Kiani came to Britain in 1975 as a visitor and subsequently married here in April 1977. In May the following year she was given indefinite leave to remain in the UK.

In 1980 the Home Of-

fice alleged that Mumtaz Kiani's husband was a seaman deserter and he was deported in 1981.

Although Mumtaz Kiani chose to stay, the Home Office now claim that she has been here without leave since 1977 and are trying to deport her.

A national protest demonstration has been organised on Sat 28 November. Assemble 11.30am at Infirmary Fields, corner of Lumb Lane, Bradford 8.



Photo: MICHAEL ANN MULLEN

Free the Bradford 12

Saturday 12 December
Assemble 1.30pm

Manningham Park, Bradford

Preparing for war: Reagan's Middle East policy

BRITISH TROOPS are to be sent as part of a 'peace-keeping force' to the Sinai desert next year. The Tory government confirmed last Monday that British troops would join those from other EEC countries — France, Italy and the Netherlands — to police the final stages of the Camp David agreement on the Middle East conflict.

But British troops will no more keep the peace in the Sinai than they do in the North of Ireland. **NICK ROBIN** argues that all the talk of Peace Plans in the Middle East is a smokescreen for imperialism's War Plans.

In the last two weeks thousands of marines have landed on the shores of Oman and Somalia from US assault ships, the 82nd Airborne Division (paratroopers) were dropped in the Egyptian desert, and B52 bombers screamed halfway across the globe from North Dakota to an airfield west of Cairo.

In all thousands of troops, not just from the US but also from Egypt, Oman, Sudan and Somalia, have participated in Operation Bright Star, a show of armed might worthy of a Hollywood epic. But of course this is real life, and it's the lives of the peoples of the Middle East which are in danger.

Purpose

Behind the twists and turns of the last few months is an artist with a purpose. The artist is imperialism and its purpose is to mobilise an alliance between the US, Israel and key Arab states against the Soviet Union and against the Arab revolution, particularly the Iranian revolution. All this at a time when direct Soviet influence in the area is at its lowest point for twenty five years.

All the 'Peace Plans' for the Middle East are really different attempts by the imperialist powers to defend their interests against potentially damaging conflicts. The new Saudi Peace Plan, backed by Lord Carrington and sections of the US administration is very similar to the famous Camp David Peace Accords which the late (but not lamented) President Sadat of Egypt and Menachim Begin of Israel drew up.

New

The new features of the Saudi Plan are the specification of the need for an 'independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital' where as the Camp David agreements merely provided for 'autonomy' on the West Bank and Gaza. But it also implicitly recognises the right of Israel to exist.

These two points could provide the basis for another 'compromise' to please everyone — everyone except the masses of dispossessed Palestinians whose right to live in their own homeland is trampled on by both Saudi Plan and

the Camp David Agreements.

Nevertheless, in an attempt to defuse the Israel/Arab conflict imperialism is trying to impress upon Israel the need for 'compromise'. US imperialism has a bargaining

counter against Begin's regime which initially fiercely denounced the Saudi Plan. Begin wants an enormous \$3 billion for his 1982 'defence' (i.e. war) budget from the US.

Meanwhile the US imperialists cannot make

their minds up over the Saudi Plan. One wing of the Administration feels it makes too many concessions to the Arab states, another feels it provides the best solution to the explosive Middle East crisis.

One thing the im-



All the Peace Plans ignore the interests of the Palestinian masses (Photo by Donald McCullin, from Jonathan Dibley's book *The Palestinians*)

perialists are sure about is their desire to turn the whole region, taking North Africa, the East Mediterranean and a slice of Asia, into a gigantic arsenal for US imperialism.

The first steps were taken on this road by former President Carter who drew up plans for a Rapid Deployment Force (RDF) permanently in the region. The Reagan administration is going further, creating a network of forward bases for American units as in the Indian Ocean island of Diego Garcia whose inhabitants have been displaced by US military hardware.

Threat

There is speculation in the press about the 'prepositioning' of 100,000 American troops in the region. One can imagine the 'Red Scare' hysteria were *Pravda* to speculate on a possible Soviet RDF to be stationed in, say, Nicaragua!

The whole Middle East is bristling with

American weaponry. The statistics are horrifying. In the first half of the 1970s, US arms sales in the Middle East averaged \$3.2 billion per year, more than the total sales over the previous 15 years.

And since then arms sales have nearly tripled. By 1979 they had reached \$8.9 billion per year, accounting for more than 69 per cent of total US arms sales. Israel has of course always been the main beneficiary of these sales, but Egypt and Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states are not far behind.

Part of the legacy of the Vietnam War was the development of a huge capital intensive arms producing capacity in the United States which means that the US needs to produce and sell arms. More important the imperialists are desperate to prevent any more Iranian revolutions.

The *Economist* recently described Reagan's Middle East policy with the phrase 'visibility is the essence of deterrence'. We prefer to call it war-mongering.

The last few months in the Middle East

- June:** Israelis bomb Iraqi nuclear reactor.
- July:** Israeli troops invade and occupy southern Lebanon.
- August:** Libyan plane shot down by US in Mediterranean. Italy announces its Cruise missiles to be sited in Sicily, aimed at the Middle East.
- October 1:** Reagan declares: 'We will not permit Saudi Arabi to be an Iran'.
- October 6:** Sadat shot. His successor, Mubarak, pledges to continue pro US-policies.
- October 10:** On the plane home from Sadat's funeral ex-Presidents Ford and Carter call for a 'dialogue' with the PLO.
- October 18:** PASOK elected in Greece ending fifty years of right wing rule, pledged to remove US bases from Greek soil. Lord Carrington visits Saudi capital Riyadh on behalf of the EEC and expresses support for the rediscovered Saudi Peace Plan. Israel opposes European participation in 'peace-keeping' force in Sinai desert as part of Camp David Accords.
- October 28:** AWAC's deal completed. Saudi Arabia to receive \$8.5 billion worth of advance radar planes and other hardware from US.
- October 30:** Israeli Prime Minister Begin responds that Saudi Plan is designed to liquidate Israel.

Roots of the Middle East conflict

By Charlie van Gelderen

ZIONISM as a movement was born in the nineteenth century. It aimed to bring the Jews back to Palestine and to establish a mono-cultural Jewish state.

From the start its principal leaders recognised that this could only be achieved at the expense of the native Palestinian population. Such views have been repeated ever since. As recently as 1967 the director of the Department of Colonisation of the Jewish Agency for Israel stated:

'The only possible solution lies in creating a Palestine, or at least a Western Palestine, without Arabs...and there is no other way to do this than to transfer all the Arabs to neighbouring countries, to move all of them out of here. We should not leave a single tribe, and those transferred should be sent to Syria and Iraq.'

From the beginning the Palestinians resisted Zionist colonisation. This resistance was expressed in harassment of Jewish settlements by the peasants who had been run off their land, by the uprisings of 1920/21, and in great strikes

and street demonstrations in the 1930s.

These reached a climax in a six month general strike in 1936 followed by a generalised revolt in the countryside, which was crushed by British forces aided by Zionist militias.

But Zionism received the active support of British imperialism, which saw in it a safeguard for its oil interests in the Middle East and its route to India. Zionism has always allied itself with what it considered to be the most influential imperialist powers in the region. Thus Theodor Herzl, its founding father, sought the support of the Ottoman sultans, the German Kaiser and the Tsar of Russia.

The six-day war in 1967 came as a boon to the Zionist expansionists. With their vastly superior military might they were able to establish their superiority well outside the borders of the statelet created by the United Nations in 1948, and to occupy the whole of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights and Sinai. Zionism is the imperialist dagger in the Arab East and the chief agent of imperialism in containing the Arab revolution.

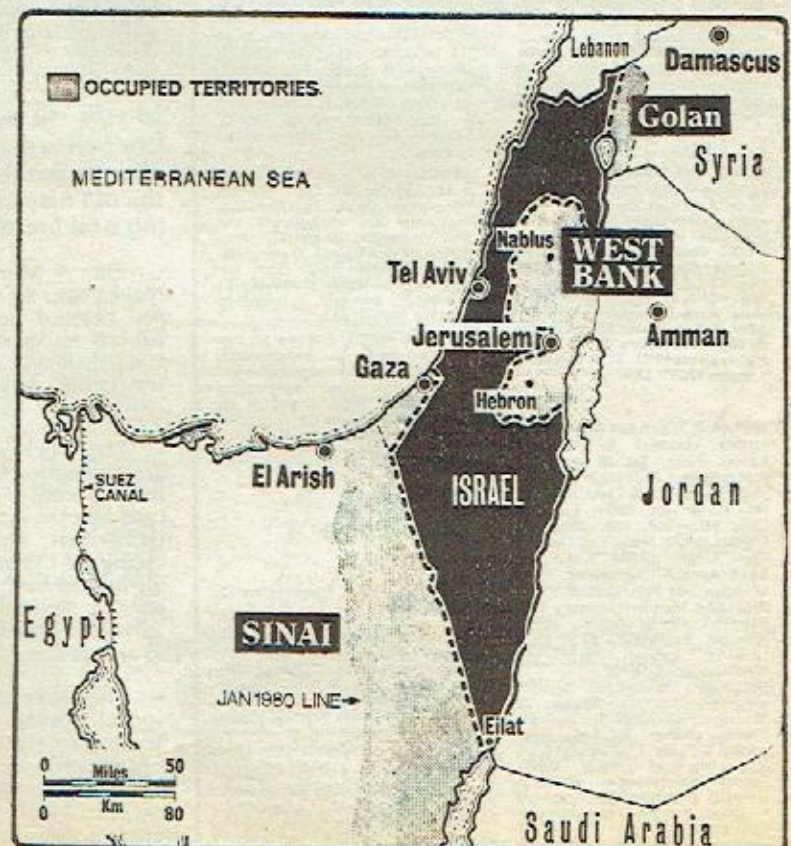
The ideological justification for Zionism was always that it would put an

end to anti-semitism. In fact it has done nothing of the kind. Modern day anti-semitism, like other forms of racism, is a product of the decaying capitalist system just as the anti-Jewish pogroms of the Middle Ages were the product of a dying feudalism.

Zionism has generated anti-Jewish racism where it barely existed before — in the Moslem countries in the Middle East. Because Zionism insists that it represents the whole of world Jewry, every act of Zionist aggression against the Arabs leads to reprisals against Jews in the neighbouring Arab states.

Zionists insist on identifying anti-Zionism with anti-semitism. Socialists should resist this insidious propaganda. Anti-semitism, like all other forms of racism, serves the ruling class by causing divisions inside the working class.

Jewish revolutionary socialists should support the struggle for a free Palestine, free from imperialism and its Zionist agents — a Palestine where Arab, Jew and Christian can live together building a socialist Palestine as part of a Socialist Federation of the Arab East. There is no other road to peace in the Arab East.



Where you can buy Socialist Challenge

Scotland

ABERDEEN: SC available at Boomtown books, King St. For more info ring Bill 896 284.
DUNDEE: SC available from Dundee City Square outside Boots, Thur 4-5.30pm, Fri 4-5.30pm, Sat 11-4pm.
EDINBURGH: SC sold Thur 4.15-5.15pm Bus Station, St. Andrews Square and bottom of Waverley steps 4.30-5.30; Sat 11.30-2pm East End, Princes St. Also available from Ian Mac 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, Crosswell Lane; Hope Street Book Centre.
HAMILTON: SC sale every Sat 1-4pm outside Safeway, shopping centre. For more info contact John Ford, 53 Eliot Crescent, Hamilton or Paul Youngson, 18 Forrest Crescent, Hamilton.

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BANGOR: Sat 10-12 town centre.
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BATH: SC on sale at 1985 Books, London Road, and Saturdays 2pm-3pm outside the Roman Baths. Phone 20298 for more details.
BIRKENHEAD: SC on sale at Labour Club, Cleveland st, Thur nights, in precinct outside Lifflewoods, Sat 11-12.
BIRMINGHAM: SC on sale at The Ramp, Fri 4.30-5.40, Sat 10-4. For more info phone 643-0669.
BOLSOVER: Cross Keys, every Fri 8.9pm, Bluebell 9-10.
BRADFORD: SC at Fourth Idea Bookshop, 14 Southgate.
BRISTOL: SC on sale 11-1, 'Hole in Ground', Haymarket. More info Box 2, c/o Fulmarks, 110 Cheltenham Rd, Montpellier, Bristol 6.
BURNLEY: SC on sale every Sat morning 11.30-1pm St James St.
CHESTERFIELD: SC sold outside Boots, Marketplace, Sat 11.30am-12.30pm.
COVENTRY: SC available from Wedge Bookshop.
HEMEL HEMPSTEAD: SC sales in Time Square, Sat 10.30-1.30pm.
HUDDERSFIELD: SC sold Sat 11am-1pm. The Piazza SC also available at Peaceworks.
LEEDS: Sat 11-1 at Lands Lane Pedestrian Precinct and 10.30-12.00 at Headingley Armadillo Centre. Corner at Headingley, Woodhouse Lane.
LIVERPOOL: SC on sale from News from Nowhere, Whitechapel and Progressive Books, Berry St.

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BANGOR: Rainbows, Holyhead Road, Upper Bangor, Gwynedd.
BRADFORD: Fourth Idea Bookshop, 14 Sandgate.
BRIGHTON: The Public House, Little Preston St.
BRISTOL: Fulmarks, 110 Cheltenham Rd, Bristol 6.
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LEICESTER: Blackthorn Books, 70 High St, Leicester, and V Karia, 53A London Rd, Leicester.

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FIGHT RACISM! Fight Imperialism! Monthly! November issue: Anti-Irish Hysteria; PTA arrests. Police terror in Liverpool 6. Free the Bradford 12! CND & peace. Communist Tradition on Ireland: Rise of the Provisional IRA. CPGB/RCG Ireland Debate. Irish POWs in English Jails. Interview: Ruth Morgan (ANC). 20p p/bp. Subscription: £2 six issues, £2.50 twelve issues. From: Larkin Publications (SCI), BCM Box 5909, London WC1N 3XX.

IRELAND: Which way forward conference organised by Greenwich Labour Party, Sat 28 November 9.30-5.30pm. Goldsmiths College students union, New Cross. Speakers include: Richard Balle, EuroMP, Clive Soley MP, Mike Biggs ex-Captain British Army, Carl Gardner City Limits, Padd Logue H Block/Armagh Committee, Des O'Hagan Sinn Fein Workers Party, Prof John Murphy University College Cork. Creche available. Lunch provided. Registration £2.50 from Greenwich Labour Party, 32 Woolwich Road, SE10.

IRELAND: Manchester Martyrs commemoration on Sunday 29 November, assemblies St. Patrick's Church, Oldham Rd, Manchester 1.30pm Coaches leave Acton Town Hall at 9am to go to march. (Bloody Sunday commemoration march in Coventry 31 January 1982 organised by Bloody Sunday Commemoration Committee).

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

NEWCASTLE: SC on sale every Sat 11-1pm outside Fenwicks. Also available at Days of Hope bookshop, Westgate Rd, Every Friday outside Newcastle University between 1-2 and outside Newcastle Polytechnic between 12-1 every Monday.

OLDHAM: SC sold every Saturday outside Yorkshire Bank, High Street. For more information about local activities, Tel: 061-682 5151.

OXFORD: SC sold Fri 12-2pm outside Kings Arms and every Sat 10.30-12.30pm in Cotnamarket.

SHEFFIELD: SC on sale Thursday, Pond St, 4.30-6pm; Saturday, Fargate 10.30-12.30pm.

STAFFORD: SC on Sale Market Sa Sat lunch time.

STOCKPORT: SC sold every Saturday, 1pm, Mersey Way. Can be delivered weekly, phone 483 8909 (evening), 236 4905 (day).

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

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

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LIVERPOOL: News from Nowhere, 100 Whitechapel, Liverpool L1.
LONDON: Central Books, 37 Grays Inn Rd; Colletts, Charing Cross Rd, WC2; Paperback Books, Brixton and Charlotte St; Kilburn Bookshop, Kilburn High Road, NW6; The Bookplace, Peckham High St, SE15; Books Plus, Lewisham; Balham Food Co-op; Housmans, 5 Calendon Rd, N1; Compendium, Camden Town, NW1; Owl, Kenish Town; New Beacon, Seven Sisters Rd, N4; The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper St, N1; Bookmarks, Seven Sisters Rd, N4; Centreprise, 126 Kingsland High St, E8; Dillons, QMC, Page One, E15; The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper St, N1; Reading Matters, Wood Green next to Sainsbury's.
YORK: Community Books, Walmgate.

PUBLIC MEETING Defend Shirley Graham No deportation Thurs 3 Dec 7.30, Harold Road Centre, Harold Road London E13. Speakers Shirley Graham and from the defence campaign: invited are Paul Boateng GLC councillor, three Newham MPs and from the Bradford 12 support group.

US HANDS off Cuba. Public Meeting with speakers from Cuban, Grenadan, Nicaraguan, Salvadoran campaigns and Socialist Action. Wed 2 Dec, 7.30pm, Abeng Centre, Gresham Rd, near Brixton Tube, London.

REVOLUTION in the Americas - Acid Test for the Left: why the Nicaraguan, Cuban and Grenadan leaderships are revolutionary and what the response of socialists internationally should be. A 32 page pamphlet available from most left bookshops at 50p or from Socialist Action, PO Box 65, London SW16 1NN for 70p inc. p/bp.

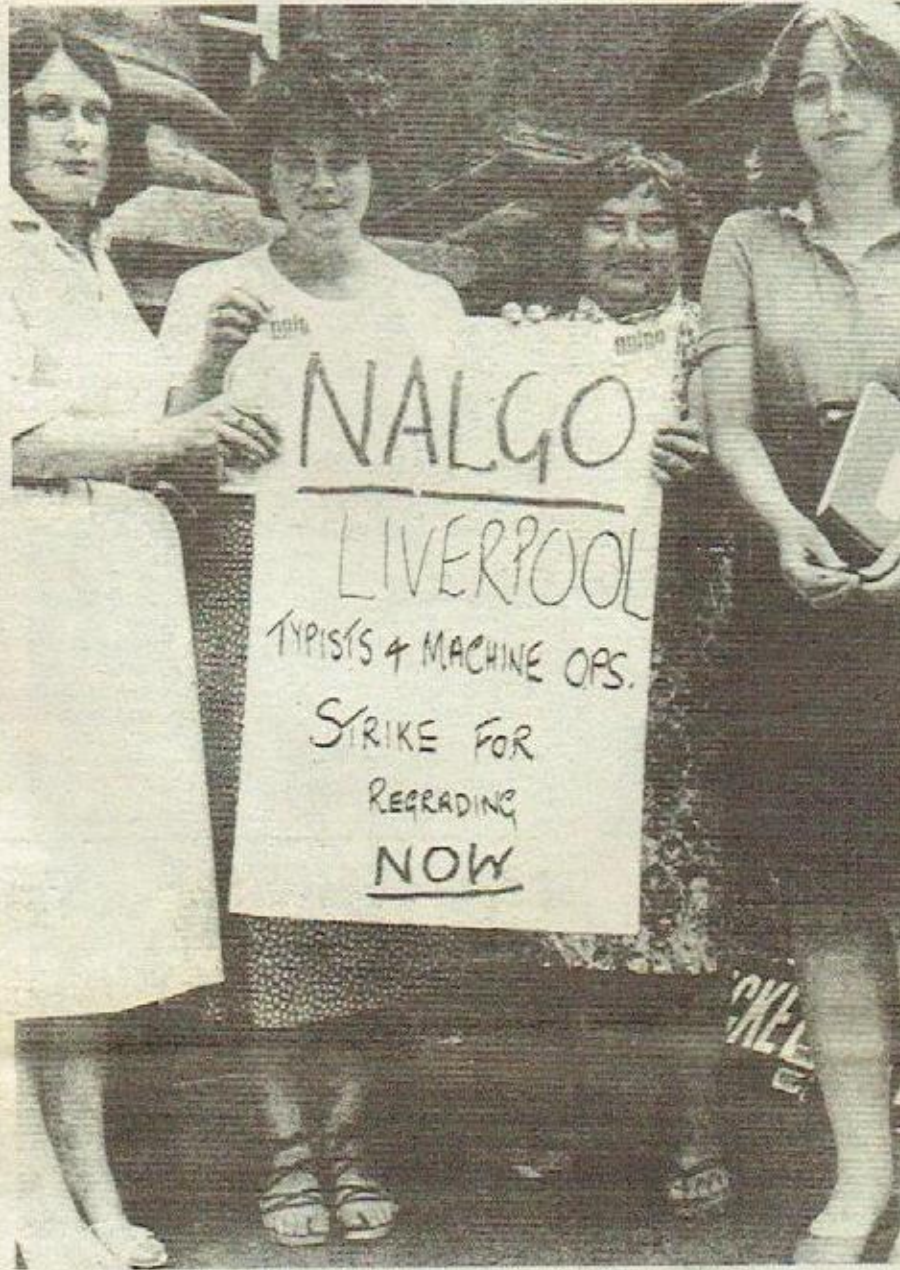
BADGES MADE: Glasgow SC supporters have a badge-making machine, will make badges quietly and cheaply for your campaign/union/Labour Party - and all the money goes back into the struggle for socialism! Write for details/quotes to: SC (Glasgow), PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

POLAND'S CRISIS is Solidarity to blame? Speakers: Jimmy Reid, Neil Kinnoch MP, Philip Whitehead MP. At 7.30pm, Mon 30 Nov, Coity Hall, Red Lion Sq, London WC1. Organised by Polish Solidarity Campaign.

REVOLUTION YOUTH regional aggregate in Sheffield on 28 Nov from 11.30 to 1.30. Contact Biss, Sheffield 5867361 or Bernic, 446040.

Letters

Letters letters LETTERS



Liverpool typists - an agreement in sight

AFTER 18 weeks on strike, Liverpool City Council typists and machine operators are very near to reaching a settlement of their 12 months old dispute over pay upgrading, more training and increased job opportunities.

On Monday 9 November, an agreement was reached between the Liberal leader of the city council, Trevor Jones, and the typists' strike committee.

The Tory councillors are attempting to scupper the agreement and have called for the sacking of all the strikers. They are accusing the Liberals of 'giving in' and have condemned the agreement as a 'charade' since it amounts to arbitration.

They have called for a special meeting of the city council to try and throw out the proposals. The agreement, which is backed by the Labour group, provides for the

setting up of a Joint Committee with an independent chairperson. The committee will consist of three persons nominated by the strikers' union, NALGO, three by the city council and a chairperson selected from nominees which the arbitration service, ACAS, will provide. The chairperson will have to be acceptable to both sides.

The typists will present their case to the committee who will mediate between both sides. In the event of a failure to negotiate a settlement, the chairperson will make the final decision. The committee is to take no more than eight weeks to make its decisions.

This agreement was ratified by a mass meeting of strikers with one vote against. At the meeting, the Liverpool NALGO Action Group circulated a newsheet which opposed the agreement, mainly on the grounds that there should be no return to work while the committee meets.

The strike committee had already rejected this idea. They suspected that the city council would not implement the committee's decisions and have insisted therefore, as part of the agreement, that the findings should be binding. This has now been agreed so there is little point in staging a strike while it meets.

The typists and machine operators will stay on strike, however, until the composition of the committee is agreed and they have voted to escalate industrial action should the city council drag its feet.

ALAN WALKER,
Vice-chairperson,
Liverpool NALGO

The JR of Doncaster

SOCIALIST Challenge's coverage of the Laurence Scott workers' struggle against Arthur Snipe's Mining Supplies Company has been of particular interest to me.

In the late 1950s I worked in the mines with Snipe when he was a deputy (foreman). I remember one occasion at Cadeby pit, near Doncaster. Snipe was prodding the roof with his deputy's stick, telling us that it was as safe as houses. No sooner did he say this than down came a slab of rock the size of a table top. It's a shame it wasn't three feet nearer then it would have crushed old Snipey and saved the LSE workers the trouble.

Obviously, his attitude to the well-being of workers under him hasn't changed much. Snipe by name, snipe by nature.

After Snipe left the mines he went into the quarrying business. This was when he patented the tool that made his fortune in later years. And the talk in the Labour clubs around Doncaster is that he didn't even invent the tool himself. But he made his fortune, and he's now the 'JR of Doncaster'. The kind of man who will spend thousands of pounds on a St Leger colt while condemning hundreds of men to the dole queue.

So that's my knowledge of Snipe from some time ago. It's time someone stood up to him. When the Scott's workers win their struggle, they will have my special thanks along with that of all workers fighting redundancy.
A MANSFIELD READER

Women continue the fight

THIS year's conference of the local government employees' union, NALGO, saw a setback for women's rights with the defeat of motions both on positive action and reaffiliation to the Women's TUC.

For many who have been active on issues affecting women in NALGO, this came as a surprise. We had thought we were making slow but steady progress.

As a result, Leeds NALGO called a national women's conference on 14 November and 163 delegates from 81 branches came together to try to work out the reasons for our defeat and the best way forward.

The day covered a wide range of issues with workshops on sexual harassment, new technology, rights of working parents, job sharing, feminist practice in the trade unions, local working branches and the Women's TUC.

The conference, as well as allowing a vital exchange of experience, was able to develop proposals which could be fed back for further discussion in the branches. The workshop on sex-

ual harassment, for example, discussed the need to have women with specific responsibility for this question in the branch. Women making a complaint then would not have to go through a male steward if they did not wish to.

The workshop on the Women's TUC proposed that the next fight in the union should be to argue for the TUC itself to remove constraints from the Women's TUC which stop it from being an effective body.

This is vital because in NALGO many people have argued against reaffiliation on the basis that the Women's TUC does not have any real power.

It was felt that the conference had been very valuable and we agreed that a similar event should be organised annually in the autumn to allow discussion around national conference motions.
TERRY CONWAY,
ISLINGTON NALGO

Zoo Time

London Zoo might like to consider augmenting its takings by inviting the Princess of Wales to be their guest.

If the number of Zoo visitors increased as a result of prurient curiosity over Ching Ching's recent false pregnancy, surely it would increase astronomically were a caged pregnant Princess there to gawp at.
PAT ARROWSMITH,
LONDON

A socialist perspective on radical pop

By Simon Lockwood

IN SPITE OF the rejuvenation of radically-intentioned pop music in the past three years, I have yet to read a socialist perspective which gets past the 'well, far out' state.

The left is quite willing to use bands as a propaganda force or a confirmation of change seems incapable of a political investigation into the true motivation and effects of their work.

The result of this has been to hand a critical carte-blanche to the pop weeklies.

Thus, when considering bands like Specials, Clash, UB40, Beat, or Gang of Four, it is almost impossible not to see them within the traditional rock framework of 'sound' and 'visuals'. There is virtually no attempt to see these groups from an angle that their work should command — that of political culture.

Searching around for a convenient peg on which to hang this 'much needed' investigation, what could be more convenient than the Clash and Gang of Four treading boards again after all these months?

These two bands represent an interesting contrast within radical rock. The Clash personify the 'bad guys searching for truth', 'rock 'n' roll rebel' routine, while Gang of Four think it necessary to undermine the conventions of pop itself.

By examining sections of the Gang's career with reference to that of the Clash, I hope to stir up some thoughts on what 'radical pop' can and can't hope to achieve.

Much has been made of the dynamic of Gang of Four on stage; their ability to galvanise an audience, to translate ideals into 'rock 'n' roll action'.

The first time I saw them, I was impressed by the way they recreated the drama of political protest — anger, humility, chaos, democracy, all fused with anti-sexist sentiments. Impressed, but somehow marginalised.

Hadn't I been through this sort of stuff on the Clash's white riot tour? Certainly there were significant advances. The Clash never seemed to have an anti-sexist thought in their collective brain-cell. But wasn't the Four's appeal just as physical, just as male? I wasn't sure.

The rest of the audience were less undecided and, after the fourth or fifth encore, I was in little doubt that here was a reservoir of revolutionary potential waiting to unleash itself on London's unsuspecting streets.

So what happened? The band released an album that reassured their following but won few converts. To me it sounded repetitive and smug. The cutting edge of their lyrics was mostly submerged in their own political shorthand: put together

two unconnected ideas and you get — political enlightenment.

The music seemed tuneless and leaden. This was followed by a year's virtual inactivity in the UK. Reports broke through of their Stateside conquests. They were rumoured to be considering settling in the more 'stimulating' atmosphere of New York. And they turned down requests to play more prestigious benefits both in this country and Ireland — supposedly a pet concern.

Their re-emergence in Britain was heralded by their second album — *Solid Gold*. A gross disappointment to fans I know, it strikes me as just unlistenable. The discovery of irony as a lyrical device is somewhat undermined by the fact that large chunks of words are inaudible. The music is a plodding caricature of the first LP.

'Paralysed' stands out from the morass but even that's more depressing than galvanising. The whole thing reeks of jamming in the studio, the ultimate malaise of popsters with cash but no inspiration.

In spite of all this, the obligatory promotion tour proved the Gang a greater live attraction than ever before.

People went, not to be challenged, but to be confirmed. The gigs had become institutionalised and the band dutifully trotted out their own past. The response was as total and, it became clear, as ritualistic as before. The only act of rebellion one expects from a heavy metal gig is the odd smashed betting shop window.

It strikes me now of course, that the Gang of Four spectacle was always that of the heavy metal monolith. That even when the really good material was fresh and challenging, they were actively undermining it with pomp and technology.

Is 'Love like Anthrax' more resonant because it is announced as one of the 'star numbers' by horror film lighting? As a total experience it may have more immediate impact. But what about the song? Steamrollered by the desire to elicit a response.

Lightshows don't heighten people's sensibilities, they bury them. They don't stimulate political action, they simulate it. They steal anger, derail it. That's why the revolution never gets past the foyer.

I am concentrating so harshly on the Four because they do have genuine socialist aspirations, they do think about



cultural implications. It would have been far less instructive to have focussed on the Clash because their mannerisms and aspirations are so much more transparent.

I was part of the Clash white riot army. I went back, tour after tour,

looking to recapture the unself-conscious unity of 1977. And I felt the personal sense of betrayal when I realised that their impact was, in fact, based around every narcissistic rock 'n' roll cliché in the book — which also applies to a good number of their songs.

The point is that Gang of Four have fashioned an influential campaign — *Au Pairs*, the Beat — out of exposing cultural repression and breaking down divisive pop fantasies, only to resort to the same self-glorifying techniques themselves. I would say that unless

New Play or El Salvador

AMERICANS or LAST TANGO IN HUA — HUA TENANGO, based on the current events in El Salvador.

The famous San Francisco Mime Troupe will be visiting England next month. From 8 to 20 December they will be appearing at the Riverside Studio, Crisp Rd, Hammersmith with their new play.

the band can get the energy together to write a new riff and rethink their presentation they will be destined to remain an instructive irrelevance resting on the laurels of one groundbreaking EP.

Hopefully this article will encourage debate on a crucial and neglected area.

Borderline — 'fast moving and very funny

THE Joint Stock Theatre Group is about to go on tour with a new production *Borderline* by Hanif Kureishi. JENNY FLINTOFT went to see it in London recently where it can be seen in the West End's Royal Court Theatre.

Amina lives on the borderline. It's the borderline between childhood and adulthood. It's also the borderline between Asian Southall and the alien, white-dominated world outside. And it's the borderline that she has to cross daily between two cultures — one traditional Asian and the other, aggressively modern Western.

Interestingly, author Hanif Kureishi has chosen to write a play about Southall from the standpoint of the Pakistani community, rather than from that of the dominant ethnic group, the Punjabis.

His characters include a woman whose main desire in life is to return to Pakistan (Amina's mother); a student who believes that the way forward for Asians is to move upwards through the white educational system; two political activists and a white liberal radio reporter, Susan.

Amina's father is arranging a marriage for her.

The play is not Agit-prop — the characters and the issues are complex. There aren't any easy answers and nobody is completely right — even Amina's father, with his traditionalist outlook and his obstinate faith in the justice and fairness of British democracy, isn't altogether wrong about everything.

Only the student, Haroun, stands completely condemned. For the play ends with the historic National Front meeting in Southall and ahead lie the horrific police violence and the vicious attempts to

crush the Asian community.

Although uncertain as to the right tactics, the young Asians understand that they and the community as a whole must stick together. But Haroun will not stay and help defend Southall.

He is leaving for University where he will become a lawyer — not to serve his community but in order to blend into the white man's world.



The use of white actors to play most of the Asian parts worked well on the whole, mainly because the accents were convincing. But it was distracting to

have Amina's father and one of the activists played by a blonde man.

More serious is the criticism that Amina's aggressive sexuality strains the limits of credibility. The author is attempting to challenge the stereotype of the passive Asian woman but, while extremely amusing, it does not completely come off.

These grumbles aside, the play is well worth seeing: the dialogue is excellent — it sounds like real people talking. And it's fast moving and very funny.

Borderline's first few productions at community centres in London have been followed by a West End run at the Royal Court, due to end on 28 November. It will be back there for two later dates — 5 and 7 December. On Mondays, all seats are £2.

Outside London it can be seen on the following dates:

On 30 November, the Central Community Theatre, Scunthorpe; from 2 to 4 December, the Theatre in the Mill, Bradford University; from 9 to 12 December at Bosworth College and the Moat Community College, Leicester; and 15 to 19 December, Aston Centre for the Arts and Birmingham University.



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Socialist Challenge

Jobs Express: just the beginning

WHEN the Jobs Express was speeding through Scotland on Monday, a report issued by the Scottish Development Agency provided another powerful argument for a fightback on jobs. The report disclosed that the number of Scottish workers made redundant in the past year had increased by a massive 63 per cent.

Other evidence points in the same direction. At the end of October the research department of the white collar union ASTMS predicted that by the time of the next election there will be 5.5m jobless.

If these gloomy forecasts are accurate it will be youth, such as those on the Jobs Express, who will be hit hardest. But there is nothing in-

evitable about the rise in unemployment. It will only occur if the bosses and the Tory government are allowed to get away with it.

How can they be stopped? By itself, the Jobs Express which ends its journey in London this weekend, will not stop the Tories' job-cutting policies. What is also needed is a campaign of

action, the strength of which will force the jobs battle into the centre of the political stage.

Part of such a campaign would be mobilising support for those who are already fighting against the sack. At present, the best example is the workers at Laurence Scott in Manchester who, for the past seven months, have been on strike against the closure of their factory.

Sadly, the strikers are having to take on not just their bosses but the leaders of the engineering union who have refused to back their members' jobs fight.

Until the union leaders back struggles like those at Laurence Scott, the unemployment protests they do support — such as the Jobs Express — will be seen as no more than token protests.

Jobs battles like that at Laurence Scott can be won. There is the example

of the magnificent victory achieved at the Lee Jeans factory near Glasgow where a long occupation ended with the closure threat being lifted.

The Lee Jeans fight involved women workers, many of them young women. And the fight for a woman's right to work is

another campaign that is an essential part of the jobs battle.

The Labour Party has called a demonstration for early in the New Year on this theme. Following the Jobs Express, this 'Woman's Right to Work' protest is the next national mobilisation which needs to be built if the fight against

the dole queue is to be taken forward.

In the meantime, march with those on the Jobs Express this Sunday. Assemble Speakers Corner, Hyde Park at 11pm. And on Monday join the lobby of parliament outside the House of Commons at 2pm.

MEET THE JOBS EXPRESS

Support youths' demands for jobs, education, training and a voice.

Newcastle
 23 November
 Edinburgh
 Glasgow
 24 November
 Liverpool
 Manchester
 Sheffield
 25 November
 Birmingham
 Swansea
 26 November
 Cardiff
 Bristol
 27 November
 London

Jobs for Youth Festival
 On the evenings of 27, 28, 29 November, concerts will be given at the Rainbow, Finsbury Park in North London featuring top rock bands.

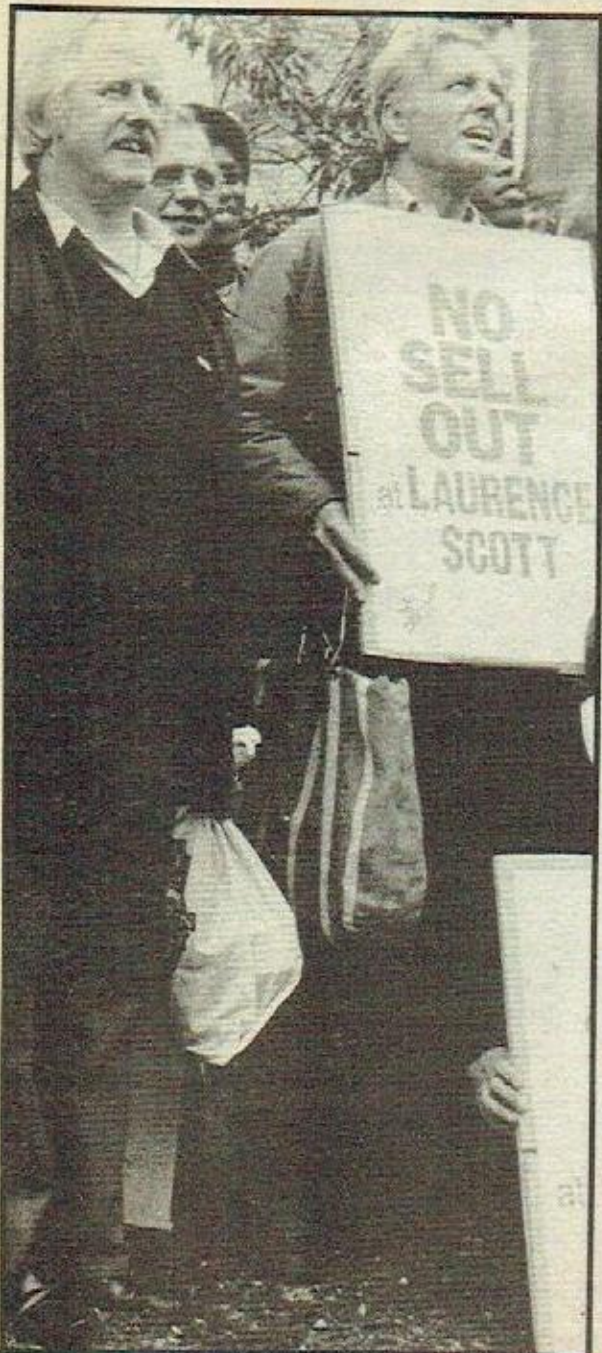
Lobby of Parliament
 On 30 November those who have taken part in the Jobs Express will lobby MPs.

March and Rally
 On 29 November a march and rally will be held in central London.

For further information contact your regional council of the TUC or your local branch of the National Union of Students.

Laurence Scott

Crucial jobs fight



WORKERS at Laurence Scott Engineering have been on strike for seven months against redundancy. Despite their occupation of the factory being broken, hundreds of workers are continuing the fight against Arthur Snipe, boss of Mining Supplies, which owns the factory.

The Laurence Scott workers have set a magnificent example against the do-nothing tactics of the TUC leaders, and the sabotage of their own union leadership, the AUEW executive.

But now their struggle has entered a new and decisive stage, and they are the victims of another massive attack — this time from the law. The Laurence Scott workers are extending mass picketing to the Mining Supplies factory in Doncaster, to spread the struggle against Snipe. Six of the stewards at the fac-

tory, including convenor Denis Barry, have been served with injunctions ordering them to stop picketing their employer.

They face possible 'contempt of court' proceedings for their refusal to knuckle under to the Tories' attempts to shackle the unions. They are on the sharp end of the Tory attacks on trade union

rights; their struggle must be supported by all workers.

The court proceedings against Denis Barry, together with Phil Penning, Billy Partlan, Peter Rown, Frank Stubbs and Dave Hallsworth has a decidedly sinister edge to them. The six under injunction face the possibility of surcharge for the lost production of their employer which could run into hundreds of thousands of pounds.

The last time the Employment Act was used in this way, against workers at the Chloride firm in East London, the workers were fined £6000 each. This time it could be much more.

Billy Partlan told

Socialist Challenge: 'We're fighting for long-established trade union rights. We've always had to break the rules to defend workers' interests. The Tories will not produce rules which will guarantee our rights — we have to fight for them ourselves.'

Last Monday between two and three hundred people picketed Snipe's Doncaster plant, including miners from the Armthorpe pit and workers from International Harvester.

A big boost was given to the picket by the support of British Oxygen workers who respected the picket line, preventing essential supplies from entering the plant.

Next Monday will be crucial for the Scott's struggle. The mass picket of Mining Supplies will take place again and the AUEW national committee will discuss again whether to support the struggle.

Laurence Scott workers have not only shown the way to fight unemployment, they are also in the lead of the fight against the Tories' anti-union laws as well. That's why thousands of people are needed next Monday in Doncaster. Be there!

Mass Picket, Monday 30 November, Mining Supplies, Carr Hill Industrial Estate, Doncaster. Off A630. Starts 6.30am. Mass picket every Monday.

