

# Socialist Challenge

# Rape victims - up against the law

# Support the train drivers

*FOR A long time, women have known that if they are raped they cannot depend on the forces of law and order for justice.*

That is one reason why, according to an estimate from the London Rape Crisis Centre, only 25 per cent of rapes are reported to the police.

But now, it is obvious to anyone who reads a newspaper or watches television that the situation is much worse than they might have imagined.

The decision of Judge Richards not to imprison the rapist of the hitchhiker, the brutal interrogation by the police of the rape victim shown on television, have shown what the frightening reality is: not only will the law fail to give adequate protection to women, it will harass rape victims, and even seek to defend the rapist.

It is true that the lenient treatment of the rapist by Judge Richards has been condemned by the top legal authorities. It is also the case that Thames Valley police has accepted criticism of the questioning of the rape victim shown on television.

But this does not mean that the maltreatment of rape victims can be explained by the prejudice of a single judge or the sadism of an individual policeman.

The structure of society, the nature of 'law and order' in this country is always liable to put women on the defensive, and insist on sympathy for men who 'lose their heads' and attack women.

When you have a system which discriminates against women in employment, job promotion, pay, insurance schemes, taxation and many other ways, then it is hardly surprising that judges or policemen carry through this logic and treat women with contempt.

And when there is a parliament in this country where women are in a minority of less than three per cent, then it is not surprising that this parliament never gets round to discuss how to strengthen the law in favour of rape victims.

That is why, until the social and economic system in this country is fundamentally altered - attacks on women and discrimination against women will continue.

*Rape: what can be done? See page 13*

**RAILWORKERS** are poised to win the first round against British Rail's attempt to destroy 38,000 jobs and massively increase productivity at the expense of railworkers. Even BR has admitted that 4,000 drivers' jobs will go after the introduction of flexible rostering. If railworkers struck together, nothing would hold them back.

Sid Wighell's appeal to the arbitration service, ACAS is a treacherous attempt to stab the dispute in the back. This is little wonder since he has agreed to all BR's job-cutting proposals which his members are now showing they do not accept.

ACAS cooked up the present deal last August after it became clear that a few months' breathing space would allow BR to take on the drivers alone. ACAS' new boss, Pat Lowry, has as much interest in railworkers as he showed in British Leyland, when he was Michael Edwards' personnel manager.

There has been 100 per cent support from the ASLEF membership for all the actions called by the executive and massive pressure is building up for all-out action.

A mass meeting of drivers in the Midlands last weekend, representing mainline stations and depots - attended by ASLEF sponsored MP, Les Huckfield - called for all-out action. Drivers

in the Southern and Midlands regions are operating a work-to-rule which is cutting services from Euston by 40 per cent.

Guards throughout the country have been fully supporting the drivers. Sid Wighell has been bombarded with demands for solidarity strike action and faces motions of censure for his role in the dispute so far.

More militant main line stations like Kings Cross, where both ASLEF and NUR members are organising strike action, can play a big role in co-ordinating national pressure for all-out action. The new rail Broad Left should add its weight to this.

A defeat for BR will be a defeat for the Tories. They are as 'uninvolved' as they were in the steel strike 2 years ago. And as with the miners who prevented pit closures last year, a victory for the drivers will be a victory for us all against unemployment.



## Broken promises.

A lot has been said about the August 1981 pay agreement, but what about the productivity agreement which was made at the same time?

The understanding on flexible rostering which was accepted by all three rail unions, including ASLEF, was quite specific. It reads as follows:

"No

body revealed the ASLEF attitude:

"The ASLEF representatives noted the points put forward but re-affirmed that after very careful consideration, they were not prepared to accept any rostering arrangements which involved relinquishment of the 8-hour day agreement..."

Since then, a

**BR broke the promise. But the issue is the 4000 jobs immediately and the 38,000 planned. And the increases in productivity which involves outlawing the 8-hour day.**

### Model Resolution

Pass this model resolution in your trade union or Labour Party branch.

'This branch fully supports the railworkers' fight for wages and against job loss. It calls on the national executive to give the financial and practical solidarity necessary to the railworkers in order to bring this dispute to a rapid and successful conclusion.'

# Editorial

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## Labour Liaison '82

THE fight is on to prevent a still birth of Labour Liaison '82. Labour Liaison was proposed, after the left advance was checked at Brighton. Its need has been confirmed by the effort of the right wing to shift blame for the damage done to the Labour movement by the Callaghan-Healey government by making the incredible charge that all Labour's election problems lie with the left's efforts to prevent such damage being done again.

But faced with Foot leading a witch hunt and many on the left unable to explain Labour's by-election losses, sections of the left went into a spin.

\* The Labour Co-ordinating Committee opposed the formation of a new left wing.

\* The Campaign for Labour Party Democracy argued for a 'low profile'.

\* Benn agreed not to stand for deputy.

The meeting of LLC has to answer Basnett. Has 'peace broken out'? Have the left capitulated to the right?

The left has no alternative but to fight. Any compromises will only encourage the right. The right are fighting for a free hand in the party so that if necessary they can seek an alliance with the SDP.

Any strong opposition in the Party and the unions therefore must be broken. A compromise with the left is hopeless for them. But it is also hopeless for the left.

Stuck halfway, the left cannot win their appeal that a radical alternative to Wilson and Callaghan can inspire masses of people and win victory for Labour.

A fighting LLC means

● Giving a vital political lead in winning labour movement backing for the railworkers, the miners and the steelworkers in their battle against the Tories. Success here would create the best possible conditions for a Labour victory — and transform the fortunes of the left.

● Breaking the back of the witchhunt. The 300 hundred constituencies that have already opposed the witchhunt should be organised and extended especially into the unions. Joint trade union — Labour Party rallies opposing the witchhunt, organised in the main centres would be useful forums to discuss the next steps to win a Labour victory.

● Backing the anti-missiles movement, the fight for a womens right to work and to choose, and building solidarity with Solidarnosc. These issues can mobilise and give the lie to the charge that left wing demands are unpopular.

● Seriously trying to open up the unions to the Labour Party debates and releasing the stranglehold on militant action by the base. This will involve giving serious backing to the fight to unseat right wing union bosses and democratise the unions.

The LLC can be useful if it helps turn the Labour Party outwards in this way. This is desperately necessary if the challenge of the left is to succeed.

## JOIN THE FIGHT FOR SOCIALISM

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

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Address.....

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Union/CLP (if any).....

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# Trade Unions

# Five reasons why you should support ASLEF

By D. Ellis, NUR member

THE stakes in the rail strike are high. The British Rail Board has flagrantly thrown aside the pay agreement reached with the train-drivers' union last August. The Board now publicly admits its own failure to follow the agreement — but justifies its actions!

The media is making out that an obscure inter-union dispute involving a mere 3 per cent rise is at issue. In reality, the outcome of the struggle will have an impact throughout the labour movement.

Here's five good reasons why all working people should be four-square behind the industrial action and why everyone should be planning resolutions and active support today.

1. Train drivers and other railworkers who are taking solidarity action provide a shining example for workers throughout Britain. It's the same old story. British Rail wants to increase productivity — to force each railworker to work harder for less money.

British Rail plan to axe 38,000 jobs by 1984. It has admitted that 4,000 drivers could lose their jobs through flexible rostering. Yet again, workers are being asked to pay for a crisis which is none of their making!

2. Railworkers are defending a fundamental right shared by all workers in Britain — the hard-won right to an eight-hour day. If the clock is put back over 60 years in this industry, just think how much easier it will be for management elsewhere to challenge this and other similar historical gains.

3. Today the rail industry is based on overtime working. On average railworkers are forced to work 54½ hours each week to compensate for the low basic rate. Now the new rostering will under-value overtime — with no proposals for an immediate increase in the basic rate.

The carrot of a 39-hour week will still leave railworkers with an enormous hole in their wage packets. If such a massive wage cut is forced on strongly organised sectors like railworkers, this will be used to keep down even further the wages of the lower paid.

4. The social consequences of longer workdays for railworkers and their families will be devastating. Management doesn't acknowledge these consequences of its plans. But its effects will extend even beyond family life.

At work railworkers will be forced to let things go by the board to complete their day's work. It's ludicrous to suggest that drivers work a mere 4½ hour day. That's the time they are at the controls in their cab.

What about the other hours spent travelling to the depots to get to the trains, the checking to ensure they are safe, the time spent reading the volumes of information published weekly to inform drivers of speed restrictions, engineering works, and so on?

If safety goes by the board, it's the travelling public that will suffer. That is, if there's a service left after the planned cutbacks are implemented.

But once again, services for social need, which take into account the well-being of the workforce, aren't part of monetarist policies. It's the profits and the book balances that count most for Margaret Thatcher.

5. It's been clear from day one of the dispute that the British Rail Board has been out to destroy ASLEF. It's tried to isolate the union at every stage. The decision to pay NUR drivers the 3 per cent although they haven't agreed to the rostering is just the latest example. And there's nothing Thatcher would like to see better than a troublesome union out of the way.

Whether this goal is attainable or not will depend on the backing ASLEF gets. If support is weak, the door will be open for Thatcher to tackle other troublesome unions. And it will be that much easier to enforce Tebbit's anti-union laws.

### GREG TUCKER NUR guard on Southern Region reports:

AS THE ASLEF strike has progressed, the feeling of the guards has hardened in support of the drivers. At the same time BR has gone on the offensive trying to drive a wedge between NUR and ASLEF.

Southern Region management is trying to stop NUR members being paid for days when no trains are running. It is threatening guards with productivity deals which include a commitment to one-person operation of trains within the next two years on suburban and inter-city lines.

The guards' response has been to close ranks. NUR branches have been coming out in support of ASLEF throughout the Southern Region and some depots are refusing to negotiate at all locally on productivity.

A stormy meeting of my branch at Waterloo, passed a resolution in support of ASLEF and demanded that the NUR Executive renegotiate on productivity, but only in line with the Guards Grades Conference decision to refuse to discuss flexible rostering hours. At the meeting members stressed the need to show our support of the ASLEF drivers.

Given the sellout by the national NUR leadership all this has led some branches to pass resolutions of no confidence in Sid Weighell, the union's general secretary.

Unfortunately, the one body able to give a line on this, the Rail Broad Left, has been strangely silent. Broad Left leaders have yet to come out openly. They must do so. Never has the time been better for socialists to drive into the NUR and turn back the collaborationist policies of Weighell and co.



## Sheffield

ABOUT 100 guards at the militant Tinsley branch of the NUR voted to begin a work to rule on 18 January in support of the drivers. This action follows the branch's decision to reject the productivity accepted by the union on a national level. The guards state that their action won't have much bite immediately, but they are determined to keep their eight-hour day and are unhappy with the way the new 39-hour week is being administered.

## Leeds

LAST Thursday, writes Stephen Skeet, ASLEF, Holbeck, the Leeds City Branch of the NUR at a meeting, attended by twice the usual number of people, passed a motion condemning the NUR executive for accepting the 'variable rostering' agreement and other productivity proposals like 'one person operation of trains' and the 'open station concept'. There were 20 guards at the meeting who reported that feeling among guards was running very high and that there was a lot of support for the drivers' action.

## Between the picket lines

By Tessa van Gelderen

**LUNCHTIME** Thursday, sitting in a pub in Kings Cross and the train drivers' strike is over... till Sunday anyway.

JON MARKS from the Local Department Committee (LDC) of the Kings Cross National Union of Railwaymen, is talking about British Rail's announcement that members of his union who are train drivers will be offered the 3 per cent pay increase which has been withheld from the train drivers union, ASLEF.

'I'd have thought the British Rail Board would have adopted that strategy before now. I'm surprised it's taken them as long as it has,' Jon pointed out that despite this attempt to drive a wedge between the two unions, the guards fully support the drivers.

'They're taking action on the 3 per cent, and against variable rostering which is what we also oppose,' Jon explains. 'Sid Weighell, our general secretary, is not putting the union's position when he says ASLEF's to blame for this dispute.'

### Record

Jon is anxious to set the record straight. 'Our executive committee has a position that the 3 per cent claim is separate from productivity and that the Board is wrong to withhold payment.'

He pulls out the circular from his union which makes this clear. 'NUR drivers have been instructed officially not to work,' he adds to stress the official position of the NUR compared to that of Sid Weighell.

STEVE FOREY, secretary, Kings Cross, ASLEF branch, gives his view on how the dispute can be won. 'The Board is making threats about locking us out,' he says. 'This tactic of a two day stoppage, it's too long, too drawn out.'

## What drivers think of the dispute

By Pete Grant, ASLEF

*In the early hours of Saturday morning East Croydon station echoed with the sound of tearing metal as a freight engine crashed into the back of a stationary parcels train. Firemen took seven hours to cut the young train driver from the twisted remains of his cab, eventually having to amputate his leg.*

The dramatic scenes were seen by millions of TV viewers on ITN news that night, bringing home to them the dangerous job that train drivers undertake. What contrast there was with the item that followed: Peter Parker, chairperson of British Rail Board, repeating his slander that the drivers are being totally selfish in demanding his Board pay the 3 per cent owed from last August unless drivers accept flexible rostering removing the protection of the 1919 eight hour day.

'What we want is an all out indefinite strike forthwith. There can be no compromise. This offer to the NUR drivers shows there is more at stake than flexible rostering. It's a deliberate attack by the BRB and the Tories to smash ASLEF.'

'You can't divorce what's happening from the general attack on trade unionists that Tebbit's proposing,' Steve continues. 'Rank and file members of ASLEF are now not prepared to accept productivity proposals. Progressive elements in the NUR are joining forces with us which is a bloody good development.'

So what do the two of them think of the 'federation' between their unions? Steve is quite clear: 'I was a delegate to conference and the first any rank and file member knew about this federation was when it was presented to us on a plate.'

'It's not been created by pressure from the branches. It's never really intended to develop the unity we do need at grass roots level.'

Jon Marks disagrees. 'The federation was in fact a positive step,' he argues, 'towards unity. You can't set up such a body on a rank and file basis. It created the framework so we can establish the links we're talking about.'

### Unity

The two continue to disagree. 'Look,' says Steve Forey, 'both ASLEF and NUR said we weren't going to accept flexible rostering. There's no point in having the federation unless you have unity in action.'

Here. Jon Marks

denies that this was actually the NUR's position. 'But,' he says, trying a different tack, 'the Federation facilitates our attempts to get our two councils together.'

'Circumstances are changing for ASLEF, you can't afford to be independent as you have been in the past. The first argument that comes up, you expect the NUR to accept ASLEF's point of view.'

'No, I don't,' says Steve, 'but I do expect them to go along with their members' interests. It's a very crucial issue. Every guard I've spoken to is against flexible rostering.'

### Guards

On this there is no disagreement. In fact at Kings Cross, the guards have been actively organising in support of the drivers.

'We're planning on a two day strike in the near future,' explains Jon. 'We took 70 guards up to Unity House, NUR Headquarters, last week. We want one hour off the working week without strings.'

'We're seeing management on Monday; if they don't accept our demands then they'll get 24 hours notice. Although the principle for flexible rostering's been accepted by the NUR, a lot of the guards are against it.'

Steve adds that the drivers want one rest day every eight weeks to achieve their 39 hour week — without strings, of course. 'That's the only way we think we'll benefit from shorter working hours.'

'The action of the guards at Kings Cross,' he adds, 'could well lead to a lock out.' Jon agrees but points out that this could have a backlash effect. 'We don't want to provoke a general lock out. It



Kings Cross drivers picket their union headquarters.

would have to be done officially through the two unions at Kings Cross.'

This proposal for support action from NUR at Kings Cross would not receive official backing from the union, but there's not much the officials could do. The train crews are determined to win.

'The NUR drivers won't cross the picket line,' says Steve, 'whether they get the 3 per cent or

not.' Peter Parker, chairperson of British Rail, can lock us all out. Nothing is going to stop

ASLEF members. We're very determined. But the key to winning is picketing.

'It's not a tradition of the railway,' Steve points out. 'Members of other unions are used to sitting down and everything comes to a stop. It doesn't happen like that anymore. Goods, these days, are carried elsewhere.'

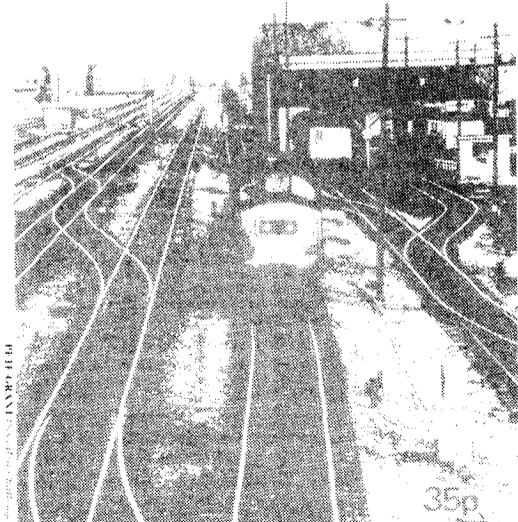
Steve explains that they're hoping to step up picketing next time on a London-wide basis. 'We want to stop anything that moves,' he says.

'We know non-union labour is being used to deliver goods, such as national newspapers.' The union leaders don't give them much help. Steve points out that there's a signed agreement between British Rail and London Transport union which outlaws strikes in solidarity with each other.

### Flying

'We really need these pickets,' he says, 'especially flying pickets.' Another ASLEF member comes in to the pub. He's been on the picket for two nights and has staffed the strike headquarters at Kings Cross for 48 hours. He gets a well deserved cheer. They're pleased with the way things went last week at Kings Cross. Now they're planning the next action: pickets on Saturday night, then Tuesday and Wednesday. They're out to win and win means all out.

## HOW TO FIGHT 'PRODUCTIVITY'



**Socialist Challenge**  
PAMPHLET FOR RAILWORKERS

What policies are needed to tackle productivity in the rail industry? Order now 'How to fight productivity', a Socialist Challenge pamphlet for railworkers. 35p plus 10p p&pp.

Cheques/Postal orders to Cardinal Enterprises Ltd. Available from: Rail pamphlet, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

## Kings Cross guards support ASLEF

By R. Brookes, NUR guard.

MOST NUR guards found out that they had lost the guaranteed 8 hour day when they heard about their union's agreement with British Rail Board over 'variable rostering' just before Christmas.

Over 70 guards attended a mass meeting and supported unanimously the action taken by ASLEF. The meeting also decided to take strike action within the following 14 days on a lightning basis to show guards' total opposition to 'variable rostering'.

By this time there were nearly 100 guards there, and they walked out together, whistles blowing, to lobby the union executive. A lot of points were raised with the six members of the executive who agreed to discuss the issues. Kings Cross guards wanted to keep the guaranteed day and work a straight 39 hour week instead of the 39 hour week averaged over 8 weeks.

The two issues that were raised many times were the loss of the 8 hour day, meaning a loss of overtime payments with no rise in the basic rate, and the impossibility of swapping turns on a weekly basis under the new arrangement. The only way in which train crews manage to have a reasonably normal family life is by changing turns. With travelling time railworkers could work anything up to a 14 hour day.

In response to the anger shown by the lobby, the executive stated that it was quite possible, within the broad terms of the agreement for Kings Cross guards to negotiate a straight 39 hour week with 8 hour days and an extra rest day every 8 weeks. However, it was clear to everyone there that BRB would never agree to this because it would completely defeat the object of the agreement which was to 'vary' hours.



Sid Weighell demonstrates on the Jobs Express march. How many jobs is he prepared to sell of his own members?

To test out the truth of what the executive said, the guards members of the local departmental committee are asking the Kings Cross area manager to give a written agreement to let train crews work an 8 hour day, 39 hour week.

At the end of the lobby the executive asked the guards to

withdraw their threat of unofficial action, but outside the headquarters, this was angrily refused. It was agreed that nothing had been said that would lead to a change of decision. That same day the LDC issued a newsletter for guards 'On the Road' outlining the decisions taken at the meeting.

On the following Wednesday and Thursday of the strike, ASLEF members picketed Kings Cross, but they were not joined by many guards. It is vital, not only at Kings Cross, that all guards join the picket lines because that is one of the best ways to show support for the drivers.



Photo: PETE GRANT (Socialist Challenge)

Resolution passed by Kings Cross guards

1. Following a LDC recommendation it was agreed that all guards attend for duty on the above two days as normal, (this action to be dependant on the NEC of the NUR not calling everybody out.)
2. All guards who attend for work to donate £5 each per day to the ASLEF hardship fund in view of the fact that ASLEF will not be paying strike pay.
3. This levy to be our way of showing solidarity with the ASLEF over their resistance to acceptance of variable rostering.
4. Guards to call strike action on two days in the next 14 days on a lightning basis to show our total opposition to variable rostering.
5. Strike action to be co-ordinated with other guard's depots.
6. A delegation of everyone in attendance at this mass meeting to immediately lobby our NEC members at Unity House to indicate our opposition to variable rostering.

reprinted from *On the Road Kings Cross guards LDC newsletter*

## Why we're going for Boyd and Duffy

By Patrick Sikorski

THE LAURENCE Scott workers have had enough. They are going for John Boyd and Terry Duffy, General Secretary and President of the engineering union, AUEW, respectively.

'Our aim', says Scotts convenor Denis Barry, 'is to expose Boyd, Duffy and the Executive for the corrupt people that they are in continually flaunting the democratic rule book of the union.'

'That is why we have launched a campaign for branches to pass a resolution, using Rule 14, which calls for the removal of the Executive.'

'We expect the kind of treatment we have had from them over the last nine months from the likes of Arthur Snipe but not from our own union.'

'They have clearly broken union policy which was to use the strength of the union to fight for jobs and against unemployment. We gave them a great platform to fight for jobs. But they don't want victories otherwise every member would fight back and they prefer a quiet life.'

The Scott workers are using a provision in the AUEW rule book under Rule 14 paragraph 5 which allows the membership to demand a ballot for the removal of the Executive.

If ten per cent or more of the branches pass the

resolution then the General Secretary must call a ballot. A two thirds majority is needed to force the Executive to stand down.

'We are confident of getting the necessary ten per cent of the branches to support our resolution, says Denis Barry. 'As you know, 1,060 branches supported our call for official national backing from the union last year and we need approximately 260 branches to continue to show their support.'

'We realise that many people don't realise the stakes involved until a similar situation hits them but we would like to think that we will get support, especially from places like Ford, where Executive member Jack Whyman was prominent in the sell out, and from British Leyland, Plansee and Staffa.'

'Of course, getting the ten per cent is only the start. Knowing the way this lot operates, we wouldn't expect a ballot without another fight.'

The Scotts strike committee has circulated every branch and District Committee in the union with an

appeal for support for the Rule 14 campaign together with copies of their latest strike bulletin which carries the headline: 'We Shall Not be Moved'.

Extensive factory tours to distribute the new bulletin and show the half

million video film 'The Laurence Scott Saga' are being organised.

Building national opposition to some of the most aggressive right wingers in the movement is the only way to give the membership the con-

fidence to fight back against the Tory jobs holocaust.

Duffy, Boyd and their cronies Sid Weighell, Bill Sirs and Frank Chappel are also the men behind Michael Foot and the Labour right's witch-hunt. They all know that a confident rank and file fighting back against the Tories will also sweep them from power in the Labour Party where for so long they have ignored conference policies broken the rule books and manipulated the block votes.

The Scott's strikers want Labour Parties, especially those with AUEW sponsored MPs, to be involved in the Scott tours, showing the film

Hackney  
Socialist Challenge/Revolution

FORUM  
Laurence Scott: a lesson in struggle

Wednesday, 27 January at 7.30pm

Dalston Library  
24 Dalston Lane, London E8



WE SHALL NOT BE MOVED

'This is the third issue of the strike bulletin. 15,000 copies of each issue are produced. To get the word out and help produce future editions, the bulletin must be self-financing. Order your copies now and distribute them among your friends and workmates. (2p a copy plus postage from: Laurence Scott Joint Shop Stewards Committee c/o, G Fryer, 20 Roundcroft, Romiley, Cheshire.)'

and raising money. The Laurence Scott workers and the four million on the dole can't afford to put off the fight to nail the Arthur Snipes and Terry Duffys of this world.

The right wingers and the broad lefters will no doubt argue that taking militant action against the Tories and the right wing

in the labour movement will cause further setbacks in parliamentary elections on the one hand and in the fight to change the AUEW leadership on the other.

The Scott's strikers' message is that we won't beat the Tories or the SDP/Liberal Alliance without also taking on and beating the right wing.

## AUEW branches support this resolution

'THIS BRANCH believes executive council has seriously mishandled the Laurence Scott dispute. As this is an issue of concern to all AUEW members the branch demands a ballot for removal of executive council in line with Rule 14 Para 5.'

Removal From Office: 'The Executive Council, or any member thereof, may be removed from office by a ballot vote of the membership of the union provided that such a ballot is demanded by 10 per cent or more of the branches and that not less than two thirds of the membership are in favour of such

removal. The ballot shall be conducted by the General Secretary'. If your branch supports this resolution, make sure it is sent to the AUEW General Office, 110 Peckham Road, London SE15 and a copy sent to the Strike Committee, 20 Roundcroft, Romiley, Cheshire, with donations.

# Miners — Gormley sabotage

By Jack Lavin

**THE TORY PRESS** has done all in their power to influence the vote of the South Wales miners who could decide the final outcome of the national ballot in the pits. If the 55 per cent majority is not achieved, this will largely be the responsibility of outgoing President, Joe Gormley.

But Gormley's fellow right wingers have also done their bit. The Nottinghamshire area President, speaking on Nottingham radio, stated that the majority of Nottingham miners would not support the executive. To make sure, he prevented the area from making an effective response to the Coal Board's advertising campaign.

The right wing would like nothing better than a defeat for the NEC in the ballot. All along the line, they have done their best to sabotage the fight for a full claim.

They prolonged the negotiations and allowed the Tories to isolate the Leyland workers, the tanker drivers and the Ford workers, all of whom could have been powerful allies for the miners.

## Mandate

The left in the NUM has organised a vigorous campaign throughout the union for rejection of the offer. In Nottinghamshire, for instance, thousands of copies of the *Yorkshire Miner* were provided for militants.

But the hope that the Tories would turn tail under the threat of strike action has led Scargill to downplay the question. The *Yorkshire Miner* calls for an incisive vote to reject the offer and to empower the NEC to call strike action 'if

necessary' in order to bring the Board back to the negotiating table 'for sensible and realistic talks'.

This has left the right wing with a lot of room for manoeuvre. They can argue that a 'yes' vote is really a mandate for more talks but not for strike action.

The Coal Board, recognising this weakness, will attempt to drive a wedge into the union and, with the aid of the right-wing, push through a settlement well short of the full claim.

The right-wing NEC majority is bound to try all its usual tricks to sabotage the fight for the full claim. It will try to string out the negotiations in order to undermine the confidence of the rank and file.

## Militants

The way to prevent a right-wing sabotage is to organise seriously for strike action. The left must show the rank and file — and the Board — that if there has to be a strike then the miners will make damn sure they will win.

The miners strike in 1972 was organised on just such lines and, ten years later, the same battle plans are needed once more.

The heat should be put on the leadership through lobbies of the NEC: the Board must be given a firm deadline to meet the claim. Strike notices should be issued as soon as the results of the ballot are out and plans for picketing drawn up.

A start could be made now to win the support of other groups of workers and a campaign mounted by militants in every pit to counter the Board's threats and Gormley's



"Now come on lads, be sensible. Grab hold of this straw!"

sabotage.

The Board and the Tories are talking tough but they face major problems. Stocks of coal at power stations have fallen dramatically and the train drivers strike has played havoc with the coal shipments from the

pitheads.

With a clear lead from Scargill and the leadership at area and pit level, as in 1972, the membership can be convinced that the full claim can be won.

In the election campaign, it was the demand for the full claim — for a

four day week, early retirement and investment into new pits — that fired the enthusiasm of rank and file miners.

Such demands can be a rallying call against mass unemployment and the Tory government.

## British steel:

# MacGregor's massacre goes on

By Celia Pugh

**SOUTH WALES** blizzards drove the profiteering rats out of their holes last week. One Cardiff shop-keeper had his shop wrecked by the local community for charging 75p for 50p pieces for the electricity meter.

Time will tell whether steel workers will respond as firmly to the threats of British Steel boss MacGregor to shut more plants because of alleged £100m snow damage, and the threat of controls on imported European steel into the United States.

Marlene and Roger Tovey both work at the Llanwern plant in Newport. Iron and Steel Trades Confederation (ISTC)

member Marlene, told Socialist Challenge: 'We're all disgusted with MacGregor's statement. We're asking what's behind it. He's using the weather as an excuse to cut the 19,000 jobs which he announced last year.'

National Union of Blastfurnacemen (NUB) member Roger, echoed this sentiment: 'My opinion is that the capitalists in Europe and Britain are trying to impose all the cuts on British Steel. No-one is left under any illusion that they believe that BSC has one strip mill too many. MacGregor's statement about the cold proves that another plant closure is never far from his mind. He will use any straw that public opinion will grasp.

Nothing has really altered since the end of last year. The threatened American block on imports will have a limited impact as British Steel only exports around 350,000 tonnes anyway.'

Since his appointment in 1980, MacGregor has made clear his intention to make the British Steel industry 'lean and profitable' through plant closures, rationalisations and hive-offs to private firms. This policy means that by July 1982 a mere 97,000 workers will be employed by BSC — a loss of 89,000 jobs since January 1979. Last year MacGregor warned that 19,000 more redundancies would be added. This is now looking more real as MacGregor lets it be

known that he is considering closing a whole plant to accommodate a production cut from 14.4m to 12.6m tonnes per year.

This plan has only one aim: to force the workforce to carry the cost of a gargantuan productivity leap. John Foley, South Wales officer of the ISTC pointed out that 'Recent productivity figures from Llanwern have boggled everyone's imagination'. It is thought that both here and Port Talbot achieved productivity increases approaching 30 per cent last year.

In recognition of this, MacGregor has insisted that there will be no wage increase at all nationally for the second year running. He has also postponed

the introduction of the 39 hour week until January 1983.

It is in the face of this that the ISTC nationally has threatened an overtime ban from February 7th. 'Unfortunately', Roger told us, 'the craft unions, including the NUB nationally have accepted the recent redundancies. Local ISTC officials also think that Bill Sirs is playing a waiting game. If the miners and Rail workers take these people on, then he'll hop on the bandwagon.'

After his meeting with MacGregor last Monday, Sirs suggested lifting the proposed overtime ban on the basis of some phony guarantees. In the interests of us all such grovelling needs to be fought.

## 'We are fighting to win'

By Gordon Smith

The work-in at British Aluminium's smelter at Invergordon is still going strong.

The workforce of 890 are taking part in the largest fight of its kind against job losses since Thatcher came to power.

British Aluminium first gave notice of closure just after Xmas on a plant which is the most efficient in Europe. It was to close only the week after it had reached a peak in its own very high standards.

Closure is being forced on the workers despite their own excellent performance.

The fault lies completely with British Aluminium who, from the time the plant opened during the Wilson government, have been running it at a loss because they cannot do their sums properly.

The workers at the Smelter have made it clear that they will 'stick it out'. With 20 per cent unemployment in the area they have simply nowhere else to go.

The 890 jobs are at stake in Eastern Ross which already has 1000 people on the dole.

Job losses in industry dependent on British Aluminium work will push

the figure of 890 to 2000 in Scotland as a whole where the Tories have already forced 14 per cent of the population out of work.

The workers at Invergordon have already received support from trade union and Labour Party branches all over Scotland. A meeting organised by the local Labour Party attracted over 500 people.

It is time to broaden out this struggle to the whole of Britain. All Socialist Challenge supporters can help by passing resolutions of support through their own Labour Party and trade union branches.



Extracts from a resolution passed by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International on 10 January

ON 13 DECEMBER the bureaucrats took the initiative and unleashed the political counter-revolution in Poland. They struck this blow to block the rise of a powerful mass movement that was moving towards the establishment of a democratic regime of workers' power.

The imposition of martial law was imperative to hit Solidarnosc before a leadership was formed capable of facing up to the question of power. The situation of dual power that opened up in 1980 could not be prolonged indefinitely.

A defeat has been inflicted on the Polish workers but the working class is not crushed as it was in Hungary in 1956. Solidarnosc is very disorganised from the repression, and a large part of its leadership has been removed. But the breadth of this trade union and 'social' movement, together with the depth of popular hatred against the Military Council of National Salvation, has created an extensive resistance including the establishment of underground networks.

A long period of localised and fragmented clashes is opening up. It is the duty of the international proletariat to support with all its strength the struggles of the working people of Poland against the repression of Jaruzelski and Brezhnev. Through this solidarity with Solidarnosc workers will learn the lessons of workers' democracy and the experiences of self-management from the Polish workers' bitter struggles.

The declaration of martial law, the mass arrests of those who are politically active and free-thinking, and the imposition of an undisguised dictatorship demonstrates yet again that there can be no 'reform' or 'gradual democratisation' of such a bureaucratic regime.

Since August 1980 the sheer instinct of survival of the bureaucratic apparatus led it to reject the existence and development of a mass, independent and democratic trade union. It did not carry out any real reform or 'renewal'. Its concessions stemmed from a policy of immediate self-defence. At the same time it was bringing together all the elements for a counter-offensive.

The cynicism of the bureaucracy's charges against Solidarnosc — accusations of 'anti-socialism' and 'counter-revolution' — are in strict proportion to the privileges that the regime wants to safeguard. The Military Council is not fighting today against 'capitalist agents' or 'imperialism' but is imprisoning thousands of representatives of the working masses.

It stands exposed as the Military Council for the Salvation of the Bureaucracy!

By imposing martial law and setting up the Military Council the bureaucracy has modified its traditional methods of rule. This indicates the extreme weakness of its social base and the deep crisis of institutions through which it established its political hegemony.

The ruling Communist Party had begun to fall apart under the impact of the mass upsurge of the last 18 months. Hundreds of thousands had left it and joined Solidarnosc. Nor had the so-called 'renewal' congress of last summer amounted to any significant change.

Even the Sejm (parliament) had begun to develop an initial autonomy from the party, as happened in Czechoslovakia at the time of the Prague Spring. On 3 October the Sejm refused to adopt the emergency measures proposed by Jaruzelski.

This institutional crisis left only an increased resort to the army as a last solution for the bureaucratic caste's counter-offensive, acting in close liaison with the armed forces of the USSR.

# Solidarity with the Polish workers



Since 1980 there have been almost continuous joint military manoeuvres; an alternative parallel system of communications was established; and General Jaruzelski acceded to the position of party leader, openly reflecting this drift towards basing bureaucratic rule on the military/police repressive apparatus.

In late October some 883 military units were sent into the country to resolve 'local conflicts' — in reality to facilitate a military takeover of the administrative apparatus. And on 2 December there was the militia attack on the Academy of student

firefighters, occupied with the support of Solidarnosc, to test the determination of Solidarnosc to respond to repressive provocations.

But it is not the case that the army has come on to the political scene as a 'third force' independent of the bureaucracy and the Communist Party. The top officer corps represents the hardline nucleus of the party. All the generals and colonels are members of the party and the massive majority are graduates of the USSR military academies.

The immediate objective of the Military Council was to break

Solidarnosc as a nationally organised apparatus and to sufficiently intimidate broad sectors of the population into believing that resistance was futile.

The repression is extensive with a mass round-up of Solidarnosc members, intellectuals, and other militants, the militarisation of whole sectors of the workforce, the establishment of 'obligatory labour' to track down Solidarnosc full-timers, the introduction of 'loyalty' statements, and the trials in true Stalinist tradition where there is no appeal against sentence.

But the extraordinary spirit of the mass movement and the gut refusal to accept the restoration of the bureaucratic order, led to a semi-spontaneous wave of strikes and broad resistance throughout the major workplaces and regions. After this first phase of active opposition passive resistance is now taking shape. Workers use their control over the productive apparatus to check the 'normalisation' plans of the bureaucracy.

The 'spirit of Solidarnosc' is already evident in the underground appeals issued by the union and in the support organised for the prisoners and their families. But the trauma produced by the coup, and the fragility and present dispersal of a new leadership of the resistance, does not favour the development of open broad-based mobilisations against the regime at the present time.

Whatever the different phases of the resistance there can however be no doubt that the breadth of the movement of the workers organised in Solidarnosc means that it cannot be totally liquidated. In the next phases of struggle against the bureaucratic dictatorship new cadres will come forward. This is a significant difference with what happened after Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968.

Solidarnosc provided a model of workers' democracy with its emphasis on mass participation, its struggles against bureaucratic corruption, and for workers' self-management. In the weeks preceding the imposition of martial law there was a growing recognition among the local leaderships of the need for a more thoroughgoing struggle against the bureaucracy — the need for 'active strikes' organised by the workers' councils, for workers' guards, and a workers' counter-plan to the government's economic proposals. Such a perspective of struggling for workers' power was the only real alternative to the continuing rule of the bureaucrats.

But Solidarnosc had not grasped the full meaning of the conflict of interests between the workers and the bureaucracy. Any long-term application of the strategy of 'self-limitation' of the struggle failed to tackle the danger of the inevitable bureaucratic counter-revolution against the emerging workers' power. A conscious political current with national influence within Solidarnosc was needed to fight for the preparation of the masses for the development of workers' power.

The Polish regime needs the creation of a new political hegemony not entirely dependent on the barrel of a gun. But reorganising the political scene runs up against a series of major problems. It necessitates the painful reconstruction of a stable party for the bureaucracy — either the existing party where a wholesale purge is underway, or a new one.

Any project of political reorganisation also requires a much better economic situation. The crackdown has to facilitate the imposition of a vast austerity plan, resulting in unemployment, price increases, reduction of social spending and increasing work discipline. But in such a

context an 'independent trade union' co-managing the regime's plans would not find any resonance among the workers.

Such an austerity plan would go hand in hand with an attempt to direct any planned bonuses to the directors and managerial or administrative staff to enable the regime to try and win itself a new social base.

The Church hierarchy remains one of the master cards which Jaruzelski must maintain. It has already been congratulated for its moderating role. In the Vatican, just as in Warsaw there is a fear that more active workers' resistance might lead to a large scale confrontation, resulting in Soviet intervention which would threaten the Church's concessions.

It was certainly easier for the bureaucracy to declare martial law than to win the war of 'normalisation'. Never before has a bureaucracy had to reorganise its system of power at all levels and on such a vast scale.

The imposition of martial law has struck a terrible blow against the whole of the international proletariat. The struggle since August 1980 of millions of workers in Solidarnosc was one of the most advanced examples of proletarian struggle on a world scale.

In this struggle between a bureaucratic government and the masses we are totally shoulder to shoulder with the masses. The workers' state was not undergoing any imperialist assault to restore capitalism. On the contrary it was the bureaucratic degeneration of the workers' state that was under attack. The proletariat was tending to radically challenge the power of a privileged minority based on the force of the police.

A common theme runs through all the declarations of bourgeois and imperialist forces on Poland: the Polish workers went too far, in this way they bear some responsibility for the coup d'état.

Washington is using the Polish events to step up its campaign to justify a re-militarisation drive and the stepping up of aid to the bloody Central American dictatorships. The danger of counter-revolutionary intervention against the Nicaraguan and Grenadian revolutions has increased.

The Fourth International will commit all its weight inside the international labour movement to develop the solidarity campaign with the Polish workers. All those who today refuse to develop this mobilisation divide the working masses in their own country and internationally. To organise active solidarity with the Polish workers facilitates preparing the same support for the mighty struggles of the Central American peoples against American imperialism.

All the links established between the international workers' movement and Solidarnosc must be used to break the isolation in which Jaruzelski wants to keep the Polish workers. Material, food and medical aid should be stepped up. And trade union commissions of inquiry should be set up to find out about the repression against Solidarnosc militants. Within the workers' movement revolutionary Marxists should develop a systematic explanation of the aims, actions and internal democracy of Solidarnosc.

Revolutionary Marxists oppose all proposals for a boycott by the imperialist countries of Poland and the USSR. Such a campaign can only play into the hands of the anti-communists like Reagan. Such a campaign would effectively mean calling on the banks and imperialist powers to strangle the Polish economy still further with all the consequences for the Polish masses themselves.

The Fourth International will link its campaign of solidarity with Solidarnosc with efforts to stimulate mobilisations against the imperialists' war drive and against the efforts of American imperialism in Central America and the Caribbean. Down with the bureaucracy's military dictatorship! Solidarity with Solidarnosc!

# Solidarnosc's resistance grows

singled out Jacek Kuron and Adam Michnik from KOR, and Jan Rulewski and Zbigniew Bujak from Solidarnosc as nothing other than 'a gang of political adventurers.'

It went on to outline its conception of how an new trade union in Poland should function: 'The time will come to build a strictly trade union organisation, a purely working class organisation without false advisers, without developed regional structures, without 43,000 officials and without political adventurers.'

## Blame

Leader of the resistance Zbigniew Bujak, in an interview with the *New York Times*, asserted that spontaneous resistance to the regime was growing, and gave a stinging reply to all those who apportion blame to the union movement.

'My answer will be brutal. I know that many Western politicians believe that if we had been wiser we could have avoided this tragedy. But I do know that "wisdom" for us meant collaboration with the state and party authorities: a collaboration that would have been directed against the workers, the intellectuals, the men of culture and the arts.'

'We would have become another annex of the totalitarian system, creating only an impression of democracy. This must not be demanded of us or our Solidarity union.... Truly independent unions can exist only in conditions of democracy. Thus to continue and remain independent the union must fight for democracy and become its guardian.'

'So it is struggle, struggle and yet more struggle.'

I had a full picture of what was going on,' he explained.

Within the internment camps themselves, now reliably estimated to have up to 20,000 occupants, there is a new hunger strike underway in the Bialoleka camp, and a newspaper, *Free Voice*, circulating within the camps themselves.

Meanwhile government repression has been stepped up. Even Archbishop Glemp, who has done his best over the last month to defuse any militant fightback, has admitted that more people have been interned. The purge of party dissidents and public officials goes on. Latest to face the chop is Henry Samsonowicz, rector of Warsaw University, for refusing to allow his staff and students to undergo the government's 'loyalty' test.

Thousands have been sacked or prohibited from returning to work for failure to sign the government's 'good behaviour' pledge — some 2,500 in the Szczecin shipyard.

A new 'independent' newspaper has been started up, *Rzeczpospolita* (Republic), by the authorities which they obviously hope will be less discredited than the other official media. Anti-semitic propaganda against Solidarnosc has also been stepped up in the party paper.

The army daily, *Zolnierz Wolnosci*, has launched regular attacks on Solidarnosc leaders and well-known dissidents. It



Zbigniew Bujak

ment received another well publicised rebuff when a stage-managed junket for the Western press went badly wrong. Journalists spoke to workers at the massive Cegielski engine factory, most of whom wore Solidarnosc badges. One worker added: 'Solidarnosc is alive and well, and we will win.'

## Worse

Things got worse for the government when Poznan's regional Solidarnosc leader told reporters that his statement supporting martial law which the authorities had publicised had been made under duress. 'I now withdraw the statement... it was made under duress, before

country on 13 February.

'The people put up with hunger and misery, to which the government has accustomed them, but they will not allow all the gains since August 1980 to be lost', said the spokesperson. There are also unconfirmed reports of continuing sit-in strikes in the Bielsko-Biala region.

In Poznan, the govern-

Information in Wroclaw.

The resistance has gone so far as to hold press conferences for Western journalists. On 13 January two Solidarnosc representatives in Warsaw told reporters that some 20,000 people were now organised in resistance networks round the country, which were planning to hold a one-minute's silence in all the major plants round the



By Davy Jones

**THE POLISH workers' resistance to martial law is growing daily. Despite the government's continuing arrests, loyalty oaths and sackings, there is a developing underground workers' co-ordination. All the signs are that the workers' fighting spirit has not been crushed.**

An extensive national underground co-ordination has been set up led by Zbigniew Bujak, former head of Warsaw Solidarnosc. Regular

bulletins are appearing in Warsaw and Solidarnosc journals have appeared elsewhere under different names — *Fighting Solidarnosc*, in Lodz, *From Day to Day* in Lublin, *Fighting*

# Poland is not another Chile

By Jonathan Silberman

**SUPPORT for the Polish workers is urgent. The savage measures taken by General Jaruzelski's government, threaten not only the gains made by the Polish workers, but also the fight for socialist democracy in other Eastern European countries. In this regard, the Polish situation has been likened to the events in Chile in 1973 when the government of Salvador Allende was ousted in Pinochet's military coup and tens of thousands of Chileans were slaughtered.**

But Poland is not Chile and the likeness is only superficial. First, there has not been a military coup in Poland. In Chile, leaders of the army conspired with the CIA and the Brazilian military to overthrow the democratically-elected government. But in Poland the existing government decided to use military means to crush the independent workers' movement.

## Coup

Talk of a military coup in Poland misses the point, and lets the ruling Communist Party off the hook. What characterises Poland, the Soviet Union and the other Eastern European countries is that the state is based on an interlocking system of the leaders of the party, the army, government ministries, the trade unions, and so on.

In many cases, the same

people can transfer from one branch of the state to another, or even occupy more than one position at the same time. In Poland, this reached the obscene stage where General Jaruzelski is simultaneously minister of defence, prime minister and first secretary of the Communist Party.

The government was forced to change its form of political rule and declare the infamous 'state of war' to defend its privileges and maintain its monopoly of political power. The whole evolution of Solidarnosc and its leadership was towards a revolutionary confrontation.

For example, Solidarnosc began to take initiatives to control stocks of and the distribution of foodstuffs in the face of bureaucratic mismanagement. Since the summer, a whole new trend began with the formation of workers' councils, moves towards workers' self-management, conflicts over the nomination of workplace

directors.

Increasingly the regional Solidarnosc leaderships were discussing proposals for 'active strikes' — keeping the factories going under workers control — and the need to establish emergency workers' plans. Nationally, the trend towards a confrontation over political power came to ahead over the decision to propose a national referendum 'inside the trade union on the functioning and methods of political structures', and the call for free elections.

The second difference between Poland and Chile was the character of the leadership of the workers' movement. Walesa is not another Allende.

Salvador Allende believed in the importance of a mass movement of workers, but one strictly subordinate to the activity of the professional politicians in parliament.

He entirely rejected — as all such leaders do — the need to build an alternative power based on the independent ac-

tivity and organisation of the workers. Accordingly, at crucial points in the Chilean struggle, the Popular Unity government sought to negotiate and compromise with the bosses and the army.

## Army

Indeed, the army felt it could overthrow the government and crush the workers' movement precisely because of this hesitating weakness of the leadership.

Jaruzelski, on the other hand, decided on martial law not because of Solidarnosc's vacillating leadership but because he feared the conse-

quences of Solidarnosc going onto the offensive.

The leadership of Solidarnosc is a rank and file leadership that learns its lessons in mass anti-bureaucratic struggle.

At every crucial turning point in Poland over the last 18 months the Solidarnosc leadership stood for one thing above all else: that when the crunch comes, the workers could rely only upon their own ability and preparedness to struggle.

It is because millions of Polish workers have been educated in this key message that despite the repression in Poland today and the serious setback suffered by the mass

movement, the Polish workers have not been crushed. There is widespread resistance.

Today, alas, in Chile, eight years after the coup the workers' movement has still not fully recovered. But there will be no such 'stabilisation' of Poland, short of the physical liquidation of the rank and file of Solidarnosc leaders, along the lines of the Chilean slaughter.

## Force

The Polish regime is not sufficiently strong to do that, which is why solidarity with Solidarnosc means continually warning against the dangers of a Soviet-inspired invasion force.

Finally, the Polish crisis comes at a time when the United States' government finds it very difficult to intervene in world politics as it did over the Chilean coup. In fact, the US and its friends in the NATO alliance have been tremendously weakened over the last ten years, both by the gravity of the international economic crisis, and by blows from the workers and peasants of Central America in Asia and Africa.

The capitalist regimes have been quite unable to unite over the events in Poland.

Undoubtedly the enemies of workers throughout the world have been strengthened by the events there. But they have no cause for over-optimism because Poland is not another Chile.



The infamous ZOMO riot police

# MICHAEL FOOT: THE TAN

By Toni Gorton and Brian Grogan

**INTENSE** interest has greeted a series of articles by Michael Foot in the *Observer* newspaper. Foot charges that the left is:

- \*Opposed to democracy
- \*For the totalitarian despotism of Eastern Europe
- \*Against trying to elect a future Labour government
- \*Responsible for the successes of the SDP
- \*Breaking with the traditions of socialism established by Marx, Engels ... and even Trotsky.

Foot's articles might in other circumstances be only of passing interest. Except his purpose in trying to establish the supremacy of parliament for socialists is a desire to legislate all those that disagree out of the Labour movement. The left ignores his arguments at their peril.

Foot's image of his left opponent is the joke figure of comrade Smith of television sit-com fame who views socialist change in 'the prophecy of a great, supreme crisis as the inexorable means of establishing the new society as opposed to the steady remorseless Fabian method of human advance'.

In such flowery phrases Foot manages to conjure himself out of the present 'supreme' crisis of Thatcher's Britain and Reagan's world in order to assert the happiness of the boom years of consensus.

But Foot gives the game away. His defence of the supremacy of parliamentary democracy leads, for him, to the inexorable conclusion that the last Labour government had a creditable record. Indeed, to suggest otherwise Foot intones 'Is a monstrous perversion'.

Never does he allow the reality of parliamentary democracy and capitalist slump to sully his great 'Idea'.

Parliamentary democracy is an important gain for the working class. The political rights which exist in this country such as the right to assembly,

the right to express political views openly, the right to vote and the right to trade union organisation have, however, all been won through bitter struggle and mass mobilisation.

But parliamentary democracy is no guarantee of our democratic rights. Indeed, it has provided the cover for the erosion of these very same rights. More fundamentally, parliamentary democracy is only formal democracy.

### Parliamentary democracy is no guarantee of our democratic rights.

The major decisions affecting our lives are taken outside by unelected civil servants, by self-appointed heads of big business and by the tiny handful of press barons. To what reality can Michael Foot be speaking when he declares that 'parliament is where disputes could be settled by consent instead of force'?

The facts show that whatever the

will of the vast majority at any given time, it is confounded by powerlessness over the state apparatus.

This we see vividly in the case of the GLC. An elected Labour GLC is blocked in its efforts to bring about lower fares by a non-elected Lord Denning ruling in the interests of the property owners and the anti-working class Tory government.

During 1976, it was the International Monetary Fund, albeit with the connivance of the Michael Foots of this world, that dictated a policy of savage cuts and wage restrictions. The list is endless.

This reality is at the heart of the constitutional fight inside the Labour Party. Are we to accept Michael Foot's conception of democracy as that of a Labour government responsible to non-elected powers of the civil service, the board rooms, the EEC or the police and army; or one responsible to the mass of people who fought to put them there?

It is this not the fatuous argument that the parliamentary leader now has less authority over individual MPs which is at the heart of the matter.

### Foot's idea of democracy comes to the simple act of marking a ballot paper.

The Alice-in-Wonderland meaning given to words is exposed by Foot himself. He defines his own 'democratic socialism', in the pronouncement of Nye Bevan as being 'collectivist, socialist power to be wielded by the central state, acting through Parliament'.

Such a hand-me-down socialism is the opposite of democracy. It involves the elitists' idea that the goal of socialist politics is to act 'on behalf' of the supposedly ignorant and unwashed masses.

This is bureaucratic, not democratic. This excludes the majority of people, rather than involving



Attachment to parliament involves support for the Tory p

them — the real meaning of democracy. For all his ornate language, Foot's idea of democracy finally comes down to the simple act of marking a ballot paper.

It is this threadbare and banal idea which accounts for his hostility to any

extra-parliamentary action.

The claim has been fairly well established by Tony Benn, among others, that all the major reforms won by the working class have been the result of tremendous agitation outside parliament. We don't need to rely on

## Labour Liaison

### Reg Race MP

**What do you think was the significance of Bishop's Stortford?**

Well, there's a great deal of nonsense been talked about Bishop's Stortford. What actually happened there was that Tony Benn put a paper to the meeting, which was an informal paper, but which made absolutely no concessions to anybody.

He said that Tatchell had to be reinstated, that the witch-hunt has to end, that Party policy has to be supported and several other things too.

That really was made very clear by him at that meeting and he was supported by the other left NEC members.

Now, he did say to various people that he wasn't particularly keen to stand for the deputy leadership in 1982.

I think your judgement about what happened at Bishop's Stortford really depends on whether you think that the Electoral College should be used in every conceivable circumstance, or whether you think that there might be tactical reasons sometimes for not using it.

I must say that I think that if Tony did stand for deputy or as leader there would be a very substantial defeat for the left, ie. he would be defeated for either position in a fairly heavy way.

I don't think that would be helpful to the long term interests of the left or

our challenge to the leadership of the party on a long term basis.

**Do you think that after Brighton the left has been thrown onto the defensive — if you think that Tony Benn would receive fewer votes this time round than last year. Some argue from that point of view that Bishop's Stortford was a victory for the right over the left, and have argued that the left should take a very much lower profile over the next period. How would you see that?**

I don't think that at all. What we will do over the next few weeks is ensure that a major campaign is mounted in the movement in support of party policy.

Now that is very important because you must ask yourself the question: who is going to support Labour Party policy on unemployment, on the bomb, on the Common Market and the rest of the major issues.

It can't be the right wing in the Shadow Cabinet because they don't agree with it, and it can't be some of the other members of the PLP because they may agree with the SDP about policy.

Therefore the only defenders of Party policy must be the left, and the left must organise forcefully to ensure that the manifesto that we fight the next election on, which will be constructed in outline form this year, is a

socialist manifesto, capable of being introduced by a socialist Labour government and which doesn't make any concessions at all to the right.

This is a campaign that must be mounted, and in that sense we are going to be on the offensive in defence of Party policy.

It is therefore the right who have been seeking over the last few months to undermine the gains that have been made by the left.

**What do you think that Labour Liaison '82 should be about? What is your attitude to the controversies surrounding its foundation — for example the opposition of some of the leaders of the LCC?**

The attitude of some comrades in the LCC quite honestly makes me puke. I wish they would depart in peace.

I think that attitudes to the Labour Liaison have clarified quite well over the last weeks.

I think that there will be agreement that we should try to make a campaign in defence of Party policy, against witch-hunts, in support of Tatchell, and in support of those who have been debarred from party membership.

That is certain to command universal support. I think the only area of contention really is whether there should be an election campaign for leader or deputy leader this year.



Will he organise the Labour Party fight in the unions?

### Dave Ward

Dave Ward, who has been elected as national committee secretary of the National Union of Public Employees, will attend the founding conference of the Labour Party in the interests of the Party.

**Why do you think it is important?**

Well, it's a challenge to the Party to go back to the Brighton Conference and have taken a bit of a stand with the witch-hunt. Some of the things that have been completely lost through the Labour Liaison have to be brought into reverse.

**Why do you think it has not been able to go on?**

First off because of the Tories. Vast numbers of workers on the day for radical change just over the next few weeks. Second, I think



# THE BRAND OF SOCIALISM



... of the last Labour government

the example of Chartism or the suffragettes which Foot amazingly places outside of the epoch of parliamentary democracy.

It was mass industrial action which destroyed the Tories' last attempt to shackle the unions. Attacks

on abortion rights for women have only been blocked by similar activity — as is evidenced by victory over parliamentary majorities favouring restrictions.

The free run given to the nuclear maniacs before the recent resurrec-

tion of CND shows there is no chance of nuclear disarmament without drawing millions into action outside Parliament.

Not one piece of parliamentary action has done anything to reverse mass unemployment. But the flick of the miners' tail last year, showed what could be achieved that way.

Parliamentary legislation and action is often necessary to ratify such achievements. But mass struggle is the primary force for social change not even the best intentions of 'men of goodwill'.

**There is no chance of nuclear disarmament without drawing millions into action outside parliament.**

The essence of socialist democracy, that is, a true democratic socialism, is the involvement of the mass of the people in daily decision-making about every aspect of their lives — from the point of production on the shop floor, to the level of state.

The fight for a Labour government has to encourage and centralise this approach.

Any Labour government that seriously embarks on this course will have to encourage and rely upon a counter power to that of the defenders of the status quo — the army, civil service and bosses' organisations.

Foot is playing games when he indicts those that foresee a violent confrontation for actually seeking one. The facts are that the workers will meet violent resistance in attempting to impose a socialist democracy.

No ruling class has ever handed over its power willingly but has resisted with every means at its disposal.

Let us recall the example of Chile studiously ignored by Michael Foot. Despite the democratic election of Salvadore Allende, the military forces took action against his government

because the workers began to take things into their own hands.

The workers' organisations were dismembered and all democratic rights suppressed. This was despite the most highly developed parliamentary tradition in South America.

**No ruling class has ever handed over its power willingly but has resisted with every means at its disposal.**

It is a CIA view of reality that would put the blame for this onto the left for 'seeking violent confrontation'. The tragedy was that the left as a whole did not foresee the problem.

Britain is no exception to this. The British ruling class has rarely been faced with the prospect of the expropriation of their power. But even when a sniff of such an eventuality is raised, the British ruling class is quite prepared to ditch parliament.

It is now a well established fact that during the winter crisis of 1974, discussion and organisation at the highest levels of the police and army began to organise extra-parliamentary strike forces.

This was only regurgitating what the ruling class did on a much wider scale to prepare for and defeat the General Strike in 1926.

Even on smaller questions, the ruling class have no qualms about opposing parliament if they perceive it as being against their interests. In 1974, the Labour government ordered the army to break up the Ulster Loyalist strike, but the army hierarchy simply refused.

The essential difficulty that Foot has is allowing workers the rights that the bourgeoisie have. And in covering up the control by the capitalist class of parliament, government and the state, he also covers up for the role of the right-wing in the Labour movement.

For all his protestations of 'consistent' democracy, his exertions on its behalf do not stretch to denouncing Lord Denning and supporting Ken Livingstone in the life-and-death

struggle in the London GLC; it doesn't extend to the vigorous denunciation of Boyd and Duffy of the AUEW in disregarding the democratically decided path of the Laurence Scott workers.

Foot's final haven of retreat is his claim that the only alternative to his vision is that of the totalitarian despotisms of Eastern Europe.

But this is totally disingenuous after the reality presented to us by Solidarnosc in Poland. His 'blindness' here perhaps explains why he has left it to Thatcher to leech off the cause of the workers in Poland.

But there is no getting away from the fact that the historic fight of Solidarity has given reality to what previously was a vision of Trotskyists. We had witnessed glimpses of our third way in Hungary in 1956 and then in Czechoslovakia in 1968. But Poland in the 1980's has proven that a third way exists.

**Poland in the 1980's has proven there is a third way.**

Foot has history on his side when he claims that 'the working class confronted with the choice between capitalist democracy with all its nauseous insincerities and undemocratic socialism, (it) will choose the former all the time'.

But the choice is no longer of this type. The vision of mass democracy, accountability and immediate recall: the image of workers' control and self-management; the defence of nationalised property relations and rejection of capitalist restoration, have been seen up and down the workers organisation throughout the world. History is now on our side.

Foot has made his choice. He can lament the fate of Ebbw Vale, his constituency which has been mauled by capitalist recession. But these laments are mere patches on the weeping sores of British capitalism. The real alternative is the fight for a thoroughgoing socialist democracy based on a planned economy. Those who assert the 'supremacy of parliament' are on the other, losing side.

## 1982: Two views

### Guard POEU Broad Left

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Foot and

But it's obvious that some of the left haven't got the courage of their convictions. All the things that the Tories are doing now were prepared by the ex-minister of unemployment, Foot, and the ex-chancellor of the Exchequer, Healey.

No wonder a lot of workers are looking for a change. But don't expect Foot and Healey to expose the SDP. They carried out the same policies.

**How does the situation in the unions link up with what's going on in the Party?**

It doesn't really, not much, or at least not enough. That's the whole problem of the Labour Left in a nutshell.

It's obvious that there is still a willingness to fight against the Tories, or you wouldn't get groups like the BL workers, who have taken a real hammering, still game to take them on.

It seems only some on the left of the Party are too nervous to organise directly for their policies in the unions. Perhaps they think that the union barons will do their job for them. But the balance sheet of

that approach is already pretty clear.

**What else do you think the Labour Liaison should do?**

It's got to organise those who are fighting the bomb, organise those who are fighting for women's rights, organise those who support the Polish workers. That's the key to it really.

If Labour Liaison remains at the level of a few ideas — however bright — a couple of resolutions to Party conference and the odd article in the Guardian — it has missed the boat.

Hundreds of thousands of people are involved in these issues. They can spearhead the left's fight against the right, and start building for a Labour victory at the next election.

But only if the left carry the fight through to the end — and these people are convinced they are going to get what they need.

**What do you think is behind the witch-hunt?**

If the left show weakness, the

right will go in for the kill. People don't muck about when they think that the prospect of never being a cabinet minister again is at stake.

At least the right don't. They are too interested in power — even if it means a loyalty oath to the IMF.

The left have got to see what they are taking on and come out fighting. I think Labour Liaison should run a big campaign in the Party and the unions against the witch-hunt as its first step.

We in the POEU are prepared to do our bit. We've got the Witchfinder General John Golding, as our sponsored MP on the NEC.

He's going to find that there are thousands of us witches....

The problem is it's much harder to fight in present day conditions. And you need a clear national lead from the unions. And that's exactly what's not happening.

To get anywhere the Labour left have got to take these people on. The miners proved it in the early '70s.

Action against the Tories can swing the whole picture around, and loads of people will feel they want a left wing government and they will be prepared to fight for one. That will give a real boost to the left.

But meanwhile the Labour lefts, particularly Benn, have got to come

out against most of the present leaders in the unions.

**How should they do that?**

Labour Liaison have got to get behind the ASLEF people, the miners and the steelworkers. We need the sort of campaign we saw on unemployment but this time in support of those who are actually doing something to stop it.

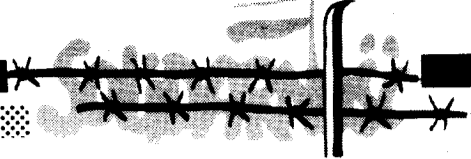
But the other half of the story is the sort of democracy campaign that we've had in the party. It is a joke to see the union leaders pontificating over the Electoral College when they are there for life.

Of course each union will have to go about it under different conditions. But the Labour left can really give a lead here.

**What about the argument that these questions are only the concern of union members involved?**

A load of rubbish. But seriously everybody knows that what goes on in the unions is political. The millionaire press try to give a political lead to union members.

So does Labour's right wing. And they organise directly among the unions to get their way.



### Solidarity Committees with Solidarnosc

**Birmingham Polish Solidarity Committee**, c/o Roger Murray, Sparkhill Labour Club, Stratford Rd, Birmingham.

**Glasgow Polish Solidarity Committee**, c/o Ian McCalman, 18 Mossiel Rd, Glasgow, G43. Ring 041-632 1839.

**Greater Manchester Polish Solidarity Committee**, c/o Jon Silberman, 51 Montrose House, Crete St, Oldham, Lancs. Ring 061-620 2885.

**Eastern Europe Solidarity Campaign**, 10 Park Drive, London NW11. Ring 01-458 1501.

**Labour Focus on Eastern Europe**, Box 23, 136 Kingsland High St, London E8.

**Polish Solidarity Campaign**, 69 Edinburgh Rd, London E13.

**Solidarnosc Trade Union Working Group in UK**, 64 Philbeach Gardens, Earls Court, London SW5. Ring 01-373 3492.

**Labour Poland Solidarity Fund**, c/o Co-operative Bank, 110 Leman St, London E1.

## Solidarity with Solidarnosc

### Glasgow

Sat 23 Jan

1.30 March from Queen Margaret Drive

Rally at 3pm at Partick Burgh Halls  
Speakers: Marek Garztecki (Solidarnosc), Denis Canavan and John Maxton (Labour MP), Jimmy Reid, Ellen Monaghan (Lee Jeans).

#### Other solidarity demos

**MANCHESTER:** March and rally called by Greater Manchester Polish Solidarity Campaign on Thur 28 January. Assemble 6.30pm All Saints, Oxford Rd for march. Rally at 7.30 at Free Trade Hall with labour movement speakers.

**BIRMINGHAM:** Rally and march on Sat 6 Feb. Call by Birmingham Polish Solidarity Committee and the Trades Council. Assemble 11am Chamberlain Square. Rally at 12.30 in AUEW hall. Speakers include Eric Heffer and Marek Garztecki (Solidarnosc).

### Revolution/Socialist Challenge Solidarity with Solidarnosc

**Southampton:** Thur 21 Jan, 1pm University clubs and societies room, students union.

**Newport:** Thur 21 Jan, 7pm at YMCA, Commercial St, Newport.

**Swansea:** Thur 21 Jan, 7.30pm at AUEW building, Orchard St.

**Lambeth:** Fri 22 Jan, 7.30pm at Lambeth Town Hall.

**Wandsworth:** Mon 25 Jan, 8pm Labour Party rooms, Lavender Hill, SW11.

**Glasgow:** Tues 26 Jan, 7.30pm at AUEW Halls, Glasgow.

**Leicester:** Thur 28 Jan, 7.30pm, Socialist Centre, High St, Leicester.

**East London:** Wed 3 Feb, 7.30pm at Dalston Library, Dalston Junction.

**North London:** Fri 5 Feb, 7pm at Roebuck pub, Tottenham Court Rd.

# Labour must back Solidarnosc

By Davy Jones

**AT LAST** the Labour Party has begun to take action in support of Solidarnosc. Last week's international committee meeting agreed to organise a major public rally in London in support of the Polish workers. Full details of the date and speakers will be available next week.

The meeting further endorsed a resolution moved by Eric Heffer MP urging 'all sections of the British labour movement to refrain from any fraternal contact with either the Polish United Workers' Party, or the official Polish trade unions, while the military regime continues, while trade unionists and other supporters of Solidarnosc are imprisoned, and while freedom of expression of trade union organisation is banned. We therefore give our full support to Solidarnosc in their hour of need.'

The resolution also supported the objectives of Solidarnosc as outlined in its congress resolutions of September/October 1981.

## March

Hopefully the NEC will endorse these proposals, having refused before Xmas to support a resolution from Eric Heffer calling on the party to organise a march for 20 December in support of the Polish workers.

The TUC is still pressing for the right to send a delegation to Poland to investigate the repression. Union branches are being encouraged to send protests to the Polish Embassy over the Polish government's refusal to receive the TUC delegation.

The beginning of serious support for Solidarnosc is not before time. The labour movement and its left wing in particular will pay dearly for its silence over Poland.

It has left the field open for the likes of Chapple and Duffy who use the Polish crisis to whip up anti-left propaganda within the unions.

Many Labour left wingers have said next to nothing about Poland, including Tony Benn. And Arthur Scargill has on more than one occasion implied that Solidarnosc bears some blame for the current crisis. It had become 'more than just a union', he claimed.

Eric Heffer replied to this disgraceful point of view in last week's *Labour*

*Weekly:* 'Certainly, Solidarnosc has increasingly come forward with political demands. Demands surely which all democratic socialists can support. Most of our British unions have political clauses in their rule books, some actually say they will work to get rid of capitalism and build socialism.'

## Support

'The issue is fairly simple. The workers of Poland have created free and independent unions, separate from the state and not under CP control. They therefore deserve our unqualified support.'

In the coming weeks and months the labour movement should rally



Workers building barricades in Gdansk on 17 December

behind these sentiments and build a mighty movement supporting the Polish workers. The Labour left and Tony Benn in particular have the responsibility to lead this campaign. The East European Solidarity Campaign is producing a broadsheet with the Labour Party

resolution on Poland, details of the rally, and other labour movement solidarity actions and resolutions. It will be vital material for all socialists organising support for Solidarnosc. Write for copies to: East European Solidarity Campaign, 10 Park Drive, London NW11. Ring 01-458 1501.



Polish seafarers struck in Vancouver last week to demand an end to repression

## Manchester mobilises for Solidarity

**FOLLOWING** a successful rally of 150 people just five days after the declaration of martial law in Poland, the Greater Manchester Polish Solidarity Campaign has been established.

The campaign has taken up the call of Solidarnosc members made at the Szczecin shipyard that an international campaign be organised for 'an end to martial law, the release of all those arrested and for the restoration of all union and democratic rights achieved through struggle since August 1980'. The Campaign is also pushing for the TUC and the Labour Party nationally to organise a serious campaign of solidarity with Solidarnosc.

The Campaign is solidly labour movement-based with Bob Litherland MP as Hon President, Labour councillor Eddie Newman as chairperson, and

Laurence Scott shop steward Phil Penning as treasurer. A torchlight demonstration and rally has been called for Thursday 28 January.

Support for the demonstration has built up with backing from rank and file trade unionists, Labour Party members and students. The City Labour Party last week voted unanimously to back the march and to affiliate to the Campaign, and a big boost came when the ASTMS branch at ICL donated £100.

A rather unfortunate rebuff for the campaign was received, however, when the North Manchester AUEW District Committee refused to give support. With five delegates voting in favour the proposition was defeated following strong opposition from members of the Communist Party.

Further information about the Campaign can be obtained from the Secretary, 51 Montrose House, Crete Street, Oldham, Lancs.

### Teachers' union backs Polish workers

The executive of the National Union of Teachers on 16 January backed a resolution moved by Bernard Regan of the Socialist Teachers Alliance calling for support for the Polish workers.

The resolution welcomed the TUC statement on Poland calling for an end to martial law, the release of prisoners, and the reopening of talks between Solidarnosc and the government. It also called on local NUT associations and divisions to endorse this stand, and to send messages to the Polish government via the Lon-

don embassy opposing the repression.

There is a meeting in London on Friday 22 January at 5.30pm in the Prince Albert pub, Wharfedale Road, Kings Cross, to discuss twinning NUT associations with their counterparts in Poland, and developing a campaign in support of the Polish workers.

### Solidarity with Solidarnosc pamphlet

2000 copies sold in first week! Order your copies now of the second edition. Just 25p or 20p for supporters' groups bulk orders.

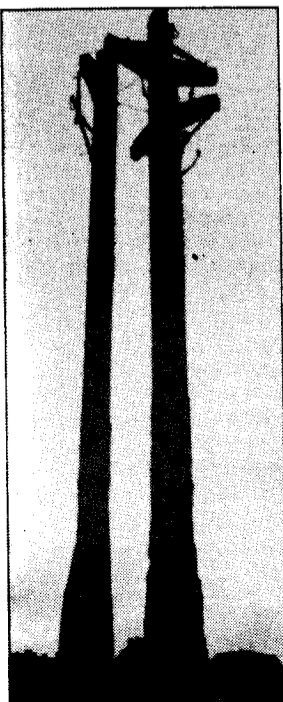


25p

Socialist Challenge PAMPHLET

### Socialist Challenge Polish school

Two day educational school on Poland and political revolution for Socialist Challenge supporters on 13/14 February in London. If you would like to come see your local SC supporters or write to Socialist Challenge school, PO Box 50, London N1.



Gdansk memorial to victims of 1970 riots

## Haig in a tizzy - US' Poland hypocrisy

By Phil Hearse

GENERAL Alexander Haig got himself into a tizzy last week at his press conference in Brussels. Called to outline the US's case for collective Western sanctions against the Soviet Union over Poland, Haig's press conference turned into near debacle when the *Guardian's* European editor, John Palmer asked if the US's position on Poland wasn't a bit hypocritical.

Wasn't it a bit hypocritical asked Palmer to make a big fuss about Poland when the US was supporting a military dictatorship in Turkey and backing up brutal repressive regimes like that in El Salvador. Haig nearly blew a gasket. 'Haven't you forgotten', said Haig, 'the assurances of the Turkish regime of a rapid return to democracy?' The assembled journalists were too polite to laugh.

### Cold War

Haig's discomfiture only highlights the utter and complete hypocrisy of the United States

over the Polish events. Reagan and his cohorts have just seen the Polish events as a mechanism for whipping up Cold War hostilities, and attempting to mobilise the Western governments behind the US's increasingly strident line.

It is particularly appropriate that Alexander Haig should be publicly confronted with the double standards of his government, because it is Haig himself who has been the most strident US spokesperson in threatening to take military action against countries in Central America, like Cuba and Nicaragua with which the United States is in conflict.

During the last year over 30,000 people have been killed in El Salvador, most of them victims of the US equipped and trained military forces. Thousands more have been killed by the US-backed regime in Guatemala.

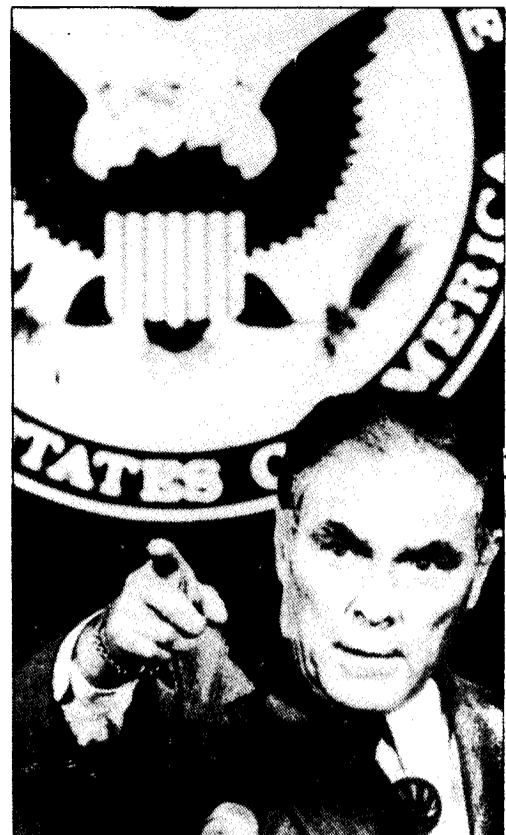
General Haig vividly outlined in his press conference the hypocrisy of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw pact in the Polish events, pointing to the presence of Soviet Marshal Kulikov in Warsaw before and during the military's move. On this Haig was absolutely correct —

the one true thing that he said in the whole press conference. But Haig could also have pointed to the role of NATO in planning the military coup in Turkey, a move in which the US was directly involved.

### Gangsterism

Just as when the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan, the US will play the Polish events for all they are worth to whip up anti-communism. The criminal actions of the Polish and Soviet bureaucrats not only deal a blow against the Polish workers and the working class internationally, but in the last analysis strengthen the hand of imperialism — making it easier for the United States to justify its international gangsterism by pointing to the 'aggressiveness' of the Soviet Union. In defending the Polish workers, we must not associate the workers movement in any way with the false friends of the Polish workers.

In reality, the United States and other Western governments will have breathed a sigh of relief when the Polish army moved against



Alexander Haig

Solidarity. The actions of Solidarity, its demands for workers control, workers veto and the use of direct action of the organised working class to win victories, will not for one moment have endeared them to the White House and the Pentagon. Solidarnosc must be supported by its real friends — the labour movement of the whole world.

## El Salvador: guerrillas control a quarter of the country

By Paul Lawson

IT IS NOW a year since the revolutionary guerrillas of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) launched their final offensive against the US-backed right wing dictatorship. Although the offensive failed to topple the regime, after a year's hard struggle the FMLN now control a quarter of the country.

In the period after the offensive, the United States poured in weapons and other forms of aid to the dictatorship. The regime and the United States thought that it would be possible to crush the guerrillas. But their counter-offensive failed; as the above map shows the FMLN now controls many important strategic areas of the country. Just as in Vietnam, the regime is able to secure the towns. But in the countryside important liberated zones exist, including some within twenty miles of the capital.

In 1981 El Salvador received more US military aid than any other Latin American country. Its military 'advisors' now comprise something like 10 per cent of the Salvadorian army's officer corps. The US military aid has included radio trucks, M-16 rifles and ammunition, planes and forty helicopters.

The role of the US advisors has been to supervise the overall operation of the war, and especially to ensure the correct use of helicopter tactics. They have also supervised the formation of a fleet of coastal patrol boats to try to cut off supplies of arms to the guerrillas, and the formation and training of the elite Atlacatl brigade — El Salvador's very own 'green berets'.

Despite the flow of weapons to the regime's army and national guard, and the increase in size of the army, the military forces of the regime have suffered from a high

casualty and desertion rate. In six months last year, ten per cent of the army were either killed or wounded.

The tactics of the Salvadorian army have taken on an increasingly 'Vietnam' style, with helicopter-borne troops flying into the countryside on 'search and destroy' missions. The objective of these missions is to fly into FMLN-held territory, to destroy training camps and other guerrilla installations and attack villages which support the FMLN.

Just as in Vietnam, a crucial objective of these attacks is to terrorise the civilian population. Sometimes these raids do in fact manage to discover and destroy FMLN camps, and military equipment. But just as in Vietnam, the government forces eventually fly out: the guerrillas and the villagers return. No permanent gains are won.

The January 1981 offensive failed because, as the FMLN itself recognises, there was in-

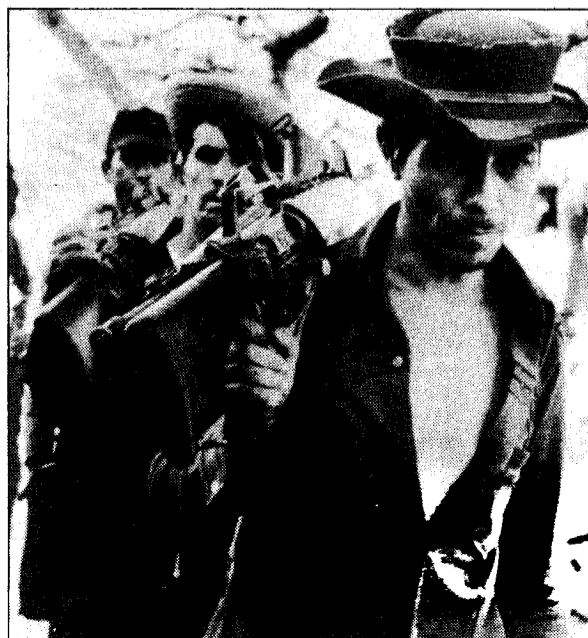
sufficient political preparation and military intervention in the towns. The population, without adequate protection, failed to carry through the insurrectionary general strike.

In the period following that setback, the FMLN returned to the sabotage campaign, which has disrupted electricity supplies and drastically curtailed production. Industry as a result of the sabotage campaign and the war climate, has decreased by twenty five per cent over three years.

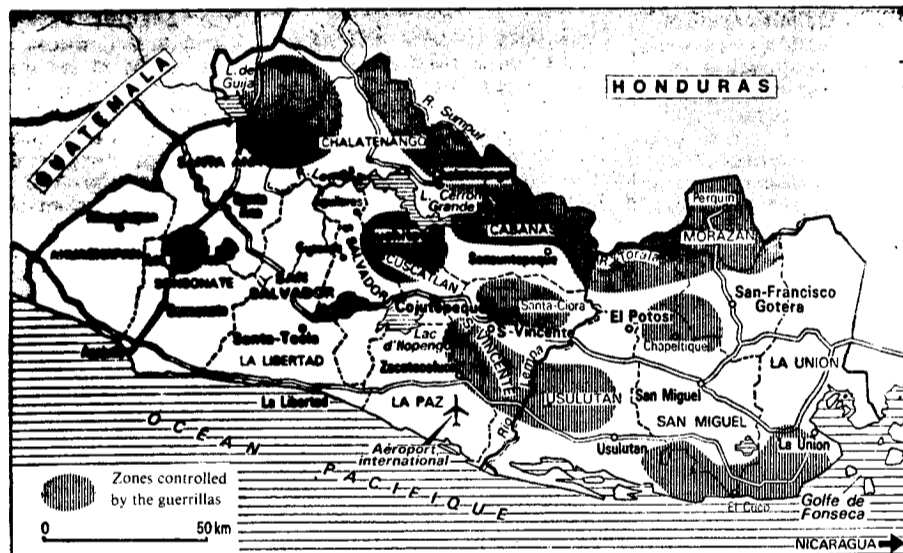
In addition, the FMLN has concentrated on conducting local offensives and widening the rural areas under its control. The extension of these areas has facilitated the construction of 'corridors'

between them — a system of routes for transferring guerrilla forces and supplies. This enables them to quickly switch their forces from one front to another.

The military situation which has therefore emerged from the year since the offensive is one of relative stalemate. Neither side is able to defeat the other — often a classic phase of a guerrilla war. Nonetheless there is a situation of genuine dual power. The FMLN guerrillas now permanently administer a section of the country. The trend of development is towards a strengthening of the power of the guerrillas, the country is literally ungovernable and the economy continues to decay. As the guerrillas get stronger, and the regime fails to cope, the possibility of intervention by the United States increases.



FMLN guerrillas



## Towards a regional revolutionary war

*Under the Eagle*, by Jenny Pearce, *Latin America Bureau*, £2.50  
By Phil Hearse

JENNY PEARCE's new book is a valuable weapon for all those who stand on the side of the people of Central America and the Caribbean against the bloody American-backed dictatorships which oppress them. The book traces the history of American domination of the region starting with the Monroe doctrine in the first half of the nineteenth century, through to the notion of 'manifest destiny' exemplified by Teddy Roosevelt's pugnacious imperialism, to the present revolutionary struggles in that region.

Particularly valuable is the account of the strategy of the United States since the early 1960s. In response to the Cuban revolution and rising discontent in the region, the US, through

the Alliance for Progress, the Central American Common Market and similar schemes attempted to assist the economic development of the region — as an alternative to revolution.

Phoney land reform schemes abounded. Such industrialisation as occurred was dependent industrialisation, under the control of the US multinationals and benefiting only the controlling oligarchy.

Twenty years later the result of this project is clear. The ruling elites remain intact, except in Nicaragua where they have been overthrown by the Sandinista revolutionaries. The masses remain hungry, landless and poverty-stricken. And the only revolutionary change has been the rise of the 'moderate' middle way seems credible to no one. Perhaps most in-

teresting from the point of view of revolutionary strategy and the future course of developments are Jenny Pearce's remarks on Guatemala. This country, she argues, is in many ways the key to the region.

Guatemala is the country with the bulk of US investment in the region. Oil has been discovered on the border with Mexico. The links between the Guatemalan oligarchy and the Reagan camp are particularly strong.

Although the political violence in the country has not reached open civil war as in El Salvador, 25,000 people have been killed since the late '60s, perhaps 5,000 in the last year.

The army kills 40 people a day, while the left-wing guerrillas — particularly the Guerrilla Army of the Poor — grow increasingly strong. Any stalemate in El Salvador, argues Jenny Pearce, could be broken by the developments in Guatemala.

The trend is towards the development of a regional revolutionary war. The only way to break the present stalemate and more, a solidarity campaign with these struggles will become a central task for socialists.

# 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 Waverly steps 4.30-5.30; Sat 11.30-2pm East End. Also available from 1st May Books, or Better Books, Forrest Rd. More info on local activity from SC c/o Box 6, 1st May Bookshop, Candlemaker Row.  
**GLASGOW:** SC sales every Thur/Fri 4.30-5.30pm at Central Station. Also available at Barretts, Byres Rd; Clyde Books, High St; Glasgow Bookshop Collective, Cresswell Lane; Hope Street Book Centre.  
**HAMILTON:** SC sale every Sat 1-5pm outside Safeway, shopping centre. For more info contact John Ford, 53 Elliot Crescent, Hamilton or Paul Youngson, 18 Forrest Crescent, Hamilton.

## Wales

**BANGOR:** Sat 10-12 town centre.  
**CARDIFF:** every Sat in Bute Town 10.30-12. Also available 1-0-8 Books, Salisbury Road.  
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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 Littlewoods, 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 Fullmarks, 110 Cheltenham Rd, Montpellier, Bristol 6.  
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**CHESTERFIELD:** SC sold outside Boots, Market Place, 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 Armada Centre. Corner Bookshop, Woodhouse Lane.  
**LIVERPOOL:** SC on sale from News from Nowhere, Whitechapel and Progressive Books, Berry St.  
**MANSFIELD:** Stockwell Gate, Sats 10.30-12 and 2.30-3; West Gate, Sats 10.30-12; Four Seasons shopping centre, Sats 10.30-12. Phone 653216 for further details.

## Bookshops

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**BRISTOL:** Fullmarks, 110 Cheltenham Rd, Bristol 6.  
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**BADGES:** Available from Revolution Youth, 20p each plus postage. Big discount on bulk orders. Write to: Revolution Youth, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.  
**BADGES MADE:** Glasgow SC supporters have a badge-making machine. Will make badges quickly and cheaply for your campaign. Contact ad hoc YCNLD c/o the international centre, Coventry.

## SC Events

**POEU** faction. Postponed from 30/31 Jan to 27/28 Feb. Mailing follows shortly.  
**RAIL FRACTION:** Saturday 13 February 1.30pm, venue to be announced.  
**RAIL MEETING** for London supporters. Monday 18 January 5pm Centre.  
**REVOLUTION YOUTH** black liberation fraction. Saturday 30 January. Venue/details to be arranged. One

**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 Fenwick's. 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 Cornmarket.  
**SHEFFIELD:** SC on sale Thursday, Pond St, 4.30-6pm; Saturday, Fargate 10.30-12.30pm.  
**STAFFORD:** SC on Sale Market Sq 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).  
**TEESIDE:** SC on sale Sat lunchtime in the Cleveland Centre, and in Newsfare, Linthorpe Road, Middlesbrough, and outside Woolworths on Stockton High Street.  
**WOLVERHAMPTON:** SC sales on Thur/Fri at Poly Students Union from noon-2pm and British Rail 4.30-6pm; and Saturday near Beatties, town centre from 11am-2pm.  
**YORK:** on sale every Thursday, dole office - Clifford Street, 9.30-11; University Vanbrugh College 12-2; Saturday at Coney Street 11-1.

## London

**BRENT:** SC sold Willesden Junction Thur 4.30pm.  
**EALING:** SC sold Thur, Ealing Broadway tube, 4.30-5.30pm.  
**ENFIELD:** SC at Nelsons newsagents, London Rd, Enfield Town.  
**HACKNEY:** SC on sale on estates throughout Hackney, at public meetings, and local factories. Contact us c/o PO Box 36, 136 Kingsland High St, London E8 2NF or phone Megan or John at 359 8288.  
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socialism! Write for details/quotes to: SC (Glasgow), PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.  
**POSTERS:** Cheap, good and fast. Order from The Other Printshop, 061-236-4905.

**FILM SHOW:** Rebellion. From series on Ireland, 'The Troubles', Leeds Troops Out Movement. Wed 20 Jan, 8pm at Trades Club, Savile Mount Leeds 7.

**REMEMBER Bloody Sunday** — a national demo in Coventry, Sunday 31 Jan. Leeds coach tickets £3/£2 by post from TOM, Box 1969, 59 Cookridge Street, Leeds 2.  
**COR, IT'S A FREEZER!** Any sort of electric heater needed for Socialist Challenge urgently — our central heating is on the blink. Phone Nick 01-359 8371.  
**COVENTRY YCND RALLY:** Saturday 23 January, 12-4pm near Apollo Theatre under ringroad. Free. April First Movement; X-directory; Hot Bed; Annex; Quiet Riot. Further info contact ad hoc YCNLD c/o the international centre, Coventry.

representative per branch/supporters group. Contact Brooking at the National Office.

**SOCIALIST** Challenge forums in East London. Laurence Scott tour speaker plus video. Dalston Library at Dalston Junction E8, 7.30 Wednesday 27 January.  
 Also Solidarity with Solidarnosc, 7.30 Wednesday 3 February venue as above.

# Socialist Challenge News

## An offer you can't refuse

### FUND DRIVE '82



By Paul Ryan  
**NICARAGUA: THE SANDINIST REVOLUTION**, by Henri Weber published by New Left Books. That's one of the books offered free with each inland one year subscription to Socialist Challenge.

Packed with facts and analysis about the Nicaraguan revolution, Henri Weber's book has been very much in demand. So much so in fact that we had to wait for the publishers to get some more in before we could bring you this offer:

This offer will only be available for a limited time so get your sub while its on. This book normally costs £2.95. The other book on special offer is 'The Autobiography of Malcolm X' published by Penguin.

### Pledge

This week we have had a good response from our readers to our fund drive appeal. Our Birmingham supporters, together sent in £200. This along with the £300 sent by our West London supporters took us to the initial target for our Poland fund and gave us the chance to put out the Socialist Challenge pamphlet on Poland.

Also, this week we received income from a number of standing orders, but it could be more. We know you're there — how about a standing order from you?

A number of our readers sent in money after reading about the launch of our 1982 Fund Drive. One, from Surrey wrote "... here is £10 as a start. I will send more as time goes on — the stinking capitalist system only allows me to live from one month to the next..."

Another, from Liverpool, writes 'I enclose £7 for six month's subscription to Socialist Challenge, plus £5 donation. Congratulations on your coverage of Poland.'

We have now got in nearly £2,000 in the first couple of weeks of the Fund Drive — I know it sounds like a lot, but it isn't. It is very expensive producing a weekly newspaper, so keep raising the money for us, we need every penny of it.



## For a Nuclear Free Europe Mobilise for 6 June

AN ALL OUT CAMPAIGN for a huge European-wide anti-nuclear mobilisation on 6 June. That was the decision of the recent meeting of the secretariat of the Fourth International.

The meeting heard reports of the decision by British CND to organise another huge demonstration on 6 June, and its call for international action on that day. The date chosen coincides with the opening of the United Nations special session on peace and disarmament.

The United Nations debates undoubtedly reflect the world-wide concern at the build up of a new cold war, and the furious re-armament that has gone with it. But UN debate have never solved anything; only mass action will put the warmongers under pressure.

The response of the United States to last autumn's demonstrations throughout Europe — one of defensive panic — shows the impact that the movement is having. The sections of the Fourth International in Holland, Germany, Italy and Spain will work par-



ticularly hard to ensure that large coordinated demonstrations take place in line with CND's call.

The Fourth International has decided that during these demonstrations its militants will take up the demand for a nuclear free Europe — 'from Poland to Portugal', which is complementary to the demand for unilateral nuclear disarmament, and for the withdrawal of American bases. It will also raise the demand for 'Jobs not Bombs', to show the links between the imperialist war drive and austerity, and solidarity with the struggles in Central America.

# Socialist Challenge

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Haringey supporter	12
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Brent	7.50
6 3 9 . 5 0	
Previous total	£1228.50
	639.50
Total so far	£1868.00

# Ireland: 'We have to win the unions'

By Bridie Ryan

THE 1981 Labour Party conference may seem a long time ago to us all now, but for those who may have forgotten, it was that conference which marked a milestone in the Labour Party's policy on Ireland. The party is now committed to campaign for a united Ireland.

But, as Joan Maynard said at the time, 'We've won the parliamentary Labour Party, we've won the constituencies, now we have to win the unions.'

She was referring to the trade union block vote which secured the defeat for resolutions on British withdrawal, the fundamental prerequisite for the achievement of Irish unity.

British trade unions that have members in the North of Ireland are concerned that support for withdrawal would divide their membership and incur final chaos.

## Reasons

But, as Irish trade unionists have often pointed out: partition, the crime against the Irish people, divides the working class.

The District Secretary of the Irish public servant's union, Matt Merrigan has said: 'It is exactly 60 years since partition was imposed on the Irish people as a partial settlement of Britain's colonial role in Ireland.'

'Community strife sectarianism, violence and death have attended the

Tony Benn, Joan Maynard, Alan Sapper and Ray Buckton.

Donn Flynn the secretary of the Labour Committee on Ireland stated: 'This conference offers an opportunity for trade unionists, Labour Party members and others in the Labour movement, to contribute to the debate that will activate the British trade unions and take forward the campaign in the Labour Party.'

## Break

'We must prove to British trade unionists that the situation in Ireland today directly involves them. Not only does a divided Ireland obstruct social and political progress there, but also threatens the labour movement here by undermining democracy here'.

The difficulties of winning a significant number of trade unionists to the cause of British withdrawal are enormous, but this conference marks an important first stage in the battle. Get delegated now.

Details from, Labour Movement Conference on Ireland, 1 North End Rd, London W14.

This was written in a letter of support to a conference which will hopefully take the first step for organising on the Irish issue in the unions.

The conference, organised by the Labour Committee on Ireland and the Committee for Withdrawal from Ireland, will take place in London on Saturday 27 February.

It is being backed by leading trade unionists and Labour MP's among them

## IRELAND: TIME FOR 'TORY POLICIES TO GO

### LABOUR MOVEMENT CONFERENCE ON IRELAND

SATURDAY 27th FEBRUARY 1982.

THE THEATRE,

309 REGENT ST LONDON W1.



Amza Ruddock (centre) one of the bereaved parents in a procession commemorating the 13 young victims of the New Cross massacre. As part of a number of events one year after the Deptford fire 1000 people attended a memorial meeting on Sunday 17 January. The following evening over 300 heard John La

Rose and Darcus Howe of the New Cross Massacre Action Committee review the campaign and plan the next stage. It was agreed to fight for a new inquiry and to set up an international inquiry. The NCMAC can be contacted at 74, Shakespeare Road, London SE24.

## Fares Up in London

By Tessa van Gelderen

**FOLLOWING the decision of the Law Lords that the Labour GLC's fares policy is illegal, London Transport's 35,000 workers are considering strike action. The unions involved are backing the call from GLC councillors Ken Livingstone and Valerie Wise for 'all-out industrial and political action to defy the Lords.'**

London Transport workers are responding to the doubling of fares, huge cuts in services and the loss of 5,000 jobs. The Tories have no intention of resolving the mess their friends in high places have placed the working people of London in.

David Howell, Minister of Transport has, in the words of Ken Livingstone, 'Given with one hand and taken with the other' when he announced that he would repay £61m of the £110m penalty which he imposed on the London rate support grant.

Where has the other

£40m gone? The transport unions should now organise with the GLC, Labour Parties, other trade unions and consumer organisations to openly defy the Law Lords.

### Up in the West Midlands

THE Labour West Midlands County Council will put up fares by 70 per cent as a result of the decision. The flat rate 2p charge for children and the plan to introduce concessionary fares for the unemployed will now be

scrapped. The Tories must be laughing themselves sick...

But in South Yorkshire AT a mass meeting in South Yorkshire, transport workers on Monday 1,400 transport workers voted to come out on 25 January. This is the day designated as a one day protest stoppage against government policies.

The bus workers will be out because the Law Lords ruling may result in the loss of 1,500 jobs in South Yorkshire.

As the leaflet calling the bus workers to the meeting stated: 'This is probably the most important meeting you are asked to attend. As a bus worker it may be your last.'

## Rape - changes needed

By Judith Arkwright and Yvonne Taylor

'HAVE YOU ever been on the game? How many men have you had sex with? How many times have you had sex? Have you had any history of mental illness?'

These were the questions policemen fired at a woman who came to Thames Valley police station to report that she had been raped.

The woman's grueling interview was featured in a BBC television documentary series on the police.

The three policemen conducting the interview took a sadistic delight in asking the woman questions which implied she was making the whole thing up. The entire procedure concluded with one officer stating: 'This is the biggest load of bollocks I've ever heard, 'and another, 'I'd say you've been a willing partner.'

Not surprisingly, in the end, the woman decided not to lodge an official complaint of rape.

It's only when such extreme cases come to light that the public outcry is made. Even the TUC has been moved to issue a statement calling for the rape law to be strengthened. Len Murray has written to Lord Hailsham welcoming the Crown's comments on the Richards' judgement, and Joan Lester MP has led a group of Labour MP's in signing a House of Commons motion denouncing Judge Richards.

The present laws are so obviously weighted against rape victims that change is needed. Beth from the London Rape Crisis Centre, told Socialist Challenge: 'The letter of the law is quite strong on rape, apart from the question of consent, and possible sentencing can be up to life imprisonment.'

But while on the one hand rape is recognised in law as a very serious crime on the other hand, few rapes are reported, comparatively few complaints are proceeded with by the police and the conviction rate is low, with sentences averaging about two and a half years.

The notion of 'consent', which forms the basis of the law, is the root of the problem. How many people who are beaten over the head or robbed are required to prove that they never consented? Yet rape victims have to do just that.

The London Rape Crisis Centre has made a submission to the Royal Commission on

Criminal Procedure calling for the onus of proof to be placed on the alleged rapist. The defendant should be required to prove that the acts he committed were not against the women's will.

Women from the Rape Crisis Centre also wish to see rape within marriage made illegal.

As far as police interviews are concerned, they want to see women allowed to have a friend present when she makes her statement. Beth told us: 'The police are there to establish facts, this can be done without humiliation or intimidation yet what was shown in the interview on television is not at all uncommon.'

The law and order brigade have been quick to seize the opportunity of the current public outcry to gain an audience for their ideas. They see the problem being one of how to strengthen the power of the law to punish individual rapists.

Clearly, the real fight must be about changing

popular attitudes and misconceptions about rape which are reflected in the legal process. Attitudes which see women as secretly enjoying rape, which see rapists as 'abnormal' men.

Rape is an inevitable product of the sort of society in which we live which degrades women and teaches men to participate in their oppression.

Labour movement leaders have shown signs that they are prepared to treat this issue with some seriousness. Hopefully we will now see them following women's lead and campaigning alongside them to bring about changes in the law.

Motions to trade union and Labour Party branches calling upon the TUC and the Labour Party to mount a campaign, fringe meetings and emergency motions at the Labour Party and TUC Women's conferences would all help women to win the support they need to move ahead on this issue.



Pc Brian Kirk was one of 'hard men' grilling raped woman - he was later demoted for 'laziness'

# Are the bosses for the SDP?

PHIL HEARSE (letters 14 January) suggests that the bosses are opposed to Thatcher's monetarist policies. If this is true, it is a rather odd that there appears to be no early move to get rid of her.

He claims that 'manufacturing' has been hurt by Thatcher's policies. This is to repeat bourgeois prejudice. Recessions, factory closures, and mass unemployment are in the interests of the bosses — even if interest rates and the value of the pound are not exactly to the bosses' liking.

The facts speak for themselves. Most major manufacturing firms are back in profit, other state sectors (British Steel, BL) are on schedule for their restructuring programme. Average productivity in manufacturing is up over 9 per cent (higher than Japan's), wage rates are down.

The main problem the bosses have with Thatcher is in relation to the money supply and the size and composition of public sector expenditure (too much on welfare, not enough on capital investment). The demands of the bosses are for Thatcher to more faithfully implement her programme.

In fact they have over-

whelmingly benefited from Thatcher's monetarist policies and broadly speaking are 100 per cent behind them.

There is a discussion on exactly how, and at what tempo, to reflate. But this is different from the bosses embracing the programme of the SDP, which in so far as it has any content, proposes a utopian return to the consensus policies of the boom years.

The sort of expansion of the economy will encourage a 'grab back' by the working class which will rule out the effectiveness of dealing with wages and the unions through legislation. Heath found that workers 'respect' for such laws was only skin deep.

The bosses need the policies of the SDP like a hole in the head. Despite all the gains, productivity is still too low. Edwardes' 'achievements' at BL only bring productivity there back to 1929 levels! Competitiveness, even with the fall of the pound and the

productivity increases, has only knocked 15 points off the 40 per cent drop suffered in 1980.

Union organisation across British industry is still an insuperable barrier to the sort of increase in the rate of exploitation required. The bosses are still utilising the situation created by Thatcher. Ford and British Rail are two typical examples of a general pattern.

Phil's analysis suggests that the perspective is for the attacks on workers to ease up. The opposite is the case. Not only will the offensive on workers' organisation intensify, but this will be generalised to other areas, like the current destruction of the London public transport system.

This is not to say the ruling class is not coping with constitutional changes, turn to coalitions and so on. But what raises this is the problem created for them by the democratic rights that we enjoy.

When the consensus no longer operates the previous 'gentlemanly' alternation of parties creates difficulties of a rather major kind.

The turning out of Thatcher poses the undoing of all her gains — particularly with the rise of Benn inside the Labour Party. This is where the SDP comes in, as a way of ensuring a further term for a Thatcherite government

(whether headed by Thatcher or not).

The bosses need Thatcher's policies (shorn of their idiocies) and by hook or by crook they are determined that the next government has them whatever people vote for. But even the best laid plans of mice and men...

BRIAN GROGAN, Hackney



Letters letters Letters  
Letters letters LETTERS

## Democracy

WHEN the early Marxists called themselves 'social-democrats' they were clear about what they wanted. Their aim was the extension of democracy in the three main areas of social life — political democracy, economic democracy and individual liberty. These three things are bound together in the revolutionary marxist's view of democracy.

The ruling class has for too long had a propaganda coup on what they say democracy means — they have taken one aspect of political democracy, that is parliamentary democracy, and held that up as 'democracy'. This needs to be confronted. By putting back the missing parts of real democracy we can challenge the ruling class on their chosen ground.

Socialist Challenge should produce a pamphlet called 'what is democracy'. It could show why socialists are the only real democrats.

ROB JONES, London



## Staffa, the need for union solidarity

WITH reference to the recent articles and letters Socialist Challenge has carried on the Staffa dispute, it may be useful to explain what happened on the staff side in Staffa.

The white collar union ASTMS eventually reached agreement with the company, albeit reluctantly. We negotiators didn't feel the branch could be carried into a position of going on strike to achieve a settlement of over ten per cent.

When the TGWU went on strike, convenor Mick Wilson requested ASTMS members not to cross the picket line. This request was supported by the ASTMS group committee, but the members as a whole voted by a slight majority to ignore the request.

Despite this, some ASTMS members decided not to cross the picket. After two days the TGWU thanked

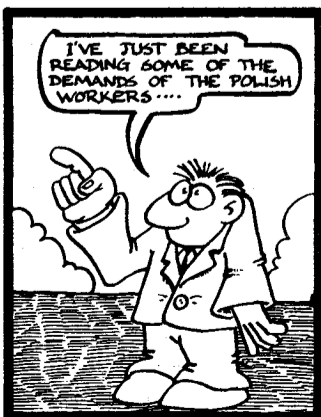
these ASTMS members and withdrew the request not to cross.

It is clear that the majority of ASTMS members did not realise that solidarity with other unions on site is essential, especially with the recent anti-union legislation. We cannot have unions on the same site being picked off one at a time. Unfortunately, a lot of ASTMS members still hold an elitist view.

This is why one lesson of the Staffa dispute is for the need of greater co-operation between unions in the same plant, and for an understanding of the importance of solidarity.

As ASTMS negotiators, we intend to carry on and press this view.

JIMMY MILLER, Vice-chair, McPherson's ASTMS London



## Guilty — if you're a woman

IT MAKES you sick at heart to read about the brutality and cruelty with which women are treated in this society and the way the law itself even condones this. And in the last two weeks, there's been enough of it.

First, Judge Bertram Richards tells women in this country that if they go out late at night, if they choose to be independent, if they attempt to exercise basic rights afforded to men in this society then they must expect to be punished for it. Women, as the victims, are always guilty.

Then, in Scotland three young men are not proceeded against for rape because the woman involved is in such a bad state that she can't give evidence and the case cannot be held — so again the woman is punished and the rapists are free.

And these cases are not exceptions. Lord Hailsham has now made a public statement condemning the decision of the judge in the first case. But if this judge has stepped out of line then he ought to be removed. Lord Hailsham would not approve of that, since it was he who two years ago upheld the verdict of special circumstance for a man who claimed that he believed the woman involved was 'consenting'.

The entire legal framework of the rape laws with its ambiguous definition of consent, with its non-recognition of rape within marriage is all against the woman.

Such laws reinforce attitudes that women are either whores or wives and mothers — that they should either stay at home or, if they go out they are almost automatically 'street walking', making themselves available for any man to take.

A Tory MP following on from the Judge Richards verdict, is seeking to introduce a law for a minimum custodial sentence of two years for all rapists. Typical of the law and order brigade to jump in on an issue like this when it gets into the press.

But socialists must explain their attitude to this. We know that the law courts and the police are no friends of women, and that women best defence is self defence — to fight to change the society that keeps them in chains and not to rely on bourgeois law.

But we cannot abstain on the issues facing women now — we should support changes in the law including the ones mentioned for a minimum custodial sentence to protect and benefit women — however sceptical we may be as to their effect.

We should also demand the removal of judges like Richards, and for the laws allowing for rape between husband and wife, and for the word 'consent' to be changed in the law.

I would be interested to know what other readers think about this. It is a burning issue for women and socialists must take it up — we cannot leave it to the crocodile tears of the bourgeois media — who are part of the problem in the first place!

JUDITH ARKWRIGHT London

## 'The Laurence Scott Saga'

Granada TV's documentary, 'The Laurence Scott Saga', is invaluable if you want an accurate portrayal of the Scott's strikers' case.

A video of the film is now available from the Laurence Scott Strike Committee together with speakers. PHIL PENNING, a TASS steward at Laurence Scott and PETE CLIF-FORD, have reviewed the documentary for Socialist Challenge.

The documentary starts by explaining that employer Arthur Snipe is a man of unusual frankness and the 'perfect villain'.

The *Financial Times* described the take over of Scott's by the Mining Supplies group in October 1980 as a 'dawn raid'. Snipe prefers to think of it as an act of charity: 'They were lucky we took it over,' he explains. He was saving a 'drowning company'.

### Assets

Challenged about his asset stripping of the Scott's new group Snipe proclaims that taking over a company is 'like getting married, you don't know what you're getting.' Enough said!

In contrast, Strike Committee representative, Peter Rowen, talks about how Snipe's move to close the Manchester factory in April 1981 shattered the lives of the 650 workers there.

The decision to occupy was taken against a background of job losses in engineering throughout the area. 'We had nowhere else to go,' says Peter Rowen.

The other villain of the saga — engineering union executive member, Ken Cure, is featured defending the national union leadership's sell out in July. Explaining why the executive settled for just three months guaranteed work, he declares, 'Where there's life, there's hope!'

The union leadership fell for all Snipe's

claims of hardship. Their patent falseness is confirmed dramatically by Paul Tapscott, former chairman of the Scott's group who describes the brutal nature of Snipe's asset stripping operation.

John Tocher, local divisional organiser of the engineering union, speaks out against the national leaders' move to stab the strikers in the back. In the understatement of the year he says: 'We're sadly lacking in national leadership.'

Perhaps the Scott's strike is best known for the break up of the occupation by sledge hammer wielding bailiffs and the flying scabs who broke the picket line by helicopter in November.

Local MP, Charles Morris, is plainly shocked by such tactics. Sadly, he fails to explain how serious a threat is posed for the labour movement as a whole by these moves and by the use of the Employment Act against the Scott's pickets.

Snipe himself raises the most important question. In defending the closure he protests that: 'There's nothing special about the situation at Laurence Scott'. So far as he and the union leadership are concerned, no doubt they hoped that this would be the case.

But what has been special is that at Scott's, the workers have fought back rather than be sent down the road to the dole queue.

Peter Rowen, throughout the documentary, describes how determined they are, despite facing enormous obstacles. The film touches on this but fails to capture fully the real strength of the dispute: the strikers' successful mass pickets to stop scabbing; the efforts to spread their message across the country; the five week long flying picket of the Doncaster-based Mining Supplies and their fight against the engineering union's leaders. It is all these things that make Scott's very special.

### Clear

Unfortunately the documentary concludes with the regret that here is an impossible situation with a stubborn management and a stubborn workforce.

However, as a summary of the Scott's strikers' story, the documentary is a vital weapon. The message from the strikers is clear: you can fight back but you have to be prepared to face many problems on the road to winning.

*The Laurence Scott Saga together with speakers is available from the Laurence Scott Strike Committee, Tel 061-231-4434 to arrange.*

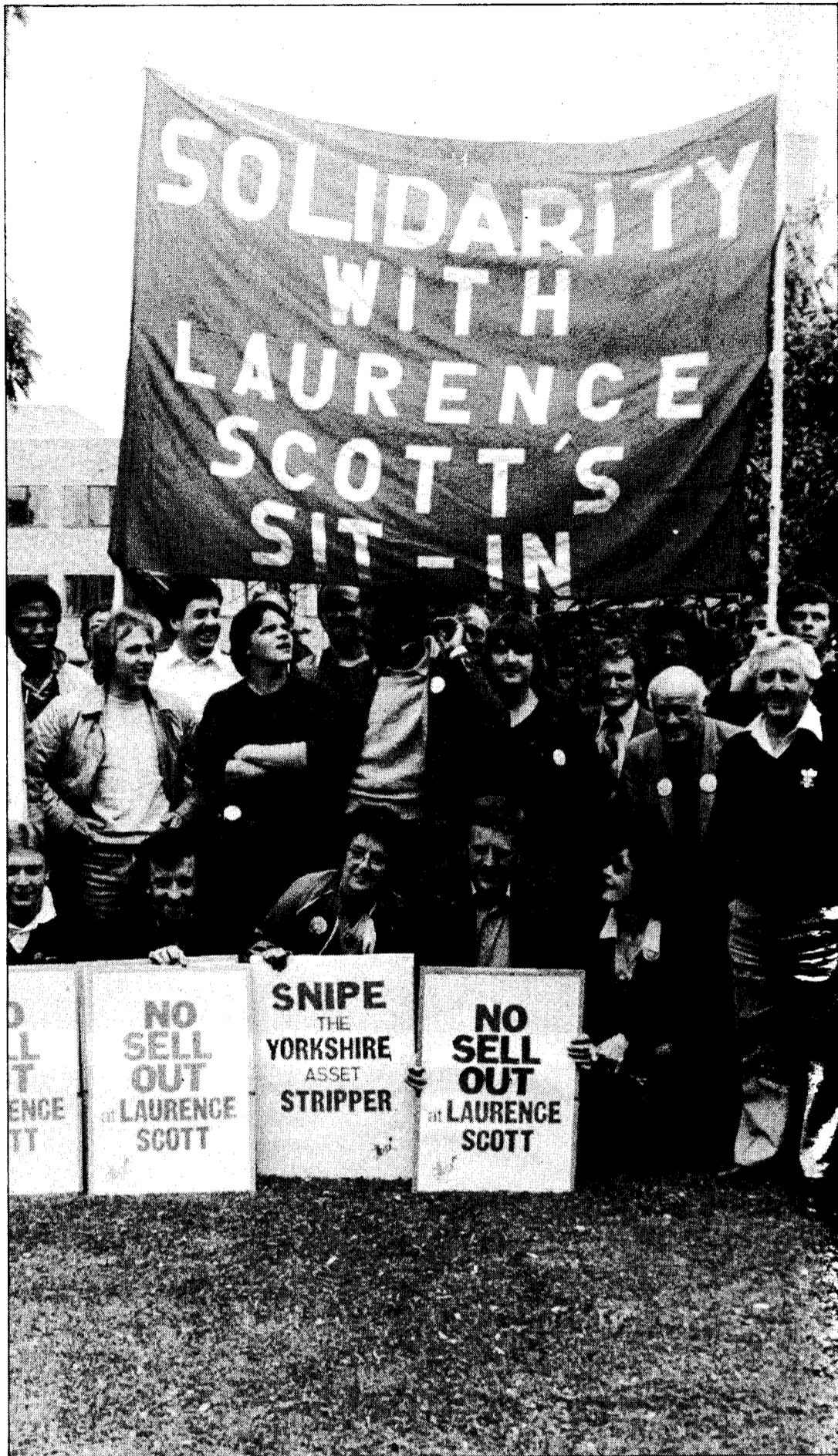
Meeting and Video Show

The Laurence Scott Saga

Speaker: Denis Barry, LSE convenor  
Mon 1 Feb 7.30pm

Halfway House, Ashton Old Rd,  
Openshaw, Manchester

Organised by Socialist Challenge



Laurence Scott in the early days of the dispute

## Should socialists support Reagan's boycott?

HOW DO we aid our sisters and brothers in Poland? With trade union and Labour leaders proposing no serious labour movement action, some people have been seduced by the idea of a campaign calling on imperialist countries to take economic sanctions against Poland and the Soviet Union.

In the first of a new series of *Arguments for Socialism*, BRIAN GROGAN argues that such actions can only further hurt the workers of Poland.

Not any old blow aimed at the despotic rulers in Eastern Europe aids Solidarity.

We know from our own experience that the Thatchers and Reagans are no friends to working people. While mouthing sup-

port for Solidarity, Thatcher is busy shackling the unions in Britain. Reagan is going still further and destroying whole unions.

Of course, socialists must stand for the overthrow of the bureaucratic rulers of Eastern Europe. The events in Poland have shown that workers' rights

are incompatible with the maintenance of a privileged bureaucracy. One or the other has to go. But the liberation of the working class is not a task for Thatcher or Reagan.

Ever since the first successful overthrow of capitalism with the 1917

Russian Revolution, imperialist rulers have hankered after winning back to the capitalist fold the growing number of non-capitalist countries.

Now, Reagan is once again mouthing threats of 'roll back'. His game is to try to leech off Solidarity's fight for workers' rights in

Poland in the hope of crushing Soviet workers. Behind Reagan's economic sanctions is his drive towards war.

At this stage, he is not contemplating a direct attack on the Soviet Union. To that extent, his sanctions are only half-

hearted. His main concern at this time is his war cry.

Reagan's striving to win backing for sanctions is an attempt to store up a fund of support for actions against the Soviet Union in the future.

The first result of Reagan achieving any success with his policies will be to undermine the growing anti-missiles movement.

In the longer term, a re-imposition of capitalism in Eastern Europe would be a world shattering defeat, not only for the workers there but for workers of the whole world. Socialists cannot be a party to any campaign which aids this.

In any event, economic sanctions do not affect the privileges of the Polish bureaucracy. A call on the

Western bankers to increase their stranglehold on the Polish economy can only increase the misery of the workers. It will not even have the marginal benefit — as in the case of South Africa — of disrupting imperialist operations.

Rank and file blacking is no solution either.

In the absence of any political campaign being waged by the rank and file trade union leaders, support for blacking appeals are bound to be inspired by imperialist propaganda.

The struggle in Poland is not economic. It is a political struggle. What is needed is political and material aid from the workers' movement throughout the world to Solidarity.



# Socialist Challenge

RESISTANCE in Poland to the imposition of martial law is growing. Last week the Polish government organised a specially laid on trip for Western journalists to see for themselves the 'peace' and 'calm' of Poznan. But when they got to the Cegielski engine factory they found many of the workers wearing 'Solidarnosc' badges.

During the same trip a regional leader of Solidarnosc — one of the few to have publicly supported martial law — told journalists that he had made his statement under duress and withdrew it.

It is clear that Solidarnosc is not crushed. Solidarity bulletins are circulating in several major towns.

The main leader of the resistance still free, Solidarnosc leader Zbigniew Bujak, has given a long interview denouncing all those — East and West — who blame Solidarnosc for 'going too far and causing the repression'.

Every day more evidence of the passive resistance of the Polish people accumulates. All this is taking place despite the fact that there are now 20,000 people in the detention camps.

The growing resistance of the Polish people indicates the need to step up the work of building a vast international solidarity movement. The left of the labour movement has been very slow to take up the campaign in Britain — something which has allowed right wingers like Frank Chapple, Joe Gormley and Terry Duffy, to present themselves as the real friends of the Polish workers.

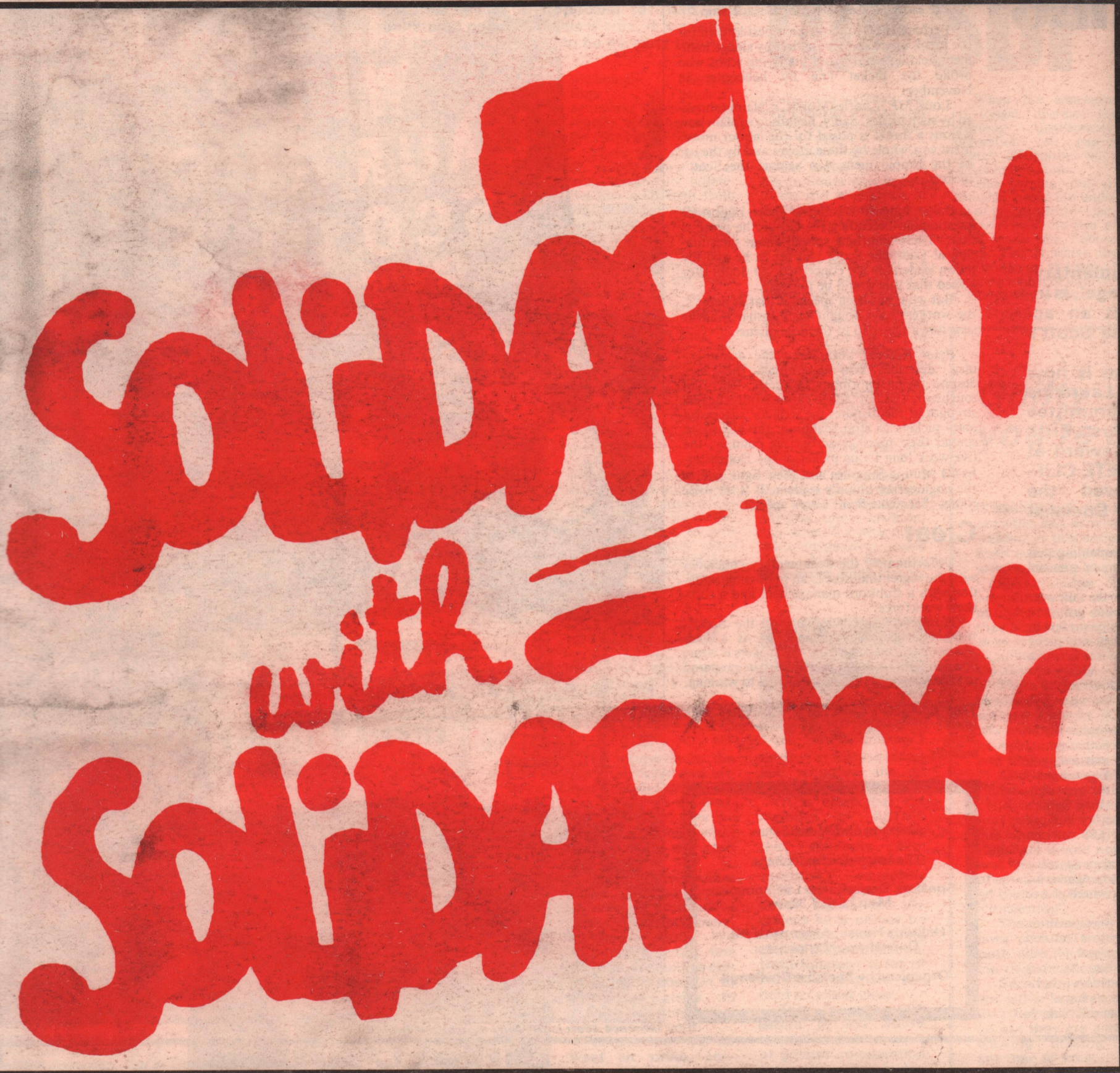
Just like Ronald Reagan and Alexander Haig, these right wingers have nothing in common with Solidarnosc, an organisation which militantly fight for workers' rights.

To begin to build a labour movement campaign important steps have been recently taken. The Labour Party International Committee has passed a resolution supporting Solidarnosc and sponsoring a London labour movement rally.

Solidarnosc committees in Glasgow, Manchester and Birmingham are organising demonstrations. And an appeal to set up a Labour Poland Solidarity fund has been signed by Eric Heffer, Ken Livingstone, Tony Benn and Ron Keating of NUPE. There are also moves towards a labour movement Solidarity conference.

Solidarity with Solidarnosc is the most important international task of the labour movement today. As the resistance grows, repression will intensify. Our job is to make sure that the Polish workers do not fight alone.

See pages 6, 7 and 10 for the latest news of the Polish crisis



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## The Polish rulers' loyalty pledge

*'I hereby declare that I have read the memorandum from the chief of staff of the cabinet of the Council of Ministers dated 17 December 1981, and I confirm that I am fully aware of my duty to behave in conformity with the principles of the people's law.'*

*'Acting in the interests of society and the principles of the edification of socialism, I undertake to safeguard in all my conduct the authority of the popular government and to scrupulously carry out the instructions of my superiors, bearing in mind the socialist development of the People's Republic of Poland and the maintenance of trust in the people's State.'*

*'Considering that numerous leading bodies of the NSZZ Solidarity union have acted over the past months clearly against the constitutional bodies of the government, tending to take counter-revolutionary positions to overthrow the socialist regime, I hereby declare my withdrawal from the union.'*



## Labour Poland Solidarity

An appeal to the British labour and trade union movement

The military coup of December 12th 1981 is continuing to meet determined resistance from the independent union, SOLIDARNOSC. After the shooting of the Silesian miners, the breaking down of factory gates and the internment of more than 30,000 SOLIDARNOSC activists, the military government of Jaruzelski is resorting to work passes, compulsory signing of 'loyalty' documents and declarations of intent not to rejoin SOLIDARNOSC. Those who refuse to comply with these anti-union measures are sacked or interned. Despite this, support for SOLIDARNOSC remains strong and in many factories passive resistance has already begun.

The Polish workers' struggle for democratic control of industry and the right to a free trade union has been attacked many times. Workers have been killed in Poznan in 1956, Gdansk in 1970, Radom in 1976 and now in Silesia in 1981. Each time the Polish working class has rebuilt its movement even stronger, eventually exploding in the historic Polish August of 1980 and the creation of the 10 million strong NSZZ SOLIDARNOSC. This union cannot be crushed by tanks and guns — it is the days of the WRON (Military Council)

which are numbered not the future of SOLIDARNOSC.

This appeal for funds for SOLIDARNOSC is going out to the British labour and trade union movement to aid the rebuilding of SOLIDARNOSC and to help the families of those interned, imprisoned and killed by the WRON. Every penny donated will go to SOLIDARNOSC. We hope every trade union branch, every Trades Council, every Labour Party branch will support this appeal with a donation.

This appeal is already supported in a personal capacity by: TONY BENN MP, KEN LIVINGSTONE (leader, GLC), ERIC HEFFER MP, RON KEATING (Asst. Gen. Sec. NUPE), JEREMY CORBYN, ANDY HARRIS (London Labour Party Executive).

Please rush donations to: Labour Poland Solidarity Fund, c/o Co-operative Bank, 110 Leman St, London E1. For further information contact: Graham Durham, Treasurer, Labour Poland Solidarity Fund, 89 Gladstone Park Gardens, London NW2. Tel: 01-452 7227.