

# Socialist Organiser

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## SCRAP MI5

FORMER MI5 agent Cathy Massiter has blown the whistle on widespread illegal surveillance by the state of labour movement leaders and peace campaigners. Their activities are legal, constitutional and the very stuff that politics and public life in a democratic society is supposed to be about. Nevertheless they are spied upon, recorded and sometimes have their homes broken into — as did TASS leader Ken Gill.

In a blatant act of political censorship, the IBA banned the TV programme in which Cathy Massiter told of her experiences as an MI5 officer.

MI5 keeps files on political activists, taps their phones and passes information about them to the government — thus contravening its own charter.

Bruce Kent and Joan Ruddock of CND, Arthur Scargill, and Harriet Harman MP when she worked for the National Council for Civil Liberties were all victims of MI5's illegal activities.

Cathy Massiter spent 14 years with MI5, but she was sent to a psychiatrist when she voiced criticisms of such operations. She explained to the Observer last week how MI5 expanded its surveillance in the 1970s to cover solicitors, barristers, journalists and pressure groups.

Initially, her job had been to monitor 'known Communists' to check on their work in peace groups. She objected when the likes of Joan Ruddock came to be included in the targets. Joan Ruddock was able to be categorised as a 'potential subversive' following an interview she did with a Soviet journalist who — unknown to Ms Ruddock — was a KGB agent.

In its monitoring of CND, it is quite clear, MI5 broke its own rules, stretching its own definitions to allow itself greater powers.

MI5's own rules permit it to keep a check on 'subversives' — defined as those who threaten the safety of the state, and seek to undermine parliamentary democracy. Clearly, their perception of who would fall into this definition would be very wide indeed. It certainly includes the Communist Party.

These revelations point to two conclusions. The Official Secrets Act is being used here yet again to stifle the democratic flow of information — in this case without even being used: its mere existence has proved enough to make the IBA run.

And organisations like MI5 are there to defend 'the State' from us — from labour movement activists. They are undemocratic and anti-working class, and should be scrapped.



The solidarity demonstration on Sunday 24th. Photo: Stefano Cagnoni

On March 6 the miners' strike will be one year old. It has been a year that has shaken Britain and remodelled the political landscape.

Class conflict, class bitterness, and naked class hatred, at a level not seen here for a very long time, have been brought into the centre of British politics.

Stark class hatred is the only description that fits the savage, relentless, conscienceless baiting to which the miners and their leaders have been subjected from day one of the strike.

Nothing has been too low or too dirty for the ruling class in the bitter war they are waging to defeat the miners.

They starve men, women and children for a year, and then their press gloats and crows indecently when thousands of miners break under the pressure of hungry homes and prolonged isolation, and go back to work — to scab on their more resilient brothers and sisters.

These events are storing up memories and hatreds that the ruling class will live to regret.

Tens of thousands of new

# STRIKE ON MARCH 6th

militants have learned to hate the capitalist system and those who run it.

The men now going back to work are not like the Notts and other hard-core scabs: they are broken men being driven back to work against

their will — still convinced that the NUM is right, but unable to stand the tremendous pressures.

They go back to work with the bitterness of defeat in their hearts and the foul taste of betraying their com-

rades in their mouths

Yet despite it all, as Arthur Scargill says, 64 per cent of the miners are still on strike

On March 6 other workers will strike in protest at rate-capping and in a gesture of

support and solidarity towards the heroic miners.

Join them! Make March 6 the day the labour movement began to tell the Tories that we will not let them break the NUM!

Victory to the miners!

## INSIDE

Build a class war prisoners' campaign! — centre pages

Police violence from the coalfields comes to Whitehall: eye-witness accounts. — page 3

Yalta 1945: the counter-revolutionary alliance to carve up Europe — page 8

Strike diary from Paul Whetton, secretary of the Notts strikers (in a personal capacity) — page 4

# Defend the unions, fight for jobs



**Rate-cap**

# Go over the brink!

Labour Councils in London have published estimates of the real cuts demanded by the Tories' rate-capping. Camden would need to close three play centres and four libraries and shut all swimming pools on Sundays. Greenwich would have to cut 900 jobs. Hackney would have to cut five day-nurseries, five old people's homes, and a third of its workforce.

Islington would lose six libraries, two old people's homes, half the meals-on-wheels service, and 750 jobs.

These estimates are based on the increased budget limits granted over the last two weeks to Hackney, Islington, Haringey, Lewisham and Leicester. In most cases, the bulk of the apparent increase is immediately clawed back in government penalties for 'too high' rates.

The Labour councils have resolved to make budgets based on no cuts, without setting a rate, on March 7, and thus to defy the government. Local authority trade unionists and

Labour activists will be striking and demonstrating on March 6 and 7 to show support.

Similar defiance is planned by some councils outside London, like Liverpool.

Most importantly, council workers are organising much more strongly than ever before. Last Saturday, 23rd, stewards from 16 local authorities met in Liverpool to plan a conference on March 30 which will set up a national coordinating committee of council shop stewards.

They hope to extend the solidarity organised in London through the 'London Bridge' committee to a national scale. The resolution put to the March 30 conference is likely to call for industrial action against cuts, and solidarity action from other authorities if one authority goes into dispute.

Despite many brave words, the council leaders keep on hinting that their tactic is to go "right up to the brink" and frighten the Tories into concessions, rather than to go over the top into direct struggle. But local authority unions will be pressing the council not to back down, and preparing to fight whatever the councils do.

## LIVERPOOL SPLIT

**LAST WEEK TGWU and UCATT stewards withdrew from Liverpool City Council Joint Shop Stewards' Committee.**

This occurred after the committee's Annual General Meeting, at which Bill Jones of the TGWU was replaced as chair by Militant supporter Ian Lowes (GMBU). It is likely that the NUT and NUPE will also leave.

A good part of the reason for the split is certainly sour grapes from Communist Party influenced unions because Militant have gained ground. But the CP is only able to get away with such tactics because of widespread feeling against the growing high-handedness of Militant in Liverpool.

Recently, for example, the City Council (in which Militant is influential) appointed Sampson Bond as head of their race relations unit. The Liverpool Black Caucus opposed this appointment: they argued that Bond was not qualified and had got the job mainly because he supports Militant's politics.

The Joint Shop Stewards' Committee voted to oppose the appointment. Then at the next

meeting — a scantily-attended one, with only routine business on the agenda — Militant supporters turned up in force and pushed through an 'emergency' resolution reversing the JSSC policy.

Another recent incident that caused anger was when UCATT struck and Militant supporters argued for no support from the JSSC until the council's side of the story had been heard.

It is easy to condemn the CP, who have a long history of using steamroller tactics themselves. But trade unionists operating in a Joint Shop Stewards' Committee need to concern themselves not only with pushing their line and their faction, but also with keeping the JSSC together as a representative body. Steamroller tactics result not in political triumph, but in groups of workers voting with their feet, as the TGWU and UCATT have done.

It can only be hoped that this situation will not escalate, and that UCATT and the TGWU will return to the Joint Shop Stewards' Committee. Trade unionists on the JSSC may be justified in cursing Militant, but they should have the issues out politically rather than withdrawing.

# The need for a second front

By John Bloxam

THE deal, which the TUC leadership brought to the NUM last Wednesday was a proposal that the NUM should surrender. Arthur Scargill is reported to have commented that it was '100%' worse than the previous position because MacGregor now made it clear that there was to be no negotiation. He was, he said, prepared to 'allow' the NUM to ring him up if they had queries about minor points.

South Wales NEC member, Idwel Morgan, explained on Thursday night what happened. "The NCB gave Norman Willis a document to bring over to us. Before we even met it was given over the radio that the NUM had turned down the Coal Board's proposals. We didn't know what they were. We hadn't seen them! But they could make the statement because the document was made up for us to turn it down. They made it so they knew we wouldn't accept it, because by accepting it we were rejecting our members, we were selling out our members. And this National Executive Committee, whatever other charges you might make, will never sell out those men who have been on strike for the past eleven months."

South Wales President, Emlyn Williams, expanded on this at Friday's Area delegate conference. He said the NEC had "compromised to the extreme. Many of us felt that we had given too much to the Board and I was a most amazed man to find out that this was treated with contempt. The following document, that came at the behest of the prime minister, was too hard even for the right-wingers to accept in the NEC."

In fact, not only did the NEC reject it unanimously, but so also did the Delegate Conference.

But if the TUC hadn't pushed through a sell-out, they had put their seal of approval to what the NCB and Thatcher were doing and endorsed their case. These cowards and traitors bear a direct responsibility for the miners who started to scab on Monday out of a feeling of desperation.

On Monday and Tuesday, the NCB boasted the largest ever figures for 'new faces'. They claim that nearly 50% are now strikebreaking, but this was denied by the union who puts the figure at 36%.

## Notts Area votes to lift overtime ban

ON Monday, the Notts miners' Area Council voted 22-11 to immediately lift the overtime ban which had begun in November 1983, after a national delegate conference decision.

In public, arch-scab Roy Lynk was more than happy. "We have lifted the overtime ban immediately. It is gone, finished." Now, he said, the scabs could earn some more money. But in private, Lynk and the other scab leaders must also be concerned with the extent of the opposition to this additional move to stab the NUM in the back and form a breakaway, company union.

The scab leaders dominate the Area Council and all the NUM branches and they campaigned to get the overtime ban lifted. But despite that, many rank and file scabs combined with strikers to make up eleven votes against the proposal.

The NUM leadership had not asked Thursday's delegate conference to expel the Notts

Area and they had met the leading scabs on Saturday. The decision to lift the overtime ban was therefore a deliberate slap in the face for them.

Attempts to stop the break-away by conciliation are obviously seen by Lynk and his friends as signs of weakness, to

## Seafarers stand firm

UNOFFICIAL action by NUS members is still preventing the movement of three coal ships from Blyth and Jarrow in the North East to power stations on the South East coast. They voted last week to continue the blockade, which has prevented the movement of more than six million tonnes of coal over the last year.

A determined attempt to breach the blockade began when — under pressure of the NCB and CEEB — Stephenson-

be taken advantage of, for them, the overtime ban decision is just icing on the cake, a stage in consolidating the separate company union, which they publicly declared when they unilaterally changed the rules on December 20 last year.

Clarke, the main company in the trade, sought court injunctions against NUS officials.

On Monday February 18, they got their injunctions and NUS General Secretary Jim Slater and local official Vince Allison immediately promised to comply. Though official union support was withdrawn, the men voted to continue the blockade unofficially.

Others beside the NUS leaders caved in. Though not immediately threatened, the TGWU lifted its blacking on Thursday, afraid of a High Court injunction. Both TGWU and NUR members started to load the ships with coal at the end of last week.



The solidarity demonstration on Sunday 24th. Photo: Stefano Cagnoni

Clearly the NCB's figures are exaggerated, a part of the propaganda war, but there was a sharp rise in the numbers scabbing.

Pressure against the strike is growing and waverers are pushing hard for the strike to be called off.

On Monday, the large and solid Easington branch in Durham voted to stay on strike — but they also voted for a national conference to consider the proposal to go back without an agreement. This proposal will now go to a Durham Area Conference this Friday.

But in Yorkshire, the move did not get very far. There were 500 strikers lobbying Tuesday's Area Council meeting which considered six different variations of the call to end the strike. Five came from the traditionally right wing North Yorkshire Area. One pit, Sharlston, had voted to return to work whatever the Area Council decision.

Emlyn Williams commented: "That is priority one. We will never go back without them."

Tuesday's South Wales EC meeting called on Thursday's NEC meeting to make a 'realistic appraisal' of the situation and have called a further delegate conference on Friday.

The proposal for an 'orderly return without an agreement' is not only to accept defeat now, but also to accept that most of those sacked aren't going to get their jobs back. It is a form of surrender, at a time when the hard core — still well over 50% and in Yorkshire 84% — are not only out but still committed to carrying on the fight.

This has been the view of the national leadership, when they have commented on the proposal before.

Is the only possibility, then, the strike continuing as at present? Certainly, the fact of large numbers of miners remaining on strike keeps pressure on the government and the economy. The Tories want the strike to end soon; they also want to escape from the nagging fear, once and for all, that other groups of workers will make common cause with the miners or open up a second front alongside them.

With the teachers now committed to widescale strike action and action scheduled over the government's latest rate-capping attack on local government jobs and services, this is not whistling in the dark.

## Agreement

On Monday and Tuesday the three NUM national officials spent many hours discussing with the TUC. Apparently they were pushing for agreement to a four point statement backing the NUM and calling again for the implementation of last September's Congress decisions. The TUC leadership refuses to do that. The only way to stop them continuing to stab the miners in the back and ignore last September's Congress decisions, is to recall that Congress.

It is a demand supported by the South Wales and Durham Areas of the NUM. It needs to be urgently taken up throughout the whole movement.

The number one priority now for all militants and socialists is still to mobilise for the widest possible action on March 6, and the clear linking of the action over rate-capping with support for the miners.

## MacGregor

LAST year Ian MacGregor put his foot in it and spilt the beans about his commitment to privatise at least sections of the coal industry. He confirmed what the NUM has been saying for a long time.

Now, the issue has surfaced again: last Wednesday, Channel 4's programme 'Diverse Reports' gave a number of economists and Tories the opportunity to drool over the prospects of privatisation.

For Tory MP Peter Rost, it seemed to offer the prospect of an industry "free from strikes". That was only a hope; but the supporters of privatisation were certain about one thing. In the words of "an expert": "There is no denying... selling off of the coal industry would accelerate the closing of some pits." How many pits?

Bill Robinson, from the London Business School, alleged that "only one third of the industry is employed in profitable pits" and talked about "cutting back to the 60,000 miners level with every pit earning its way."

That would be a job loss of over 120,000! And they deny any intention to butcher the industry!

## Get ORGANISED!



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## Eye-witness accounts

What started as a peaceful demonstration on a bright, sunny day, turned into a horrific and shattering experience that will be etched on the minds of all those men, women and children who had gathered to show their support for the miners and their families.

Bands were playing, children singing and with a general air of comradeship and solidarity there was not a sign of trouble. But as the march approached Trafalgar Square, more and more police began to appear. It became apparent that they were itching to start something.

They seemed to be waiting for the Notts banner to appear. There was a quick snatch and they took two Notts miners. The crowd, though obviously incensed, were to remain calm and orderly. With hundreds of young children on the march, nobody wanted any trouble.

The marchers decided to refuse to march further until the two miners were released.

Chants of "We shall not be moved" and "Let them go, let them go, let them go" were the only resistance the police met with.

But they were determined to antagonise the demonstrators. As we waited for the stewards to negotiate the release of the two miners, more and more police arrived and some people began to panic because of the number of children present.

Then the horses were brought in. People rushed to the sides of the street with the children screaming and crying. Helping hands grabbed children to pass them over the crush barriers for protection. But the mounted police just didn't care. They came charging in. People shouted at them, "mind the children, we've got children here for God's sake". By this time the children were absolutely hysterical. They were screaming and in some cases actually passing out. But it didn't stop the police.

One young lad climbed on to the barricades and began hurling the crush barriers into the street to try to protect the demonstrators from the horses, but still they would not stop.

Parents clung to the railings, determined not to be separated from their children as the second charge began. Police on foot tried without success to prise the hands of the parents off the crush barriers, saying it was their own fault for bringing their children on the demonstration, and telling the parents to leave their children and come back for them later!

"Animal" would be too kind a word to describe those policemen. Even animals have compassion for their young. Now Thatcher and her henchmen have created a new kind of species to walk the streets of London and anyone who has any doubts about the nature of the violence on the picket lines over the past year will have no doubts now.

Harrowing though it may have been for those women and children, they have experienced the true nature of the state, and a lesson that will not soon be forgotten.

Mr Kinnock, Mr Willis, don't talk to us of violence, because we were there. Were you?

By Angela Fraser

# Police on the rampage in Whitehall



Police attack demonstrator in Whitehall last Sunday. Photo: Stefano Cagnoni, Report.

## LAWYER REPORTS: "Police were out of control"

A lawyer who witnessed the police attack on Sunday's demonstration told Socialist Organiser that she saw demonstrators being arrested in a very violent and unnecessary way.

She told us how she saw at least five people who had been arrested held in neck locks by the police to prevent them from shouting out their names to her and she claims that one demonstrator was beaten up inside a police van after trying to shout his name to her.

The lawyer told us that the arrests were so brutal that each one provoked fighting as those nearby tried to help those being arrested.

After the march stopped to demand the release of the

arrested miners, the police put a thin cordon across Whitehall and then seem to have decided not to let the rest of the march proceed into Trafalgar Square.

The rally came to an end and many of the tens of thousands in Trafalgar Square began walking down Whitehall. The top of Whitehall became completely blocked with people and the cordon of police became trapped between the two groups of demonstrators.

A lot of chanting began and the trapped police became very scared, although they faced no apparent threat of violence.

Reinforcements were brought in, including police on horseback. A number of brutal arrests were made at this point and fighting began to free the arrested. The police van sent in to pick up those who had been detained became trapped in the huge crowd and was only able to escape by driving at people.

Then the mounted police charges began. The police were so out of control that there are reports that a police inspector went along the police lines with a loud-hailer shouting "Cool it, police officers".

Over 120 people were arrested of whom about 35 were cautioned and the rest were charged with assaulting the police or public order offences. One demonstrator received a broken leg.

According to the lawyer we spoke to, despite police claims that the trouble was caused by a crowd of drunks, none of the arrested that she was able to see after the demonstration showed any signs of being drunk.

## "Orgy of violence and intimidation"

What we saw on Sunday was an orchestrated orgy of police violence and intimidation. The scenes which took place were indescribable. To see police horses turned against women and children was horrific.

It was unbelievable that this could be happening on the streets of London in 1985 and it underlines the lengths to which the state is prepared to go to smash both physically and psychologically the resistance of workers who oppose the policies of this government.

After last Sunday, I now anticipate problems on March 6. All I have to say to the London police is, "We'll be back".

It was no coincidence that the Notts contingent was at the centre of the trouble on Sunday. The police action took place, as it did last time we were in London, at a very convenient place for the police, up by Horseguards

By Paul Whetton

Parade, where they had all the horses, the rest facilities, the snatch squads, the TV cameras, the police photographers up on the roof and all the rest of it.

Nobody will persuade me that this incident was not specifically designed, organised and orchestrated in order to break up the demonstration and give the mineworkers a good hiding.

It is something you read about in foreign countries and it is something you read about in our past history, but to actually see police officers behave like that on the streets of London has had a profound effect on both the women and the children who went on that march.

## "I saw copper punch women in face"

By Pete Gilman

THERE was a carnival atmosphere as we marched up Whitehall to the miners' rally in Trafalgar Square. Anna and I were near the band and behind us were a street theatre group and several children attracted by the Pit Dragon.

Then we heard "two Notts miners have been arrested". Some people said to sit down in the street, others not to, but the march came to a complete standstill. The theatre group began a song and we all tried to join in, though few of us knew the words.

A friend of mine came down saying he had seen the police drag two Notts miners down a side street and beat them up pretty badly.

A woman said the police had sealed off the top of Whitehall and weren't letting anyone through.

The waiting continued, people were calling for stewards but they had disappeared. Then we heard that the police had sealed off the bottom of Whitehall. We were trapped.

People were saying that nothing could happen. It was a completely peaceful march, a carnival, — "look at all the children".

A police transit van with special perspex windows drove past, stopping only a few yards away. I saw two police dragging someone into the back. He looked like he had been beaten up.

A woman with a toddler in her

arms appeared. She said the police wouldn't let her through at the bottom of Whitehall. She was very frightened.

Someone said the riot police were there, others that we were to be baton-charged, but it was impossible to see and that made it worse.

Anna and I linked arms, seeking and finding courage in each other.

Suddenly the horses were there. The mounted police went right through the middle of us, men and women were knocked over and some police on foot were kicking them. They were calling the women whores and swearing at the men. Many of us shouted back.

I saw a policeman punch a woman in the face and she went down.

a group of people were trapped on a section of pavement, a wedge of police on either side and several mounted police in front. The men were shouting, the women screaming, the children crying. The police forced their reluctant horses to ride right into them. I heard shouts of anger and screams of pain. People were injured. I saw a policeman deliberately ride his horse over a little child, on his face a look of savage pleasure.

Every few seconds they would grab someone and drag them away, sometimes just giving them a beating. It was indiscriminate. Those arrested had done nothing, it was just "taking prisoners".

The mounted police ran through us repeatedly, scattering people and knocking them down, enjoying the sport. The foot police swearing and shouting. I saw a policeman, number T275, kick a woman in the back of the leg. I saw others grab a banner and destroy it.

That day the police blocked off the tail end of a perfectly law-abiding and peaceful march and smashed it, violently and unnecessarily. I believe their commanders must have received specific instructions from the Home Secretary to do this. Leon Brittan and Thatcher would not allow a perfectly peaceful demonstration in support of the miners to take place successfully. This shows our future under the Tories.



# TUC has sold out

## Paul Whetton's diary

THE fact that the TUC were prepared to accept and to urge the NUM to accept a document whose provisions the NUM had long ago rejected, merely underlines the low threshold of acceptance that the TUC has.

It was not unexpected of the TUC, but even though we expected it, people nevertheless felt bitterly disappointed and the message has got to be got over to the rest of the trade union movement that the leadership spent so much time grovelling at the feet of the Iron Maiden.

Is it coincidence that it was about 12 months ago that they did exactly the same thing over the GCHQ issue?

The trade union movement did nothing, but sat back and accepted that, which was a dangerous precedent that gave Thatcher and Co. the nod to move against the NUM. Now, here they are twelve months later, after being kicked in the teeth over GCHQ, back grovelling to Thatcher to sell out the NUM. Rather than stand up and make a firm issue of it themselves, they went to the Prime Minister and tried to get her to let them off the hook by intervening in the dispute.

Of course she told them to get lost and they came out of No. 10 with their tails between their legs.

Buckton has been pretty good in support of the miners but he's part of a collective

body that is a prisoner of the establishment. When they came out of there they did not know which way to turn.

The rejection of the document by the NUM EC was unanimous, which was something when you consider some of the people on the executive, like Trevor Bell.

It was also rejected by a special delegate conference. The only scab area that did not attend was Nottinghamshire. So there were areas represented with large numbers of men working, and even then it was a unanimous rejection.

I don't think we can now expect anything at all from the leadership of the TUC. We have to say that we've been sold out by the leadership and we demand a recall TUC Congress so that we can put our case there and demand that the Congress deliver the promises made last September and more than that, press them to call a general strike.

It is quite obvious that the question is no longer one of sustaining us throughout the dispute with money and so on. Solidarity action is now the utmost priority and we cannot accept anything less.

The government remains

under great pressure with its economic strategy in tatters. The pound continues to fall against the dollar. The government haven't got any answers for these problems because there are no answers to the crisis of capitalism for the bosses.

So we have to appeal to the rank and file of the trade union movement to exert that extra twist of pressure and bring the government to heel in order to solve this dispute.

We are now approaching twelve months on strike and there remains terrible hardship in the pit villages. In a lot of people's eyes there seems to be no end to it.

People are very disillusioned with the failure of the rest of the trade union movement to come in with anything approaching solidarity action and people are getting to the stage where they are very desperate, and some, inevitably, are returning to work.

But, having said that, there is still a vast percentage of our membership out on strike. I cannot understand all this talk in the press about passing the "magic" 50%. There will still be a substantial number on strike, even on the Coal Board's figures which, incidentally, I do not accept.

There is widespread con-

cern about what is going to happen to imprisoned miners and we have got to make sure that whatever else happens we don't forget those class war prisoners.

So an exploratory meeting has been held to see if it is possible to coordinate all the small groups that are springing up and try and bring them under a national umbrella, in an organisation that has got the expertise, that knows what is happening inside the jails, has got the legal expertise and so on.

We hope to broaden this out by having a one-day conference on the issue.

As far as I'm concerned, it is going to be an issue that will not just concern miners. If the attacks of this government continue, other workers will become class war prisoners and it will become a joint issue.

We will have to look to the experiences of the relatives action groups in Northern Ireland and learn from their experiences.

The decision of the Notts Area Council to lift the overtime ban really puts them beyond the pale and I hope that no deal has been done between the scab leaders and the NUM in order to get Notts off the hook, because that would be the worst possible blow to the morale of striking miners in Notts.

I hope that the special delegate conference will be reconvened as soon as possible and the expulsion of the Notts Area will go ahead.



The NUM leadership

Not fit



at the end of the road

Arthur Scargill is Britain's most militant trade union official. But his reliance on bureaucratic procedure rather than workers' power has led the miners' strike towards disaster.



to lead

### These people are idiots!

"Sectarians are capable of differentiating between two colours: red and black. So as not to tempt themselves, they simplify reality... They simply dawdle in one place, satisfying themselves with a repetition of the self-same meagre abstractions." - Leon Trotsky.

The headlines and text above are from 'The Next Step', paper of the RCP.

Prince Philip backs NCB

By Andrew Fisher  
PRINCE PHILIP yesterday indirectly backed the NCB Coal Board in the

THE Londoner  
Proud of London - proud of the GLC  
January 1985

WHAT THEY DIDN'T TELL THE QUEEN

The Queen was deeply impressed when she visited the new day centre for the homeless at Waterloo. The centre provides advice and opportunities to learn new skills. 'It's marvellous' says the Queen. And it is heavily funded by the GLC. But what the Queen wasn't told was that the centre may be one of the last of its kind. Because if the GLC is the last of its kind, the government intends to...

The left-wing GLC appeals to the monarchy as respectable support for its campaign against abolition - and that same monarchy, with its credentials as a force above politics refurbished, backs Ian MacGregor.



A Polish workers' paper replaced 'Pravda' in this photo of Lenin by 'Solidarnosc' - showing that they recognise that Stalinism is the negation of Leninism.



Mass picket at Frickley. Photo: John Harris

## Heathfield discusses ballot

ABOUT 700 people packed into the Oakley Centre in Crewe to hear Peter and Betty Heathfield, and other speakers, on February 19. The rally had been organised by Crewe Trades Council, and banners from the Rolls Royce Joint Shop Stewards Committee and other workplaces were present.

The theme of lack of support from such Labour Party representatives was a recurring theme throughout the speeches.

One of the best speeches was from NUR representative Jack Lamborne, who spoke of the support that railworkers have given the NUM, and of the increasing pressure they were under from BR management as

a result. He said it was about time Moss Evans and the TGWU leadership set about getting the same kind of support by stopping the scabbing by lorry drivers who were transporting the coal that would otherwise have gone by rail.

The other main speaker at the meeting was Paul Foot, the well-known Daily Mirror journalist, who spoke about the atrocious role that the media had played during the strike. He cited examples of media bias, like the attention given to the scab Barry Newton when he claimed that he had had ammonia thrown in his face by strikers. When Newton was convicted recently of wasting police time for throwing it over himself there was nothing on TV!

Foot's speech was marked, above all, though, by its attention on what had gone wrong

with the strike, and an overarching pessimism. Certainly there are problems with the strike, and it would be foolish to try to pretend everything is going our way, but it really wasn't helpful at a rally to mobilise support to spend so much time dwelling on these problems.

Our job is to build on the strengths of the strike, to redouble our efforts to rally support for the miners, and to overcome the problems that we face in the strike.

Peter Heathfield said that the message that was coming from the rank and file loud and clear was - no surrender. As far as the leadership was concerned, he said there would be no surrender. For the last few months they had been part of a charade, chasing around the country after the NCB for nego-

tiations, whilst all the time the NCB were setting up talks then destroying them in a calculated attempt to demoralise the membership.

On the question of the ballot, Heathfield gave some surprising information. He said that at the beginning of the dispute when the NEC met to discuss calling the national strike it was Arthur Scargill who put forward the proposal for a national ballot. North Staffs miners who were present at the meeting have since confirmed that this is true. The NEC threw out Scargill's proposal for a ballot on the grounds that there were already area votes for strike action, so a ballot wasn't necessary.

Heathfield also said that at the subsequent delegate conference Arthur Scargill again proposed a national ballot.



# Answering the ban on mass pickets



## Back the miners



Rank and file miners in Yorkshire have answered the legal ban on 11 named pits by continuing to organise mass pickets like this one at Frickly last Wednesday. Photo: John Harris, IFL.

# TUC: WAITING FOR A REPLY

We're about assisting the miners. We're not about running to 10 Downing Street and coming on the television and saying "She'll listen to us". And that from a man who is at the head of ten million organised trade unionists.

And when he's asked if it was a successful meeting, Willis says "Oh yes, a very successful meeting". Why? Because they managed to crawl up the steps of No. 10.

Is it any wonder that they didn't know what they were bringing back to the NUM Executive? They were so overwhelmed about being allowed to cross the threshold. They think they'll be able to do it twice a year, now.

I warn you, everyone of you that is in organised groups of labour, don't

## By Denis Skinner

Send your argument to Congress House, they'll sell you down the river.

The Tories can't handle more than one strike at a time. The miners are quite enough for Mrs Thatcher. So if groups of workers all over the country take industrial action, like the teachers who are starting next week, and the teachers are not in the forefront of the industrial elite, then we can spread the industrial trouble so that Mrs Thatcher can't handle it.

When I had just become an MP, back in 1972 I went to Tower Hill to go on a demonstration in support of the five jailed dockers. And word went round the march that as a result of all the

Thatcher knew what she was doing, inviting them into the spider's web, and off they went, the Magnificent Seven.

I feel sorry for some of those people — just. I feel sorry for Ray Buckton whose members have done a magnificent job. Is he really saying that he is disappointed that the NUM executive and the delegate conference, which includes delegates from areas that are working, have turned down that document?

We are going through some of the most crucial months in the whole of trade union history this century, we have never come up against a more critical situation. I sent Norman Willis a letter saying

what I thought he should do, that is, implement the 1984 TUC Congress resolution to give full support to the miners, including industrial action, just as in 1972 when the threat of a general strike forced the government to back down. I said that in order to implement this it might be necessary to have a special delegate conference so that the mobilising at local level could take place.

### TUC

The TUC Congress has the power, the organisation and the responsibility and it must be used.

I am still waiting for a reply.

In the period since I sent that letter, the TUC have been trotting back and forth to the Coal Board and to the government, thinking they can solve this problem.

The leadership of the trade union movement have been kidded on, just like that other lot in 1926 who went to see Baldwin. The difference is that this time, the miners are more resolute and with your support we can still carry this fight forward.

It's a hard slog, and not just the money. In the course of the next few weeks, the rank and file in every town and city and in every organised group, have got to get together and organise so that they've got an issue to fight on within their own union, whether it be wages or conditions. I think it's not necessary to wait for Terry Duffy, David Basnett and all the rest. Do it yourselves, because you all know that during the course of the past five years, there have been many pay claims and attempts to improve your conditions that you have had to put to one side, because of the massive pool of unemployment.

pressure of rank and file strike action and activity, the TUC had called — not a general strike — but a one day strike in support of the Pentonville Five.

The whole mood changed as we marched to Pentonville Jail. Everyone knew that we were on our way to victory.

The result of that strike call was that the government sent someone down to the jail to release the five. That was a victory for the working class and it is a victory that we need to repeat today for the miners.

There are fifteen pay claims in the pipeline for the next 3-4 weeks, and not only the national officials but the local officials have got a duty to organise industrial action.

How often have we heard leaders of unions like NUPE say "We've got no power". Well, they've got power now. They should be ashamed of themselves, because they could have settled this dispute long ago by giving their total support to the miners.

You can save your conscience by putting your hand in your pocket and giving some money, but you've got to do more.

From Dennis Skinner's speech in Trafalgar Square last Sunday.

## Meaford power station picket

ABOUT 50 people took part in a mass picket of Meaford power station near Stone in Staffordshire on February 21.

The picket had been organised by North Staffs Trades Council Miners' Support Committee, and the NUM, but most of the pickets were from Birmingham Trades Council.

The police were extremely hostile to the picket. They kept everyone other than an official six off the road, and made those of us on the official six stay on the opposite side of the road to the incoming traffic, thus making it almost impossible to flag down any cars or lorries coming in.

One worker who did stop to talk to us on the way in said that he was very sympathetic. He said that workers at the power station had been fighting for their jobs without much support. Meaford is due to close, and had been taken off the national grid until the miners' strike began to bite into the CEB's generating capacity.

Despite being sympathetic, however, he went into work saying he didn't see how him coming out would help.

He said there hadn't been any meetings in the plant in line with the TUC's call for meetings to organise support for the miners. He agreed to tell the union secretary that we wanted to talk to him, and the next step will now be to try to organise a meeting with workers at the plant addressed by an NUM member.

There will be a picket of Meaford every Thursday from now on at 6.30 a.m. and we would welcome support from all trade unionists and Labour Party members.

MY first pit was Castlehill Colliery in Carlisle, Lanarkshire. This closed because of "economics" in the same year. That was 1951. So I moved to Blantyre Ferme, Glasgow. Ten months later this closed, because of "economics"! My next colliery was Karmes in Muirkirk, Ayrshire. I was 16 at the time, and it was my third colliery.

### Long-life

My father decided enough was enough — economics seemed to be running his life. So the Board moved him and his family to a "long-life" pit. This pit was Firbeck in the Notts coalfield. At least this time the pit lasted until 1968. Firbeck was a hell-hole.

From the age of 17 from there, I was a face worker.

This meant hand filling. At that time no. 1 in the hit parade was "16 tons of no. 9 coal" — I worked on no. 9 face and that's what we loaded — 16 tons a shift. All by hand.

And of course as any collier will know the coal had to be rendered accessible, bored and fired; drops and bars had to be set before the coal could be transferred to the conveyor.

Temperatures were high — often 90°F, and we worked with

# Standing up to economics

Jim Russel, a striking miner from Kiveton Park, South Yorkshire, told Socialist Organiser how he has been forced to move from pit to pit because of "economics".

hardly any clothes.

I thought there had to be something better than this — and joined the army.

In 1968 I moved to Kiveton — the same year as Firbeck closed. At Kiveton I was a trainee instructor on a fully reserved training wall.

Then management said the wall was not producing enough coal. We explained that young men surely should not be sacrificed for tonnage. The management disagreed and brought the "economics" argument into it again. The wall closed.

### Bevercotes

Disgruntled at the management I left Kiveton Park and the NCB and went to work for a private coal mining contractor at Bevercotes. My wage increased half again over what the NCB gave.

In 1978 I rejoined the workforce at Kiveton. The union at the colliery has always been a force which the management recognised as being formidable. But, I'm sorry to say, our bargaining power, previously

enjoyed by the union, has been seriously jeopardised by the actions of the NUM men who have returned to work.

### Officials

But even at this late date every man who returned at Kiveton still understands that our union officials have made their job their lives. No man could wish for better representation.

My experience of moving around is shared by many other miners. We have been uprooted and moved, and then moved again.

Every miner knows a pit must close when there is no coal left. But even the Board admit there are reserves of five years in the most "uneconomic" colliery — Cortonwood. These reserves, which presumably they have worked not at a profit — but stable, the coal there, as Selby comes into operation, becomes less attractive.

That's when we become dispensable. How many times in a man's life does this have to

happen before he makes a stand?

The announcement made in March 1984 lit the fuse to our present dispute. As everyone knows, this is the longest major dispute in the history of unions in this country. It reminds me of a saying of my grandfather who died prematurely of the dust disease, pneumoconiosis, "remember as you go along, lad, common sense is not so common".

It was common sense, surely, to make a stand when not to do so would mean the closure of five collieries — which is what the Board threatened us with in March 1984.

Every miner whose pit had shut knew the ploy. "Economics" was always the front argument of the NCB and the only concern of the NCB — not our livelihoods.

"Economics" moved a young lad if 15 through Lanarkshire, Ayrshire, Notts and Yorkshire coalfields.

The hard core at Kiveton Park are still fighting to the best of our ability — picketing, fundraising, visiting major cities. This hard core, the true union members, can stand until the NCB and the government show some common sense.



# Build a campaign for the jailed

**THE MINERS' strike has changed the political landscape of Britain — radically and probably for good.**

- Systematic scab-herding, orchestrated by a shameless media and organised by the police,
- Police thuggery on a vast scale,
- Large numbers of striking workers locked up in the ruling class's jails,
- Unbridled hate-mongering against the trade unions, and the relentless baiting of trade union militants.

These ruling class methods, tactics and public attitudes, which have scarcely been seen in Britain for decades, are now the stuff of political and trade union life in Thatcher's Britain.

This is naked class war. In response to it we need to put the labour movement on a war footing.

The scandal of the last year has been that while Mrs Thatcher and her supporters everywhere, from Fleet Street to the coalfields, have mobilised and behaved like people who know they are in a serious fight, the leaders of our movement have failed to mobilise. They be-

have as if nothing will ever convince them that Mrs Thatcher is out to cripple and crush the labour movement.

In this situation the most energetic thing the TUC has so far managed was the long, humiliating crawl on Norman Willis's knees from Congress House to 10 Downing Street.

A labour movement whose leaders were fit to lead it would right now be making a tremendous outcry about the fact that there are 150

## Socialist Organiser COMMENT

miners in jail on charges arising out of the strike, and many other miners waiting to be tried.

This is vicious class law, a compound of Tory bloody-mindedness and police vindictiveness.

But how could a Neil Kinnock or a Norman Willis voice a proper response to this legal savaging of the battered, bleeding, magnifi-

cent miners? They have spent much of the strike attacking the miners' pickets for defending themselves against the police bully-boys.

The British working class is not made up of Kinnocks and Willises. Even the least political people know injustice when they see it — or when it is pointed out to them.

We need to organise a broad and powerful labour movement campaign to demand that the jailed miners be released and all charges arising out of the strike be dropped.

This is the least we owe to these jailed brothers, who have given so much in this fight for jobs and against Thatcherism.

And more is involved than doing our duty by the imprisoned miners.

A powerful campaign for the class war prisoners could rouse and wake up the labour movement, and bring home to the less aware just what is going on in Thatcher's Britain right now. It will allow us to explain exactly what the stakes are between the Government and the NUM.

## A scandal that mus

**FLYING pickets** — a long-forgotten working class tactic — were revived once again by the miners during their strike early in 1972. Other workers learned from the miners.

In the summer of 1972 striking building workers used the flying picket to great effect, going from site to site.

During the strike there were no arrests. Months later, in February 1973, 24 workers were arrested. The most serious charge brought against them was 'conspiracy' to cause damage and intimidate.

The evidence was threadbare, but — as during the miners' strike today — the Tories were able to use ordinary criminal law against trade

unionists.

Three of the 24 were given jail sentences in December 1973, and three more in February 1974. The first reaction of their union was to oppose all support for them.

George Smith, then general secretary of UCATT, and a contributor to the Morning Star, declared that any action in support of the ? would do the union

'a great disservice'.

At first only a small left-wing group, Workers Fight (a forerunner of Socialist Organiser) helped the workers to organise a defence campaign. The Communist Party's Morning Star 'lost' material about the case sent to them by local CP members. (George Smith was a TUC 'left', and the CP wanted good relations with him).

## HOW WE FREE THE CLASS WAR PRISONERS



By James P Cannon

The International Labor Defense, which was formed in 1925 under the direct inspiration of the Communist Party was specifically

dedicated to the principle of non-partisan labour defence, to the defence of any member of the working class movement, regardless of his views, who suffered persecution by the capitalist courts because of his

in Moscow'; that I must admit, although it was strictly an American institution in its methods and practices. The ILD was born in Moscow in discussion with Bill Haywood. The old fighter, who was exiled from America with a 20-year sentence hanging over him, was deeply concerned about the persecution of workers in America. He wanted to have something done for the almost

forgotten men lying in jail all over the country.

There were over 100 men — labour organisers, strike leaders and radicals in prisons at that time in the United States — IWWs, anarchists, Mooney and Billings, Sacco and Vanzetti, McNamara and Schmidt, the Centralia prisoners, etc. In discussions there in Moscow in

1925 we worked out the plan and activities or his opinions.

I can speak with authority about that because I participated in the planning of the ILD, and was the National Secretary from its inception until we were thrown out of the Communist Party in 1928. The International Labor Defense was really 'born

The fight to free the class war prisoners is now at the centre of working class politics in Britain. But there is almost no experience in the British labour movement of campaigning for political prisoners. We've had it relatively easy here for a very long time.

Ten years ago the labour movement made a very bad job of campaigning to free the famous Shrewsbury building workers and the trade union leaders betrayed and abandoned them. Put in jail by a Tory government and kept there under Labour, they served out their full sentences. Des Warren did three years and came out of jail with his health in ruins.

The account of the campaign to free the Shrewsbury building workers (right) explains what went wrong.

The article (right) by James P. Cannon explains how to build and run a broad, non-sectarian campaign in the labour movement for class war prisoners. Cannon, the well-known American Trotskyist, founded and ran the International Labor Defense in the USA during the 1920s, when he was a leader of the US Communist Party.

## How students can help

**Simon Pottinger argues that student unions should step up support for the miners by adopting a class war prisoner, and that next weekend's conference of NOLS should launch a campaign to defend jailed miners.**

With 150 miners in jail what can student unions and Labour Clubs do about it. They can adopt a class war prisoner.

It's up to us to do what we can to make sure that the prisoners and their relatives are supported and that the rest of the labour and student movement know why these class fighters are being kept in. The NOLS conference this weekend gives us the oppor-

tunity to properly start the campaign. Every Labour Club should adopt a prisoner.

As well as writing to him, comrades should keep in touch with the family, find out what help they need and where necessary raise money to pay for visits.

Pickets of the jails and courts with placards should be organised. Approach the local press and radio and ask them to cover the picket. Where the student union has good links with the labour movement, perhaps through the YS, a demonstration could be organised.

Building support for class war prisoners is not only a necessary part of miners' support work, it is also directly relevant to the fight in the student movement for student union autonomy.

At the moment the Attorney General's office is piling on the pressure to stop student unions

making political donations.

The Receiver has been sent into the Polytechnic of North London after they gave money directly to the NUM. The defeat at PNL has helped to increase the fear of the courts in student unions, worrying activists and has been used by the right to stop political activity.

Building support for class war prisoners is a way to change the mood in student unions. By pointing out the role of the police and the courts we can convince student activists that the anti-union laws, including the laws and guidelines which restrict student unions are not neutral, are not 'fair', and should be taken on.

To start the campaigns, open meetings should be organised, perhaps with a speaker from the Mineworkers' Defence Commit-

tee (which has decided to prioritise the class war prisoners) and a speaker from Cammell Lairds, where 37 occupiers were jailed.

Socialist Students in NOLS are pushing for the following emergency motion to be put to NUS conference on the issue:

- This conference Believes*
- 1) That over 150 miners are in jail.
  - 2) That letters have been sent to Terry French in Wandsworth Prison but since the end of February they have been returned to senders.
  - 3) That every prisoner has the right to receive all letters sent.
  - 4) That 37 Cammell Lairds workers were jailed for fighting for their jobs.
  - 5) That the courts are biased against the miners. The judges have victimised strikers by inflicting heavier sentences on miners than on non-miners for



# miners!

The history of many countries, from Peru to Ireland, shows that a campaign for political prisoners or for the reinstatement of victimised militants can play a great role in mobilising broad support and in educating the pessimistic, the defeated, or the less militant.

In Britain today a vigorous campaign for the imprisoned miners could help build the support that the striking miners and their families so desperately need.

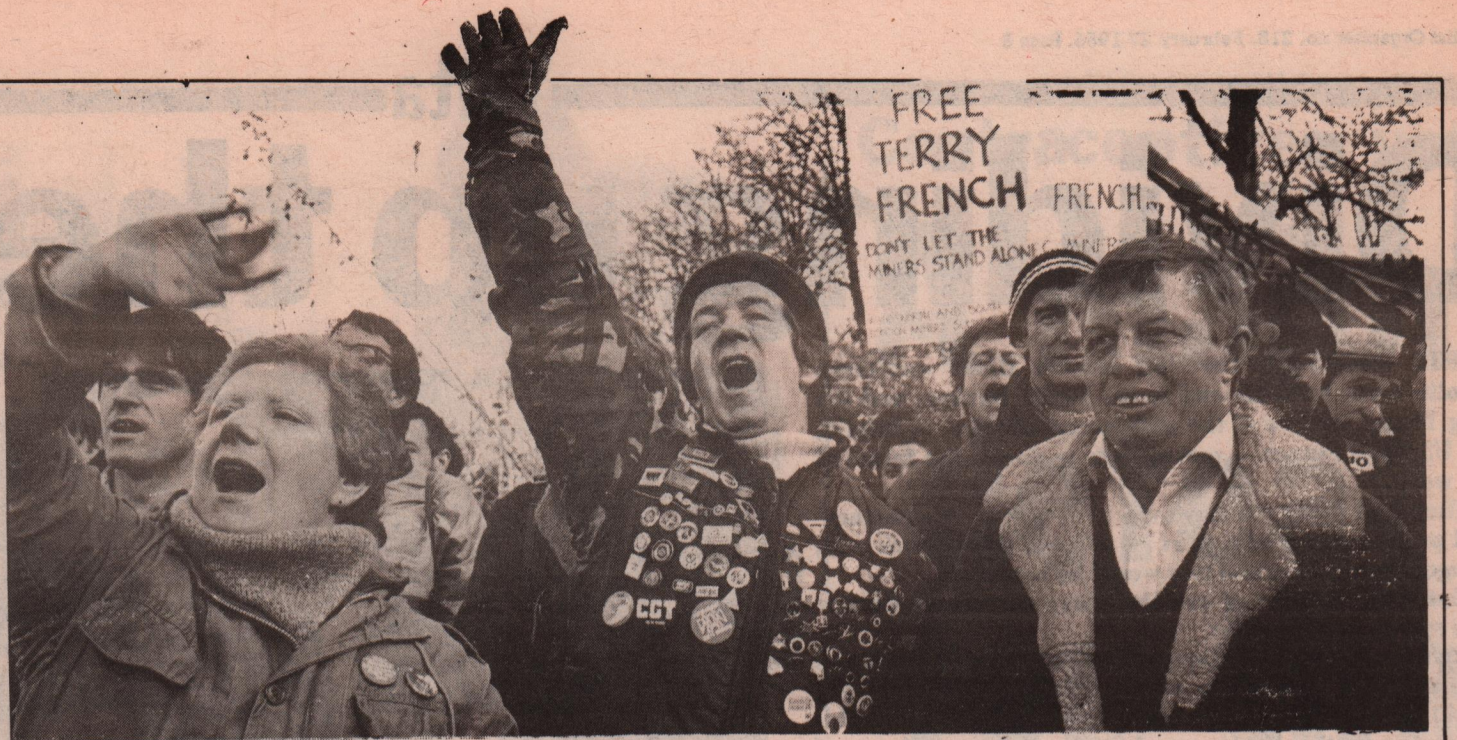
We need a national conference, perhaps convened by the NUM, on the issue.

Meanwhile, pass resolutions through your trade union and Labour Party branches calling for the release of the prisoners and demanding an end to the prosecutions arising out of the strike. Get your branch to 'adopt' a prisoner.

Organise pickets of the many jails where class-war prisoners are being held.

Help organise relatives' action groups to agitate in the labour movement.

Victory to the miners!



Picket of Wandsworth Jail calling for the release of Terry French, a Kent miner imprisoned for five years. Photo: Andrew Moore.

## It not be repeated

The Shrewsbury case also showed what a determined minority could do.

Bit by bit, the campaign to defend the pickets won wider support. The TUC called a demonstration for them, and the Labour Party conference demanded the release of those in jail.

But the Labour government elected in February 1974 made them serve their full terms.

The final chance to free the pickets came in November 1974, when the final appeal came up for the two longest-serving prisoners. Several building sites in Manchester struck, under the influence of Workers Fight, and the next day sites in Liverpool came out and called a mass meeting.

Communist Party members told the meeting — untruly —

that the Manchester sites had gone back, and Liverpool was isolated. So Liverpool went back — and then Manchester was isolated.

The Shrewsbury pickets served out their sentences. The most disgraceful thing about this whole disgraceful episode in the history of the British labour movement was that it need not have happened like that.

a properly-organised defence campaign, mobilising the strength of the labour movement could have freed the jailed building workers.

That's the lesson we must learn for today. A powerful campaign can free the 150 class war prisoners. We must build such a campaign.

## ORGANISED TO

# WAR PRISONERS

we completed the plans which were later to become reality in the formation of the ILD; and when I promised him that I would come back to America and see to it that the plans did not remain on paper; that we would really go to work in earnest and come to the aid of the men forgotten in prisons — the old lion's eyes — his one eye, rather — flashed with the old fire. He said, 'I wish I could go back to give a hand in that job.' He couldn't come back because he was an outlaw in the United States, not for any crime he had committed but for all the good things he had done for the American working class. Up to the end of his life he continued to be an active participant in the work of the ILD by correspondence.

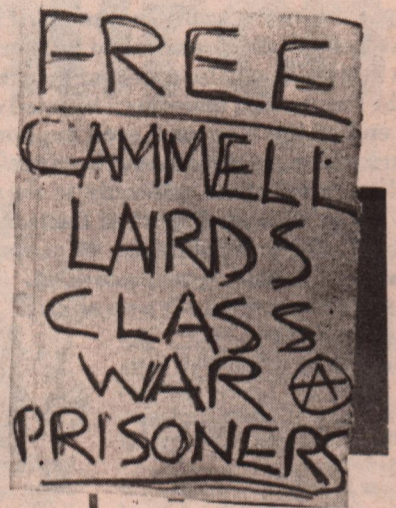
The plans for the International Labor Defense as a non-partisan defence organisation, made there in Bill Haywood's room in Moscow, were carried out in practice during its first years. There were 106 class war prisoners in the United States — scores of IWW members rail-

roaded in California, Kansas, Utah and other states under the criminal syndicalist laws. We located a couple of obscure anarchists in prison in Rhode Island; a group of AFL coal miners in West Virginia; two labour organisers in Thomaston, Maine — besides the more prominent and better known prisoners mentioned before. They added up to 106 people in prison in this land of the free at that time for activities in the labour movement. They were not criminals at all, but strike leaders, organisers, agitators, dissenters — our own kind of people. Not one of these 106 prisoners was a member of the Communist Party! But the ILD defended and helped them all.

The principle of the International Labor Defense, which made it so popular and so dear to the militants, was non-partisan defence without political discrimination. The principle was solidarity. When you consider all this and compare it with the later practices of the Stalin-

ists; when you recall what has happened in the last 20-odd years, you must say that the Stalinists have done more than any others to dishonour this tradition of solidarity. They have done more than any others to disrupt unity for defence against the class enemy.

The ILD adopted as its policy to remember them all and raise money for them. We created a fund so that \$5 was sent every month to each of the 106 class war prisoners. Every Christmas time we raised a special fund for their families. The Centralia IWW group, almost forgotten for years, were remembered, publicity was given to their case and efforts made to help them. The same with all the old half-forgotten cases. The ILD was the organising centre of the great world-wide movement of protest for the two anarchists, Sacco and Vanzetti. All this work of solidarity had the backing and support of the Communist Party, but that was before it became completely Stalinised and expelled the honest revolutionaries.



Picket of Cammell Lairds shipyard, Birkenhead, last year, after 37 workers were jailed for defending their jobs. Photo: John Smith, IFL.

similar offences.

6) That the Tories are using the courts to continue their fight against the NUM.

7) That at the moment there is little national coordination of defence campaigns. NUS must offer its resources to the NUM to help co-ordinate and build the campaign.

Constructs the Executive:

1) To launch a campaign in the student movement, together with the Mineworkers' Defence Committee to defend class war prisoners.

2) To provide details of all class war prisoners for CMs.

3) To urge CMs to: a) adopt a prisoner and to keep close contact with their family. b) picket jails holding class war prisoners.

4) To make a donation of 10,000 to the NUM for class war prisoners.

Dear Terry  
I have just read about your unfortunate case in the Socialist Organizer and I am just writing to show my support and praise for you and Chris. As I am awaiting a court case myself having been wrongfully arrested myself for Unlawful assembly and a host of other charges trumped up by Margaret Thatcher's puppets, anyway that's by the by. I just want to say don't despair you have done your bit like we'll win this one keep your chin up and don't let the bastards get you down.

because I am sure when our fight is over the public and the media will see this government and establishment for what is really is anyway good luck in your fight for justice and all my best wishes for the future.  
Yours faithfully  
a fellow fighter and striker  
Terry Stacey  
GOOD LUCK

Terry Stacey, a miner from Wath, currently awaiting a court case, sent this letter to Terry French, the Kent miner imprisoned for five years.

It is important to send such letters to convicted miners. It turns out, however, that the prison authorities are under no obligation to forward mail to prisoners.

A letter sent from Glasgow Mineworkers' Defence Committee to Terry French was returned accompanied by a circular stating that "you may only write to a convicted prisoner in reply, to a letter received from him" — or write via the Governor "if there is something of importance you think the prisoner should know".

Support groups, trade union branches, etc., should write to the Governor of Wandsworth Prison protesting at this outrageous, vindictive mistreatment of imprisoned miners.



Yalta

# Dividing up the world

**FORTY YEARS** ago the Nazi dictator Hitler was three months away from his end in the Berlin bunker, and the 'Big Three' leaders of the anti-fascist alliance — Britain, the USA and France — met at Yalta to decide the future of the world.

They had filled the airwaves with talk of 'democracy' and promises of a new start — a world from which war, hunger, oppression and fear would be banished.

But with unheard-of cynicism they carved up Europe into spheres of influence.

Roosevelt, the dying representative of the vigorous and dynamic US imperialism which now hoped to rule the world; Churchill, long-serving representative of the rapidly waning British Empire; and Stalin, the gravedigger of the Russian workers' revolution, who had deported whole nations and slaughtered untold millions of the USSR's people, including many thousands of honest communists.

At Yalta Stalin promised to help crush workers' revolution in the West. He kept that promise: Communist Parties in France and elsewhere insisted on 'national unity' at the end of the war, and even supported colonial wars as in Indochina. In return, and because Roosevelt and Churchill were too weak militarily to do anything else, Stalin was given control of most of Eastern Europe, a vast area with 80 million inhabitants. 40 years later the peoples of Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia, etc. are still without the right to control their own affairs.

WHAT UNITED the USSR and the imperialist leaders at Yalta was, above all, a drive to forestall any revolutionary explosion on this planet martyred by six years of war.

It was the desire to make sure — by sharing out the role of policeman in different countries and continents — that no people could repeat what happened in 1917-19 and burst onto the political scene. That no-one should be able to make those who plunged humanity into the carnage of the war pay for the sacrifices and the unheard-of miseries they had inflicted on millions.

What impelled the imperialists to get together with each other and with the USSR, at the conferences of Tehran in 1943 and Yalta and Potsdam in 1945, was the need to make provision as quickly as possible for the collapse of the German and Japanese armies. The allies of Germany and Japan were collapsing, and the Allies want to plan who would take over — to avoid a vacuum of authority.

Formally the decisions at Yalta were:

- The occupation of Germany, divided into four parts,
- Recognition of the positions gained by the USSR, and a promise by it to intervene against Japan;
- A plan for a conference at San Francisco to create a United Nations Organisation.

The UN, according to Churchill, was to permit "the end of the system of unilateral actions, exclusive alliances, spheres of influence, balances of powers, and all the other expedients which have been tried for centuries and have always failed".

But what Churchill reports from the discussions of the time

in his memoirs is much closer to the real intentions of those involved.

"The moment was apt for business, so I said, 'Let us settle about our affairs in the Balkans. Your armies are in Rumania and Bulgaria. We have interests, missions and agents there. Don't let us get at cross-purposes in small ways.

"So far as Britain and Russia are concerned, how would it do for you to have ninety per cent predominance in Rumania, for us to have ninety per cent of the say in Greece, and go fifty-fifty about Yugoslavia?"

"While this was being translated I wrote out on a half sheet of paper:

"Rumania: Russia 90%, the others 10%.

"Greece: Great Britain (in accord with USA) 90%, Russia 10%.

"Yugoslavia: 50-50%.

"Hungary: 50-50%.

"Bulgaria: Russia 75%, the others 25%.

"I pushed this across to Stalin, who had by then heard the translation. There was a slight pause. Then he took the blue pencil and made a large tick upon it, and passed it back to us. It was all settled in no more time than it takes to set down.

"..... After this there was a long silence. The pencilled paper lay in the centre of the table.

"At length I said, 'Might it not be thought rather cynical if it seemed we had disposed of these issues, so fateful to millions of people, in such an offhand manner? Let us burn the paper'.

"No, you keep it', said Stalin".

Almost everywhere the peop-



Churchill, Roosevelt, Stalin — dividing the world

les had governments of national unity imposed on them, in which Communist Parties gave their endorsement to the most reactionary forces and contributed with them to rebuilding the old state apparatuses.

That is what happened in France. De Gaulle used the French CP, which he brought into the government, to get the workers to 'produce first and make demands after that' [as the CP leaders put it].

It happened in Eastern Europe too. The Russian army imposed the return of their former leaders on the peoples there.

This Holy Alliance prevailed both in the East and in the West until 1947 — that is, until the world leaders had relaxed their fear of revolution.

In Rumania King Michael was kept on his throne and decorated by the USSR. In Yugoslavia Tito, whose resistance movement was the only real political force in the country, was compelled by the Yalta agreement to tag along with representatives of the royal government in exile.

In Hungary, the 'Red Army' brought former collaborators of the dictator Horthy back to power.

Above all, the conquered peoples were warned by blood and iron that no revolt would be permitted.

In Germany, bombing of the industrial cities as from the winter of 1944-5 cost hundreds of thousands of lives [as in Dresden, bombed on February 13-14 1945]. The bombing was aimed not at the German army

but at the civilian population.

In the ports of Eastern Prussia, according to Arthur Conte in his book *Yalta or the partition of the world*:

"Numerous vessels were sunk, like the *Wilhelm Gustoff*, an all-white luxury ship which ... used to run tourist voyages to Madeira, and was torpedoed with six thousand people of all ages on board.

"People were fighting for a place. Since priority was given to women and children, men dressed as women. The most grotesque scenes took place side by side with the most horrible spectacles.

"The Anglo-Americans bombarded the ports. The Soviet submarines waited for the refugee boats as they went out. Dozens of rafts, overloaded with shipwrecked people, were tossed on the waters of the Baltic".

### Bombardment

Conte also describes the savage bombardments of the cities of Japan.

Japan "was bombarded with unprecedented force. On top of that, the Japanese cities were extremely vulnerable.

"They had no shelters. They were constructed with wood and bamboo, with windows of paper. Just dropping some small incendiary bombs was enough to cause the worst catastrophes and the most terrible panics.

"There was no need here to use heavy calibre bombs as at Essen or Dusseldorf.

"The Superfortresses attacked Tokyo several times. There were thousands of deaths in the

city centre and in the industrial suburbs."

It was an apt symbol of what these so-called 'peace' conferences were, that it was just after the last one, at Potsdam, that the US dropped two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, leaving 200,000 dead.

Before putting down their arms, the imperialist powers which had used those arms to settle the conflicts created by their competition (exacerbated by the crisis of 1929), first turned those weapons against the

peoples.

All those who died while the heads of state parleyed did not die to defend the interests of one or another camp.

Nor did they fight for their own interests. They were massacred for the sake of the example — so that the oppressed should be paralysed by terror. So great was the fear of a wave of popular uprisings among the world leaders.

It was that which was weighed up, decided, and measured at the Yalta conference.



Stalin — the self-styled 'Father of his People' who introduced capital punishment for children as young as 12.



Before Stalin's alliance with Roosevelt and Churchill he joined up with Hitler to carve up Poland. Cartoons by David Low.



## Kinnock backs SAS

ADDED impetus to the demand for a challenge to Kinnock as Party leader at this year's party conference is provided by his continuing efforts to undermine Party policy on Ireland.

That policy, embodied in the NEC statement on Northern Ireland adopted by the 1981 annual conference, is both inadequate and ambiguous. It fails to get to the roots of the problem. And, on successive pages, it manages to be both for and against British withdrawal.

If Kinnock gets his way, though, then the Labour Party will be thrown back to the seventies, when Labour and Tories in Parliament pursued a bipartisan approach on the question of Ireland — on the Tories' terms.

Kinnock made his position clear when he visited Ireland last December. He backed so-called "undercover operations against terrorism" (read: SAS murder squads) and the use of "paid informers" (i.e. super-grasses, whose "evidence" is so contrived and unreliable that even the Northern Irish judiciary is finding it increasingly difficult to accept).

He also endorsed the Tories' refusal to meet elected representatives belonging to Sinn Fein. Just to underline the point, he likewise refused to meet them. And his attitude to British withdrawal is clear-cut: "I do not support a British withdrawal from Northern Ireland," he explained to a press conference.

### Allegation

Kinnock has, however, called for an inquiry into "allegations" of a shoot-to-kill policy by Northern Irish "security forces".

But, he has stressed, his call for such an inquiry is not an attempt to "undermine or embarrass the security forces or increase alienation". On the contrary, the purpose of the proposed inquiry is to demonstrate that there are "systematic orders" which are not being "exceeded".

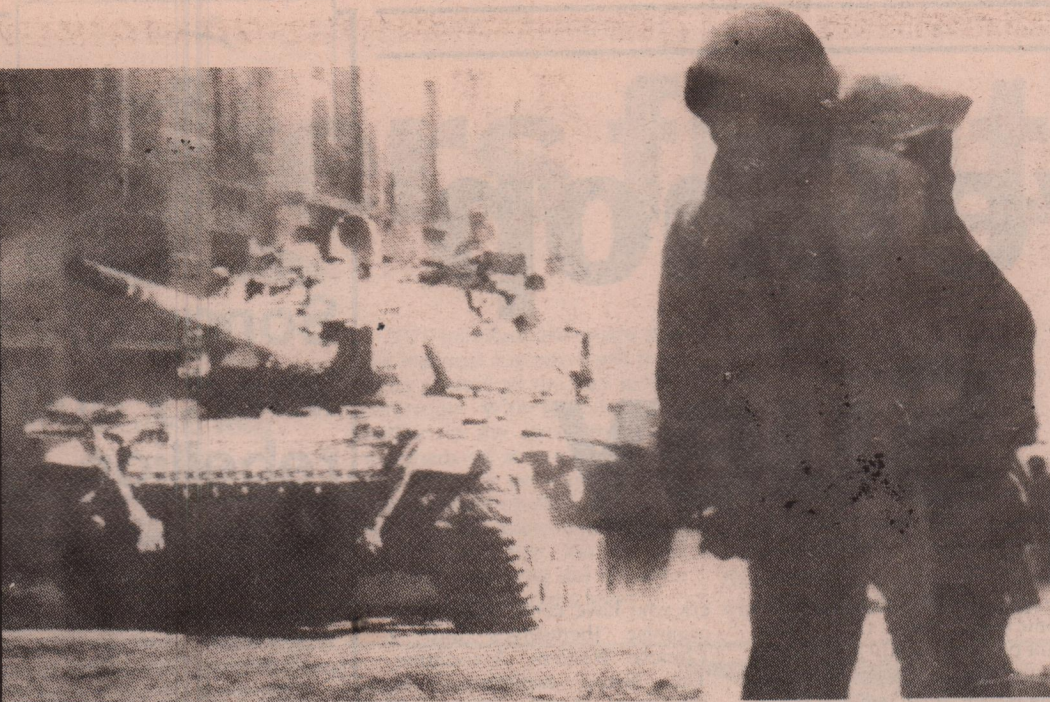
More recently, Kinnock has ordered a review of Party policy on Northern Ireland, in an attempt to turn the tide against the growing inner-Party sentiment for British withdrawal.

Already his supporters have removed Joan Maynard (an Honorary President of the pro-withdrawal Labour Committee on Ireland) from chair of the Party's sub-committee on Ireland and replaced her with Alex Kitson, a well known supporter of the extension of the British Labour Party to the Six Counties.

And as part of the same strategy, Kinnock appointed Peter Archer, the main Party spokesperson on Northern Ireland rather than Clive Soley, who, as junior spokesperson, has generally displayed a more open attitude on the question.

It is not a question of defending the existing, woefully inadequate Party policy on Northern Ireland against Kinnock's "revisionism". It is a matter of combatting Kinnock's moves towards a restoration of bipartisanship in conjunction with a fight to commit the Labour Party to campaigning for British withdrawal.

And that, in turn, is inseparable from the fight to replace Kinnock with a socialist Party leader who is prepared to argue and actively campaign for such a policy.



## Israel withdraws from the wreckage

ISRAEL has begun, very cautiously, to withdraw from Lebanon, which it invaded in June 1982. On Saturday February 16, Israeli troops left the town of Sidon, on the Mediterranean coast. The border of Israeli-occupied Lebanon has been slightly redrawn. A small area to the south-east of Sidon is now officially under the jurisdiction of the Lebanese government in Beirut.

The prime aim of the Israeli invasion was to break the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) as an effective political and military force.

They were not entirely successful in that, though the PLO was forced to evacuate Beirut and recently PLO leader Yasser Arafat produced a platform of peace proposals jointly with King Hussein of Jordan. Hussein was responsible for the massacre of Palestinians in 'Black September' 1970.

But the occupation of southern Lebanon — which had been run by Israeli stooges even before the invasion — has proved very costly, financially, politically and in lives, to Israel. Since June 1982, 621 Israelis have been killed and 3,710 wounded in Lebanon. Faced with a very serious economic situation at home, the national government headed by Shimon Peres has committed itself to some form of withdrawal. Phase One is now over.

### Vacuum

Israeli withdrawal leaves a political vacuum in Lebanon, a severely divided and war-torn country. The present government — the result of pacts and deals rather than popular expression — is an uneasy coalition of the main warring factions, lacking real authority in many parts of Lebanon.

Sidon has already seen clashes between groups contending to fill the vacuum. Thousands of armed members of the pro-Iranian Hizbollah (Party of God) entered the town, tearing down the Lebanese flag and sticking up posters of the Ayatollah Khomeini. The official security forces do not have the strength to keep order.

The Hizbollah is only one, if the most extreme, of the many political, ethnic and religious groups vying against one another in Lebanon. Its rival for leadership of the Shi'a Muslim community — which in general consists of the poorest elements of Lebanese society — is the

### By Clive Bradley

more moderate Amal (Hope) Party — moderate, that is, by the standards of Islamic fundamentalism.

The dominant groups now are the Christian Maronite Phalange Party of President Amin Gemayel, the Suuni

Muslim faction represented by Prime Minister Rashid Karami, and the Druze-based Progressive Socialist Party of Walid Jumblatt.

None of these groups or factions can lay claim to broad, non-sectarian support, and none have left-wing credentials. Unless the Lebanese working class can begin to assert its own, independent voice, raised above the sectarian bloodbath that Lebanon has been for over ten years now, the future is very bleak.

## Palestine campaign

### By Will Adams

**AT ITS Annual General Meeting last Sunday, 24th, the Labour Movement Campaign for Palestine was able to register some successes since its last AGM in 1983.**

The major one was the Labour Movement conference on Palestine, organised jointly with the Palestine Solidarity Campaign last May.

The AGM resolved to take up the tasks set by that conference — a labour movement delegation to Palestine, and a campaign for the disaffiliation of Poale Zion (overseas branch of the Israeli Labour Party) from the British Labour Party.

The Labour Party leadership has ignored the policy passed at the 1982 conference, in the aftermath of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. This policy supported the establishment of a democratic secular state in Palestine.

There were two main political discussions at the AGM. One, on the current situation in Israel, centred on the dire economic position there and the possible development of a fascist movement around Kahane's Kach party and elements from the right-wing Likud coalition.

### PLO

The other discussion looked at the rightward shift in the Palestine Liberation Organisation following its retreat from Lebanon. This shift has strengthened Arafat's hand, enabling him to convene the 17th Palestine National Council and get support for PLO links with Egypt and its 'special relationship' with King Hussein of Jordan.

Although these policies do not command a majority of the organisations in the PLO, the opposition is currently fragmented.

The sharpest debate was on recent events at Sunderland Polytechnic. The Union of Jewish Students has been banned by the Students Union there on the grounds that it is Zionist and Zionism is racism. Socialist Organiser has argued against this ban.

Although the Israeli state was established by racist means and is racist, Zionist organisations cannot be equated with racist groups of the type of the National Front. Unfortunately the vast majority of Jews are Zionists: they are by no means necessarily racists. To ban Jewish organisations for being Zionist means to ban nearly all Jewish organisations and thus actually to infringe the democratic rights of Jews.

Two resolutions were put to the AGM. Unfortunately the better one was defeated.

### Wrong-headed

The defeated resolution, moved by Andrew Hornung, described banning of Jewish and Zionist organisations as "wrong-headed and counter-productive". An amendment defending the autonomy of student unions was carried before the resolution was defeated.

The successful resolution, moved by Tony Greenstein, advised against moves to ban Zionist organisations but went on to welcome "the victory of Palestinian/anti-Zionist forces" at the recent Sunderland Poly student union meeting, and offered "full support to Sunderland Poly in any confrontation with the National Union of Students executive" arising from the ban.

An amendment moved by Bob Cullen, a delegate from Oxford, would have removed all reference to disagreement with the ban, thus in effect offering uncritical support to Sunderland Poly. It was narrowly defeated before the resolution was carried.

## Contraceptives vote

# A major defeat for the Church



## NORTH AND SOUTH

### By Paddy Dollard

**LAST WEEK the Dail (Parliament) in Dublin voted to make condoms available to people over 18.**

This was an important political event. Until 1979 all contraception was banned in the 26 Counties of Southern Ireland. In that year a bill brought in by the present Fianna Fail leader, Charles J Haughey, made contraceptives available to married couples who could find a doctor willing to write them a prescription. Even to do that he had to defy the Catholic Church's ban on contraception.

Haughey described it as "an Irish solution to an Irish problem", and there is no reason to think he was being humorous.

The new law will not open the floodgates of revolution. Far from it. It is a miserable law, which sets the minimum age for sexual activity at 18. Millions of illegal contraceptives were easily available, anyway.

The important thing is that the Dail voted against the wishes and in open defiance of the instructions of the Catholic hierarchy. It stood up to a brutal public campaign of arm-twisting and attempted intimidation of Dail deputies.

Bishops made pronouncements that it was the duty of Catholic legislators to be guided by Catholic moral teaching. A number of deputies received death threats. Many received convincing indications that if they did not toe the bishops' line then they would pay for it at the next election, and some of them no doubt will.

Despite all that, Dail Eireann voted against the Church. No such direct defiance has ever happened before.

For a decade or so, the bishops have been cautious,

claiming to have given up any pretensions to a direct political influence. Early in the '70s they agreed to changes in the Irish constitution which removed the reference to a 'special place' for the Catholic Church.

The days seemed long gone when the hierarchy would send for a minister and tell him what they wanted him to do, or would break him if he refused — as they did notoriously in 1951, when Dr Noel Browne tried, against their wishes, to bring in some free health care for pregnant women and new-born babies.

The Church began to wobble on its promise to keep out of politics during the national debate and referendum on abortion in 1983. It came back in with hobnail boots to stop the 'condom bill' — and suffered the clearest defeat it has ever experienced in independent Ireland.

One of the worst effects of the partition of Ireland was that it segregated off the bulk of the Protestant population and thus destroyed the possibility of cultural pluralism in the south.

In the North the prime minister could proclaim "a Protestant state for a Protestant people", and repressed the one-third Catholic minority. In the South, they talked about a 'Republic' and appealed to the Republican tradition of Tone and Davis, but what they created was 'a Catholic state for a Catholic people'.

The largely upper-class Protestant minority was marginal. From the mid-1920s, when divorce was abolished, Catholic dogma shaped social legislation. Obviously this Catholic rule in the South widened and deepened the gulf between North and South.

It has taken a long time for the power of the Catholic hierarchy to weaken and begin to crumble. It would be wrong now to exaggerate the extent to which that power has been eroded.

Nevertheless, the fact that the hierarchy couldn't muster the power to get its way on an issue it considered fundamental and campaigned on vigorously — that's progress.

Des O'Malley, a former contender for the Fianna Fail leadership, was the hero of the Dail debate. Defying the Fianna Fail whip to vote against the government, O'Malley made a thoughtful speech and then abstained. For that he has been expelled from Fianna Fail.

He put the issue starkly when he said that the issue was not the condom bill but whether the Dail could rule, and, beyond that, whether Ireland could ever unite into a democratic republican society in which Catholic and Protestant could coexist as equals.

That was the issue, and that's why the vote against the hierarchy is so important.



## Review

# Goodbye Chop Suey

By Cheung Siu Ming

THE Chinese are the third largest ethnic minority in Britain. Last week, for the first time on British TV, a Chinese team produced an hour-long programme about the Chinese community in Britain. Even before it was broadcast, a preview in Manchester led some Chinese to write in to Channel 4 complaining about the programme's bias against restaurant owners and about the distorted image of Chinese men as compulsive gamblers.

The main theme of the programme was that the Chinese catering trade is not a bed of roses. Life is hard for both restaurant workers as well as the self-employed take-away famil-

ies — long working hours, poor pay or insecure income, health-sapping working conditions — the Chinese youth born in Britain will want something better.

The position of Chinese women came across well — the daughters from an early age come under much greater pressure to help out with the family business; the women take the worst-paid washing-up jobs while the chefs are mainly men; the housebound women shoulder all the household and child-care burdens while their husbands work hundreds of miles

away in another city and come home once a week; their dependant position starkly highlighted by the battered wife who described her husband's compulsive gambling.

The best part of the programme was a discussion meeting of a group of catering work-

ers who have come together to organise themselves into a Chinese Workers' Association. The heavy exploitation by restaurant owners who wield great social power in the community, and the apathy and racism of British trade unions have led these workers to seek this form of organisation as their first step to fight for better working conditions and job security.

Unfortunately the programme did not develop these themes more, but instead devoted time to Chinese classical music, Tai Chi Chuan and kung-fu which really did not have much to do with the fate of Chinese youth and their parents' humdrum, take-away life in Britain. They reinforced the stereotypes and created more mystification. The time would have been far better spent on examining what is really the central cultural activity for the youth — mother-tongue education.

The Chinese in Britain have recently been the subject of a House of Commons Home Affairs Committee Report. The largely positive recommendations in the report have to be critically understood, because the Report plays down the racism of the British State and sees the Chinese as a compliant ethnic minority "whose integration into British society could become a major success story." For whom?

No, our future lies in retaining our clear identity as a community. We will strive for unity with other ethnic minorities in the fight against racism, and with the working class movement against the bosses, white or Chinese.



## Songs of liberty and rebellion



This week we begin a new regular feature, "Songs of Liberty and Rebellion". Each week we will print a piece of verse — and occasionally prose — drawn from the tracts, poems, songs and arguments that have been produced by the oppressed and their sympathisers over the ages in the long struggle against the exploiters and against the tyranny of their states.

This week we print most of Percy B. Shelley's "Song to the Men of England". It was written in the early-19th century when workers — men, women and little children — were being driven into the hell-holes of the Industrial Revolution and shot down or sabred when they protested, as they were in the infamous 1819 "Peterloo" massacre in Manchester.

## To the Men of England

Men of England, wherefore plough  
For the Lords who lay ye low?  
Wherefore weave with toil and care  
The rich robes your tyrants wear?

Wherefore feed and clothe and save,  
From the cradle to the grave,  
Those ungrateful drones who would  
Drain your sweat — nay, drink your blood?

Wherefore, Bees of England, forge  
Many a weapon, chain and scourge,  
That these stingless drones may spoil  
The forced produce of your toil?

Have ye leisure, comfort, calm,  
Shelter, food, love's gentle balm?  
Or what is it ye buy so dear  
With your pain and with your fear?

The seed ye sow, another reaps,  
The wealth ye find, another keeps;  
The robes ye weave, another wears,  
The arms ye forge, another bears.

Sow seed — but let no tyrant reap;  
Find wealth — but let no impostor heap;  
Weave robes — let not the idle wear;  
Forge arms — in your defence to bear.



On Friday ITV is giving over nearly the whole evening to the miners' strike

# Cuts: medical nonsense

The Tory assault on the National Health Service has led to many far-reaching and sometimes unexpected consequences for patients. Last week, I looked at the way cuts had led to longer waiting lists and attempts to close vital facilities. This week, I will describe how the cuts are affecting the quality of present day treatment and the training of future doctors.

### Centralisation.

Closing smaller hospitals and centralising services into ever larger hospitals may make "economic" sense. However, it makes medical nonsense.

For instance, the ten year plan for the West Lambeth Health District leaves the area with just one hospital, the massive St. Thomas's Hospital. This is extremely inconveniently placed on the south bank of the Thames with out-patients facing long journeys by public transport.

Concentrating large numbers of sick people in one gigantic hospital is a dangerous policy, with many diseases being passed around, despite precautions.

Some infections are only found in hospitals, as only here can the bacteria gain access to people's bodies through operation wounds.

Recent outbreaks of fatal food poisoning seem to have been

made worse by the large numbers of sick and elderly patients sharing the same food.

### Cutting staff and beds

One response to bed shortages has been to speed patients' passage through hospital, as reported from the Camberwell Health District. This may result in patients going home before they are well enough or where there is inadequate after-care.

Patients may need dressings changed, etc., and yet Camberwell's Community Nursing Service has received no extra funding to cope with earlier discharge of patients. Indeed, Camberwell is short of 16 District Nurses.

Standards of hygiene, which need greater attention in larger hospitals, are damaged by run-down of staff. For instance, it is thought that staff shortages led to the food poisoning outbreak mentioned before through food being left out for hours before



## SCIENCE

### By Les Hearn

being served.

### Privatisation

Strictly speaking, it is not "privatisation" but "cost-cutting" that is the name of the game. Some hospitals have used privately-employed domestic staff for years but the current

policy has led to the replacement of low-paid but dedicated staff by even lower-paid, semi-casual staff who often don't even have time to fulfil their workloads, let alone chat to patients or take an interest in the hospital.

### Unrealistic

Unrealistic contracts have resulted in situations like that at Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge. Last October, the Guardian reported that "Bags of soiled linen [urine, vomit, faeces] are piled high in a corridor. Cardboard boxes full of rubbish, sacks of surgical waste are stacked against the wall. It is 7 am and they must have been there all night."

This was the result when a new firm took over from domestics employed by the hospital and by Crothalls. Pay cuts and redundancies resulted in a strike and in the resignation of Professor John Davis, one of Britain's leading child specialists. He criticised the "political decision" to bring in "so-called privatisation," stating that workers' conditions of service should allow them to focus their

main concern on patients' well-being. This would not happen if domestics were turned into casual labour. He added, "On my wards we value very highly the responsible and loyal work of our cleaners and the personal help often given to our patients and their parents."

This is not just one isolated scandal. Privatisation at High Royds Hospital in Leeds resulted in human excrement and vomit being left on floors, while at Barking Hospital, where Crothalls renewed its existing contract, slashing wages and conditions, inexperienced scab cleaners have allowed cockroaches and other insects a free run.

Not only does this increase the risk of contracting infections in hospital, but patients have lost the important psychological benefit that domestic staff often bring.

### Medical teaching harmed.

A perhaps unexpected side-effect of reduced stays in hospital is the harm done to the education of medical students.

Students need the time to examine and learn from patients before, during and after treatment.

The King's College School of Medicine and Dentistry stated recently that there was *already* a shortage of beds for teaching. With reduced stays in hospital, students might find the patients in and out before they had had a chance to be taught anything about the physical signs of their illness.

The General Medical Council has already commented on the lowered standards of students' physical examination of patients, due to inadequate practice.

### Progress

The School is also worried about the progress of doctors in their compulsory year in hospital after qualifying. This year is supposed to consolidate the practical aspects of doctors' training but at King's, "House officers are now spending too high a proportion of their time on administrative tasks, particularly in the often fruitless endeavour to find beds for their patients."

Next week, I will look at how the cuts have prevented urgent improvements in treatment and are destroying medical research.



# Teachers fight for pay

THE teachers' action over pay has got off to a good start. Both the half-day national strike on Tuesday, called by the NAS/UWT, and the selective three-day strikes in over 200 schools called by the NUT, produced a solid response from their members. Both unions have planned further selective strikes in the coming weeks.

For the first time in recent years, the NUT is bringing out some members in its most militant Division, Inner London, at an early stage. 1000 teachers in over 40 schools in Wandsworth, Westminster, Hackney and Lambeth, are being balloted this week for three-day strikes starting on March 11. But this is less than 10% of the entire NUT membership in Inner London.

Several developments have sharpened the conflict.

\*Many local authorities have threatened to dock pay from teachers who withdraw from non-contractual duties, e.g. Merton teachers were threatened with losing £10 for each after-school meeting they missed.

\*Solihull has taken the NUT to court for not balloting its members there on its decision to work to contract. The NUT has now decided to ballot its members there and union activists expect massive support for

## England

By Cheung Siu Ming

action.

\*Keith Joseph threw the employers into disarray by announcing that there was no extra cash to be had, even if the NUT was willing to make concessions on working conditions.

Until then, the employers had sought to split the NUT from the other teaching unions who were prepared to negotiate a trade-off. Now it is the employers' side which have split.

NUT members in London are particularly angry about the ILEA's cutting of in-service courses last week. It is rumoured that the ILEA Labour Group will not vote for an illegal overspend budget on March 6, but will hedge their bets by deferring a decision till after the rate-capped London boroughs have decided whether or not to levy a rate.

Teachers are angry because, while they are striking on March 6 to defend rate-capped councils, the ILEA Labour Group has adopted an anti-union attitude on pay and conditions, and a defeatist attitude on rate-capping.

NUT militants are aware that the National Executive will have to be pushed all the way in this campaign. With less than £10 million in the strike fund and members on strike getting full pay, there is no way the NUT can seriously escalate the action without both a levy and a reduction of strike pay. Yet the last Executive meeting did not even discuss strike pay or a levy!

THERE are dangerous signs that Scottish teachers engaged in a sustained pay campaign may be diverted by a management-inspired pay and conditions package.

In discussions last week local authority representatives floated a package deal which would entail a rewrit-

## Scotland

By Ian McCalman

ing of the teachers' contracts to include attendance at parents' meetings, compensated for by time off in lieu, and a commitment to carry out curricular development and increased non-class contact time and a guaranteed number of in-service days.

Clearly such a package would cost the employers very little for it could be achieved in some local authorities, especially Strathclyde, by redeployment of existing "surplus" staff.

There was no price tag on the package but Wolsey Brown, EIS Salaries Convenor, speaking at the Union's Council at the weekend, spoke of money possibly being made available from contingency funds at the disposal of George Younger, Scottish Secretary of State.

### Connivance

It is highly probable that this management ploy has been cooked up with the connivance of Younger and that any funding will simply come from reallocation of £7 billion which Younger has at his disposal for the financial year 1985/6. In simple terms, money would be taken from the health budget to add a small percentage to teachers' salaries.

The whole package should be refuted for the ruse that it clearly is and talk of negotiations along such lines rejected outright.

Unfortunately EIS Council also narrowed its options by rejecting the call for an interim wage claim moved by supporters of the Campaign for a Fighting Union. This was of the order of 15% and required highly intensive industrial action in March. The motion was narrowly defeated at Glasgow Committee of Management but overwhelmingly defeated at Council. That it was discussed at all was only thanks to President Henry McLachlan who overruled the efforts of full-time officials to keep it off the agenda.

### Targetted

Despite talk of intensified industrial action through more strikes targetted on Tory held constituencies, the right wing successfully resisted further industrial action, except for a one-day strike, in the non-targetted areas. A motion for a mass lobby of Parliament in conjunction with the NUT was remitted to the Executive.

As was pointed out by the Left on the Council, we are in danger of being hoist with our own petard, of being hypnotised by the "success" of our pay campaign so far in terms of membership and public support. Without an interim claim, we are in danger of drifting forward with falling momentum and a concomitant increasing willingness of the right wing to accept a pay and conditions package.

The membership are still in an angry mood and the campaign is rolling forward but there are growing pitfalls ahead and it will be the task of the Left in the union to put the membership on their guard.

## Strathclyde NALGO strike

By Margaret Brewer

ON Monday February 4, a residential worker was seriously assaulted by a resident in a local authority children's home in Glasgow. This was the latest in a series of assaults on staff members by this child.

The residential workers in Wallacewell home, Strathclyde, realising that the situation with this child had irretrievably broken down, asked management to move him. This request was refused despite the fact that the workers were now at risk.

Next day, the same child threatened a domestic worker.

Due to management's failure to deal with the situation, all the workers in Wallacewell went on strike on Tuesday, 5th.

On February 12, 94% of all residential childcare workers in the region voted to escalate the action. By February 20, the national emergency committee of the union gave the action official backing. To date, management have made various offers, except to move the child who assaulted the member of staff.

All residential workers have received a letter from management with a categorical guarantee that no worker who scabs during this dispute will lose

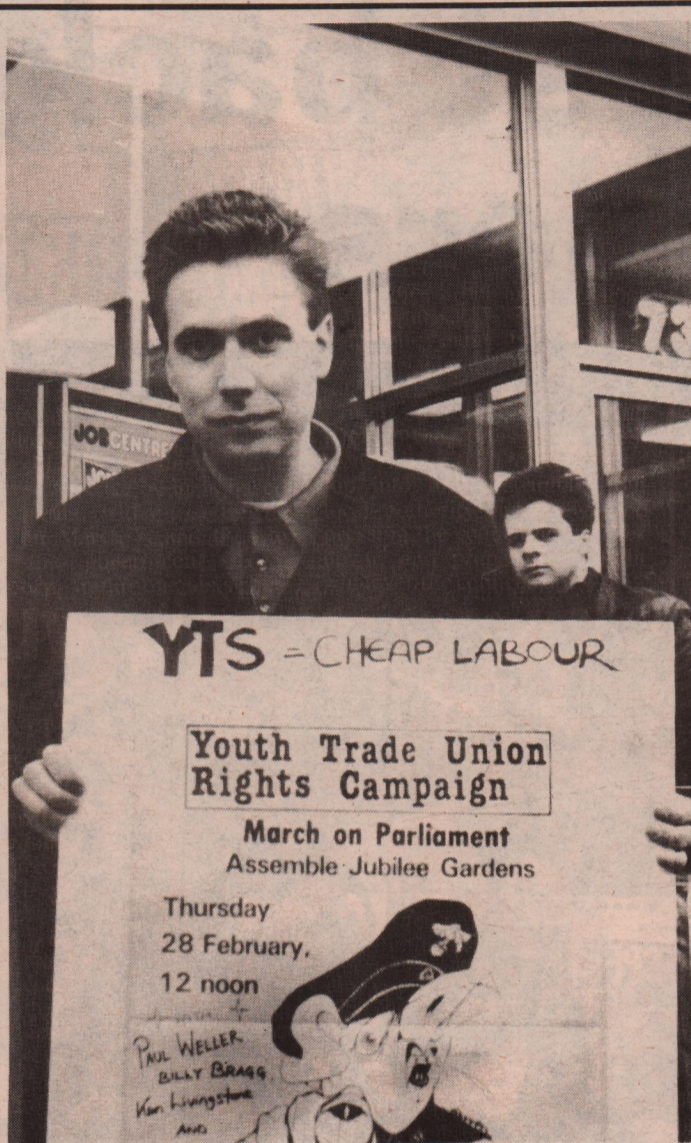
their job — or be disciplined in any way by the Regional Council. Management are clearly determined to weaken the union by threatening the closed shop agreement.

The Wallacewell incident is not isolated. Violence against staff in such homes has increased over the past few years due to the closure of List D Schools and Assessment Centres as a result of government cutbacks.

Children's homes are now taking in the more violent and disturbed children who would previously have been cared for in establishments designed for their needs.

Wages are lower in children's homes than in List D Schools and Assessment Centres, running costs are far cheaper, and staffing levels are inadequate.

The implications of the present dispute in Strathclyde reach far beyond problems in individual homes. NALGO members must demand an end to management shirking of responsibilities in situations like that at Wallacewell. Management must recognise the root causes of such incidents: the Tories' drastic cutbacks in social services, and the failure of local authorities like Strathclyde to take a stand against the Tories — and protect the service conditions of their employees.



Pop star Jerry Damners on a picket of a Job Centre in Brixton, South London, last week, organised by the Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign. Photo: Stefano Cagnoni, IFL.

## UCW conference must plan fight against cuts threat from Post Office bosses

By Alan Fraser

Monday March 4 will see the beginning of a crucial special three-day conference of the UCW.

The conference has been called to discuss a number of radical Post Office proposals which are contained in a special report drafted by the UCW executive committee, called Postal Business Efficiency: Conditions of Employment.

Some of these proposals such as the mandatory productivity scheme, the immediate introduction of new technology and part-time workers are in direct opposition to current union policy.

The Post Office have threatened to implement these policies with or without agreement.

The UCW EC report puts forward four recommendations which effectively ask the membership to totally disregard all previous conference policy and give the EC carte blanche to make an agreement with the Post Office.

On the past record of the UCW leadership, it is clear that they are ready to sacrifice thousands of their members' jobs without lifting a finger.

On the brighter side, the membership have shown that they are in no mood to lie down and accept the leadership's blatant attempt to sell them out.

Many amendments have been submitted calling on conference to instruct the EC to continue to negotiate in line with previous union policy.

Many amendments also call upon the EC to bring any future agreement on these proposals to another special conference for ratification.

In the meantime, rank and file activists must now begin to campaign and organise independently of their leadership to ensure that current union policy is fought for.

Otherwise, thousands of UCW members' jobs will be lost.

## EETPU threatens TUC

THE EETPU has threatened to sue the TUC if the TUC abides by its policy and expels the union for accepting government funds for ballots under the 1980 Employment Act.

Eric Hammond, who took over as union general secretary from Frank Chapple, says that he expects other trade unions will also go to court if the TUC expels them.

The electricians' union, like the AUEW, has applied for balloting funds in breach of TUC policy. Hammond, writing in the union journal, Contact, says he

will not be "cajoled, intimidated or bullied into submission" by the TUC.

The "warning" that a defiant right wing stand could attract other union members accords with the Chapple-Hammond policy of establishing the EETPU as a scab union. In the recent past, the union has signed 'no-strike' agreements.

The TUC must be held to its policy. The anti-union laws must not be complied with, and the TUC must be prepared to take firm action against right-wing rebels.

## Build a public sector alliance on pay!

By Steve Battlemuch

Big battles for public sector pay claims loom in 1985.

Now, belatedly, and after a lot of pushing, the TUC have instead called a meeting of union executive committees for the last week in March. Most claims are due on April 1! Some were due last November.

At rank and file level, however, links are being made. The Council of Civil Service Unions (CCSU) held pay rallies over the last couple of weeks and NALGO, NUPE and NUT speakers spoke alongside civil service trade unionists.

In Nottingham, a public sector alliance committee has been organised, with six unions represented at the inaugural meeting, CPSA, SCPS, IRSF, NALGO, NUPE and COHSE. The NUT sent apologies. The committee will meet regularly. Committees like it should be set up everywhere.

The start of industrial action by the NUT should be the signal for other public sector unions to join them as quickly as possible. March 6 will be an opportunity for action.

But our union leaderships, by and large, have failed to link the issues and have not called for strikes on the 6th. Some, like the IRSF say they don't want to 'confuse' the issue and will instead call for one day action on April 1.

Others like the 'left'-led CPSA urge "full participation" on March 6, but they do not call for CPSA members to strike on that

day. It seems it will be left to branches to decide, one by one.

CPSA, it seems, will go along with plans for a one-day strike on April 1 and then "ballot" for all-out action to start in mid-April.

The major issue this year is going to be the balloting arrangements for the all-out strike consultation.

In the past CPSA has used "show of hands" votes at workplace meetings — the most democratic form available. However, the 1984 Trade Union Act requires postal balloting, with a loaded ballot paper asking if people are prepared to break their contract of employment. It seems most civil service trade unions are going to comply.

In the CPSA we have a clear conference policy against compliance with anti-union laws; but this could well be lost on the CPSA executive after the split in the E and Left.

Some now argue for ballot papers to be sent to branches, to be filled in at workplace meetings. In reality the branches controlled by the right wing would use the ballot papers for desk top balloting or postal balloting.

Moreover, the proposed compromise would still be in breach of the anti-union laws. So CPSA should either stick to union policy or go right down the Tory line on postal ballots.

Motions should be sent to the CPSA NEC urging them to stick to our original voting procedures.



# Socialist Organiser

## The not-so Democratic Left

By Simon Pottinger (president Durham Students' Union, in personal capacity).

Eric Heffer says

# Labour must back the miners

OVER HALF Britain's trade union members would vote Labour in a general election tomorrow.

In an opinion poll published by Mori last week, 54% backed Labour — a big increase on the 39% support in the June 1983 general election. The Tory government has become very unpopular among trade unionists.

But 53% said that they would vote against political funds in the ballots to be held within the next 12 months until the 1984 Trade Union Act.

39% favour keeping up the political levy. Fully 91% agreed that trade unions are essential to protect workers' interests.

Many arguments — about the political levy, for example — have yet to be won. But it is also clear that a big potential for resistance to the Tories' assault on the unions is not being tapped by the leadership.

Neil Kinnock and the Labour Party leaders still hope that Labour can prosper once the miners' strike is over — whoever wins. Nothing could be more stupid or short-sighted, as Eric Heffer said in a speech in Liverpool last weekend.

"We should not be apologetic about our support for the miners. We should not be creeping around afraid to say what we think. We should shout from the rooftops that the miners are right and that they must be fully supported.

"We expect the TUC General Council and the Labour Party national executive to get together quickly with the NUM to work out the positive industrial and political steps required.

"It is never the Uncle Toms who win the battle — it is those who are prepared to



fight positively for their beliefs.

"What is required now is what the miners have asked for — the mobilisation of the trade union and labour movement in their support. That means stepping up both

industrial and political action.

"It is a myth being peddled about that, if the miners lose, Labour would surge ahead. If the miners are defeated, disillusion will be rife in the entire labour movement."

THIS year's Labour Students' conference will most likely reflect the current leadership of the organisation.

For at least three years now the Kinnockite leadership of Labour students has maintained its grip, not through political argument, but by bureaucratic manoeuvres.

In 1983 70% of all the delegates of Socialist Students in NOLS, the left wing faction in NOLS, were ruled out of order.

In 1984, after six elections, SSIN had won two, the Militant one, and the conference was closed down.

In 1985, something in the region of 25 Labour Clubs (all opposing the present leadership) have been denied full voting rights at the conference.

This year, virtually all of the SSIN nominations for the national committee of Labour Students have been ruled out of order.

Ironically, the current leadership of Labour Students describe themselves as "Democratic Left", by which they mean reformist left.

The "democratic" nature of their organisation is not just displayed in their behaviour at Labour Students conference, but also in their refusal to hold caucuses of NOLS at NUS conference.

The "left" nature of their organisation is shown in its unrestrained eagerness to witch-hunt the new, Militant-controlled, FE Labour Students organisation.

With prompting from NOLS, the Labour Party NEC has declared membership of FELS incompatible with membership of the Labour Party. This is despite the fact that at least 80% of FE students are denied membership of NOLS by the "Democratic Left" rules.

We, in SSIN, are proposing the rules are changed at this conference, but we don't expect to win.

The democracy movement in the Labour Party of two years ago has been made a mockery of by the "Democratic Left". Witch-hunting people because of their beliefs has ceased to be anathema to the "democratic left".

These people have ceased to command any real majority in Labour Students. The only two things that keep them together in a leadership position is misuse of the bureaucracy of the organisation combined with a

self-generated hysteria over the Militant Tendency.

However, for the past three years, the opposition to the current leadership have had the real majority in Labour Students. Manoeuvres will not keep the "Democratic Left" in power for much longer.

When it comes to policy debates both in NOLS and NUS (which the "democratic Left" control) it is clear why the ideas of the "democratic Left" are not those held by the majority of NOLS activists.

At last Christmas's NUS conference, the "Democratic Left" opposed a motion which condemned police-initiated violence in the miners' dispute; demanded NUS give full support to the women against pit closures movement; and called upon NUS to give £20,000 to the NUM.

The miners' debacle is symptomatic rather than a "one-off" in the student movement.

The major class attack by the government which also affects students is that over local democracy and more specifically rate-capping. NUS and NOLS have completely failed to work out any sort of strategy for tying FE and PSHE students into a council workers' fightback.

Completely inadequate proposals have been put forward for the March 6 day of action, and NUS have failed to propose items to be included in Local Authority education budgets.

Perhaps the clearest example of the way in which the "Democratic Left" exploit and abuse their "Left" credentials is on the issue of sexual politics.

They have managed to completely reduce the issues of women's, lesbian and gay liberation to the personal. Solidarity with WAPC or LGSM has, at a national level, been non-existent. Work around sexual liberation has been confined to assertion training, positive discrimination and autonomy. Legitimate issues in themselves, but not in and of themselves.

The "Democratic Left" have taken these legitimate demands and stick to them over and above any living struggles.

This conference will not mark a breakthrough for Labour Students, but it should provoke the leadership of NOLS into forcing NUS to do something for the miners and build on this Wednesday's NUS demonstration in Barnsley.

## FUND

February has been a very bad month indeed for the fund.

We needed £400 just to balance our regular budget: we got £151.20. Result: £250 shortfall, and we'll need no less than £650 to balance March's budget.

Thanks, however, to: Debbie Williams, £10; Nottingham comrades, £10; Birmingham, £20; East London £18; Glasgow, £2; Manchester, £17.50.

Send contributions to SO, 214 Sickert Court, London N1 2SY.

## SOLIDARNOSĆ

THE Polish dictatorship has been forced to back down on proposals for food price increases. But the banned independent trade union, Solidarity, is to go ahead with its planned fifteen minute general strike on Thursday, February 28.

Government proposals for across-the-board food price increases were rejected by the official state union organisation, OPZZ, which groups unions set up after Solidarity was banned. The government's own advisory Council for Prices also opposed the increases.

The real pressure is from Solidarity, which has refused to call off its impending strike.

The government's retreat does not mean that it has promised not to raise prices. Three proposals for increases have been rejected, leaving a fourth to be considered as we go to press. The remaining variant allows for a continuation of rationing of cereals and fats.

Preparations by Solidarity leaders for the strike have been impeded by police harassment. A meeting in Gdansk was interrupted by police, and three Solidarity organisers detained.

But the underground press, and the host of organisations that constitute the Solidarity-based opposition, are growing in strength.

## US demands surrender

RONALD Reagan last week called, more openly than ever before, for the overthrow of the Sandinistas in Nicaragua. He told a televised press conference that he wanted the Sandinista government's "removal in the sense of its present structure, which is a Communist totalitarian state". He called on them "to change course and surrender".

### Invasion

His comments coincided with increased threats of invasion of Nicaragua, as the US nuclear-armed aircraft carrier, Iowa, docked in Costa Rica. US forces — including 4,500 troops, M60 tanks and the Iowa, are current-

ly engaged in manoeuvres in Nicaragua's borders.

Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega commented that Reagan placed himself "one step from a declaration of war". But the Sandinistas are reacting cautiously to Reagan's outburst.

In practice, the call for the Sandinistas' overthrow adds little to present US policy, which is to back the Honduras-based 'contras'. Military exercises could merely be sabre-rattling at this stage.

But the Sandinistas are taking no chances and have been preparing for any possible US invasion. The revolutionary government — which contrary to Reagan's assertions and unlike US

stooges in the region, has mass popular support — could mobilise fierce resistance to any invasion.



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