

# Socialist Organiser

No.257 January 23 1986 25p Claimants and strikers 10p

## Help bring the news

As part of our £15,000 appeal fund we ask all our readers who value the news coverage and analysis provided by Socialist Organiser to give us £1 for every copy.

### MURDOCH'S NEW PRINT WORKS

# THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME

Back in 1981 Rupert Murdoch produced a video about a new printing works which his News International group was building in Wapping, East London.

This plant would provide a modern, bright, clean and spacious environment for print workers on the Sun, News of the World, Times and Sunday Times.

According to Murdoch it would allow them to escape from the cramped conditions of Bouverie Street and Grays Inn Road.

That was a lie. Behind the barbed wire, guard dogs and video cameras, News International's Wapping plant will be a hell, not a paradise, for print workers.

Murdoch has set the presses rolling without an agreement with any print union. He is demanding a legally-binding no-strike deal. He says anyone taking strike action will be sacked. There will be no closed shop and no recognition for union chapels or branches. Workers will be forced to work exactly as

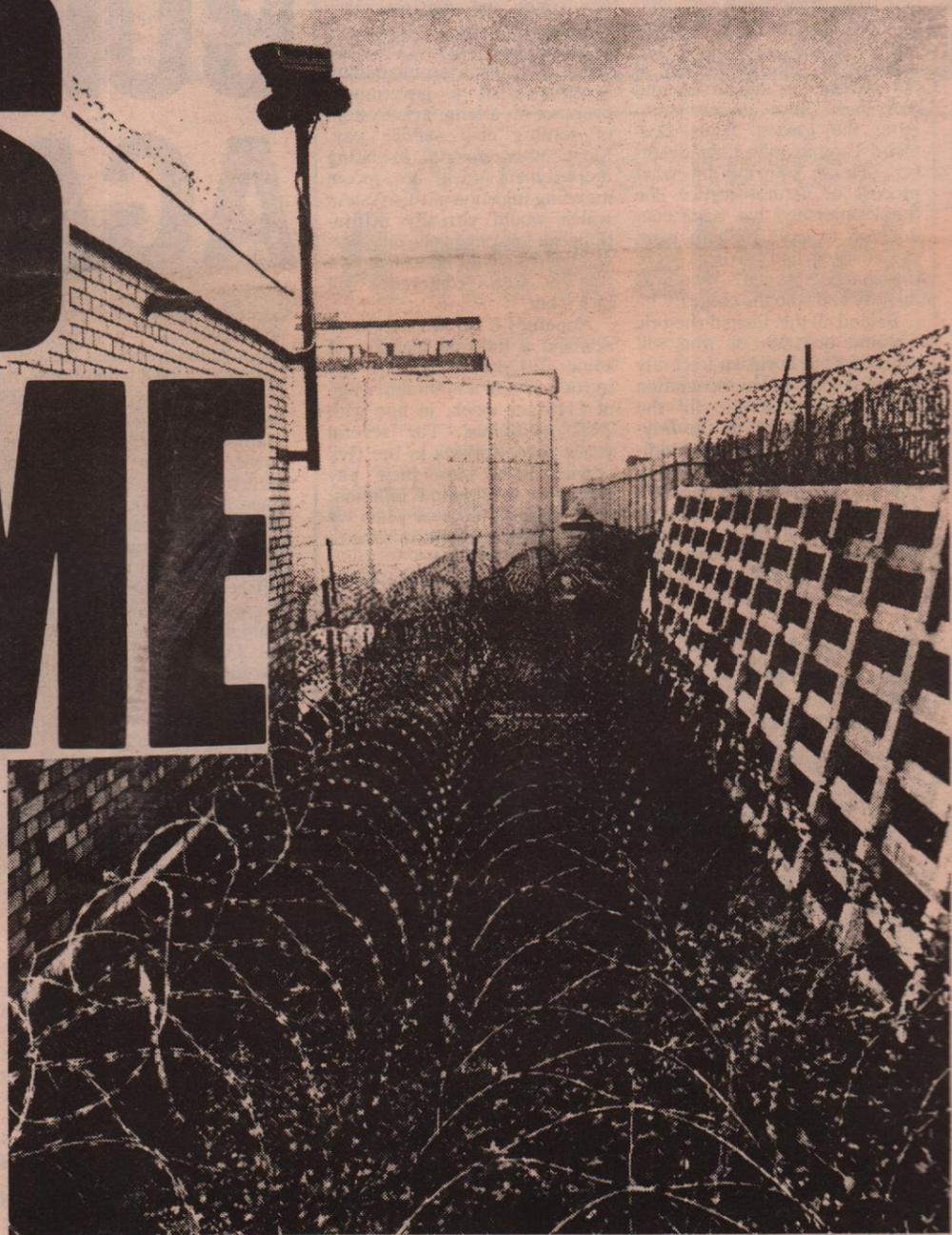
the boss tells them. 'Flexibility' will allow management to hijack the benefits of new technology and push the workforce around. The result will be bigger, fatter profits for Murdoch and dole for print workers.

#### 'Agreement'

Last week SO published details of the kind of 'agreement' News International want. It sums up and codifies the work practices already existing there. All the signs are that the EETPU are prepared to sign, leaving the NGA and SOGAT unrecognised and without negotiating rights.

So far Murdoch has only produced one 24-page supplement at Wapping. If he is able to continue and consolidate his operations there then it means the end of the traditional strength of the Fleet Street unions.

Turn to page 3



Murdoch's welcome for trade unionists

**ALL  
STRIKES  
ILLEGAL**

**THE SACK  
FOR  
STRIKERS**

**NO UNION  
BRANCHES  
RECOGNISED**

**MASSIVE  
JOB  
LOSSES**

# The right witch-hunts the right

By Mike Grayson

The internal politics of the largest civil service union, CPSA, became even more complex recently, with a split in the right-wing "Daylight" group which currently controls the union's executive committee.

The original Broad Left in CPSA was divided in November 1984 when members of the soft Labour left and Communist Party walked out to form "Broad Left '84". Now the right has also divided — but apparently personalities rather than politics lie behind this split.

CPSA president Kate Losinska and her chief acolyte Marion Chambers have put out a statement to other right wing NEC members, attacking Pat Womersley who "only joined us from the Left ten years ago". "Her persistent undermining of our leadership by her constant sniping has diverted our attention from performing our vital function of fighting extremism in our union".

However, Ms Womersley is not without her supporters and defenders. In a counter-statement the gallant Peter Desmond-Thomas asks flamboyantly: "Please tell me by what process of natural justice she [i.e. Womersley] has been condemned to exile. Where were the charges laid? Where were the charges proven? Who was the jury and who the judge?"

Behind all this insipid rhetoric lies the question of who will succeed Kate Losinska (recently awarded the OBE in recognition of her tireless service for the forces of the Right) as the Daylight group's presidential candidate. Losinska herself obviously hopes to see Marion Chambers take on the mantle and has consigned her rival, Womersley, to the outer dark beyond the

fringes of the current right wing organisation.

Unless there is a rapid reconciliation among the feuding right wing elements, CPSA members will be faced this spring with four election slates for NEC candidates, and a ballot paper more than 100 names long. In such a situation, the Broad Left will have a good opportunity to regain ground from the right, and promote itself as the only group with real policies that will advance the aims of the membership.

No doubt also, however, activists will have to fight against a certain amount of cynicism and lack of interest in the elections engendered by the splits and infighting of the past 15 months. If this can be overcome, we can again see a left-wing leadership taking over from the witch-hunting right.

Meanwhile, this Thursday, 23rd, CPSA holds its special pay conference to decide on the 1986 pay claim and the necessary strategy to win it.

Alistair Graham and the right wing NEC are recommending acceptance of a government proposal on a long-term system of settling civil service pay. Most other unions, including management ones, are recommending rejection of this system which would virtually institutionalise low pay in the civil service, and it seems almost certain that the CPSA conference will kick it out.

Hopefully it will then go on to demand a flat-rate increase of some £20 per week; and the introduction of a minimum wage of £110 per week, in line with TUC guidelines. For several years now, workers in the civil service have seen their pay increases fall behind inflation: 1986 must be the year when we launch a serious fight to reverse this trend.



Pensioners demonstrate at TUC Fowler march

Photo: Jez Coulson IFL

# BUILD A FIGHT AGAINST FOWLER

Stan Crooke reports on the fight against Fowler's social security cuts

Several hundred delegates will be attending the National Campaign Against Socialist Security Cuts (NCASSC) conference in Manchester this Saturday, 25 January.

Since the establishment of the Fowler Reviews of the social security system, and especially since the publication of the Green Paper based upon those reviews, campaigning up and down the country has involved in different areas to different degrees, claimants' groups, unemployed workers' centres, Labour Party branches, trade unionists (especially in DHSS) and a wide range of welfare rights organisations.

## Postponements

Such campaigning forced repeated re-writings and repeated postponements of the publication of the White Paper (finally published just before the Christmas holidays in order to neutralise the potential for an immediate response to it).

In certain respects the White Paper differs from the earlier Green Paper. The original proposal to completely abolish State Earnings Related Pensions (SERPS) has been replaced by proposals to cut the scheme by half by the year 2033. The original proposal to cut back rent and rates rebates as income rises at a common rate has been replaced by two separate 'tapers': now the plan is that for each £1 extra income you lose 60p rent rebate and 20p rate rebate.

A blatantly racist presence-test proposed by the Green Paper has also been dropped from the White Paper.

Significant changes have been made in the timing of the proposed cuts. The major changes are now scheduled for April 1988, as opposed to the original date of April 1987. But replacement of universal maternity grants and death grants by loans will go ahead in 1987, as too will

changes in maternity allowance.

The extent of the Tories' retreat should not be overestimated, and their ability to recover lost ground should not be underestimated either.

In general, the White Paper is broadly the same as the Green Paper. Supplementary Benefit is to be replaced by Income Support, Family Income Supplement is to be replaced by Family Credit, single payments and additional requirements payments are to be scrapped, a new Social Fund for loans is to be set up, all claimants will have to pay 20% of their rates themselves, etc., etc.

Where the Tories have retreated, it has generally been in response to opposition from their own supporters. Many employers, for example, were opposed to abolition of SERPS. And a single 'taper' for rents and rates would have been a hard blow for many owner-occupier pensioners, in whose ranks are to be found many of the "Tory poor".

But there is no reason for pessimism about the prospects for future campaigning against the social security cuts. The White Paper claims that the proposed changes will result in two million "winners" and "only" four million "losers", but the real figure for 'losers' is much higher: 7 million families receiving Child Benefit will see its value cut year by year, and all 20 million workers contributing in to pensions will suffer through changes in SERPS.

Building upon achievements to date, future campaigning will therefore need to draw in support from those millions of losers and organise that support in the form of effective and active opposition to the cuts.

The basis of that opposition is joint campaigning locally by

claimants' organisations and trade union/Labour Party bodies. Given the impact of the cuts on students and the plans for campaigning against the cuts by the National Union of Students, university and college student unions should involve themselves also in such local campaigns, and make their resources and facilities available to them.

Such local campaigns will have a particularly important role to play in the national "take up" campaign planned for the March/July period, with the goal of ensuring that claimants put in claims for all benefits to which they are entitled. Such a campaign would also lead to the DHSS being so overwhelmed by claims that it would be unable to reorganise itself to administer the changed social security system proposed by the White Paper.

## Gallant

It will also fall to the local campaigns to exploit the May local council elections as a way of building the campaign against Fowler — demanding of council candidates what their attitude is to the proposed cuts and, more importantly, what they, and the organisations they represent, intend doing to fight them.

The Labour Party needs to get its act together in opposition to the proposed cuts. The Labour Campaign Against Social Security Cuts is launching its campaign at the close of January, but this seems to involve no more than getting each Constituency Labour Party to sign a petition (yes — another petition) against the cuts.

Labour Party branches and CLPs should be involved in local campaigning. Labour controlled district Councils should refuse to retrain their staff for the

changes in payment of Housing Benefit (not due for implementation until after the next General Election). And Labour MPs should carry out organised parliamentary disruption instead of engaging in polite debates and point-scoring.

In the unions there is still a need for basic education about the universal impact of the White Paper's proposed cuts. Most people still see them as effecting "only" the unemployed and pensioners — but in fact they will hit everybody in society with the exception of its wealthiest, who will benefit from the tax cuts which the social security cuts are meant to finance.

There is an even bigger need for a more active response from unions with members in the DHSS — the Civil and Public Servants Association and the Society of Civil and Public Servants. Though both have been heavily involved in NCASSC and the "Action for Benefits" campaign, there has not been the consistent campaigning required to make strike action against the cuts a realistic possibility in the immediate future.

Tenants' associations can also play a particularly important role in the campaigning against the cuts by building towards a mass refusal by claimant-tenants to pay the 20% of the rates they are meant to pay out of their own pockets. Tenants' associations should also demand of local authorities that no retaliatory action is taken against tenants who refuse to pay that 20%.

Above all, there is the need for claimants, trade unionists and Labour Party members to get together to draw up alternative proposals for an extended and democratised social security system. Although this has been a constant theme in discussion about the Fowler Reviews, there has been little or no movement towards actually beginning to draw up such an alternative set of proposals.



Just reprinted: Socialist Organiser's 'Where We Stand'. 20p plus postage from 214 Sickert Court London N1 2SY.



'Under Whose Flag?': class politics or bloc politics? 60p plus postage from 214 Sickert Court, London N1 2SY

# POWER AND STYLE

Mrs Thatcher behaves badly towards her colleagues in the Cabinet. She is not interested in their opinions. She sees the Cabinet as a rubber stamp.

Many people, including many Tories loyal to what Thatcher represents politically, are convinced that these criticisms of Thatcher's style of leadership are true. Beyond Heseltine's revelations, we have historical evidence: Thatcher has ditched most of those in the Cabinet who have erred from her set course.

But it is not merely a question of style. If it was, then the problem could be solved by getting a new Prime Minister who is nicer to his or her colleagues.

There are more serious issues.

## Elected

No one is elected to the position of Prime Minister. The leader of the majority party simply assumes the post — or if there is no majority party then the Queen chooses. Then the Prime Minister has arbitrary powers to select and dismiss the members of the Cabinet.

Tony Benn, in 'The case for constitutional premiership' argues: "The Prime Minister [has] the power to appoint and dismiss Ministers without any constitutional requirement to get these changes approved by Parliament...Prime Ministers also appoint permanent secretaries, ambassadors, chiefs of staff, the heads of the security services...This list excludes the Prime Minister's rôle in choosing...judges...complete personal control of the conduct of government business...A Prime Minister may secure the adherence of the UK to treaties which bind the UK Parliament without any requirement of the formal ratification of Parliament.

In short the Prime Minister has presidential powers without being elected and without the check and balanced that can accompany elected presidents. Thatcher's attitude towards 'her' Cabinet is merely a relatively extreme exploitation of an undemocratic structure that exists under all British governments.

It exists under Labour governments too, which should worry us much more.



Neil Kinnock's attitude towards the Labour Party, its activists and its conference decisions, is merely foreshadowing how he intends to act as Prime Minister.

Parliamentary democracy is a very limited form of democracy.

We have no real control over our representatives in between irregular elections, and Parliament has very little control over the Cabinet.

And real power in society resides outside of Parliament. Governments make policy — but

in conjunction with and enormously constrained by the bosses and bankers. Day-to-day decisions in the running of the economy are made far away from any form of democratic control.

And the corridors of political power, too, are staffed by huge

numbers of unelected people: permanent civil servants, chiefs of police, army top brass.

The labour movement needs to set out to replace this present extremely limited democracy with completely new democratic structures.



News International's new plant at Wapping, complete with barbed wire fences, security cameras and a high speed ramp for sending trucks out of the plant at picket-busting speeds. Photo: Roger Hutchings, Network.

## T&G must act now!

The TGWU have negotiated a deal to distribute any newspapers produced at Wapping. This cuts across what SOGAT — the union which usually covers newspaper distribution — want. SOGAT have asked for all publications emanating from Wapping to be blacked. The TGWU must carry out this request. All TGWU branches should rush resolutions to their executive demanding that this happens. Ron Todd, the man who would have the EETPU driven out of the TUC for accepting government money for ballots, should pull his finger out and turn the potentially mighty power of the TGWU against Murdoch's union-busting.

# The shape of things to come

## From page 1

Success for Murdoch will make it that much easier for Eddie Shah to press ahead with 'Today', a 44-page full colour daily for which he has already signed a no-strike deal with the EETPU. The rest of Fleet Street would follow. Whole trade unions could disappear. The NGA's very existence is at risk as the bosses put the pressure on with new technology and sweetheart deals.

Wapping is the test case. If legally binding no-strike deals

can be established in the print — which despite craft mentality is a stronghold of union organisation — then the way is open for setting them up in the rest of industry. This could mean a big attack on organisation, conditions, wage levels and employment throughout industry.

So what News International are doing at Wapping doesn't just concern print workers, it's a matter for the entire labour and trade union

movement.

The whole of the movement must rally to the print workers. The votes for strike action at News International from the NGA and SOGAT members must be used for organising strike action.

Murdoch has made it clear that in the event of a strike he will use Wapping to print the Sun, News of the World, Times and Sunday Times. The TUC should make clear where it stands and call a mass picket of Wapping to shut it down.

## Womens' rights A new attack

A Bill to stop all embryo research will be heard in the House of Commons this Friday, 24th.

The Unborn Children (Protection) Bill, proposed by Tory MP Kenneth Hargreaves, promises to be a virtual replica of the Powell Bill which was defeated last year, and as such represents a serious attack on women's rights.

### Powell

Although the exact contents of the Bill are as yet unknown, supporters have said that it will take up all the issues of the Powell Bill. This would mean that the embryo would be given legal status and protection, jeopardising much research and abortion and contraception rights.

Research into congenital diseases such as muscular dystrophy and spina bifida would be heavily restricted, as well as research into the causes of infertility and miscarriages. Since research into in-vitro fertilisation (IVF) would be stopped, its success rate would continue to be depressingly low.

In addition, childless women will find it harder to get IVF treatment because of the restrictions which would be imposed in its practice.

A woman wanting IVF would need to get two doctors to petition the Secretary of State on her behalf. She would have to pay a fee for this service. If the Secretary decides that she is a suitable recipient of IVF (i.e. presumably white, middle class and married), the woman can have treatment for four months, with a possible extension of two months. For a treatment which has a low success rate six months is scarcely long enough.

The Bill will make it clear that any doctor in possession of an embryo for any purpose other than implanting into a woman will be committing a criminal offence. If a woman changes her mind about IVF, then the doctor would have to find a woman to

implant any fertilised eggs into with the fear of criminal proceedings. Doctors would only fertilise one egg at a time, which would further reduce the chances of success. Many doctors would not be involved in IVF at all.

Perhaps the most dangerous aspect of the Hargreaves Bill will be its veiled attack on abortion and contraception rights. Because the Bill aims to protect the embryo and give it a legal status equal to a human being it would create a contradiction in the law.

At present abortion is allowed up to 24 weeks, but a law which protected an embryo from fertilisation would threaten this situation. Similarly, contraceptives such as the intra uterine device and the morning after pill would be threatened.

In the context of increasing unemployment and privatisation and pressure from the government for women to 'return to the home' it is no coincidence that yet another Bill to strengthen state control over women's fertility turns up. Central to struggle for women's liberation and socialism is the call for a woman's right to control her own body, and we must work within the Labour Party for a wider acceptance of this.

### Conference

Last year's Labour Party Conference passed a resolution opposing the ideas behind the Powell Bill and supporting women's right to abortion. Conference also agreed that since abortion is a political issue Labour MPs should not be able to exercise their conscience at the expense of women's consciousness.

Pressure should be put on Labour MPs to turn up and vote against the Bill on Friday. The National Abortion Campaign is organising a lobby of MPs on Friday. Meet outside the Commons at 9.00 pm. Details from NAC on 01-465-4801.



Whitehall and Dublin officials will be visiting Washington in the next week or so to discuss what money the US will give to back up the Anglo-Irish deal.

About \$300-\$350m is expected, in addition to US government aid for US companies investing in Ireland. According to the Financial Times, cash may also be contributed by Canada, Austral-

ia, and EEC countries.

Unionist MP Harold McCusker declares that the "money will disappear into Irish bogs, the pockets of gombeen men and the bank accounts of corrupt politicians", but the governments want to make sure that the cash goes into highly-visible projects like road-building and housing, especially in the North.

## Pretoria role in Lesotho coup

All the signs point to a heavy South African involvement in the coup in Lesotho last Monday, 21st, which deposed Chief Jonathan and installed a military regime headed by Major-General Justin Lekhanya.

Though never part of South Africa, and independent since the 1960s, Lesotho is completely surrounded by South Africa and has an economic status close to that of a Bantustan.

40% of the male labour force work as contract labourers in South Africa.

For a long time the South African army (the so-called South African Defence Force) have been mounting attacks against South African exiles, many associated with the ANC, residing in Lesotho. Just before Christmas six black South Africans were murdered by the SADF after being lured to a party.

On New Year's Day the South African regime imposed a food and fuel blockade of Lesotho, demanding that members of the ANC living there be handed over to the SADF.

Lekhanya went to Pretoria last Friday to discuss setting up a joint Lesotho/South African defence council. It is almost certain that the Pretoria regime guaranteed support if he moved against Jonathan. This support materialised just hours after the coup when South Africa called off its blockade.

Fosatu had correct tactical positions on how to build the unions, as against the ANC/SACTU... its fundamental political positions, above all the total insistence on non-racialism, inevitably led to a convergence with the ANC."

Ross is nothing if not self-confident. What evidence is there for this 'convergence' between the ANC and many of the unions, who have been critical of the ANC tradition? Ross stresses 'non-racialism and little else; he merely asserts 'convergence' to be.

That Cosatu has called for the abolition of pass laws perhaps? That Cosatu President Elijah Barayi, comes out of the ANC tradition? That Cosatu's name implies adherence to the Congress (that is, ANC) tradition?

Ross does not even marshal these facts — and that is not too surprising, because they don't stand up to scrutiny. Everyone knows that Cosatu brings together both Fosatu and other 'workerist' unions, and UDF affiliates like SAAWU: political compromises are hardly surprising. And much of the evidence for 'convergence' is merely based upon the fact that Cosatu, like the ANC, opposes apartheid...

### Stalinism

But what of other political positions. Is there a convergence between many of the unions and Stalinism on the issue of Poland? Is there convergence on the issue of workers' control? Is there convergence on criticisms of the Freedom Charter precisely that it is *not* 'non-racial'? Is there convergence on the question of the armed struggle and its relationship to mass movements within South Africa? Is there convergence on the vital issue of the political independence of the workers' movement?

Of course there is not. And, whatever the star-gazers of the revolutionary process may think, convergence would mean either that the CP ceases to be Stalinist or that the embryonic workers' movement experiences a massive and debilitating political degeneration and retreat.

## Brush up more

John Ross, the editor of Socialist Action, has recently brushed up on a bit of recent South African history in an effort to translate the line of the South African Communist Party into Trotskyism.

Sporting a different name, Dick Carter — which for some reason makes me think of radio private detective comedies — Ross goes to town on 'The politics of Cosatu'.

Recognising the centrality of the old union federation, Fosatu, to the new 'super-federation', 'Carter' comments: "...while

## The other Japan

Riots hit Tokyo earlier this month, as more than 500 people attacked the police with Molotov cocktails.

The spark to the events was the death of a left-wing activist, Kyoichi Yamaoka, who had been trying to break the hold of gangsters over the Sanya slum area in the city.

Most of the 8000 inhabitants of Sanya are cheap contract labourers, heavily exploited by racketeers who act as sub-contractors for work on building projects and the like.

That is the real Japan — a far cry from the popular image of a capitalist paradise, where happy workers have a guaranteed job for life and desire nothing more than to push up their productivity another notch.

A far cry, too, from the picture some people on the left sometimes have of Japan, as a land of brainwashed zombies.

In fact the majority of Japan's workforce depend for jobs on temporary contracts or small businesses where they have few rights. And many Japanese workers are no admirers of the country's 'economic miracle'; it is not unknown for May Day marches in Japan to be one million strong.

## Youth action

The youth are fighting back against Thatcher — and the very young are taking direct action.

At a Panto in Sunderland, the show had to be stopped as angry youth pelted the stage. They were incensed by the wicked witch — who was modelled on Margaret Thatcher.



An unpopular posting for Kremlin agents? Photo: Andrew Ward, Report

# A better place than Greenham

The press is agog about allegations that the Greenham Common women are Russian agents. But SO can do better. The following letter from one of the Kremlin agents at the Cruise missile site has come into our hands.

Dear Comrade President, I have moved location, following loss of cover during my previous mission. A nosy 'Defence

Weekly' magazine got suspicious after seeing me wearing a fur hat — had to move on quickly. Other agents are continuing the work at Greenham.

But questions are being asked, comrade. Surely we have better places to put agents for this sort of work. Is it really necessary to have our best people stuck in a field, in the bitter cold and wet, singing

songs about Mother Nature?

I have good news, though, comrade. We have uncovered a sinister imperialist plot.

We have photographs of a secret military installation that is clearly of greater importance than Greenham Common — indeed, more important than the Pentagon, if the extent of its fortifications is anything to go by.

It is sure to be nuclear.

Once we release our photographs to the British press, heads will roll. The government may find itself in a crisis it cannot survive. They've set themselves up well and truly this time.

I ask you: a NATO base in Wapping!

Yours secretively, Agent 40192.

## Soft left edges towards a witch-hunt

TWO MONTHS ago Socialist Organiser supporters in Stoke North submitted an emergency resolution to the Tunstall North branch Labour Party opposing the witch-hunt against Liverpool District Labour Party, and calling for the suspension to be lifted.

The motion was seconded by one of the soft left, and carried overwhelmingly. Two days later when the Branch submitted the resolution as an Emergency to Stoke North Constituency Labour Party the comrade who had seconded the resolution proceeded to speak against the

resolution being taken as an emergency!

After some debate it was narrowly agreed not to accept the motion as an Emergency; but another proposal was accepted to invite a speaker from Liverpool DLP and an opponent of the DLP to the January meeting of the General Committee.

### Impossible

Come January, it was said that it had been impossible to get speakers; and our resolution did not appear on the agenda. The Executive had decided 'not to put the resolution on the agenda until the speakers had been heard'.

Another resolution from Tunstall North did however get taken. It called on the CLP to send £137 to the Liverpool Defence Fund. The amount was exactly the same as had been sent to Lambeth 'a couple' of months before.

### Nonsense

The argument was clearly nonsense. If we were to support only struggles led by 'socialists' the Labour Party would have to withdraw support from CND and the Anti-Apartheid Movement. And what about Lambeth

## Turning Marxist?

Since it split off from the Eurocommunist CP, the Morning Star has been trying to put a hard-line Marxist gloss on its politics.

In its editorial on Michael Heseltine's resignation, it held forth on the international contradictions of imperialism, and it identified Heseltine as representing an EEC-oriented faction of the ruling class while Thatcher stands for a US alignment.

"By no means", it assured us, "does this make [Heseltine] progressive". The labour movement should take advantage of the Tories' divisions to develop its own independent offensive.

Very good. But why then is Ken Gill, the Morning Star's leading supporter in the trade unions, second only to Heseltine as a public advocate for the European capitalist consortium bidding for Westland?

# Socialist Campaign for a LABOUR VICTORY



## What happens when the oil runs out?

# THE CASE FOR LABOUR

Britain's oil boom started seriously in 1981. Between 1981 and 1985 North Sea Oil brought Britain a trade surplus of £30 billion. The government will draw £12 billion from the oil in taxes in 1985-6. But from now on oil income will decline, slowly but steadily.

Even the feudal princes of Saudi Arabia and the corrupt generals of Nigeria have seen to it that their oil booms bring their countries new factories, roads, and public buildings. Not Britain's Tories. While the oil money pours in, the basic hardware of British society has been decaying.

Government capital spending has slumped. The central government controls loans to councils for house-building: it has cut the money available by 65% between 1978/9 and 1985/6.

According to civil servants, £19 billion is needed to put local authorities' housing stock into good repair. Civil engineering experts report that Britain suffers "decaying water and sewage services...derelict land...damaged sea defences...gaps in the road network...". The official National Economic Development Office estimates that £2 billion is needed for hospital maintenance, and that maintenance work on school buildings is running 40% short of what's needed.

### Tight

Yet the Tory government still holds the purse-strings tight. Thousands of building workers are jobless, masses of work needs to be done, and the Tories say "we can't afford it".

Profits are booming. The overall rate of return on capital in 1984 at 12% was the highest figure since statistics started in 1960. Yet private capital investment is low, too. There's masses of money around, but the inner cities rot.

So where has the money gone? Where have the oil profits disappeared to?

Abroad, mainly. Between the end of 1979 and the end of 1984, the stock of British capitalists' direct and portfolio investments abroad soared from £53 billion to £150 billion. British capital has operated internationally for well over a century now. But under Thatcher it has spread itself faster and more vigorously than ever before.

There is method in this madness. British capitalists invest abroad because it is profitable — and British capitalism now draws more net income from overseas investments than any other capitalism. And in Britain the Tories' demolition-squad economics make capitalist sense. Mass unemployment — so the capitalists hope — will break Britain's traditionally strong labour movement, and allow industry to revive on the backs of cowed, broken-spirited workers.

But so far the Tories' success is limited. Manufacturing profits are still low by world standards. The unions still have great reserves of strength. There is a long class war ahead — and it will get more and more bitter as the oil runs out.

## The Casino Economy

Each day £30 to £40 billion of currencies is traded in the City of London; that is, a value more than all the new and replacement capital investment (machines, factories, roads, houses, etc.) in Britain in 6 months.

Maybe 10 to 15% of this dizzying whirl of money is to do with real trade of goods and services. The rest is speculation. Millions are gained and lost as the pound goes up 0.01 against the dollar or down 0.01 against the yen. Bigger falls and rises, and the international capitalist system goes into a crisis: jobs and livelihoods are destroyed.

Just a few yards away, a similar business goes on at the Stock Exchange. In the 12 months to October 1985, shareholders — a small minority of the population — made some £32 billion profit on a rising stockmarket.

That's twice the total National Health Service budget.

Other years, share prices fall. The shareholders' fortunes take a knock — and companies go bust, factories close, working class families have their lives devastated by unemployment.

London is a big centre of international finance, doing about one-third of all the foreign exchange trading in the world. Britain now rakes in more, net, in interest, profit, dividends and other 'invisible' income from abroad, than any other country.

But while Britain's casino economy flourishes, and £100,000 a year, £2000 a week, becomes a standard salary for a City whizzkid, misery and decay spreads over the rest of the country. Only a couple of hundred yards east of the City is Brick Lane, where Bengali families live in rotten housing, harassed by racists and dependent for jobs on low-wage sweatshops. That's Thatcher's Britain.

Since 1979 one manufacturing job in every four has disappeared. Factories have been replac-

ed by dole queues. Since 1983 — for the first time ever — Britain has had to import more manufactured goods than it can export. Many goods, particularly high-technology ones, just aren't produced in Britain any longer.

Britain's share of world manufactured exports has dropped dramatically. Between 1965 and 1983 Britain's manufactured exports grew slower than those of any other country in the entire world, excepting only India (whose exports grew at about the same rate as Britain's) and a few countries like Tanzania which export hardly any manufactured goods anyway. In 1955 Britain's manufactured exports were 133% of West Germany's in 1983, 44%.

### Babble

Despite all the Tory government's babble about high technology, Britain has done worse there than in other sectors: the British share of world exports in information technology dropped from 9% in 1970 to 4% in 1984.

Many of Britain's industrial areas have become pauper wastelands. In a place like Handsworth, Birmingham, only 5% of school-leavers get jobs.

Since the Tories took office in 1979, the high-paid have had much bigger pay rises than the low-paid.

To make it worse, the high-paid have had big tax cuts, while the low-paid pay if anything more taxes. So in 1983 the 'final' income (after taxes and benefits) of the top 20% was 5.7 times the average of the bottom 20%. In 1976 the ratio was only 5.1:1. Inequality of wealth has also increased. In 1980 the top 10% owned 52% of all marketable

## The assault on the unions



The millions on the dole strengthen the bosses' position when they demand speed-up, increased effort, job cuts...and thousands more on the dole; but to enforce the dictatorship of capital, the will and the spirit of the trade unions has to be broken. That is why the Tories were prepared to spend billions on defeating the miners.

The bosses' assault proceeds on three fronts: set-piece confrontations like the miners' strike; new laws; and a piece-

The 1980 (Prior) and 1982 Tebbit 'Employment Acts' made all industrial action unlawful if:

- \* It is in support of other workers,
- \* It is political, or
- \* It is to do with a dispute outside the UK.

Workers can lawfully picket only their own workplace. Closed shops can exist only if ratified in a ballot according to Tory-prescribed procedures by 85% of those voting or 80% of the workers covered.

'Union labour only' clauses in commercial contracts are unlawful.

Under the 1982 Act, unions taking unlawful industrial action can be fined up to £½ million.

The 1984 (King) Trade Union Act goes further. Unions are obliged to conduct secret ballots under Tory regulations (which involve considerable delay for a strike ballot) in order:

- \* to strike,
- \* to have a political fund, or
- \* to elect most of their officials.

meal but unrelenting offensive within the workplaces.

No strikes; 'flexibility' (i.e. full power for the boss to order the worker about; increased use of sub-contractors; more temporary workers on short contracts; more part-time workers, who have fewer legal rights; and

Turn to page 6

wealth; in 1984, 54%.

Perks have increased. Between 1980 and 1985 the percentage of managers getting share option or sharebuying schemes increased from 15% to 48%; those getting a company car, from 72% to 80%; those getting free private health insurance, from 58% to 71%.

Inland Revenue workers complain that they have not enough staff to chase up an estimated £4.5 billion of tax evasion. Customs and Excise, similarly short-handed, making a rule of never-pursuing possible VAT

fiddles if the amount involved is less than £100,000.

Meanwhile masses of special investigators are sent in chase of maybe £4.7 million to £135 million social security fraud. £886 million of social security entitlements (as of 1983) go unclaimed because people don't know their rights or are put off by bureaucracy.

Since 1979 the government has cut £9 billion from social security and given £13 billion in tax cuts.

The Tories used to be called the stupid party. They certainly seem set on making Britain the stupid country.

The percentage of youth getting higher education in Britain is now, according to World Bank figures, lower than in any other advanced capitalist country (except Switzerland); and lower also than many Third World countries — South Korea, Philippines, Thailand, Jordan, many Latin American countries.

But entry conditions are tightening — in 1984 11,000 young people were refused admission to university who would have

got in under 1978 conditions — and there is even talk of shutting down some whole universities.

Numbers of overseas students have been cut by making them paying full-cost fees — from 83,000 in 1979-80 to 53,000 in 1984-5.

The education system is being starved of money. Teachers' pay has lagged massively since 1974, and students' grants have been cut 20% in real terms since 1979. Now students stand to lose about £1000 a year by being banned from getting social security money.

## From page 5

more overtime — these are the arrangements the most aggressive employers are imposing.

Output per worker in manufacturing increased drastically in the early '80s — mostly through speed-up rather than any new technology. While millions are unemployed, overtime is running at high levels. In 1981 there were 71 serious or fatal injuries per 100,000 workers in manufacturing; in 1984, 87.

Increased pace and pressure at work makes jobs more dangerous.

As the rat-race becomes harsher, at least three-quarters

## JEREMY CORBYN MP:

One of the problems in the whole Westland business is why Westland Helicopters was not taken into British Aerospace when the aircraft industry was nationalised in 1976.

It was a serious weakness then, which some of us pointed out at the time, and it is now shown to be a weakness in that Westland is separate from British Aerospace, which could be renationalised if a Labour government wished to do that — in fact I believe it should do that.

of a million people now do two jobs. Part-time jobs, with low pay, few legal rights, and difficult to unionise — that's what employers offer these days. Of the 706,000 new jobs created (net) between March 1983 and January 1986, the great majority, 491,000 were for part-time women.

Tory trade union laws and Tory economic policy are designed to create a rule of fear in the workplace.

The Tories aim quite openly to cut youth wages.

In 1979-83 they tried various schemes which didn't really work. From September 1983 they tried a larger project — the Youth Training Scheme, which by 1984 was providing one-year jobs for 25% of 16-year olds. They are paid £26.25 a week.

The training element of YTS is usually minimal. 40% of YTSers get no job at the end of their scheme. But YTS is useful for employers because they can take on school-leavers at low cost (the government pays them for taking on the YTSers) and use the year as a 'filter' for deciding which

Privatisation is part of the same policy. It's nothing to do with getting a better service through the supposed benefits of competition. Private contractors brought in to clean hospitals at cut rates have done a sloppy, filthy job. Privatisation of British Telecom has meant bigger phone bills for most people — to balance cut rates for the big-business users where the Mercury consortium competes selectively with BT.

But privatisation does do one thing, apart from allowing stock-market sharks to get quick profits. It breaks up a workforce. In a hospital, a local authority, or an industry, where there are many different employers and sub-contractors, each with different pay and conditions, it is more difficult to get strong trade union organisation.

At each stage this assault on working class organisation throws thousands more onto the dole queue. And even then it doesn't finish. If employed workers are to be forced to endure miserable conditions, then the unemployed must be more miserable still.

The Tories have completely scrapped earnings-related unemployment benefit, and are eroding other benefits bit by bit.

The poverty and hopelessness of unemployment makes people sick, and desperate. Researchers have estimated that for every 100,000 people who lose their jobs, deaths increase by 5,000, mental hospital admissions by 6,000, and prison intake by 1,900. A separate survey found that workers made redundant and their families had to visit hospital or a doctor 20% more often after they lost their jobs.

Do you wonder that there are riots and violence on the streets of Tory Britain?

ones they will give permanent jobs.

In 1984 youth wages started to fall seriously behind adult wages. And now from April 1986 the Tories plan to expand YTS to two years for everyone. Just how they'll do it is not clear, because their budget provides only 38% more money for doubling the scheme — but that's the intention.

Youth refusing to become YTS cheap labour have had their social security money stopped. The Tories have talked about making YTS compulsory, but so far they have backed off from this.

The Tory government has pressurised health authorities to hive off hospital services like cleaning and laundries to private contractors, and councils to do the same with services like refuse collection, house-building and house repairs, etc.

The government has also sold off big chunks of nationalised industry, as follows:

1979 25% of ICL computers  
1980 Fairey  
Ferranti  
1981 British Aerospace  
Cable and Wireless  
1982 Amersham International

National Freight Co.  
Britoil  
1983 Associated British Ports  
International Aeradio  
British Rail Hotels  
1984 British Gas Onshore Oil  
Enterprise Oil  
Sealink Ferries  
Jaguar (was part of BL)  
British Telecom  
Inmos  
1986 Plans to sell off: British  
Gas, British Airports  
Authority, and more  
shipyards (some already  
sold).

# The socialist answer

British society needs to be reconstructed. Industry needs to be reconstructed. Health provision; education; other basic services; the very fabric of human relations — all need to be reconstructed.

The capitalist class — the top few per cent who own practically all the liquid wealth — won't do it. All they have to offer is the Tory vision of a Britain where all spirit of solidarity is broken; where each pursues his or her fortune as best they can, and devil take the hindmost; where a gang of profit-gougers, speculators and exploiters lord it over a crushed working class.

## Nudge

It can't be done by a government trying to nudge and manipulate the capitalists into behaving better. International competition is making their drive for profit more savage, more feverish. The profit-lust which so casually disregards human life won't take long to rip loopholes in the best-drafted paper schemes for a benevolent capitalism.

France's Socialist government elected in 1981 tried to legislate and cajole capitalism into social-harmony. The result was roaring inflation, an uncontrollable foreign debt, and an abrupt reversal of policy forced on the government.

No: the working class must reconstruct society.

Workers in several companies fighting redundancies and run-

down have drafted "workers' plans" as their alternative. Community groups in areas hard hit by government cuts have done the same for local services. Those workers' plans generalised and integrated to cover the whole economy — that is the

Many working-class people are put off socialism because they identify it with the Stalinist systems of the USSR, Eastern Europe, etc.

But Stalinism is not socialism. Long before Stalin's rise to power working-class socialists denounced 'state socialism' and insisted that socialism was more than state ownership of the means of production.

Working-class socialism means common ownership together with a democracy much wider than present-day capitalist democracy — a democracy which allows working-class people real freedom of expression and real political power.

That, in essence, is what Solidarnosc fought for in Poland and what underground Solidarnosc militants are still fighting for.

gist of socialism.

To make possible such working class economic planning for human need, in place of production for profit, two things are needed: public ownership of the main industrial, commercial and

financial enterprises, and a real working class democratic system of government. The limited democracy of the present Westminster system — where the democratic element, elections every five years, is hemmed in and stifled by unelected state hierarchies (civil service, armed forces, etc) and by the House of Lords, the Royal Assent, and so on — must be superseded by a "workers' parliament", with minimum bureaucracy, open government, and right of recall over elected representatives.

In 1980, when unemployment was still much lower than it is now, the economists Andrew Glyn and John Harrison calculated that putting all the jobless to useful work could produce enough extra goods and services to make possible:

A 50% increase in pensions and all social security benefits;

PLUS a statutory minimum wage of £105 a week;

PLUS a 75% increase in house building;

PLUS a 25% boost to spending on health and education;

PLUS a 50% rise in manufacturing and construction investment.

Yet Tory economics tells us that "we can't afford" jobs for the jobless! The system is crazy!

It is true that not every unemployed person could immediately be slotted into a useful job. But the big increase in resources created by putting people back to work could enable a socialist

government to put millions of people into education and training programmes on trade-union rates of pay. Such a move is desirable anyway; many lives are blighted, and great resources wasted, because access to education is so limited for adults.

Another priority should be to get rid of overtime, to reduce the working week, and to establish adequate nurseries and other communal facilities to free women from the burden of housework. Tory ideologues waffle on about the "leisure revolution"; the reality for most working class people is either long grey periods of unemployment which are very different from "Leisure" because of demoralisation and shortage of money, or periods of "free time" in which they are so exhausted and drained after work that they can do little more than stare at a TV.

All this reconstruction needs to be done on an international — at least European — scale. Current national frontiers, centuries old, are made outdated by modern technology. To try to plan a computer — or aerospace or transport, or steel, or energy — industry within the limits of a single small country like Britain is like trying to turn the clock back.

But the fight back starts here and now, with every battle where the labour movement asserts itself against the juggernaut of profit: defending jobs and services, fighting for work-sharing without loss of pay, or establishing workers' control in production. The fight for a Labour government is one of those battles, and a central one.



Riot cop with CS gas in Tottenham. Photo: Andrew Moore.

# The

Tory rule means the enforcement of market economics — everyone for themselves, dog-eat-dog, nothing counts except cash in the hand.

That's economic freedom, say the Tories. Allowing people to spend their money themselves rather than have a bureaucrat spend it for them. Rolling back the frontiers of the state.

Far from it. In reality, when the spirit of grab-all-you-can is unleashed, more heavy-handed state power is imposed so as to keep orderly conditions for profit-making.

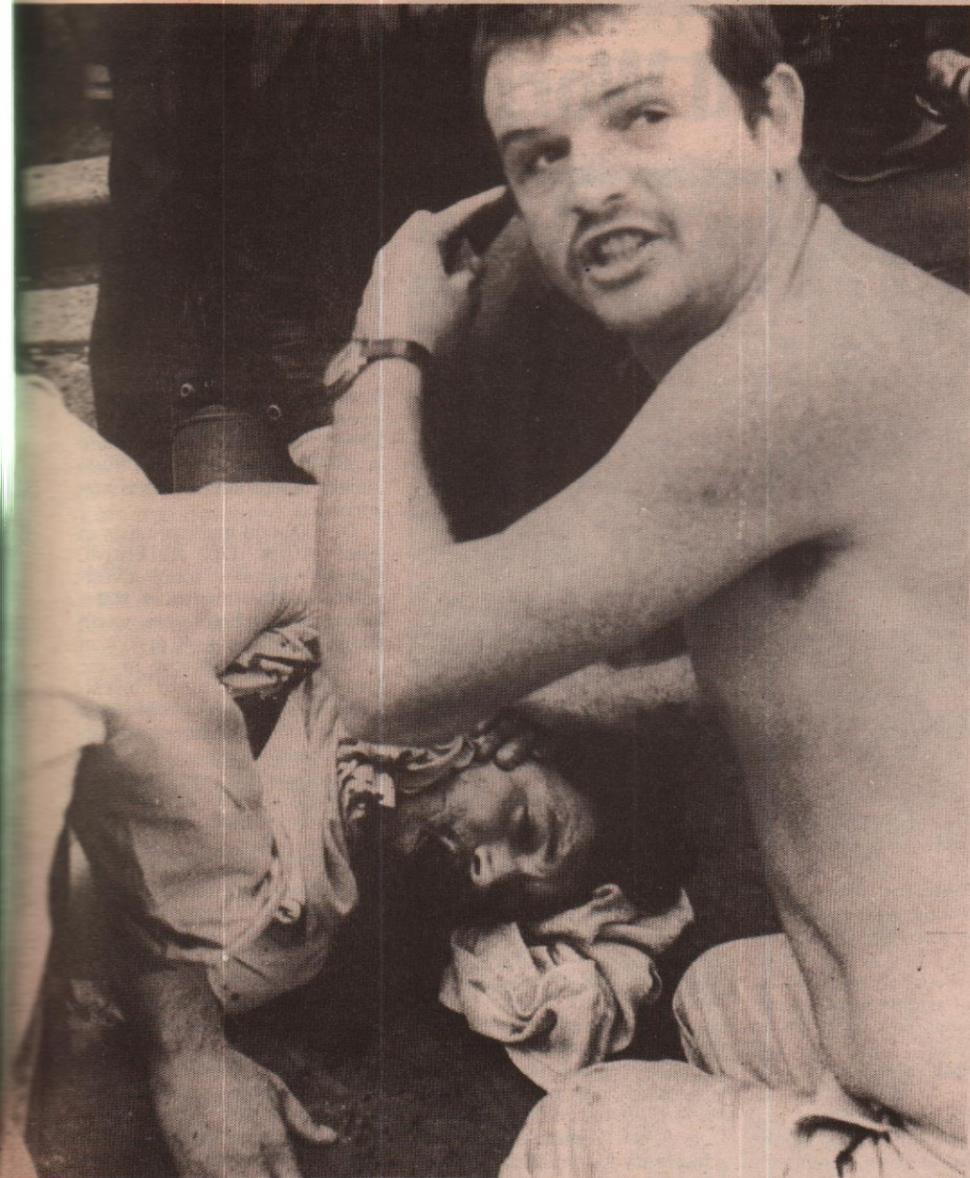
The Tories have aimed to cut public spending. In fact state expenditure has risen both in real terms and in proportion to national income.

Less is spent on housing, less on education; marginally more on the National Health Service, though not nearly enough more to cover the increasing health needs of a more elderly population; and massively more on the military, on police and prisons. Military spending has gone up 30% in real terms between 1978/9 and 1985/6, and spending on police, prisons, courts, etc., by 41%.

However heavy the hand of the state, it cannot keep a lid on the tensions and vices bred by Tory economics. Between 1979 and 1984, crimes of violence against the person increased by 20%, robberies by 100%. The police's clear-up rates went down from 77% to 74% for violence against the person, and from 31% to 22% for robberies. In London the police clear up only 17% of reported thefts and 9% of

The police have become more and more trigger-happy. In January 1983 cops shot Stephen 'Waldorf' as he sat in his car and nearly killed him: 'mistaken identity'. It was revealed that police were carrying guns 15 times a day in London alone.

Since then:  
In June 1984 two unarmed



Sean Downs murdered by the RUC, 1984. Photo: Derek Spiers, Report

## state rolls forward

men were shot and seriously injured by police in a London post office.

In August 1985 five-year old John Shorthouse was shot and killed as he lay on a bed by a policeman searching his house.

In September 1985 Cherry Groce was shot and paralysed for life when she got out of bed to see why police had

(carrying a five year jail sentence) will be created.

The secret police, MI5, have been exposed as tapping the phones of many peace campaigners and trade unionists and vetting people who apply for BBC jobs. And what do the Tories do? Tighten the screws, batten down the hatches. The government has prosecuted civil

cracy. If the people of an area vote Labour for a council that will maintain and expand services, then too bad for them. Through financial penalties and controls over borrowing, or through legal threats, the Tories will make sure the council does not carry out its mandate.

With Labour councils as with trade unions, the Tories want to flatten any strong, organised dissent.

Like the economic offensive, the attack on our civil liberties will get worse not better if the Tories are allowed to stay in office.

We must resist. The last Labour Party conference voted for operational control over the police by elected local authorities — including London, where at present there is no local elected control over the police at all. Labour also opposes the Police Act and the Public Order Bill. On a whole series of other fronts, it is down to the working class to fight for democracy.

Manchester, devote special resources to drilling spy-holes in public toilets and mounting watch so as to catch and prosecute gay men.

Everyday discrimination, which also affects lesbians, is strong too. But at its conference last year the Labour Party committed itself to fight for full equality for gays and lesbians.

The people who run Gay's The Word bookshop face a major and potentially ruinous trial. The authorities have seized many books sent to the bookshop from abroad, and prosecuted them on the grounds that the books are obscene.

Gay men are still heavily discriminated against by the law. And some police forces, like

smashed down her door in the early morning.

In October 1985 Cynthia Barrett died from a heart attack after being pushed around by police searching her flat.

And the Tories' response? More weapons, more powers for the police. As of November 1985 2 police forces were holding CS gas, and 12 plastic bullets. When Manchester police authority instructed their Chief Constable to get rid of his plastic bullets, he simply evaded the decision by continuing to hold the bullets — "on loan from the Metropolitan Police".

The Police Act gives the police huge stop-and-search powers. The new Public Order Bill will extend the powers of the police to pick up whom they wish from demonstrations and pickets. All marches will require seven days' notice to the police. The police can set the time, place, and maximum numbers for any march or picket.

New catch-all offences of 'disorderly conduct' (carrying a 400 fine) and 'violent disorder'

servants Clive Ponting and Sarah Tisdall for revealing information which embarrassed the Tories.

This same Tory government has several times been found by the courts to be acting illegally — when it tried to force a South London health authority into cuts, when it tried to remove board and lodging money for young unemployed people travelling round the country in search of jobs, and in its financial penalties on local authorities. Initially its ban on trade union membership at GCHQ was found illegal, though the Tories got that ruling reversed on appeal.

Each time the Tories simply change the law as they need and press ahead. It's the same approach as the Police Act, which was designed largely to make legal what the police were already doing illegally. Rule of law? They make up the laws as they go along.

The Tories' attacks on local government hit not only jobs and services but also local demo-

Much of the technology of heavy-handed Tory state power has been tried and tested in Northern Ireland. Plastic bullets, for example, have killed 15 people in Northern Ireland since 1972, half of them children, and blinded or maimed others.

Northern Ireland has no-jury courts, convictions on the basis of the unsupported evidence of 'supergrasses', notorious interrogation centres, troops on the streets, and the SAS doing 'under cover' assassinations.

It is run as a military/police state. The people of Northern Ireland suffer, and democracy in Britain itself is corroded.

Why does all this happen? The majority of Irish people

The Prevention of Terrorism Act was introduced, supposedly as a temporary measure, in November 1974. Its most widely used clauses are those empowering the police to detain people for 72 hours (and sometimes longer) and to deport people from Britain to Ireland or vice versa. Both powers can be used arbitrarily, without any charges being brought.

Between November 1974 and the end of 1984, 5949 people were detained in Britain under the PTA, and 4360 in Northern Ireland — that is an average of three

fought for many decades against British rule of their country. Eventually, around 100 years ago, a large section of the British ruling class became convinced that the costs of keeping hold of Ireland outweighed the benefits.

But another section of the British ruling class allied with the Protestant minority in Ireland to defend the status quo. The ensuing struggles finally led to Ireland being partitioned in 1920-21. Britain released the south and held onto the north-east. It was an undemocratic partition. A sectarian state in Northern Ireland entrapped a 35% Catholic minority who had no wish to be part of it.

For nearly 50 years Northern Ireland was, as one of its prime

# Military rule in Britain's backyard

ministers put it, "a Protestant state for a Protestant people".

Westminster governments turned a blind eye.

In the 1960s Britain improved its relations with the south and

people detained under the Act every single day, week in and week out.

Some 318 people were excluded or deported under the Act. 467 people in Britain, and 1741 in N. Ireland, were charged with an offence after being detained under the Act.

The PTA has empowered the police to harass at will anyone, British or Irish, sympathetic to the Irish Republican cause or thought by the police to be sympathetic.

decided that the Northern Ireland unit had outlived its usefulness. Gradually Britain began to push reforms. The oppressed Catholics rose up and demanded full rights. The alarmed Protestant regime hit back. In 1969 British troops went onto the streets to gain control.

With more urgency now, British governments tried to reestablish Northern Ireland by reforming it. The entrenched sectarianism of the state that Britain had created proved too strong for them. The reform efforts were smashed by the Orange general strike of 1974. Britain fell back to a policy of 'sweating out' the crisis, maintaining direct rule from Westminster and trying to beat down the rebellious Catholics by sheer volume of

repression. The British army worked hand in hand with the Protestant-dominated police, the RUC, and the notorious Ulster Defence Regiment, nominally a part of the British army but in reality a Protestant sectarian militia.

The new Anglo-Irish deal does represent an official admission by the government that this policy will not work. It says, solemnly and formally, that the Catholic minority can never get adequate redress within the Northern Ireland unit, and only an all-Ireland arrangement can satisfy their reasonable demands.

But immediately its main meaning is more repression against the militant elements within the Northern Catholic community, around Sinn Fein and the IRA. And it is not a serious solution. It is tinkering. It retains the Northern Ireland unit, yet denies the Protestants their demands for 'democracy' (i.e. Protestant-sectarian majority rule) which are irrefutable if that unit is valid.

The British Army has no right to be in Ireland and does no good there. It only freezes and sustains the conditions that are brewing up sectarian civil war. A solution can be found only by dismantling the partition of 1920-1. Britain must withdraw, and a settlement must be negotiated among the different sections of the Irish people. A federal united Ireland, with local autonomy for the heavily Protestant area within a 32 county state is the only framework which can allow for Catholic/Protestant reconciliation.

## £25 a week for a holocaust

Ireland is not the only place where the British military machine does no good for the working class people of Britain or anywhere else.

Britain has been at war continuously since 1945, somewhere or other in the world: Palestine, Malaya, Korea, Kenya, Cyprus, Aden, Oman, the Falklands... Never once have these wars been to defend the ordinary people of Britain. Mostly they have been imperialist wars against national liberation movements.

As the British Empire dwindles, leading army com-

manders like Frank Kitson make no secret of the fact that they see the military's main future role as 'counter-insurgency': repressing dissent and rebellion at home. Former Chief of Staff Michael Carver has revealed that in 1974 some 'fairly senior officers' discussed a military coup "if things got terribly bad".

### Machine

The Tories now spend £25 a week on this military machine for every family of four.

The Trident programme will

cost as much as 500 new hospitals or 300,000 council houses. The EH101 helicopter project comes to as much as the total existing hospital-building programme plus the cost of electrifying all main-line railways.

It is not just waste, it is a menace. A big political crisis, or even a mistake, could trigger off the world's nuclear arsenal and destroy civilisation. Former US president Richard Nixon revealed in July 1985 that he had seriously considered using nuclear weapons four times while in office: during the Vietnam war, in the Bangladesh war of 1971, when there were border clashes between the USSR and China, and during the Middle East war of 1973.

And the ability to massacre hundreds of millions of people in the USSR and Eastern Europe is a poor sort of 'defence'.

We must disarm the warmongers, starting with Britain's warmongers. Britain should be pulled out of NATO, a military alliance built on the 'first-strike' use of nuclear weapons. The armed forces should be replaced by a person's militia.

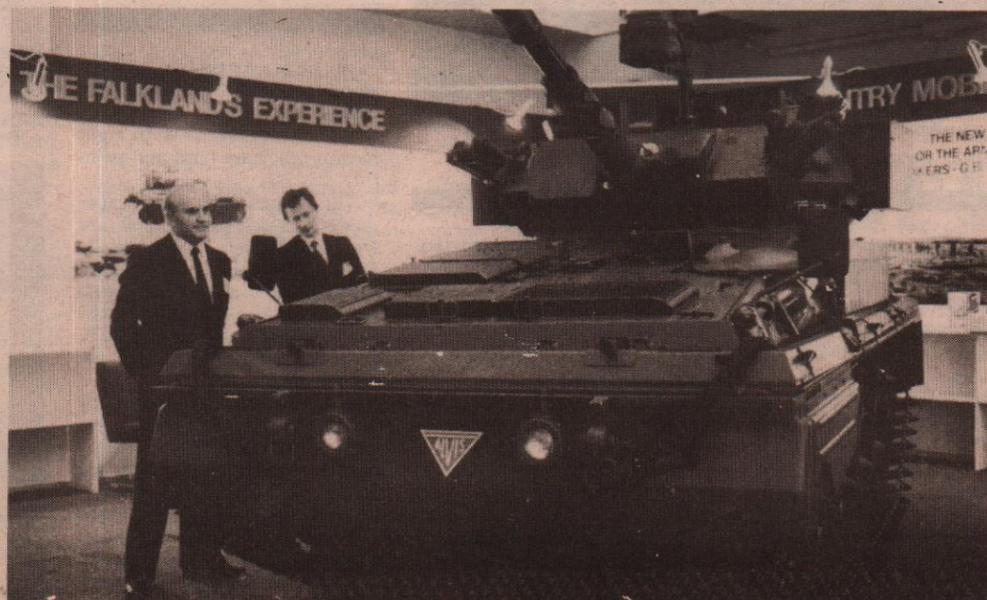


Photo: John Harris

Since the 1982 war the Tory government has spent £2 billion on military purposes in the Falklands — or £1 million for every child, woman and man living on the islands.

# Women: cheap labour with two jobs

In the Tories' economic scheme, youth are intended to be cheap labour. And women are intended to be cheap labour with two jobs.

The cuts in welfare services mean that more and more old, young and sick people are pushed back into the home — to be looked after by unpaid women. At the same time, more and more women have been taking waged jobs, often part-time — even though, with typical meanness, the Tories in 1984 made parents pay extra income tax if they had use of a workplace nursery.

Part-time workers are generally paid less per hour than full-timers. And even full-time women have found the gap between them and men widening. It narrowed after the Equal Pay Act of 1975, but now women's pay has declined from 76% of male rates in 1977 to 73% in 1984.

The Tory government has also given semi-official support to

various attacks on women's right of control over their own bodies, like the Powell Bill. More quietly but more effectively, it has whittled away abortion rights by administrative orders tightening up the 1967 Abortion Act, and by cuts in NHS provision.

Tory changes in the benefit system also erode women's independence. Child benefit, a major item paid directly to women, has had its real value steadily reduced. Under Norman Fowler's latest proposals, Family Income Supplement is to be replaced by a Family Credit paid through the pay-packet of the main wage-earner in the family, i.e. usually the man.

The labour movement, and especially women in the labour movement, fight for equal pay for work of equal value; for positive discrimination in training to ensure real equality of access to jobs; for adequate nursery provision; for legal and financial independence for women.

# Rotten with racism

Decaying British capitalism is rotten with racism.

In 1974 the unemployment rate for both black and white workers was 4%. In 1986, among males, it is 11% for whites, 29% for West Indians, and 34% for Pakistanis and Bangladeshis.

As the economic scramble becomes harsher, racial discrimination makes itself felt more.

The Manpower Services Commission surveyed Liverpool job centres. Black applicants, on average, got a job after 25 applications; whites, after 15. The Policy Studies Institute submitted test applications for jobs in London, Birmingham and Manchester and found racial discrimination by 45% of employers. The Commission for Racial Equality put in sample job applications in Leicester, and found that 42% of whites were offered jobs but only 11% of similarly qualified blacks.

Black people get the worst of it not only in employment but elsewhere. They suffer specially, for example, from the decline in public spending on housing. Some 55% of West Indians and 57% of Bangladeshis live in council housing, mostly in flats; only 20% of whites, and those mostly in houses rather than flats.

Black people suffer specially from the increase in violence on the streets. According to Home Office figures in 1981, Asians are 50 times more likely to suffer a racial attack than white people. Since then racial attacks have increased sharply, particularly in East London.

Police do little about stopping these attacks. On several occasions they have been keener to arrest Asians defending themselves or their community than to bring in the white racists.

The Tories have made things worse. Their Nationality Act reinforced immigration obstacles. From October 1982 they enforced charges for NHS treatment for 'overseas visitors', so that black people sometimes have to produce their passports when they go to hospital. Depor-

tation orders have increased sharply: 465 in 1973, 1234 in 1978, 2242 in 1983.

When there is a risk of white British citizens getting caught in the crossfire in South Yemen, the royal yacht Britannia is sent with great fanfare to collect them. But when Tamils in Sri Lanka seek refuge from massacres by the state forces of the British-backed Sinhalese-chauvinist government, Britain refuses most of them entry. In Bangladesh, even those people who fulfill all the requirements of successive British

# Looting the Third World

At least 335 million people, according to the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation, do not have enough to eat for basic health. This year maybe six million are at risk of death from starvation in Ethiopia, three million in Sudan, two million in Mozambique, and millions more in West Africa and in north-east Brazil. Six common and preventable diseases kill five million children a year in the Third World and leave another five million permanently disabled, according to the UN Children's Fund.

The roots of this horror lie in the plundering of the Third World by metropolitan capitalist profiteers for over 400 years. Now capitalist agriculture is spreading in the Third World, displacing traditional peasant cultivation from the richest lands. But the industry of the Third World, battered by metropolitan competition and drained by debt payments to metropolitan banks, does not expand fast enough to provide jobs for the displaced peasants. Millions of people become paupers.

The resources to end this poverty exist. The world spends nearly \$1000 billion a year on military purposes — \$3000 for each of those 335 million undernourished people! In April 1985 the UN appealed for an emergency fund of \$1.6 billion over a year to save them starving. UN officials had a hard job getting the money: yet it's only half as much as the world spends on military purposes in one day.

Britain's Tory government played a leading role in per-



suading the EEC to freeze food aid to Africa in 1986. It has cut Britain's own aid budget by an average 6% per year in real terms, between 1978-9 and 1983-4. Britain now spends on aid in one year only as much as the military budget for three weeks — though much of the aid consists of arrangements to sell British goods on easy terms to Third World countries, and brings back a great deal in profit.

The minuscule level of aid from countries like Britain to the Third World are completely swamped by the 'aid' which flows back the other way in interest on loans. Net capital inflows into black Africa in 1985-7 — mostly but not all aid — are

estimated at \$4 billion, as compared to \$9 billion flowing out in debt payments in 1985.

Britain's aid budget is just over £1 billion a year. Third World countries owed nearly £50 billion to British banks at the end of 1984. Work it out: at an interest rate of 10% (actual rates paid vary), that's £5 billion interest each year.

The last Labour conference decided to call for massively increased aid and the cancellation of the debts of Least Developed Countries. It is also necessary for the British labour movement to support workers' movements in the Third World.

The problem of famine is not just one of relations between countries, but one of relations

between classes. Even in countries like Ethiopia the overall food supply is enough to nourish everyone: but the bulk is seized by the rich, leaving not enough for the poor.

The Tories align themselves with the most conservative, pro-Western ruling class groups in the Third World, supporting Reagan and the 'contras' against the Sandinista government in Nicaragua and preventing any serious Commonwealth sanctions against the South African regime.

We have a responsibility to help the workers and peasants everywhere in the world, but especially in South Africa where a powerful new non-racial trade union federation has recently emerged.

Of 2000-odd multinationals in South Africa, 1200 are British. British capital's total investments in the apartheid state, direct and indirect, are worth about £11 billion — 40 to 45% of all foreign investment in the country. British direct investment in South Africa represents almost 10% of all British investment world-wide.

The biggest British companies in South Africa include ICI, Metal Box, Blue Circle, NEI, Dunlop, Barclays, Standard Chartered, Hill Samuel, Rio Tinto Zinc, Shell and BP. Before the present economic crisis there, Britain used to draw about £1.2 billion a year from South Africa in profits, dividends, and 'invisibles' (more than the total overseas aid budget).

As of march 1985, only 29 out of the 139 biggest British companies in South Africa recognised non-racial trade unions. At least 1800 black workers in British firms were paid below minimum subsistence levels, most of them employed by the notorious privatisation-merchants Pritchards.

# All just the same?

Given this record, domestic and international, how do the Tories survive? Why does anyone vote for them?

Their strength rests on apathy and cynicism among working class people. The demoralised belief that all politicians are the same and you can never do anything to change the world, can

are big arguments between Kinnock and the socialist left wing within the Labour Party about what Labour should do now and what a future Labour government must do.

But to draw the conclusion that all politics is Tweedledum and Tweedledee is to give the Tories a clear run. If working class people give up on politics, demoralised, then the Tories will have their way, and things will get worse and worse.

A Labour government is subject to the pressure of organised working-class opinion through the Labour Party and trade unions. Out of a fight to get a Labour government, together with the debate and discussion within the labour movement about Labour policies, can come a working class movement confident enough to change society. Out of demoralisation can come nothing.

Don't fall for the idea that the SDP/Liberal Alliance is maybe something new and different, maybe a soft option to get rid of the Tories without going all the way with Labour.

During the miners' strike SDP

leader David Owen attacked the Tories for not using the law harshly enough against the NUM. The Alliance's general economic policy — monetarism, privatisation — is similar to the Tories, with maybe a bit more public investment, a wage freeze, and fiercer laws against the unions. On nuclear weapons they basically agree with the Tories.

The Alliance is just as bad as the Tories. Neither an Alliance government, nor even a coalition in which Labour is a prisoner of the Alliance, will be any alternative. We need a Labour majority and a straight Labour government.

Some time in the next two years the Tories have to call a general election. With increasing splits and divisions within the Tory party, and probably a worsening of the economic situation, it may be sooner than you think. By campaigning for Labour, joining the Labour Party and working with the SCLV, you can help to make it sooner, and to make sure Labour wins when an election comes. Thatcher is not invincible!



Ten year old youth arrested by police in Toxteth, Liverpool, during riots in 1981. Photo: John Smith (IFL).

## ERIC HEFFER MP:

I believe we must not accept a coalition with the SDP/Liberal Alliance. They are the other side of the Tory coin. On most political issues, like the trade unions, they are just as reactionary as the Tories, as they are on issues such as defence and the publicly-owned industries. They are dedicated to the maintenance of the capitalist system which David Owen calls the 'Social Market'.

easily be converted into submission to authority, desire for strong government, the belief that Tory solutions must be right because they are hard and painful.

The Tories also use scapegoats — black people, militant trade unionists, supposedly Russian-controlled peace-campaigners — to rally people who have given up on (or never dared think of) challenging the system, and who want easier targets for their frustrations.

It's true that weakness by Labour's leadership does give ground to the demoralisation that the Tories feed from. When Neil Kinnock is bolder and more vigorous about denouncing Labour left-wingers and militant miners than in advancing positive Labour policies, then it can't help. It is no secret that there



# The rise of the partisans

During World War 2 the leftwing Greek Resistance Army liberated and administered four-fifths of Greece. By 1949 the Left was defeated — its supporters killed, jailed or exiled. What went wrong? In this five part series, Ian Swindale traces the history of the resistance, British intervention in Greece and the ensuing civil war.

Part one deals with the occupation of Greece and the growth of ELAS.

At 3.00 a.m. on October 28 1940 the Italian charge d'affaires in Athens called on Greek dictator General Ioannis Metaxas to demand the right of free passage through Greece for Italian troops. The reply was a curt 'no' and as Italian troops invaded across the Albanian border they met stiff resistance from the Greek Army and a popular uprising of the Greek people in defence of their country.

The Italians were driven back across the Albanian border, pursued by the Greek Army, and for six months there was stalemate until on 6 April 1941 German troops entered Yugoslavia on their way to assist the beleaguered Italians. Within a few weeks Greek resistance was overcome and the country was occupied by Axis forces.

## Instability

The enthusiasm with which the Greek people rose to defend their country owed little or nothing to the popularity of the government. After ten years of unstable Republican government King George II had returned in 1935 to head a restored constitutional monarchy and as political instability in Greece continued to increase he colluded in the following year in the seizure of power by the fascist-inspired General Metaxas.

The trade unions, which had never been properly independent from the state, were dissolved and replaced by Nazi-style joint employer-worker organisations. Strikes were declared illegal; civil rights were suspended; and union militants and socialists were arrested and tortured in an attempt to force them to sign declarations renouncing their political views. The Ministry of the Interior disrupted the Communist Party (KKE) by publishing its own version of the KKE paper, issuing statements from its own parallel "KKE leadership" and publishing both forged and forced 'declarations of repentance', sowing mistrust and suspicion in the ranks of the underground organisation.

Metaxas died in January 1941 during the war with Italy but as the Germans advanced, the King, together with Metaxas's ministers and a ragbag of republican politicians withdrew first to Crete and then to Cairo.

Armed bands have always existed in the remote mountainous areas of Greece. When times were hard and food scarce they would plunder the villages on the plains in traditional Klepht bandit style or harass occupation troops — most recently in history the Turks. Now they began harassing the Germans.

In Athens, Aris Velouchiotis persuaded the KKE Central



ELAS guerrillas. Women played an active part in the struggle.

Committee to send him to the mountains to try and organise the armed bands as a resistance movement to the German occupation. Velouchiotis's family came from the liberal bourgeoisie but Aris did not feel comfortable in this environment. He studied agronomy, joined the KKE, headed its youth organisation for a time and was imprisoned under Metaxas. Now back in the villages of occupied Greece, he set about transforming the scattered bands into a Greek Resistance Army — ELAS.

The KKE leadership were suspicious of this development from the start. Throughout the war they vacillated between two policies. On the one hand they set up a broad-based National Liberation Movement (EAM) with a view to putting sufficient pressure on the bourgeois forces to secure the portfolios of Interior and Armed Forces in a post-war government. They were therefore anxious not to upset the bourgeoisie on whose goodwill their future Cabinet posts depended. But the bourgeoisie were thoroughly anti-communist and anti-ELAS.

Lies and rumours circulated continuously in bourgeois circles in Athens about ELAS activities, atrocities even. KKE general secretary Siantos took his cue from these rumours and put constant pressure on the ELAS leadership to moderate their methods and to secure British recognition — and hence respectability in the eyes of the bourgeoisie — at any price.

It was all a waste of time. The

British would only recognise ELAS if it put itself under the command of Middle East Allied HQ, while the anti-communism of the bourgeoisie ensured that ELAS would never appear respectable in their eyes.

But the alternative policy of the KKE proved equally disastrous. In the event of a seizure of power being necessary, the KKE leadership's perspective, based on a monolithic conception of the October Revolution as a model for all revolutions regardless of local conditions, was for an urban struggle to seize control of the main towns — a struggle in which there was no role for the partisan forces to play. They held to this view dogmatically throughout the war.

## EEAM

The urban working class was organised during this period and was involved in struggle. The state trade unions of Metaxas — with their leaders in exile — were replaced by illegal national liberation front trade unions — EEAM. An armed militia was later organised in working class areas where the Germans no longer dared to venture, but its scope for struggle was limited by the massive firepower of the occupying forces.

Nevertheless after the winter of 1941-2 in which 300,000 Athenians starved to death, the capital was on the verge of erupting. In February 1943 the collaborationist government announced civil mobilisation of the workforce. This was resisted in a series of strikes and mass

demonstrations in which unarmed Greek civilians were shot down in their hundreds by German and Italian troops.

Seeing an opportunity for self-promotion, the Archbishop of Athens Damaskinos, informed the German governor of Athens that unless the civil mobilisation was called off he would assume leadership of the protests and summon the whole population of Greece to resist. The civil mobilisation was called off. The KKE had been centrally involved in organising this campaign but it proved impossible to use their militias in Athens. Instead of going to the Mountain where they could train in the use of arms, gain experience of fighting and strengthen ELAS they remained in Athens biding their time and waiting for their opportunity.

While ELAS was organising in Central Greece and Macedonia, another resistance group was organising in Epirus on the north west coast. This was the General National Democratic Union (EDES), led by Napoleon Zervas and Komninos Pyromaglou. The British Middle East Command based in Cairo were anxious to establish a non-Communist resistance movement in competition with ELAS and instructed the reluctant Zervas to go to the mountains or be denounced to the Germans on Radio London.

EDES was, according to its constitution, a republican movement with socialist ideals, but Zervas was a thoroughly unscrupulous and ambitious man who was prepared to adapt

his politics to the needs of the British.

The first British agents, led by E. Myers and C.M. Woodhouse, arrived in Greece in October 1942. Their brief was to coordinate sabotage attacks by the resistance groups and in particular to cut the Salonika-Athens railway which was part of the Germans' supply route to Rommel in Libya.

On 25 November 1942 ELAS, and EDES guerrillas together with British saboteurs destroyed the railway bridge over the Gorgopotamos River. It took the Germans three months to repair it.

The BBC gave a glowing report of Zervas's and EDES's role in the operation. ELAS was not even mentioned. It was a

clear indication of the British government's attitude.

The Resistance continued to meet with success, particularly against the Italians, and in the Spring of 1943 outside Grevena they were joined by local villagers in a battle which resulted in the surrender of the Italian Battalion Commander and his men and the capture of large quantities of arms and equipment. On 25 March 1943 — Greek Independence Day — ELAS andartes marched through Grevena — the first occupied town in Europe to be liberated.

British policy towards Greece at this time contained a contradiction that was difficult to resolve. The immediate needs of war meant that the Military Command in the Middle East were willing — even anxious — to support all those fighting the Germans, regardless of their politics. The Foreign Office, on the other hand, were primarily concerned about the political outcome in Greece after the Germans were finally defeated.

## Dependence

Britain had been one of the three guarantors (along with France and Imperial Russia) of Greek independence since the country freed itself from Turkish rule in the 1820s, and Greece's relationship to Britain was one of semi-colonial dependence. British governments had always been able to discreetly intervene at the highest levels to push Greek policy back into line whenever the occasion demanded.

Churchill was determined that British influence in Greece should be restored as soon as the German army of occupation withdrew. This meant, in particular, the restoration of the monarchy. Clearly a large, well-armed, well-trained, politically motivated ELAS did not fit in with these plans. From 1943, as the World War shifted more and more against Germany, the conflict between British imperialism and the Greek partisans became more and more central.

The British Mission in Greece did its best to reconcile the needs of war against Germany with its desire to keep control by involving ELAS in operations against the Germans while at the same time trying to bring them under the direct command of Middle East HQ and limit their growth in size and armaments.

Meanwhile Churchill began developing the view that the problem could be solved if the Allied landing in the Mediterranean were to take place in Greece, rather than Italy, and he began pushing this view with Roosevelt and Stalin.

Next week: To the eve of Liberation.

## Get Organised

Become a supporter of the Socialist Organiser Alliance — groups are established in most large towns. We ask £5 a month minimum (£1 unwaged) contribution from supporters.

I want to become a Socialist Organiser supporter/I want more information.

Name .....

Address .....

Phone no: .....

Send to Socialist Organiser, PO Box 823, London SE15 4NA, or phone 01-639 7965.

# May the force be with you

By Les Hearn

As fast as scientists try to describe, explain and simplify the laws of nature, nature seems to throw spanners in the works.

A little over a century ago, Maxwell showed that the three forces of nature were in fact two, since the electrical and magnetic forces were aspects of each other. (The other known force was gravity).

The discovery of radioactivity and of the structure of the atom led to the discovery of the strong and weak forces, making four forces. Then 20 years ago, the electromagnetic and the weak forces were shown to be aspects of the same force, proof coming a couple of years ago, with the discovery of the predicted and required W and Z particles. Then there were three...until a fortnight ago. This is when "hypercharge" made the headlines.

Hypercharge is an extremely weak force with a range of about 200 metres. Its size seems to depend on the mass of the bodies experiencing it like gravity. However, it tends to push things apart, like a sort of anti-gravity.

Now, it has always been a problem to convince people that objects fall to Earth at the same speed, regardless of their masses (ignoring air resistance). Galileo is credited with proving this by dropping a cannon ball and a musket ball from the Leaning Tower of Pisa. American astronauts repeated the experiment more impressively by dropping a feather and a hammer on the Moon. The objects fell at the same rate as the Moon has no air to cause a feather to flutter.

However, according to US physicists, the heavier object ought to fall slower. This dumb-founding conclusion was reached after re-analysing data published 60 years ago to confirm Galileo's hypothesis.

This research had been undertaken by Hungarian Roland von Eotoos, a skilled experimenter, one of whose triumphs was to show that objects travelling East are lighter than those travelling West (it's to do with centrifugal force and the direction of the Earth's rotation).

The Americans were motivated to look at von Eotoos's data by the curious fact that measurements of the strength of gravity at various points on the Earth's surface were always greater than measurements in the lab.

Von Eotoos had carried out many measurements of the gravitational attraction between pairs of objects of differing masses and materials.

One material used was a mixture of tallow, grease, suet and other things (there is little profit in speculating why this was chosen).

As in all experiments, each measurement varied in a small way from a "perfect" result. This is known as "scatter" and is supposed to be random. The Americans found this scatter to be less random than was thought. In fact, the gravity force between more dense objects was less than that between less dense ones.

To explain this, "hypercharge" has been suggested. This "anti-gravity" will have little impact in our perceptions.



Science

though. It is some hundred times weaker than gravity, itself a very weak force.

Info: New Scientist and Guardian.

The tobacco industry has very effectively got round the ban on TV advertising of cigarettes. Through their sponsorship of such sports as cricket, motor-racing, snooker and darts, viewers of ITV and BBC are regularly regaled with brand names and symbols. This gets right to children, a majority of whom are unaware of the "absence" of cigarette adverts on TV.

In contrast to the hundreds of millions of pounds spent on tobacco advertising, the Health Education Council has a mere £9 million for all its activities. One of its initiatives has been National No Smoking Day and it spent £20,000 getting a company called Research Services of Great Britain to evaluate its impact last year. Now, RSGB has been nobbled. It has a new job, testing products for a tobacco company and a clause in its contract forbids it working for the HEC.

Of course, the government gets lots of money from people's self-destructive habits, a fact which explains perhaps why anti-smoking ministers have been frozen out of the DHSS. The Department has in fact aided the tobacco industry to improve its image by encouraging it to set up the Health Promotion Research Trust. This awards grants for research into health problems, except those caused by smoking.

As a result, there has been a debate among researchers. Should they use tobacco cash for a good cause or should they refuse it because it helps the industry to appear more benign and respectable?

The latter view has recently prevailed.

First, left-wing academic Professor Hilary Rose has returned HPRT cash after urgings from health campaigners. Then, a scathing editorial in the British Medical Journal called for doctors to avoid tobacco's "dirty money".

Lastly, the HEC has rejected the suggestion of its chairman that they adopt a more friendly attitude to the HPRT, which has £11.5 million to dish out over three years.

Council members saw the government's hand behind this proposal and indeed saw it as an attempt to "muzzle" the HEC.

Meanwhile, research shows that cigar and pipe smoking are just as harmful as cigarette smoking. Cigar and pipe smoking are still advertised on TV.



The Spider Woman

# The way out of the prison camp

Most reviews, articles in colour supplements and interviews with William Hurt, have managed to comment of this film that it concerns a revolutionary and a homosexual.

Apparently "revolutionary" and "homosexual" describe different slots on the same scale of human oddity, and apparently it is impossible by definition to be both.

Fortunately, the characters in the film are not the cardboard cut-out stereotypes that inhabit the heads of film critics. On the contrary, Hector Babenco's 'Kiss of the Spider Woman' is a subtle and moving portrayal of two men forced together by imprisonment.

Molina (William Hurt) has been sentenced to eight years for corruption of a minor. Valentin (Raul Julia) is a political prisoner, arrested helping a leading comrade to flee the country and tortured to give up the secrets of 'the movement'.

## Movies

To pass the time, Molina tells the stories of old movies he has seen. In the movies Molina finds a world of romance and passion to which he can escape. He is oblivious to the political content of the films — even to the message of a war-time Nazi propaganda picture filled with criminal Jews, idiotic Frenchmen and handsome German soldiers out to change the world.

To begin with Valentin despises his over-sensitive cellmate but over time their relationship warms and develops.

Molina is deliberately woman-like, a stereotyped queen, full of self-hate and self-pity. The only person he has ever loved is his mother.

Yet, we discover, he is also

Edward Ellis reviews 'Kiss of the Spider Woman', now on general release.

at once cunning and devious, but loving to the point of foolishness. He is unpredictable. Is he a friend, or a traitor to Valentin?

Valentin is hard, self-disciplined, bearing up under torture, putting the struggle before personal considerations.

Yet beneath the exterior he is, after all, afraid and lonely.

Kiss of the Spider Woman is set in Brazil; but it could be anywhere, or at any time. It concerns a society ruled over by a brutal police state. And it vividly conjures the uncertainty, personal isolation and pessimism of the victims of the state.

There is no escape for the militants of 'the movement': the security forces are everywhere; best friends are secret, treacherous enemies; only their dreams are happy.

Other social victims, like the homosexuals, might try to carve out a niche of escape, fantasy, but the conflicts in society suck them back. Neither Molina nor Valentin have a chance of real freedom.

This image of life under a police state is genuinely terrifying. It is not only the prospect of torture and death, and the hopelessness of the imprisoned, the sense of doom; most frightening is that the necessities of struggle against such a state leave the participants isolated, cold, friendless and unfriendly. Paradoxically, it is prison that throws Molina and Valentin together.

At the centre of the film is the growing depth to the relationship between the two cellmates.

Both are complex characters becoming — reluctantly — dependent upon each other. Valentin comes earnestly to respect Molina; Molina to love Valentin.

## Contrast

It is sensitively and convincingly handled, with marvellous performances from Hurt and Julia.

A plot that centres almost

entirely on a single cell might have resulted in a very stagey film. But the interweaving of Molina's movie stories into the rest of the plot serves both to hold the interest of the viewers, and to place into sharp contrast reality — ugly, tedious, dirty — and dreams. The clumsy, ham-acted, crass Nazi propaganda film is also very funny.

Kiss of the Spider Woman is an excellent, beautifully made film.



William Hurt as Molina

# Teachers still fighting

By Cheung Siu Ming

Both the TUC-affiliated teachers' unions for England and Wales, the NUT and the NAS/UWT, held special conferences last weekend, as the teachers' dispute enters its eleventh month.

NUT general secretary Fred Jarvis reported on why the NUT have rejected the latest ACAS-inspired talks. He accused ACAS of playing the Tory government's game, of tempting teachers to trade away their working conditions for new money on top of the 6.9% "final" offer. He attacked the other teachers' unions for attempting to sell out, especially venting anger on the NAS/UWT leaders who used their votes against the NUT to elect the headteachers' union representative as the new secretary of the Teachers' Panel of the Burnham Committee.

The conference agenda was crammed full of amendments reflecting the militancy which has developed in all divisions of the union. The Left had high hopes of winning decisive amendments which would step up the action at this crucial stage.

The first amendment to the Executive motion came from Inner London. It called for the joint action and co-operation at grass roots level between NUT and NAS/UWT members to be translated at national level into a

"joint caucus of TUC-affiliated unions on the Teachers' Panel", and for "a common approach on the current and 1986 pay campaigns".

The movers persuaded conference, despite opposition from the platform, that it was not enough to blame the NAS/UWT leaders; what was needed was a positive campaign of united action to put pressure on the NAS/UWT to break with the scabs and work with the NUT. The amendment was carried narrowly on a card vote.

Other amendments, reaffirming the basic claim of £1200 and for a flat rate distribution of the claim, were accepted by a platform who in "normal times" would not have wished to be tied down so explicitly.

### Overwhelmingly

The high point of the conference came when Inner London again moved an amendment calling for a one day national strike. This was strongly opposed by NUT Vice-President Richardson, but carried overwhelmingly.

The next and most crucial amendment called for the present half day per month strikes without strike pay to be escalated up to one day per week.

All NUT actions have to be carried by a two-thirds ballot majority of all members entitled



Joseph can still be beaten

to vote. So far 11 ballots have been held and none have fallen lower than 79% in favour.

The platform used the argument that the union could not risk a divisive ballot result, "you should only ballot when you already know what the result is going to be". This is a fundamentally undemocratic and conservative view which hides behind consensus and avoids leading from the front. Unfortunately this fear of division prevailed and the amendment was lost without a card vote.

The same argument was marshalled against the next amendment from Notts calling for a ballot on the total boycott of the 1986 examinations. The amendment went to a card vote with half an hour to go, and this meant that amendments calling for a refusal to invigilate exams

(but not for stopping them) were not debated.

Many delegates believe that there was a majority for a ballot against invigilation. The Scottish teachers took this as a first step last summer, and only after that proceeded to ballot their members last October for a total exam boycott. Raising the total boycott immediately proved premature, and the card vote was eventually lost. (A similar move in the NAS/UWT conference was also defeated).

### Levy

An amendment calling for a monthly levy of the membership was also lost. Significantly though, the platform did not argue against it in principle as they did in Easter. The NEC reassured conference that there was still enough money and that

they would levy the membership as soon as it proves necessary.

By this stage, hopes that the rank and file could succeed in pushing the leadership any further along the road to escalation and victory were truly dashed. The last amendment calling for continued strike action (instead of just working to rule) if a sell-out is imposed by the other teachers' unions against the NUT, was lost.

By all accounts, the NAS/UWT leadership was also able to contain their militants at their conference, though not without some close votes, especially on the exam issue. Their argument of settling the 1985 claim now in order to fight on in 1986 unfortunately carried the day.

These conferences are a clear signal to the employers not to concede any further on the 1985 claim. Any deal stitched up on the 1985 claim will have a major dampening effect on the 1986 claim, if the miners' strike is any example to go by. Teachers will be up against cuts in jobs and services, and imposed changes of working conditions written into their contracts.

It is still not impossible to fight on, but our failure to escalate now could prove decisive. Carrying on the same level of wildcat, disruptive action and waiting for the general election will not be enough. After the May election, many local councils will surely chance their arm and lock us out.

Paul Whetton's diary

## Oppose the bosses' offensive!

The results of the ballot in Leicester over whether or not to break away from the NUM show that Lynk and the UDM have been sussed out by the rank and file who are quite aware of what is going on.

Irrespective of their stance during the dispute, people have realised the need to belong to one national union.

Lynk has admitted that the UDM is losing members. The front runner for the UDM is in fact the Coal Board. It can be seen that the UDM is not a trade union, nor even a working men's organisation, but a company union.

Because of the attitude of the Coal Board we have had to be on the defensive in our attempts to combat the UDM but I can see the time coming when we will be able to go onto the offensive, which in reality means taking the offensive against the Coal Board.

We are aware that there exists a lobby for privatisation of profitable pits and I understand that merchant bankers from London even visited one pit.

Our job is to convince those who remain with the NUM that the benefits they have won over the years will not exist in a privately-owned mining industry. They will want a high-productivity, low-wage, unorganised workforce.

Twelve months ago, half way through our dispute, we were saying 'it's the miners today and it will be you tomorrow'. Now, in Fleet Street, we are seeing the reality of that prophesy coming true.

They have not yet completed their plans for the mining industry but they have got so far forward that they are now looking at other sectors.

While we got a lot of support in our dispute from rank and file workers, a lot of trade union leaders sat back and said to themselves, 'we're safe, they can't touch us'.

Now they've got to build up a head of steam to oppose the offensive not only in Fleet Street but in all industries.

## Sheffield steel: support needed for victory

Sheffield Forgemasters shop stewards are in an optimistic mood as a result of recent events in the 15 week long strike.

Shop steward G. Thompson claimed that it will now take more than recognition of union rights to get the men back to work. They want a substantial pay rise too.

Strike action was taken when

management proposed the abolition of the Joint Health and Safety Committee, in spite of seven deaths and nine serious accidents in under two years.

Management also proposed that ISTC national officials have power of veto over local shop stewards and locked the convenor out of his office. They also refused any across-the-board

pay rise.

On 20 November ISTC ordered their 200 members back to work but the membership made it clear that they would organise in an alternative union rather than return. Within 24 hours the ISTC leadership withdrew their recommendation for a return to work.

Since then all 700 men working on the BSC Atlas site of Forgemasters have been sacked. But four mass meetings have overwhelmingly supported continuing the fight.

Even more encouragingly, since the sackings, the other Sheffield site, River Don, has voted to support the strike and has been out since 2 January.

A mass meeting of the two sites took the decision to form a single trade union structure within the Sheffield sites.

Since the two sites have ground to a halt the management have shown signs of cracking and of being divided. Contradictory press statements have been made. P. Wright, managing director, claims that the company has no financial difficulties as a result of the strike while Kenney, the Company chair, claims that there are desperate financial problems. The company has been to the Department of Trade and Industry to try to get a £10 million loan. This has been refused until there is a return to work.

To try to break morale management are contacting individual workers and sending P45s to only a few of the sacked men. Shop stewards are confident that victimisation will not precipitate a return to work; but there are fears that men will be starved back.

As a result of River Don taking strike action there are now 2,200 strikers needing financial support. When River Don were still working they were donating £2000 per week into a levy which now must be found by support groups in the labour movement.

Already support groups on the lines of those developed during the miners' strike, are springing up. Promisingly, a "Women for Steel" group has been establish-

ed but participation has been restricted to relatives of the strikers.

A successful ending to this dispute now depends upon the committed support of the labour movement.

Send donations, messages of support and requests for speakers to: Dispute Centre, AUEW House, Furnival Gate, Sheffield. Tel: 0742 79042.

## Ford

Last week TGWU and AUEW members voted by big majorities for strike action at Fords car plants throughout the country over their pay claim.

So far officials have just sat on these majorities. On the other hand management look determined.

They have made an offer of 13-16% over two years and want to impose 'Japanese' style practices throughout the company's 24 plants. This has already led to a series of small isolated sectional strikes.

What's needed is to turn the ballot majorities into action. The union leaders must stand up to Ford management.

## Strike against racism

On Monday and Tuesday 13/14 January about 150 Bengali pupils stayed away from Morpeth secondary school in Bethnal Green, East London.

The strike followed events the previous week when a 50-strong gang of white fifth-formers had been running around the school assaulting younger Bengalis and some teachers. The declared aim of the white pupils was to make the school white-only.

The Bengali pupils organised the strike to force the school authorities to take action against the racists. On Tuesday the

Deputy Head and an officer of the Inner London Education Authority met some of the pupils who were staying away.

The Bengali pupils raised several complaints — such as slowness in suspending the white attackers and the lack of security on the school site which meant that a number of pupils from Daneford School (a local school with a record of racist assaults) had joined in the attacks.

Eight of the racist ringleaders were suspended and five of them will face hearings about expulsion before the Board of Governors.

The strike by the Bengalis was a success. They forced the school authorities and the ILEA to take the attacks in their school seriously.

Some of the Labour Party nominees on the Board of Governors have been active in support of the Bengali pupils and support expelling proven racist ringleaders from the school.

The local Labour Party is also supporting the pupils and has called for ILEA to set up a race action team to deal with cases such as Morpeth and recent events at nearby Daneford school.

Without such positive action the anti-racist policies of ILEA are nothing but fine talk.

'Workers' Liberty' special issue on South Africa. 75p & p&p. from Socialist Organiser, 214 Sickert Court London N1 2SY.

More on South Africa

Azania Frontline: 35p from AZISC, BM Box 4863, London WC1N 3XX

**AZANIA FRONTLINE**

Newsletter of the Azania (South Africa) Liberation Support Committee

**WORKERS' LIBERTY**

**Breaking the chains**



Black workers and the struggle for liberation in South Africa



NO 12 JANUARY 1986 35p

## Subscribe

Get SOCIALIST ORGANISER each week delivered to your door by post. RATES: £8.50 for 6 months. £16 for one year.

Name .....  
Address .....

Please send me . . . . months' sub. I enclose £ . . . . .

To: Socialist Organiser, 214 Sickert Court, London N1 2SY.

# Socialist Organiser

# Can't slow down

We're now within two weeks or so of finishing the initial work on our new offices and moving in. It's taken a bit longer than we thought, but the result promises to be well worth it.

Fund-raising, however, can't afford to slow down for a long time yet. We've got a lot of bills to pay just now; there's a fair deal of extra work still to be done to the premises over the next few months; and we have to pay off loans.

Thanks this week to: Shepton Mallet reader, £5; Jim Denham £20; Birmingham raffle ticket sales £1; Sally Richards £20; Martin Snowdon £22; Bob Fine £100; Glasgow readers £20; Sarah Cotterill £30; Christine Priestley £15; Nottingham reader £1; Ivan Wels £125; Helen

Rigby £15; Tim Cooper £45; Leo Keely £2; Nottingham raffle ticket sales £6; Sheffield drinks levy £16; Jill Mountford £40; Cathy Nugent £3.40; Graham Smallwood £20; York drinks levy £10.50; East London readers £2.96; Brian Farrer £5; Keyvan Lajevardi-Khosh £65; Will Adams £60.50; Patrick Blandford £5; North London readers £3.50; North London raffle ticket sales £11; Cate Murphy £40.

Send donations and raffle ticket sales money to: SO, 214 Sickert-Court, London N1 2SY.

# Unionists batter Thatcher's stonewall

THIS Thursday, 23rd, 15 out of Northern Ireland's 17 Westminster constituencies hold by-elections.

The 15 Unionist MPs (Northern Ireland's other two being John Hume of the SDLP and Gerry Adams of Sinn Fein) resigned their seats in order to force by-elections on the issue of the Anglo-Irish accord signed last November.

They hope that massive victories for them can do something like what the Westminster general election of February 1974 did 12 years ago.

Then, a big hard-line Orange vote in the Westminster election gravely undermined the power-sharing executive, based on the SDLP and a minority of Unionists, which Britain had just set up. The power-sharing executive was finally smashed by an Orange general strike three months later.

Whatever the result on Thursday, events are not likely to develop quite like that.

In the first place, the election is different. No Unionist group, other than the small Alliance party, has backed the Anglo-Irish deal, so there cannot be any parallel to the big defeat for pro-power-sharing Unionists 12 years ago.

The Unionists opposed to the Anglo-Irish deal — the Democratic Unionist Party and the Official Unionist Party — come into the by-election with 15 seats and cannot possibly come out with more than 15. So it will be difficult for them to point to big gains.

It is even possible — depending not so much on the fortunes of the Unionists as on the allocation of Catholic votes between the SDLP and Sinn Fein — that the Unionists will lose a seat.

The Unionists hope, to show an increase in votes. This can only come from Protestants who didn't bother to vote in 1983.

In any case, the Tory government is clearly prepared to stand firm against at least this degree of Orange backlash. Its Anglo-Irish deal does not depend on any support at all from the Unionists.

The deal sets up an arrangement whereby Northern Ireland is run by London and Dublin in consultation. Its most immediate effect is likely to be increased London/Dublin cooperation in repression against the more rebel-



Ian Paisley at Hillsborough, where the Anglo-Irish deal was signed

By Martin Thomas

lious part of the Northern Catholic community, and in particular against Sinn Fein and the IRA. But from their own point of view the Unionists have cause for concern.

Logically there are two alternative approaches to the communal conflict in Northern Ireland.

One is to try to find a settlement within the framework of the existing Six County unit. This would eventually mean a return to the Protestant majority rule which made the province a sectarian hell-hole for 50 years, with maybe this or that minor safeguard for the Catholics.

The other is to say that a settlement must be found in the framework of a 32 County Ireland.

For some 12 years successive British governments have evaded a choice, instead maintaining direct rule from London and hoping to beat down the rebellious Catholics by sheer volume of repression.

According to Margaret Thatcher's and Tom King's

speeches, they are committed to finding a Six County solution. Thatcher declares herself a convinced Unionist and says 'Out, out, out' to all nationalist options; King says Ireland will remain partitioned 'in perpetuity'.

But the document they have signed says something different. It says, in effect, that the reasonable demands of the Northern Catholics cannot possibly be satisfied in the Six County framework but instead need some all-Ireland arrangement; and, moreover, that the opinion of a majority within the Six Counties is subordinate to that all-Ireland arrangement.

So the Unionists are alarmed. Protest, possibly violent protest, will certainly continue after the by-elections, although it is unlikely to blow up as quickly as in 1974.

The other parties standing in Thursday's by-election are the Alliance party; the SDLP, which supports the Anglo-Irish deal; the Workers' Party, which originates in the Republican movement but now puts all its stress on workers' unity over economic issues; and Sinn Fein.

The Workers' Party cau-

iously supports the Anglo-Irish deal, and Sinn Fein cautiously opposes it. They say it is no solution, but it contains concessions: their election slogan is 'Keep up the pressure'.

In Britain, the Labour Party leaders have done little but endorse the deal while keeping a certain distance in case it runs into trouble.

But a British and Irish labour movement response must be based on grasping the fundamental issue.

The Northern Ireland unit has no democratic validity. It was created undemocratically by British imperialism and has sectarianism built into it.

The only possible resolution of the Catholic/Protestant conflict is within a 32 county framework. British troops do not have — never have had — any right to be in Ireland, and they do no good there.

Britain must withdraw, and a settlement must be negotiated between the different sections of the people of Ireland. The rights of the Protestant minority can best be protected within a stable framework by local autonomy within a federal united Ireland.

Local group	Target	So far	Per cent
North London	1600	912.16	57%
Nottingham	1000	893.72	89%
South London	800	701.15	88%
East London	760	495.30	65%
Merseyside	500	475.50	95%
Cardiff	600	404.50	67%
Manchester	1000	349.35	35%
Glasgow/Edinburgh	560	284.00	51%
West London	500	200.00	40%
York/Harrogate	300	183.90	61%
Coventry	350	175.00	50%
Stoke North	200	132.75	66%
Durham/North East	200	130.80	65%
Basingstoke	560	115.47	21%
Stoke South	200	90.00	45%
Sheffield	400	74.10	19%
Birmingham	100	63.00	63%
Canterbury	90	32.00	36%
Colchester	100	23.80	24%
Aberdeen	20		
Leeds	60		
Oxford	40		
Southampton	60		
Central/general	5000	511.50	10%
Total	15000	6248.00	42%

**Socialist Organiser premises fund**

★ RAFFLE ★

Prizes: 1 & 2. Radio/cassette recorder  
3. Gestetner duplicator  
4. £30 worth of books

Winning tickets will be drawn on Tuesday February 18th

For tickets (20p each) or books of 10 on sale or return, write to SO, 214 Sickert Court, London N1 2SY.

