

CND: The Peoples
March: NATO
Linwood

socialist

REVIEW

Monthly magazine of the Socialist Workers Party
15 April - 15 May 1982 - 100p

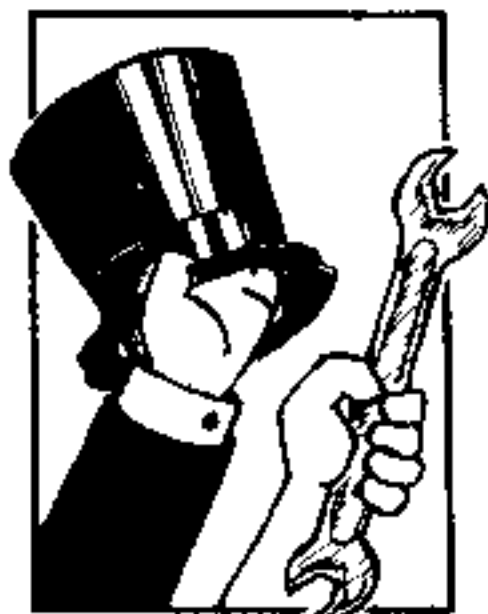


Poland



El Salvador

Neither
Washington
nor Moscow
but
International
Socialism



Class struggle

Ripples that cannot be ignored

There has been quite an important shift in the industrial struggle since the beginning of the year, symbolised by the miners' strike, which could be described as a 'ripple' of militancy after the doldrums of the autumn. It's impossible to ignore the lack of mass backing for a fight at Linwood (see Industrial Discussion Section) but it is wrong to ignore some of the straws in the wind about a limited fightback elsewhere.

First of all, we have a period since the turn of the year when there have been four significant 'national' disputes, culminating in the civil service action. The first three of these struggles were in varying degrees successful.

Though the seamen did not get what they wanted, there was a lot of involvement of new layers within the union and a fair degree of rank and file militancy. Independent observers, like Lloyds List, saw the settlement as a setback for the employers. Secondly the miners achieved a major propaganda victory—against Tory philosophy on the public sector, on viability and so on—even if the victory was hedged about with a lot of question marks as we described in our last issue. Lastly the water workers discovered a strength, and more important a degree of independent organisation, which has not appeared previously. The officials were forced into an ugly con trick to 'prove' the members had accepted a very fishy deal. Nevertheless in terms of the government's attempts to hold down pay, the settlement was seen as a success by other groups of public employees such as ambulance workers.

Both the miners and the water workers have had an impact throughout the public sector—but this has not prevented the hospital workers getting a Catch 22 pay offer where whichever way they vote they accept

a big cut in real pay, nor did it have an impact on the teachers. It has, however, led to a few ripples of rank and file discontent. The miners' victory has prodded some rail workers into life—for example in the workshops. Part of this is a question of confidence, part the simple fact that the miners' settlement means more coal travelling by rail, particularly in South Wales.

More disputes in engineering

The slight signs that the slump is easing have also led to action. The best example of this was in the Metro strike at Longbridge, but more recently there have been other indications. John Brown Engineering in Clydebank—which is one of the few large engineering plants left in Glasgow—virtually imposed a 7% pay increase in December, together with job cuts. But the fact there was a new order two months later and that special pay increases were given to the design staff led to a one-week strike in the engineering section at the beginning of March.

This is the first period for quite a time—with the solitary exception of Gardners—that anything like a fightback has occurred in engineering. A very high proportion of the disputes that have taken place have, however, been attempts to resist the employers' offensive. This is an improvement over most of 1980 when the degree of resistance in the engineering industry almost disappeared. In the past three months or so, attacks on shop floor organisation, on custom and practice etc have become more widespread, in particular in a series of disputes in a Sheffield and South Yorkshire—and this time round there has been a reaction.

This goes not only for engineering but for other manufacturing industries. The prob-

lem is that the struggles have in general been very isolated, and often only carried by craftsmen—because they are more secure in terms of jobs but also because the employers are having a go at the maintenance and craft sections now. So for example craftsmen at several South Yorkshire glassworks came out in support of Canning Town Glass where a steward was sacked, but they were back at work after a fortnight when the dispute failed to spread.

The wave of Sheffield and South Yorkshire disputes, from the end of January onwards, has occurred with each in isolation. And yet the issues have been very similar in each: Rotary Electrical—management refuses to implement second stage of pay deal and declares redundancies over a work-to-rule; Eclipse Tools—management tries to select named workers for the sack; Plansee Tooling—management 'offers' 7% after five-month freeze and then sacks the entire workforce when they walk out; Markhams—management suspends four workers over refusing to move jobs; Bone Craven—management 'offers' 7½% increase for 30% increase in productivity; Snows—management breaks short-time agreement, suspends convenor and sacks the whole workforce.

An obvious pattern

All these disputes were taking place at the same time as the Ansell's strike, the lock out at Southampton docks, the attempt to impose new conditions at Felixstowe docks, the attempts by Ford and BL to impose new grading schemes and redundancies on foremen and white-collar workers. There is an obvious pattern and an obvious conclusion to be drawn about how employers are continuing to use the slump to drive back such workplace organisation as exists; to reduce the workforce, and to impose new conditions on those workers who remain. The contrast between current events and the period before Christmas is that then employers were getting away with it virtually scot free; now there is a response. Fragmented and confused but nonetheless real.

Some management offensives have been quite grotesque: for example the refusal to allow workers to organise retirement presentations in company time at Bridon in Newcastle and the attempt by Revlon in Maesteg to apply IQ tests to choose who was going to get the sack. Both these incidents resulted in immediate stoppages. But in the main, management is pursuing the same objectives as before, but finding it slightly more difficult to get away with it.

This change in the climate is really quite hopeful. The number of strikes has gone up quite sharply as compared with the previous period, and this has coincided with important national disputes where the employers have not got their own way. Those workers who are prepared to go out on strike, despite the fear of the dole, are not surprisingly quite militant about it. And most important disputes are left isolated and demoralised by the inaction of officials and the 'broad left' alike. The importance of political activists and of those who have experience of how to organise and win strikes has never been greater.

Dave Beecham



Seven days of Socialist ideas, discussion and entertainment

Marxism '81 is organised by the Socialist Worker Student Organisation

This year it is at Queen Mary College, Mile End Road, London E1.

From 10th July to 17th July (Friday to Friday).

£11.50 in advance, £13 on the door.

Write to SWSO, PO Box 82, London E2, or ring 01-986 8355, for further details.

Hungary 1956 Czechoslovakia 1968 Poland 1981?



The storm that won't abate

A four hour general strike larger than any the country had ever known before. Preparation for an all-out general strike which would probably have been the largest known in world history. Military exercises by the world's second greatest power prolonged because of 'the seriousness of the situation'. The government pleads with the people to take it seriously and avoid 'national suicide'. Frantic appeals to Western states for economic aid: the country has only 10 days of food left.

Poland was indeed a country on the brink of revolutionary upheaval in the last day of March — an upheaval that would have had dramatic effects on all of Europe. The confrontation was postponed on the basis of a last minute compromise. But those who agreed this deal on both sides were soon under bitter attack from many of their colleagues: for the first time those in Solidarity who disagree with Walesa are speaking of him in terms which rank-and-file workers on the West use to describe full-time union bureaucrats.

But can the new 'truce' last any longer than the old one? And if not, what can we expect in the period ahead?

Over the page we print a chronology of the events which led up to confrontation between Solidarity and the Government. It tells its own story. The social truce proclaimed by premier Jaruzelski early in February and tacitly endorsed by the union broke down under three different sorts of pressures.

The first and most obvious was from the Russians and a powerful section of the Polish regime. They see the very existence of an independent trade union as a slow fuse that could eventually ignite explosive resentments across Poland's border among the

workers of East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and above all, Russia. They also fear that in borrowing more Western money to buy off discontent, the Polish regime would become politically as well as economically in hock to the West.

The second was the avarice of the western bankers. They saw the interest and capital repayments of the vast loans they had already made to Poland threatened, and were reluctant to lend more unless they were given east iron guarantees of economic changes inside Poland together with higher than normal levels of interest. So in the

socialist REVIEW

CONTENTS:

- 3-5 Editorial: Poland, the latest round.
- 6 Lambeth
- 7 Bans on Marches
- 8-9 People's March
- 10 Ireland: the second Hunger Strike
- 11 El Salvador
- 12 Spain: First time farce, next time tragedy.
- 13 France
- 14 Briefing: Youth Opportunities Programme
- 15-17 Labour and the bomb
- 18-19 NATO: the rulers divided ...
- 20-22 CND: the largest mass movement yet
- 23 CND: Labour Movement Conference
- 24-26 Avtar Jouhl
- 27-29 Industrial Discussion: Civil Servants, Linwood
- 30 Norman Mailer
- 31-32 Alternative Economic Strategy
- 33 Books
- 34 Films
- 35 Theatre
- 36 ABC of Socialism: W is for All Willing Workers

Edited by Chris Harman

Assisted by Colin Sparks, Simon Turner, Pete Goodwin, Norah Carlin, Sue Cockerill, Stuart Axe, Jane Ure Smith, Dave Beecham, Gareth Jenkins, Jill Poole, Jon Bearman, Christine Kenny, Jim Scott, Andy Durgan Peter Court.

Films: Jane Ure Smith

Inside the System: Henry Brandler

Business Pete Goodwin, Jane Ure Smith

Correspondance and subscriptions to Socialist Review, PO Box 82, London E2. Please make cheques and postal order payable to SWD. Socialist Review is sent free to all prisoners on request.

ISSN 0141-2442

Printed by East End (Offset) Ltd, (TU All Depts) London E2

How the first truce fell apart

4 March Premier Jaruzelski and party leader Kania attend summit in Moscow with Russian leaders, including defence chief Ustinov and head of KGB, Andropov.

5 March Police arrest Kuron of the dissident group KOR. He is held for six hours and ordered to report regularly to the police.

Local Solidarity in Lodz, Poland's second largest city, issue strike alert after sacking of five union activists in a Ministry of Interior hospital.

Announcement that Warsaw Pact to hold troop exercises in Poland at end of month.

8 March KOR organises commemoration of student demonstrations of 1968 in Warsaw university; Kuron, who was imprisoned for his part in them, is main speaker.

At the same time nationalist, anti-semitic demonstration takes place.

9 March Strike threat in Radom: local Solidarity demands sacking of judges etc who imprisoned workers after strike and demonstrations of 1976.

10 March One hour general strike paralyses Lodz.

11 March Further Lodz strikes called off after reinstatement of victimised workers.

12 March KOR member Adam Michnik arrested and told to report to police three times a week.

16 March Strike threat in Radom suspended after resignation of governor and police chief of region.

Peasants occupy building of regime-run Peasant Party in Bydgoszcz.

19 March Riot police break into meeting of Solidarity leaders and local authority in Bydgoszcz; Solidarity delegates, including national leader Jan Rulewski, hospitalised; deputy premier Stanislaw Mach witnesses events without restraining police.

In Suwalki local governor resigns after strike threats.

20 March Half a million workers join local two hour general strike in Bydgoszcz region.

Solidarity issues general strike alert for whole country.

22 March In Bydgoszcz 3000 supporters of Solidarity mill round union HQ.

Solidarity told at negotiations that Warsaw Pact manoeuvres were being extended 'owing to the seriousness of the situation'.

Politburo statement broadcast for next two days attacks 'political activities' of Solidarity for 'creating a state of anarchy' and denounces 'extremists and adventurers' in union.

23 March At national Solidarity meeting

of 300 people, speaker after speaker comes out in favour of general strike. Walesa walks out in anger but later returns to accept majority decision. Decided to call a four hour warning general strike to be followed four days later by unlimited general strike.

Polish news agency PAP claims no beatings up took place in Bydgoszcz.

26 March Reports that majority of Politburo had followed Olszowski in calling for a state of emergency. But after Jaruzelski threatens to resign, position is reversed.

27 March Four hour general strike. All country's factories, plants, newspapers, shipyards and mines closed. Students occupy colleges and universities.

Senior official of Polish broadcasting authority says government prepared for 30 day general strike and ready to impose martial law.

28 March Lech Walesa has an hour long meeting with Cardinal Wyszynski, head of Polish church.

29 March Meeting of 140 strong party central committee. Key note speech by Barcikowski of moderate wing of politburo talks of 'creeping counter-revolution'. But some other members criticise him for not looking at real problems facing country. Decision to call special party congress for July.

Continued Warsaw Pact exercises on Northern coast.

In Rome, Pope says Polish workers want to work, not to strike.

30 March Solidarity negotiators suspend call for general strike due next day after seven hours of talks with government. Walesa says he is 'satisfied with 70 per cent of agreement'. But Andrzej Slowick from Lodz Solidarity and Marian Jurczyk from Szczecin Solidarity unhappy.

Government agrees to suspend certain police officers involved in Bydgoszcz attack and 'to study' problem of Rural Solidarity and arrested dissidents. In return Solidarity 'accepts there was some justification for police interference in Bydgoszcz because there was a climate of extreme tension in the city'.

31 March National commission of Solidarity eventually agrees to endorse agreement 25-4 with six abstentions. But only after 'heated exchanges'. Reported that 'an overwhelming majority' of commission dissatisfied with compromise. Letter to meeting from Bydgoszcz Solidarity leaders beaten up by police, Rulewski and Labentowicz, accused Walesa and negotiators of 'not fulfilling instructions' and 'manipulating the union'. Also criticise Walesa for 'contacts with authorities'.

1 April KOR member Modzelewski resigns as press officers of Solidarity in protest at undemocratic handling of negotiations by Walesa.

period of the truce the shortages got worse and the queues grew longer.

The third was the determination of growing numbers of workers not to lose the opportunity to rectify grievances that had been accumulating for decades. In Solidarity with its decentralised structure based upon delegates direct from the factories, they had an instrument to deal with these, whatever the pledges made by the national leadership to ministers and cardinals. Deputy Premier Rakowski (a darling of the Western press) complained bitterly to Solidarity leaders that the union's branches in 33 of the country's provinces had demanded changes in the personnel of the security services, and militia. He listed strikes and strike threats over such issues in Radom, Lodz, Katowice, Bielsko Biala, Nowy Sacz, Cracow, Lublin, Suwalki, Kalisz.

The assault on Solidarity representatives in Bydgoszcz may have been a provocation by the hardline, most pro-Russian elements aimed at precipitating a crisis in which they could take control of the state. But it had the effect of acting as a focus for all the resentments of the workers.

The massive success of the four hour strike underlined just how isolated the regime was from other social forces. In the workplaces even the members of its own party ignored its order and joined the action.

In the crucial hours before the all-out strike call was due to become effective the regime had two choices. It could stand firm — and see the country paralysed, its factories taken over, its police and its functionaries overwhelmed by a flood tide of hostility as every shop and every granary became a confrontation point between its forces of order and the hungry masses, the structure of its state sustained only by a growing influx of armed men from Russia. Or it could compromise, buy time, and hope somehow to be able to widen its base of support, to draw at least some of the middle class and peasantry behind it, co-opt Solidarity leaders into structures of collaboration, to work closely with the Church to isolate the militants and dissidents.

What now are its chances of success?

The isolation of the regime

The rows inside Solidarity, and the fact that it seems to be the opponents of the compromise who are resigning their positions, show that the regime's position is not yet completely hopeless. There is a danger that under the pressure of the church hierarchy the group around Walesa will turn their back on the left radical current of dissidents represented by KOR, and begin to act like a conservative trade union bureaucracy.

That would be disastrous, since it would mean Solidarity giving up its position as a focus, a leadership, for all those who are discontented and frustrated. Workers in small factories would no longer look to workers in large factories for backing, dissident intellectuals and students would no longer find any protection, the peasants would fall back into the passivity that comes from feeling that they have been abandoned by everyone in the towns.

Under such conditions, political forces which have been completely marginalised over the last eight months — especially the

anti-semitic, conservative nationalist forces, harboured by the hardliners in the party and encouraged by former interior minister Moczar's Veterans' Association — could begin to gain a following. The regime would hope as in 1968 and, to some extent in 1957, to use these to atomise the opposition.

The very scale of the social and economic crisis means that the balance of forces between Solidarity and the regime cannot remain frozen at its present level for long. Solidarity has gathered massive strength because it has offered people hope in a desperate situation. If it refuses to do things that build that hope, they could all too easily fall away from it. As that happened, the regime would be able to refurbish the old mechanisms of repression in the localities and in the factories.

An unstable equilibrium

Yet that is not going to be an easy job for it. All the pressures that wrecked the last truce continue to operate. The Russians will be more worried than ever after what they will see as yet another surrender by the regime to the union. The Western bankers are still dilly-dallying over their terms for extending Poland's loans. And Solidarity continues to have a decentralised structure which enables local committees to fight very effectively over issues which the Walesa leadership would prefer to ignore.

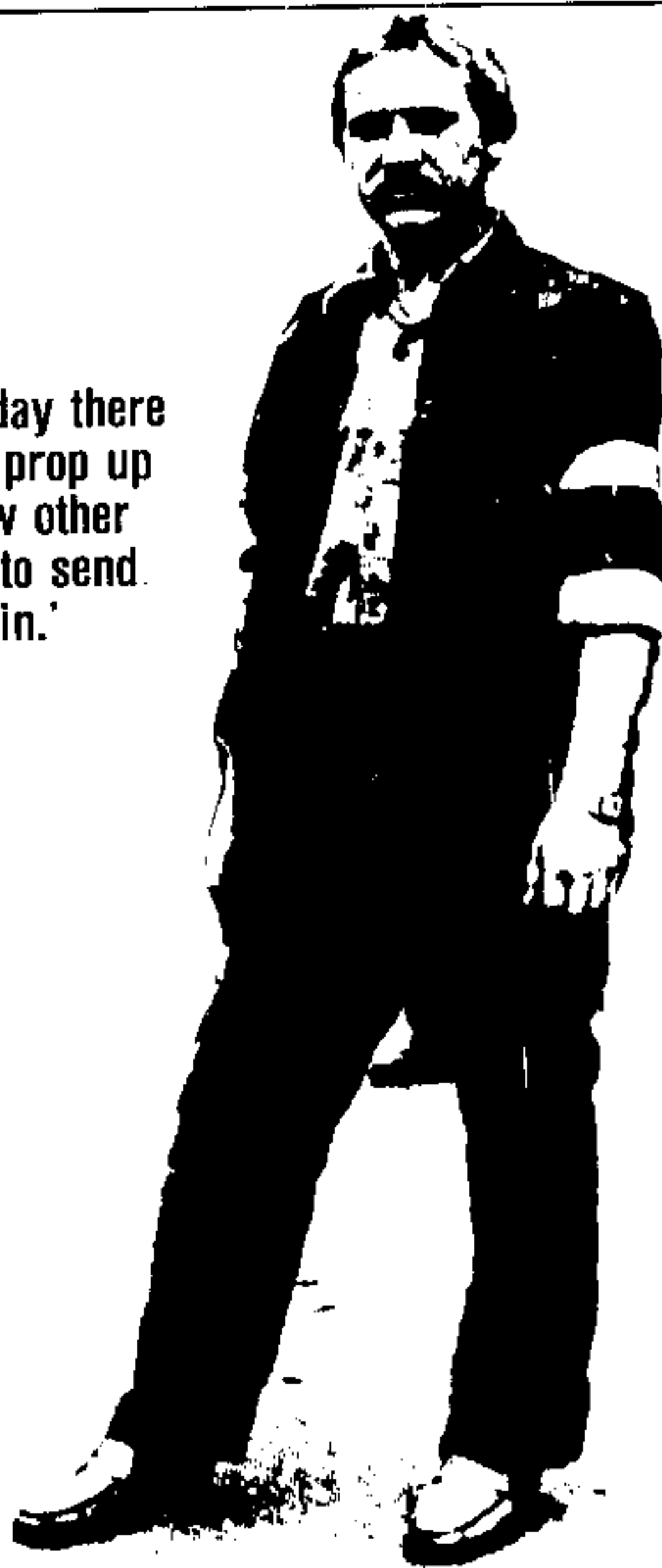
The regime is planning a special party congress, in the hope that this will widen its base of support. But a congress alone cannot solve its most fundamental problem: its present base is restricted to some hundreds of thousands of middle ranking bureaucrats who are bound to it by the very network of petty corruption that so antagonises the mass of workers and peasants. Any drawing of new 'untainted' people into the structures of control and into delegacies to the congress is going to be bitterly resisted by these bureaucrats. An all-out fight by the 'reformers' in the regime could only further paralyse the party and further weaken the regime's control over the country. This is what the inter-party fight did in Czechoslovakia in 1968 — and there was no mass independent workers' movement then, nor was there the continued threat of a breakdown in the food supply.

Another mechanism the regime can try is the establishment of participation procedures in the factories — so that workers come to identify with 'their' factory's efforts to survive market pressures in competition with workers in other factories. This, essentially, is the aim of the economic reform being prepared for the congress. But to be effective, it would have to cut across the ties of unity built up in the struggles of the last eight months and embodied in the structure of Solidarity in which craft and enterprise distinctions have little place.

The regime is faced with a chicken and egg problem. It cannot defeat or even incorporate Solidarity without widening its own social base. But it cannot restructure and hence widen its social base in safety while Solidarity is still a focus for workers' aspirations.

On top of all this there are the divergent as well as complementary interests of the Pol-

'At the end of the day there may be no way to prop up his men in Warsaw other than for Brezhnev to send his tanks rolling in.'



ish government and its Russian overlord. The Russians do not want the regime to be overthrown by an insurrectionary general strike. But neither do they want it to become more dependent on Western loans or even, in a certain sense, to widen its social base — after all, the wider its social base, the more secure the regime will feel about following the policies independent of or even opposed to Russian interests. Hence the willingness of the Russians to encourage those in the police and elsewhere whose provocations could upset the whole applecart.

All these factors suggest that the truce will last hardly longer than the old one. The regime can hardly avoid doing things that will either upset the Russians or drive the workers once again towards mass strike action — indeed, it may end up doing both.

It only won time for itself on 30 March, because there is not yet a clear revolutionary current inside Solidarity arguing that the only alternative to continued suffering under the present regime is its replacement by a government of workers' councils, based on the very forms of workers' democracy out of which Solidarity itself is built. Instead, the majority inside Solidarity still believe they have no choice but to leave power in the hands of the government with the union doing no more than moderating its actions.

But the March crisis did begin to produce

a political polarisation within Solidarity with, for the first time, the more radical elements arguing openly against those the Western press now praises as 'moderates'. It is clear that in many localities workers remain convinced they could have won *all* their demands with the threatened general strike and will give a ready hearing to the radicals. This makes us think that another major confrontation cannot be far off.

Brezhnev's dilemma

The Russians have not wanted to intervene. They realise that the costs can be immense. If they cannot subdue Afghanistan, how can they be hopeful about forcing a larger, much more industrialised nation to submit. The US was torn apart in the 1960s by a war against a small, agricultural country many thousands of miles away, at a time when the boom still provided most American workers with rising living standards. What could happen to Russia if faced with a struggle only a few hundred miles from Moscow against people raising demands of direct appeal to Russian workers suffering cuts in their own living standards?

Yet at the end of the day, there may be no way to prop up his men in Warsaw other than for Brezhnev to send the tanks rolling in. This only shows how deep the crisis is, not just for Kania and Jaruzelski, but for the Russian ruling class as well.

Will the GLC do the Lambeth Walk?

Horace 'Cuts' Cutler and his County Hall hatchet men may well be thrown out of office in the forthcoming Greater London Council election on May 7th by a growing tide of bitterness against Thatcher's destructive policies.

After years of Tory control the GLC has cut 5000 jobs, paralysed development in areas where it is most needed and, having allowed GLC estates to turn into neglected slums, is now busily trying to sell off their housing stock or pass the problem on to the local boroughs by forced transfer. The Tory approach to GLC services is to destroy them. Over the rhythmic chopping of the Tory axe can be heard the oft-repeated incantation: 'leave it to private enterprise'.

The Labour GLC manifesto offers a cheerful alternative to the ineffectual role the GLC has so far played. Perhaps the most spectacular amongst an attractive range of promises in the manifesto is the new transport policy. All we have to do is tick the right box in the polling booth and we will get a 25% reduction in all London Transport fares, then to be frozen for an indefinite period, along with an increase in bus routes. Also contained in this bargain package are ... more council houses to be built; opposition to council house sales; a massive expansion of all services; investment and jobs to be expanded through a 'Greater London Enterprise Board'—and all this to be carried out by a group containing a larger number of young left Labour candidates than ever before!

Those more sceptical readers disenchanted by decades of broken promises and shoddy compromises under Labour, may protest that a serious analysis of what a Labour GLC is likely to do must probe a little deeper than their manifesto.

As an employee of Lambeth council, led by Ted, the 'Red Knight', I have direct experience of just how futile are the endless promises, conferences and socialist postures beloved of the Labour left, in the face of the present attack on local government services.

Manifesto

Let us take the example of council house sales. Ted Knight declared, like the GLC Labour manifesto, that he would firmly oppose sales. Activists in tenants' associations and trade unions were soon wrenched out of the false optimism this encouraged when Ted Knight made his first major U-turn in October last year and passed down to NALGO members the instruction to carry out sales.

The only real opposition to sales has come from ordinary union members in the Housing Directorate refusing to sell. However, management has exerted considerable pressure on members to carry out sales and the struggle to hold our position has been exhausting and bloody. So much for the 'bureaucratic resistance' that was at first

promised to cover up Labour's capitulation to the 1980 Housing Act.

At a recent meeting between Ted Knight and representatives of the council unions I had the opportunity to ask him for an assurance that no staff would be redeployed from helping to build council houses into selling them off. In a devious attempt to play the NALGO leadership off against our branch, he replied that since our dispute was officially only over the provision of extra staff to process sales, we should have no objection to him 'providing' staff to do the work.

'Socialist'

Another example of this yawning chasm between actions and rhetoric was the Local Government in Crisis conference of last November. The conference, initiated by Ted Knight to build a national campaign to defend local government services, agreed a policy including no cuts in jobs or services by Labour councils. Yet again, though, activists who were carried away by the flood of 'socialist' sloganising were to be brutally disillusioned. Last month Lambeth Labour Group decided not to take a stand against the Tory cuts, but rather to carry them out. Over 10 million is to be lopped off next year's budget, adding to Lambeth dole queues and destroying much needed services. The callousness of these cuts is exemplified by the closedown of a reception centre for homeless families and the attempt to redeploy the staff affected into vacancies in another Directorate. This week a crowd of elderly and disabled persons appeared huddled on the steps of the town hall. They were protesting at the effects of Lambeth's cuts package on them: spending allowances abolished, food charges doubled and holiday charges substantially increased.

Baffled by the sheer scale of these shifts in policy, we must ask, why did Lambeth council not make a stand on those very issues it had bravely announced it was prepared to fight over? The answers to this question explain very well the cynicism of a certain Lambeth councillor who is also a GLC candidate. He told me that the GLC manifesto is largely based on assumptions about government policy which are highly questionable: that HIP grants would be maintained, that higher capital spending would be permitted etc.

When deciding this year's budget Lambeth council were under attack by government policies from two quarters.

First there are the cuts in Rate Support Grant, the money central government contributes to local government. This grant was previously fixed by a series of calculations based principally on the amount each local authority had seen fit to levy for the services that authority chose to provide. The Tories, though, have appropriated to central government the power to decide how much

the people of each borough ought to need and to allocate rate support accordingly.

For example, the people living in non-urban areas, who elect councils submissive to the Tory onslaught on local authority powers were deemed to need more expenditure this year, whereas those living in deprived urban areas, having elected councils like Lambeth, deserved to get less. The sheer aggression and audacity of this appropriation of power show how defenceless local authorities are before a determined onslaught.

The second factor squeezing local authority budgets is higher interest rates. Lambeth's £10m cuts package amounts to one fifth of the interest paid out to the city bankers.

Lambeth council had three options, to give into the Tories and bankers through a substantial rate rise or through drastic cuts, or to lead an all out fight with the government.

They were too scared to defy the government and preferred 'balancing the books' to risking surcharge, government commissioners and the ruination of Ted Knight's promising career as a councillor of the GLC.

They were also too scared to place all the burden on rates. A recent supplementary rate levy in Lambeth had resulted in massive demonstrations of angry ratepayers. Most of the shops and many of the houses where I live still have 'NO' sign stuck in the windows, meaning 'NO to rate rises'. Clearly the Tories need not install commissioners to replace rebel councils if rate rises mean they will get voted out of office anyway.

The dubious solution agreed by this archetypical left wing Labour council was cuts and a 37% rate rise and a £4 rent rise. Not only do they wield the Tories' axe by cutting jobs and services; they rob the impoverished working classes of Lambeth and proudly proclaim themselves socialists to their embittered victims. The future for

The Poplar way

Lambeth is one of more and more services being cut only to be replaced by yet another leaflet blaming it all on the Tories.

The only real alternative for Ted Knight was to follow the example of the Poplar councillors who went to jail in 1921 for refusing to pay money to bodies like the Metropolitan Police. If Lambeth council attempted to mobilise thousands of workers onto the streets, as did Poplar council, refused to sell off council houses and withheld payments to the merchant bankers then, of course, a vicious battle would ensue. Of course councillors would risk surcharge and a whole range of other legal actions. Nonetheless, at some point socialists must be prepared to stand and fight. If that point has not been reached by Lambeth now it never will be.

If power does not lie in the council chambers of Lambeth, it certainly does not lie in County Hall either: the GLC is subject to even more stringent financial control than any other local authority. The greatly increased capital expenditure of Labour's GLC manifesto will need parliamentary approval through the annual GLC Money Bill, which they are hardly likely to get.

Will Webb

Banning the Nazis or bashing the left?

Gareth Jenkins looks at the effects of bans imposed under the Public Order Act.



Over the last month the authorities, on police advice, have imposed wholesale bans on demonstrations in various parts of the country. The bans arise out of threats by the various Nazi organisations to hold marches and the likelihood of massive counter-demonstrations. But once imposed they ban all demonstrations.

The use of bans seems to indicate a certain shift in police tactics. Until now they imposed them with reluctance, preferring to use Nazi marches as an excuse for mobilising very large numbers of police.

Perhaps they are finding the cost of such police deployment is too high, now that invaluable lessons in crowd control have been learnt. Or perhaps they relish their ability to stop numerous left wing or trade union demonstrations for every fascist march that is affected — so, for instance, mucking up the first stage of the planned TransPennine CND march as a by-product of a ban ostensibly aimed at a National Front demonstration four weeks before.

Despite this, there are still many on the left who feel that we should demand state bans to keep the Nazis off the streets. But a brief glance at the history of the Public Order Act confirms that giving the police power to ban demonstrations provides them with a weapon they will use against the left.

The Public Order Act was rushed through parliament late in 1936, following the Battle of Cable Street when thousands of East Enders took to the streets and prevented Mosley's fascists marching through the area. In particular, the act strengthened police powers to prohibit processions and forbade the wearing of uniforms of a political nature in public.

It is this last point, which applied most obviously to fascist blackshirts, that gives rise to the argument that the Public Order Act was a reluctant government's response, under pressure from progressives and the left, to the threat of fascism. Certainly that was the thrust of Labour Party propaganda.

But those most actively involved in the anti-fascists struggle at the time, particularly Communist Party, did not see it like that and opposed the bill. Unlike the Labour Party, who had advocated keeping away from anti-fascist demonstrations, the CP had been the chief inspiration and organisation of opposition to Mosley's blackshirts and clearly recognised that the extension of state powers would be used primarily against the left, not the right.

There is, in fact, evidence that the government had been thinking about introducing a public order act for some time in response to *left-wing* activity. The hunger marches organised by the National Unemployed Workers Movement had aroused police hostility, and as early as 1932 the government had considered (but finally rejected) putting forward a bill to prohibit processions thought likely to cause disorder.

No doubt the disorder brought about by fascist provocations, including the Battle of Cable Street, finally tipped the balance in favour of government legislation. But in all probability it was the fear of large-scale anti-fascist mobilisation that came uppermost in the government's mind.

Certainly, in its operation the Public Order Act did little to hamper the fascists and nothing to help the anti-fascists. Some cases for anti-semitic abuse were brought against fascists, but more often it was anti-fascists who found themselves in the dock. As for the implementation of bans, the East End of London had a prohibition against political processions placed on it and renewed every three months from 1937 to 1940. The recent month-long bans have

made life difficult enough as it is — just imagine, however, the effect of a three-year ban!


The final point to note in this connection is that the application of bans relieves the fascists of having to organise to prove their strength. Police sources indicate that on one occasion in the late 30s the fascists were having difficulties in getting the required numbers for a march and would have been glad of a ban (though they didn't admit it) to avoid embarrassment. No doubt the National Front felt the same last month when their planned march through Deptford was banned. Had it taken place, they would have received a massive hammering from the forces of the local black population and the left.

So, while bans are a backhanded compliment to our ability to mobilise against the fascists to the extent that the police fear disorder, we should not be lulled into the belief that they are working on our behalf. The evidence is to the contrary — which is hardly surprising. Although the government may dislike the fascists, it dislikes us even more and in the name of 'the public interest', 'decency', and 'law and order' will take every opportunity to weaken us.

Inside the system

One of the great questions of left wing politics is the exact moment that Tony Benn became a champion of the oppressed. Not, apparently, before 1976-77. In that year, as Energy Secretary, he awarded a lucrative slice of the North Sea oil bonanza to a firm called Charter Consolidated. This firm happens to be owned by the South African mining giant Anglo-American, which makes the bulk of its money out of apartheid.

Only cynics would say that Tony Benn is a champion of the oppressed in opposition and a champion of the most vicious forms of capitalism when in office. Revolutionary socialists would say that he is a sincere reformist, and when in government is simply a prisoner of a system that it is impossible to reform away.





An opportunity that mustn't be thrown away

At the end of May thousands of trade unionists from across the country are expected to converge on London to welcome the People's March from Liverpool into the capital. Organised by the North West Region of the TUC, with the assistance of the Midlands and South East TUC's, it is the first real attempt by the official union machine to do something positive about two and a half million unemployed. Ralph Darlington looks at the prospects for the march.

The 280 mile Jarrow-style People's March is being billed by the organisers as the most important event on unemployment since the thirties. Launched after the November Labour Party protest in Liverpool with the personal backing of TUC general secretary Len Murray, it is receiving wide ranging support. Sponsors include twelve union national executives, numerous Labour MPs and a host of personalities including Spike Milligan, George Melly and Jackie Charlton. About 10,000 people are expected to join the launch of the People's March on May Day in Liverpool, while another leg of the march will depart from Sheffield. The two will then wind their way through a number of major towns and cities en route to London.

Local councils have been approached to give the marchers a civic reception; to feed and accommodate them in municipal buildings; to donate free of charge, halls, cinemas and theatres under their control, so that a programme of social events can be arranged to coincide with the marchers' arrival. A petition has been produced for presentation to parliament and a host of leaflets, posters, car stickers, badges and broadsheets distributed to spread the message.

And the weekend of 29-31 May will see the arrival of the People's March into London with a huge pop festival with bands like The Who likely to attract about 100,000 people, particularly youth. That will be followed on Sunday 31 May with a mass rally in Hyde Park and demonstration to Trafalgar Square with delegations of trade unionists from across the country and speeches from trade union leaders and Michael Foot.

A welcome turn

In the last few years the Right to Work Campaign has been virtually the only national body to try to organise against unemployment. A whole series of unemployed marches and protests under both Labour and Tory governments won the Campaign significant support and respect within the trade union movement. Last year over 2000 official trade union bodies sponsored and supported the march from South Wales to picket the Tory Party conference.

Nevertheless the Right to Work Campaign—particularly under Labour—operated in a climate where its initiatives were more often than not snubbed and attacked by many union officials and the TUC general council.

The fact that union leaders who in the past denounced Right to Work marches now see the value of organising the unemployed linked to the trade union movement, should not deflect us from welcoming such an initiative. That the TUC itself has organised a major jobs protest can only strengthen and deepen the necessary resistance to the Tories. All along the route there will be a chance to argue against unemployment and against the madness of Trident missiles; to point out that the wealth exists to guarantee everyone five days pay or five days work, but that the priorities of a society determined by profits denies such a real distribution of wealth and resources.

Yet *ideas without action* are worthless. The magnificent victory of the Gardners occupation in Manchester against redundancies was only won as a result of rank and file *action*.

A few months ago that victory stood out alone in the battle against job losses. With thousands more on the dole there are other factories and workplaces scattered across the country taking action to defend jobs.

The most spectacular recent example was the *unofficial* rank and file miners strike and flying pickets which led to a major Tory U-turn. And the women of Lee Jeans in Greenock, the engineers at Plansee in Sheffield, the Ansells brewery workers and the Camden journalists have all been taking up the battle for jobs.

The inspiration of the unemployed marching can be a lever to spread what are still isolated and small struggles in the workplaces. But more is needed than just this.

Things would be far better if the TUC general council accepted responsibility for permanently organising the unemployed into their own national union.

The Right to Work Campaign has been encouraging union bodies to pass a model resolution calling on the TUC to form a National Unemployed Workers Union. The support it is receiving is an indication of the concern felt by many trade union activists. Only the TUC has the resources to establish a national organisation, with the unemployed as part of the wider trade union movement and able to win a voice in the TUC congress. A fighting union of the unemployed that sought solidarity with workers, particularly those in dispute, would be a powerful force to reckon with.

And a TUC march that vigorously campaigned for stoppages in every town the People's March goes through, that took collections for strikes would contribute to shifting the mood of resignation to acceptance of unemployment so prevalent within the movement at the moment. It would vividly display that there *was* a real alternative to Thatcherism, that the enthusiasm of the unemployed with the muscle of the employed could be moulded into a militant industrial struggle against the Tories.

Unfortunately the political direction of the People's March offers no such perspec-



People remember the Jarrow march—but it ended with a whimper not a bang.



tive. And the key organisers have wasted no time in writing off the possibility of a TUC national unemployed union.

The title 'People's March' encapsulates the dilemma. Instead of an angry unemployed protest march akin to the Hunger Marches of the thirties, the North West Region TUC has chosen to take as its model the Jarrow march of the same period.

The parallel is significant. The marches organised by the National Unemployed Workers Movement were far bigger and more militant than the Jarrow march. Yet it is that one march which for many people symbolises the hungry thirties.

The militant NUWM recognised the need to stop the unemployed organisations being solely charity seeking bodies, as they so often were. It understood the necessity of convincing the unemployed that they should not allow themselves to be used as blacklegs, and of convincing the official trade union movement of the need to encourage and co-operate with the organised unemployed. Its Hunger Marches were organised by men and women who recognised that a passive acceptance of the inevitability of unemployment had to be replaced by politics that saw the need for massive social change. Yet because the organisation was both militant and Communist-led it incurred the disapproval of the official Labour and TUC leadership—similar to that given to the Right to Work Campaign.

The Jarrow march was quite different in spirit. It was determinedly non-political. The agents of the three major political parties were involved in organising it, and the marchers were chosen to represent all sections of opinion. On the road they went to church every Sunday.

The Jarrow town council did not wish to be associated with the subversive NUWM and so the Jarrow Crusade set off for London one week before the Tyneside contingent of the National Hunger March of 1936 was due to leave.

Despite these efforts at forming a broad democratic and people's alliance, the executive of the Labour Party and the General Council of the TUC made no distinction between the 'respectable' Jarrow march and the marchers of the NUWM. No help and assistance came from these leaders.

When the crusade arrived in London on 1 November 1936 no welcoming demonstration had been laid on, and it was left to the Communist Party to organise a reception. Ellen Wilkinson, Labour MP, described what happened in her book *The town that was murdered*:

'I thought that we were guaranteed 100 per cent respectability. With the blessing of bishops, priests and clergy, subscriptions from businessmen, the paternal interests of the Rotary Club and the unanimous vote of the town council, could anything have been more constitutional?

'The Labour Party, however, drew out and the TUC circularised the trades councils advising them against giving help. So in places like Chesterfield, where the trades and labour council obeyed the circular, the Conservative Party weighed in with hot meals and a place to sleep'.

Jarrow's petition was handed into parliament without any debate and the Crusade fizzled out like a damp squib. The Jarrow marchers quietly left London without any farewell demonstration. Yet the following day the National Hunger March arrived in London. The contingents from Scotland, the North and South Wales were met by an enthusiastic crowd of a quarter of a million workers.

It was a dramatic climax and it had immediate effect. The government suspended the introduction of lower unemployment scales and agreed to revise its new relief regulations.

The myths surrounding the Jarrow march serve only to cover up the shameful role of the official Labour and trade union leaders.

Allying with the enemy

The People's March is not likely to be treated in such a disgraceful fashion as the Jarrow march. Unfortunately the organisers of the march have learnt little from the historical parallel they have chosen to adopt. Most importantly they do not see the key role of *employed trade unionists*, the only people with the muscle to actually do anything about unemployment.

Strenuous efforts are being made by the North West Region TUC to stretch the broad democratic alliance, as did the Jarrow March, to include support from church leaders, Tory and Liberal MPs and employers organisations.

A tremendous fanfare has been made that prominent sponsors of the People's March include such notables as the Liverpool Independent Mission of Industrial Chaplains, Sir Harold Wilson (who presided over the doubling of unemployment) and Tysons, a major building contractor and a leading firm in the CBI.

In Sheffield the People's March organisers have approached the Territorial Army to

provide catering for the march and asked the Women's Institute to help.

When the Liverpool march arrives in Birmingham an open air service outside the city cathedral of St Phillips is to be held. In Coventry, the cathedral will be open all day for a day of prayer on behalf of the unemployed to coincide with the arrival of the march. Even St Pauls Cathedral in London—the venue for the Royal wedding—has been asked to put on a special service for the unemployed.

By seeking the concept of 'People's Unity'—by going for support from such 'higher' authorities—it is actually diluting the political impact of the fight against unemployment.

Virtually everybody is sympathetic towards the unemployed—one could even argue Tories care about them. Yet sympathy is not enough. The question is how do we organise against it? The only organisations who can really stem the tide against job losses are inside the trade union movement, and it is there that the emphasis of the march should be placed. The unemployed don't want prayers; they want *action* and *commitment* from employed trade unionists.

The march should seek solidarity from engineering workers, dockers and print workers not bishops and Tory MPs. Sympathy will not shift anything—only organisation between the employed and unemployed will.

For socialists the question of *workers power*—not people's unity—is also the mechanism for the transformation of society. And the unemployed should be part of that.

The North West TUC's decision to restrict the numbers marching on the People's March to 500, and the necessity of the unemployed finding a trade union body prepared to sponsor them to the tune of £100, indicates that in many respects the initiative is essentially a showpiece for the trade union leadership to cover up their past lack of activity over unemployment.

Nevertheless, despite all these misgivings the People's March initiative, however politically mis-orientated, is likely to be the biggest demonstration against unemployment seen for a generation. And the Right to Work Campaign and socialists everywhere should play a full part.

That does not mean cynically sitting on the sidelines sniping and criticising the march. Socialists should energetically back the People's March, sponsor marchers in their trade union organisations, send donations, prepare receptions of factories and workplaces to greet the march en route and join the mammoth weekend of protest in London at the end of May.

At the same time revolutionary socialists need to sharply differentiate themselves within such a campaign. At every available opportunity we should point out the march's limitations, argue for the importance of linking the *unemployed* with the *employed*, for the pressing need for a TUC National Unemployed Workers Union, for solidarity with strikes, for no reliance on MPs, let alone Tory varieties, for *industrial action* as the only way to get rid of the Tories, for revolution, not reform of the system.

Bobby Sands



The second hunger strike

The re-run of the hunger strike in the H-blocks marks the culmination of four long years of struggle inside that gaol. Ever since the British withdrew political status in 1976, they have met active resistance. The first prisoner Cieran Nugent, began the protest by refusing to wear prison uniform. At one point, over 400 prisoners joined the blanket and no wash protest. Now the stage is set for the final showdown.

The stakes are high in this struggle. Victory for the prisoners would amount to a major break in the 'criminalisation' strategy of the British. It could lead to the emergence of a mass movement for British withdrawal. Defeat, at the hands of Thatcher, though, would set the movement back years. The demoralisation that would follow the political defeat and isolation of militant anti-imperialists, could clear the way for a new attempt at a 'permanent solution'. It would also add a major fillip to the growing right-wing Paisleyite mobilisations.

Yet the campaign in support of the prisoners has got off to a slow start in Ireland—North and South. On the first day of the hunger strike 8,000 people turned up on the demonstration in Belfast, compared to 25,000 last time around. The Catholic church felt confident enough to attack the hunger strike as 'morally evil'.

Republican myths

There are many reasons for the slow start. Mass movements cannot be turned on and off like a tap—despite republican myths about the effects of a heroic hunger strike. That is particularly the case when the last hunger strike ended in massive confusion. The thousands in the streets outside and some of the prisoners inside simply did not accept the Provos' claim that they had won a victory in a secret deal. The British government may have made concessions in the conditions and administration of the prison. But it had not been forced to concede political status and when all was said and done, *that* was the issue.

In the South, the H-block campaign faces a difficult uphill battle. It cannot rely on an older spontaneous nationalist appeal. It needs to raise the H-block issue on a class basis: arguing politically that workers have a direct interest in resisting repression. Yet the campaign has been somewhat reluctant to take this approach.

Instead it has concentrated much of its efforts on appealing to the rank and file of the governing party, Fianna Fail, in the hope that they will put enough pressure on the premier Haughey to whisper in Thatcher's ear. Yet Fianna Fail's 'republicanism' has always been skin deep. It is a populist ruling class party that will campaign as much on law and order or breaking strikes

as it would on the North. One thing its membership shy away from completely is any real struggle.

Nevertheless, despite the slow start and the political confusion of the leadership, the H-block campaign has succeeded in reorganising. Action groups are operating all over the country. The by-election in Fermanagh with Bobby Sands, the hunger striker, standing will add a major boost to the campaign. Major demonstrations will be taking place throughout Ireland in April.

The very fact of the campaign's existence points to a central weakness in the British ruling class strategy. The aim of its 'criminalisation' policy was gradually to drive the Provos into the corner of the pure 'terrorist' type campaign by removing any political legitimacy from them. The prisoners were to be isolated, regarded as little more than vandals. The fact that thousands have marched and struck for the prisoners proves that the British ruling class has ideologically lost the battle.

At another level, there is a general British ruling class demoralisation with the North. Ever since the collapse of the power sharing executive, its primary aim has been to use the machinery of direct rule to grind down the 'extremists' in the hope that a moderate centre would emerge. The criminalisation strategy was simply part of that overall process. But that objective is now further away than ever. Furthermore, the economic crisis in Britain itself has meant that it cannot create the conditions with which to impose a solution.

Faced with the possibility of a permanently unstable Northern statelet, Thatcher has looked south to Haughey. It is not as yet clear how serious the Tories are in their attempt to involve the southern ruling class. Certainly they have no principled objection to it. Haughey for his part is saying: 'We are prepared to play our part in imposing stability. We have clearly proved our trustworthiness by the extent of our cooperation on security. It is time to act as partners'.

There is quite a lot in it for Haughey. He needs to play the green card to cover up the yawning economic mess in the South. With inflation running at 21%, rising unemployment and massive public debt, he must move against the working class. To be able to bring about the historic goal of 'national unity', Haughey will sell anything. Membership of NATO is being offered to please Thatcher's wider strategic interests. A 'federal Ireland' is his stated objective. In simpler terms it means a restored Stormont regime in the North and a continuation of reactionary Catholicism in the South.

The major opposition to the possibility of a Haughey-Thatcher entente comes from Loyalist workers. For the last decade the

Unionist monolith has become increasingly fragmented. It cannot unite around a strategy of imposing Protestant supremacy. But it can still effectively come together to fight a threat from the outside. Paisley, by focusing on the external 'threat', is successfully making a bid for Unionist leadership.

The massive destruction of Ulster industry—with unemployment now hitting the proportion of the '30s—provides the ammunition of frustration and anger for the Paisley campaign. In the absence of a socialist force, Paisley's argument that the destruction of industry is part of a 'British economic withdrawal' finds ready ears. Protestant workers are moving to the right—but only because they have heard no alternative.

The prospect of a Paisleyite leadership of Loyalism faces the anti-imperialist movement with daunting tasks. Loyalism must be faced full square. Victory on the H-block issue would contribute to that. But in the longer terms, socialists have to build a force that can direct its energies to splitting Protestant workers from Loyalism.

Kieran Allen

El Salvador: The state of the war.

Jenny Pearce provides a run-down on the forces fighting the Junta and their successes and failures so far.

The United States may not have been successful in convincing the world that the Soviet Bloc and Nicaragua are supplying El Salvador's guerillas with arms but it did succeed in focusing world attention almost exclusively on that issue. As a result the internal as opposed to external aspects of the war have received little serious analysis. The left also, in its undoubtedly well-founded concern with US imperialism's role in the country, sometimes give insufficient attention to the internal forces: El Salvador is in the throes of a class war as well as a national liberation struggle.

The Farabundo Marti Liberation Front was formed towards the end of 1980 and marked a new stage in the move towards unity of the four guerilla organisations which had begun with the formation of the Unified Revolutionary Command (DRU) 19 May 1980; coordination of military strategy now became possible. These four organisations are: the Popular Liberation Forces (FPL), the Armed Forces of National Resistance (FARN), the People's Revolutionary Army (ERP) and the Salvadorean Communist Party (PCS). The FPL are the largest of the organisations, while the ERP has a long history of emphasis on the military struggle and is particularly strong in Morazan province; the PCS is the most recent convert to the armed struggle.

The FMLN number about 4,000 men and women with at least 6,000 reserves; contrary

to US claims, they are not particularly well armed. The M-16 is their most sophisticated weapon but they have no anti-aircraft weapons and a lot of their equipment consists of old hunting rifles and hand made bombs.

In January 1981 the FMLN launched an offensive. The media referred to it as the guerillas' final offensive and presented it as a failure. The guerillas called it a 'general offensive' and deny that it failed: according to Shafick Handal of the PCS the objective was 'to begin the stage of the General Offensive, spreading the war to all parts of the country; passing from purely dispersed guerilla actions to military campaigns coordinated within a single plan: at the same time passing to operations using larger military units, with more important armaments including some artillery pieces; and carrying out operations that combine guerilla warfare and forms of regular war'. It seems that the guerillas also aimed to show their strength before Reagan's inauguration, and some sectors of the Salvadorean left clearly saw this as a prelude to negotiations towards a political settlement.

The offensive was not, however, successful enough to convince the United States that a negotiated settlement was the best way out of the crisis. A major error was the failure to consider workers' defence in the capital, so that the army was able to crush the general strike which was called on 13 January by murdering and terrorising the workers.

The guerillas' tactics have changed since the offensive, and they now talk of a prolonged popular war, the original strategy of the FPL rather than the FARN who favoured moving rapidly into an insurrectionary phase. The tactics now involve harassment of military posts, temporary occupations of villages, destruction of electricity pylons and power stations, road blocks and the burning of cash crops to provoke economic collapse.

The guerillas are at times close to San Salvador and a serious threat to the capital might well be the excuse for more direct US military intervention. It is unlikely however that the guerillas could achieve this in the near future: at present it looks as if there will be a prolonged war in which neither side can win a complete victory.

One member of the El Salvadorean armed forces is reported to have said it would take four years to defeat the guerillas and a further seven to liquidate them altogether. The Americans on the other hand appear sufficiently optimistic to talk of a victory in six months followed by elections.

The prospect of prolonged war and increasing US involvement has led to a number of initiatives to bring about a negotiated settlement, notably from the governments of Mexico, Panama and West Germany. A brief look at the political forces in the country suggest however that such initiatives are based more on wishful thinking than on a realistic assessment of the situation.

The political wing of the FMLN is the Democratic Revolutionary Front (FDR) formed in April 1980. It consists of the mass popular organisations which are also linked up to the military organisations already mentioned:

The other important groups in the FCR are the Revolutionary Nationalist Movement (MNR), a small Social Democratic party,



An American trained murder gang in operation

and the Social Christian Party (PSC), the progressive wing of the Christian Democrat Party.

This broad alliance is fraught with a number of contradictions. Its spokesperson is Guillermo Ungo, leader of the MNR and well connected in the world of international Social Democracy. He has been an important figure in gaining European Social Democrat backing for the FDR, but while his reformist position has won international backing the MNR's social base remains a small group of urban intellectuals. Whether negotiations actually take place will depend not on Ungo but on the revolutionary organisations.

Mass terror

On the right of the spectrum there is another figure who has gained his position mostly through external support: the President, Jose Napoleon Duarte. Duarte occupies the Presidency entirely because of US backing. As leader of the Christian Democrat Party, with a small base of support in San Salvador where he was mayor for 12 years, Duarte has been used to convince the world that the US is supporting the reform minded centre. In reality Duarte has no mass support and his readiness to negotiate with the FDRA remains meaningless while the extreme right continues to dominate the government. The military hardliners in the government, led by General Garcia, Minister



of Defence, make a farce of US claims that this is a government of the centre.

The army is responsible for the mass terror in El Salvador, the daily assassinations, kidnappings and torture of workers, peasants and students. The exact figure is unknown, some suggest it is approaching 17,000 deaths since January 1980. The army (about 16,000 men), the recipients of generous US military aid (US\$35.4 million worth) and now receiving sophisticated US training (there are now 56 American military advisors in El Salvador, including a team of Green Berets), together with the paramilitary organisations are carrying out a campaign of liquidation on behalf of one of the most reactionary oligarchies in the world.

The US project to combine crushing the left with a programme of economic modernisation has no apparent social base in the country. The oligarchy refuse to accept even the moderate agrarian reform proposed.

They are more likely to continue to work for a right wing coup such as that attempted by D'Abuisson early in March, in the hope that ultimately the US may have no alternative but to do the same.



First time farce, second time tragedy?

Andy Durgan reports that the failure of the February Coup in Spain doesn't mean that the threat from the right has been reduced.

Since the abortive coup of 23 February, the situation in Spain has deteriorated rapidly. It is clear to the army that their position is not going to be threatened from any of the established parties or the King. There is ample evidence now that there was widespread support for the coup both among the officer corps and civilians. Arms were distributed at the HQ of the fascist Fuerza Nueva, and several civilians, some known fascists, were seen inside the occupation of the Spanish Parliament.

Despite this support, both within and outside the army, the response of the political forces has been weak and vacillating. The King's warnings against any serious purge have been taken to heart by the Centre Democrat government. Only a small number of officers are likely to be punished.

The reaction of both the Communist and Socialist Parties has been abject in the extreme. Rather than attempting to mobilise mass opposition to the fascist threat, they remain totally committed to a peaceful and gradual transformation of the state machine built by Franco. For the last four years they have undermined workers' struggles by pointing to the spectre of a right-wing backlash. Now it has happened, they can only offer more concessions to the right in order not to be 'provocative'. Further, they are creating the most incredible illusions in the right-wing parliamentary parties by going on joint demonstrations with them—even though large sections of these parties don't fundamentally disagree with the army's programme but just quibble about the methods.

Leading the non-provocation stakes is Communist Party secretary Santiago Carrillo who has stepped up his eulogies to

the King as the man 'who knows how to defend the constitution'. Carrillo's touching faith in 'the institutions of Spanish democracy' (such as the army and the Civil Guard perhaps?) led him to describe parliament after the coup attempt as 'the most fitting place to die'.

This grovelling by the Communists and Socialists has led to a shift to the right inside the factories. Symptomatic of the new confidence among the employers is the refusal of their organisation to sign a new 'social contract' with the socialist trade union.

The Basques

But the centre of the government wing offensive remains the Basque Country. The key decision of the right was to send troops there to assist in 'anti-terrorist operations' and to patrol 'tension areas'. The predictable result was a rapid escalation of repression. Scores of members of the radical nationalist pro-ETA coalition Herri Batasuna have been rounded up. All public activities of the revolutionary left have been prohibited or smashed. But repression is nothing new to this embattled area. Last year, 2,140 people were detained there, most under the notorious Anti-Terrorist Law. Very, very few of those picked up were convicted but the majority were subjected to beatings and torture.

But support for those forces fighting the army, concentrated in ETA (m), is likely to be hardened by the increase in repression.

The armed struggle enjoys considerable mass support though this tends to be concentrated in certain areas of the region. Herri Batasuna, who openly support the armed struggle, received up to 40% of the

vote in the last elections in some industrial areas.

However, the situation in the area isn't helped by ETA (m)'s emphasis on the military struggle. It lends ammunition to the reformists and to the conservative nationalist forces of the Basque National Party in their hysterical anti-ETA campaign. Things are further complicated by the attacks on ETA (m) by the 'moderate' split-off, ETA (political military). The party that supports it, Euskadiko Ezkerra continually ally themselves with the reformists and nationalists, going so far to describe Herri Batasuna as 'fascists' and ETA (m) as the main danger to democracy.

But the response of Herri Batasuna to the coup reveals the limitations of their politics. Their ultra-left analysis of the present regime being essentially similar to Franco's led them to declare that the coup was a 'Spanish' not a Basque affair, and they supported none of the protests against it. In fact, ETA (m) seems hell bent on provoking full-scale military intervention in the Basque country, shooting two colonels immediately after the coup attempt.

The threat of a second coup attempt is a very real one. Not because of terrorism but simply because the state machine, especially the police and army, has been left intact since the death of Franco. The recent order by General Aramburu Topete, head of the Civil Guard, that Franco's portrait should be placed alongside the King's is only the tip of the iceberg.

The army seem intent on regaining its historic role as arbitrators of Spanish politics.

Another coup?

Who will stop them? The bourgeoisie while they may not be wildly enthusiastic about the idea of a military government, don't seem necessarily prepared to do a great deal to prevent it. The working class movement, though, is far from dead and buried and remains the principal obstacle to any military coup. The crucial question remains whether they can organise themselves effectively to scare off the right. That is why the criminal policy of appeasement of the Socialists and Communists can only increase the chances of another coup. Militancy remains, but it can be dissipated as long as the workers remain tied to their lead.

Not surprisingly there is a great deal of fear for the future among rank and file militants given the feeble response of their leaders. The initiative of the two main revolutionary organisations, the MC (Communist Movement) and the LCR (Revolutionary Communist League) to call for joint work in favour of a broad anti-fascist movement is extremely positive. They argue correctly that however distorted Spanish democracy is, it is much better than an out and out military dictatorship.

Actions against the right wing threat aren't necessarily actions in favour of the present regime, but vital to defending the existence of a legal workers' movement. But their arguments must be turned into reality. Crucial will be their ability to draw into activity the growing numbers of dissatisfied militants opposed to the present leadership of the reformist parties and unions.



A demonstration in Bilbao in support of ETA

A murky business

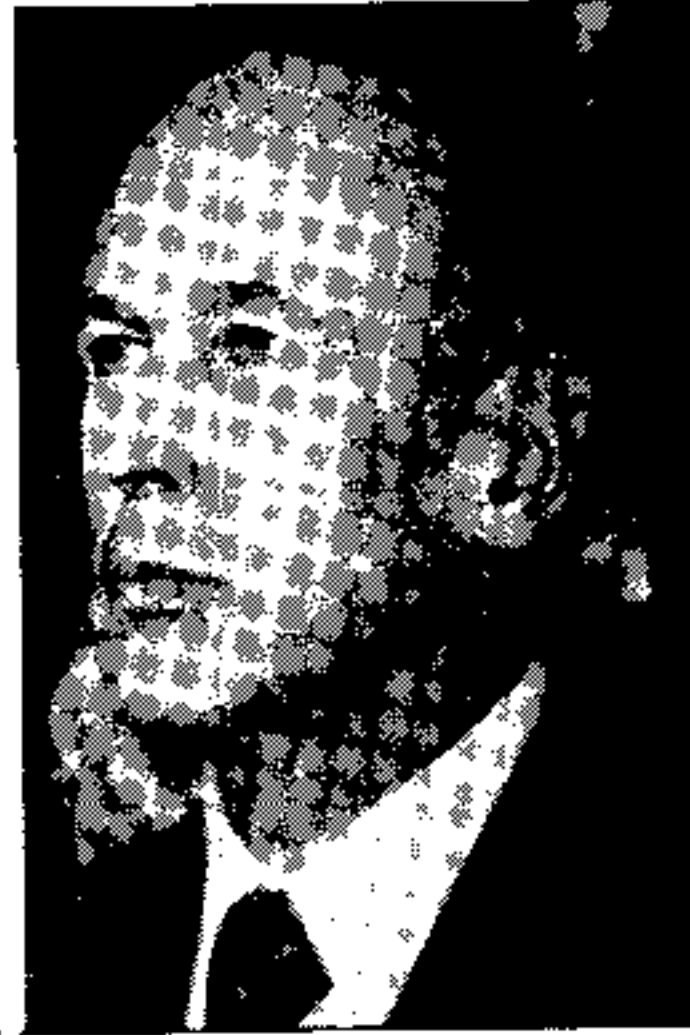
Ian Birchall looks at the contenders for the French presidential elections



Marchais



Mitterrand



Giscard

The persons who framed the constitution of the French Fifth Republic were no fools. Presidential elections every seven years, parliamentary elections every five years, both by direct universal suffrage. As a result France finds itself in an almost permanent pre-electoral situation.

As a result the forthcoming presidential elections (scheduled for April 26 and May 10) radiate nothing so much as boredom. The leading contenders—retiring president Giscard, Gaullist Chirac, Socialist Mitterrand and Communist Marchais—are all familiar faces who seem to have been around for a long time. Giscard's probable victory (though polls suggest it could be a close-run thing) will come more from lack of enthusiasm at the alternative than from any positive merits in Giscard's record.

When he was elected in 1974 Giscard promised to restore the economic balance of the country within thirty months. In fact, despite the much-publicised scandals (notably the Bokassa diamonds) which have characterised his regime, the most striking fact about Giscard's seven years in office has been the consistent deterioration of the economy.

Over the last five years unemployment has doubled, reaching a figure of 1,680,000 at the beginning of this year. Inflation has risen from 9% to 14% a year over the same period. Meanwhile various social security allowances have been cut.

Giscard's years of office have been marked, not only by new laws strengthening police powers, but by an alarming rise in the degree of brutality and open racism on the part of the police. And new laws have been introduced aiming at 200,000 repatriations of immigrant workers per year.

On an international level Giscard has continued to defend French imperialist interests in Africa. While he has been in power French troops have made military interventions in Mauritania, Zaire and Central Africa. In France's West Indian colonies of Guadeloupe and Martinique repression of nationalist movements continues.

Giscard's failure to win the confidence of large sections of the French bourgeoisie is shown by the widespread support for Jacques Chirac, the candidate who claims the mantle of General de Gaulle (although, as always with dead prophets, there are rival claimants). He is promising to cut public spending by 30,000m francs (about £3000m) in his first year in office.

Giscard's greatest asset is the disarray of the reformist left. Never since the mid-sixties have relations between the Socialists and Communists been so bad, and rank-and-file trade union cooperation between militants of the two parties is often rendered almost impossible.

Mitterrand, who has just enough chance of winning to make him wary of promising much, is waging a largely negative campaign. He is concentrating on unemployment, the need for an alternative to Giscard, and France's role in the world. While Mitterrand's accusations that Giscard represents a privileged clique are undoubtedly true, there is nothing in Mitterrand's policies that goes beyond the limits of a timorous nationalist reformism. Indeed, some of his sharpest criticisms of Giscard have centred on the fact that Giscard is not anti-Communist enough—that he was not quick enough in condemning the Russian invasion of Afghanistan.

A left alternative

Marchais' campaign, unhampered by any danger of victory, is marked by a demagogic leftism, aimed more at Mitterrand than Giscard. (Though Marchais' populist image was somewhat dented by his recent inability, on television, to answer a question about the price of a Paris underground ticket). But above all the CP's policies are marked by deep nationalism; Marchais has called for the nationalisation of the Michelin company because it invests abroad. The CP's recent campaigns against immigrants are, of course, notorious (the Moroccan CP has recently denounced the 'racism' of the French party). The other main plank of Marchais' politics has been a slavish defence of Russian foreign policy—this too has taken a knock recently, as a result of an article in *Pravda* which spoke highly of Giscard's record, especially in foreign policy.

The CP's current sectarian line is causing problems in its own ranks. Scarcely a day goes by but *Le Monde* carries reports of CP members being expelled, resigning, or signing manifestos calling for radical changes in the party. While such activity is largely confined to the party's intellectuals, there is evidence of deep discontent, which might erupt in more dramatic forms after a bad electoral result.

On the first round of the election, Mitterrand will probably get something over 20%,

and Marchais between 15% and 20%. It is therefore obvious to anyone who can count that Mitterrand can only win on the second ballot if the CP vote switches behind him.

Both sides, however, are playing hard-to-get, and studiously refusing to enter into any negotiations. Marchais has refused to promise CP support on the second ballot while keeping his options open by saying that he may call for a vote for Mitterrand if the CP's vote on the first round is high enough.

Marchais has been demanding that Mitterrand promise to include Communist ministers in his government. Mitterrand has, however, refused to have any truck with this, thereby usefully improving his appeal to the middle ground as a solid anti-Communist. Mitterrand simply hopes to get Communist's votes without making any concessions. He will get some, but probably not enough.

The revolutionary left

Since the 1974 election the Giscard regime has introduced new electoral regulations making it harder for candidates outside the political mainstream to run for the presidency. All candidates now need five hundred signatures from certain categories of elected officials—primarily mayors.

The only candidate of the revolutionary left who seems certain to run is Arlette Laguiller, of the Trotskyist organisation *Lutte Ouvrière*, who got over half a million votes in 1974. *LO* has a smoothly functioning apparatus, and is clearly more adept at chatting up mayors than anyone else on the left.

Unfortunately Laguiller's campaign seems to be confined to the level of abstract propaganda. *LO* announces, quite correctly, that the workers should look to struggle, not the ballot-box—but fails to offer any advice as to how such struggle is to be developed. Moreover, the propaganda is not pitched at a very high political level. The main posters for the Laguiller campaign bear such slogans as: 'To tell them some home truths, Arlette Laguiller'; 'Arlette Laguiller, the plain-speaking of a woman of the people'—and even 'Arlette Laguiller, for all women.'

Alain Krivine, of the Ligue Communist Révolutionnaire, (French section of the Fourth International) is also hoping to stand again, as he did in 1969 and 1974, although the LCR seems to have had trouble finding friendly mayors over the last two or three months.

At the opposite pole from *LO*, the LCR is putting all its emphasis on the reformist parties. The LCR holds that the defeat of Giscard is a necessary precondition for any significant rise in the level of class struggle in France, and therefore is giving priority to the demand that the CP and Socialists shall agree to support the best-placed left candidate on the second round. This demand, while not incorrect in itself, seems to channel all the LCR's propaganda into purely parliamentary forms. A typical LCR poster reads: 'On the first round, Vote Against Giscard without voting for the splitters, Vote for Alain Krivine.'

In short, the French presidentials look like being a bitter harvest for all concerned—except Giscard d'Estaing.

The Con that cuts wages

Youth unemployment has for some while been a concern dear to the heart of the TUC. Small wonder, then, that they leapt at the chance three years ago to be seen to be doing something about it when the Youth Opportunities Programme was introduced by the Department of Employment's Manpower Service Commission. In the last few months, however, their uncritical support and involvement in the scheme has come under fire from a number of unions who are beginning to realise that unpaid and un-unionised labour presents a threat to their members' jobs.

Over two-thirds of the kids involved in the Youth Opportunities Programme (YOP) are placed within the 'Work Experience on Employers' Premises' component of the scheme. Any employer who can convince the MSC that he can provide work of a 'useful' kind, together with some training will be supplied with 'trainees' off the dole queues. These trainees can be expected to work up to 40 hours per week for £23.50.

Obviously, such schemes are open to an enormous amount of abuse. Although employers are only supposed to take on trainees to do work that would not otherwise get done, and *not* to take them on to replace workers made redundant, at least 20 per cent of employers have admitted to doing just that. And more recent figures suggest that the real proportion is much nearer 60 per cent. A third of employers have also been using the scheme to vet new staff without having to pay them full wages during their probationary six months.

Some unions are beginning to wake up to this fact, but the trade union movement as a whole seems to be quite unaware of the sheer scale of the Youth Opportunities Programme. The government this year intends to provide nearly *half a million* young people with work under the scheme

the union response

Not surprisingly, it is in the public sector that the unions are first starting to fight back against this. With permanent jobs visibly going down the drain as a result of expenditure cuts, an almost limitless supply of unpaid labour can only accelerate that process.

In January NUPE's Welsh Divisional Council put a stop to union approval of all new YOP schemes because of the threat both to their members' jobs and to their negotiated rates of pay. This decision was rapidly overturned, however, by the arrival of the big boys from London saying that this wasn't union or TUC policy, and a South Wales official was disciplined for carrying out his instructions not to cooperate further with the MSC.

In March, NUPE in Hertfordshire withdrew from negotiations over the Tory-controlled County Council's plans to take on 100 YOPEes for the same reasons. The CPSA, whose members administer YOP, reaffirmed at last year's conference their policy of having nothing to do with the programme. In

December 1980, though, the executive overturned the conference decision and has been campaigning through the union journal for branches to give support to the scheme.



Unions in the North-East, the Midlands, Manchester, Liverpool, South Wales and London are now looking much more closely and critically at the sorts of schemes they are being asked to approve, and in a number of cases are refusing to do so without substantial guarantees that no jobs will be lost or threatened as a result.

At national level, the TUC and union executives are still taking the view that the union movement has a duty to help kids find jobs, and that work experience provided by YOP is a valuable means of doing so. This argument, however, is one that really doesn't stand up when the facts are looked at more closely.

A lousy deal

When the Youth Opportunities Programme started in 1978, a trainee had an 80 per cent chance of finding a job after his or her placement. That's now down to 40 per cent and falling fast. Most of the half-million people on the scheme this year will find themselves back on the dole queues in six months or a year's time with virtually no chance of a permanent job.

The 'training' provided by employers is often minimal, and certainly bears no comparison with that given in traditional apprenticeships (which, incidentally, are now running at half the 1968 levels). Education facilities laid on at local Techs and FE colleges by the MSC often amount to no more than a few sessions on how to fill in application forms and how not to completely balls-up a job interview.

From the trainee's point of view, the programme is pretty lousy. The 'training allowance' of £23.50 which should have gone up last November, was frozen and there's now little chance of it going up again before November '81. Many of the trainees are working in miserable conditions in shops and factories with little chance to meet other kids on the scheme.

In Manchester and in London, YOP trainees are making moves to organise themselves to fight for higher allowances, better working conditions, improved education and training facilities, and for union recognition. Greater interest is now also being shown by some unions. NUPE and the T&GWU in some areas are prepared to recruit the trainees and are slowly coming to terms with the challenge of organising among 16 and 17 year-olds who have little or no experience of trade unions, and whose terms and conditions of 'employment' are vastly different from those of youngsters in proper jobs.

Fighting back

In an economic and political climate significantly changed since the programme was first mooted, there is no doubt that it presents the union movement with serious problems over the defence of jobs and the undermining of wage levels. Nevertheless, YOP is here to stay for the foreseeable future and, locally, unions will have to learn how to exercise to their best advantage the considerable control they can have over the way the scheme is operated.

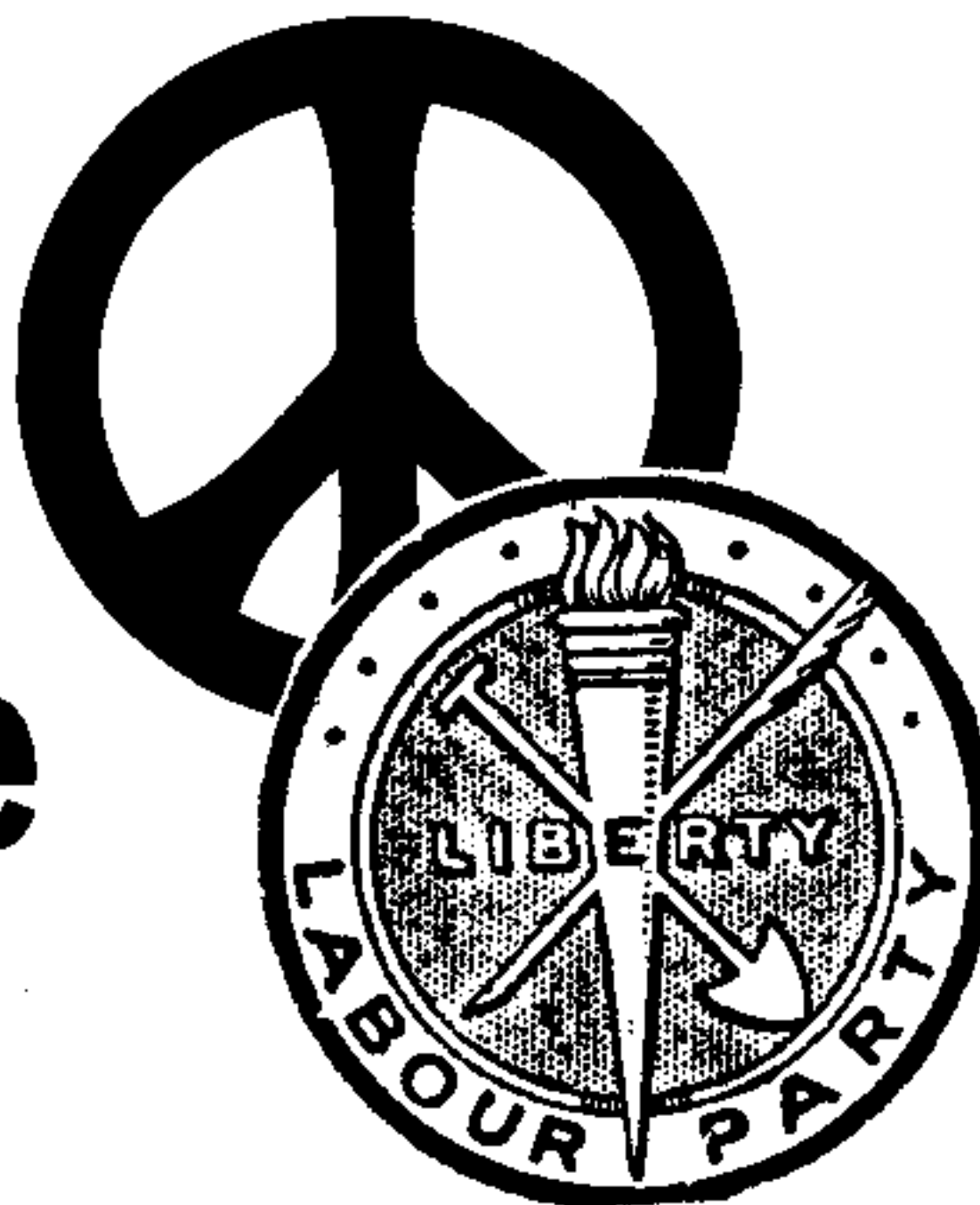
Every new YOP scheme must have local union approval before it can be started. Unless branches are aware of this and make their interest known to MSC Area Boards, it is far too easy for the MSC to go over their heads and get approval from a dozy shop steward or a local union bureaucrat. And although a branch may not be able to do anything about the appalling rate of pay, they can still negotiate successfully about working conditions, hours of work, proper training facilities and decent day release courses. They can ensure that they are involved in the induction and training programmes for new trainees and that they have a chance to talk to the kids about joining a union.

Trades Councils also have a role to play. Not only can they push the TUC to ensure that training allowances are, at the very least, brought into line with inflation each year, but they can draw up standard criteria for branches to use when checking whether schemes submitted to them are satisfactory. This may help avoid the situation where, when one union refuses to endorse a scheme, the MSC start hunting around for another, less meticulous, one to do so.

Above all, the active and critical involvement of local unions must be used to make sure that the government doesn't get away with the use of the programme as a cheap way of selling permanent jobs and disguising the effects of cuts.

Christine Kenny

Will Labour ban the bomb?



Labour Party members have been very active in the new CND movement. The Labour party national executive called the first big London demonstration of the new movement in June last year, supported the huge CND demonstration last October and gave its endorsement to last month's CND Labour movement conference. With veteran Aldermaston marcher, Michael Foot, the new leader, it is not surprising that many anti-missile activists are beginning to see the election of a Labour government as the way to ban the bomb. Is that sound politics or hopeless naivety? Pete Goodwin looks at the evidence.

There is absolutely nothing in Labour's past periods of office to hold out any hope for CND supporters. The record has been succinctly summed up by right wing Tory MP Winston Churchill during the recent House of Commons debate on Trident:

'It is thanks to the British Labour Party that Britain today has an independent strategic deterrent. It was Clement Attlee and a small narrow group of cabinet colleagues who took us down that road. He was followed by the Right Honourable members for Huyton (Harold Wilson) and for Cardiff South-East (Jim Callaghan) both of whom played a major part in devoting upwards of £1000 million of defence resources on the Polaris improvement programme, code-named Chevaline. They did so without mentioning it in the House of Commons'.

As we shall see, Winston Churchill has his own reasons for saying this. But no-one on the Labour side contradicted him. And for the good reason that what he said is absolutely true.

Up until the traumatic (for them!) vote for unilateral nuclear disarmament at the 1960 Labour Party conference, Labour leaders were quite openly for the British bomb. Thereafter more duplicity was involved.

Take Labour's 1964 election manifesto:

'The Nassau agreement (just made by the Tory government) to buy Polaris know-how and Polaris missiles from the USA will add nothing to the deterrent strength of the Western alliance... Nor is it true that all this costly defence expenditure will produce an 'independent British deterrent'. It will not be independent, it will not be British and it will not deter. Its possession will impress neither friend nor foe...

'We are not prepared any longer to waste the country's resources on endless duplication of strategic nuclear weapons. We shall propose the re-negotiation of the Nassau agreement.'

Not very radical, positively more-NATO-than-thou, but nevertheless positive commitment to get rid of *British* nuclear weapons in general and Polaris in particular. Within weeks of getting office Harold Wilson had decided, as he explains in his memoirs that the Polaris programme was too far advanced and therefore he would break his promises and continue with it. Or was that the only reason? Another right-wing Tory, Julian Amery, had this to say in the Trident debate:

'I asked Lord Mountbatten once what was his greatest achievement as Chief of the Defence Staff. He told me that it was convincing Denis Healey and Harold Wilson of the need for a British nuclear deterrent, and an independent one'.

The fact that ten years after Wilson first accepted Polaris as too far advanced to be worth stopping, he (and then Callaghan) spent that £1000m *modernising* it seems to bear Amery out.

The Conference

All this may, however, be thought to have changed with the decision of the 1980 Labour party conference. What was that decision?

In fact *four* resolutions on nuclear disarmament were passed there.

Two were unilateralist. Composite 44 called for 'a commitment in the Labour Party manifesto to unilateral nuclear disarmament' and Composite 45 demanded 'that the next Labour Party manifesto... must include a firm commitment opposing British partici-

pation in any defence policy based on the use or threatened use of nuclear weapons: a pledge to close down all nuclear bases, British or American, on British soil or in British waters...'

Two were multilateralist. Composite 43 considered that 'the safety of the British people... will be best secured by multilateral disarmament...' and called for 'urgent discussions so that Cruise missiles need never be based in the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union abandons its own SS20 missile system'. Composite 37 demanded that 'governments take seriously the pledges they made at the United Nations special session on disarmament in 1978.'

There is therefore something here for everyone. The left can take policy to be 44 and 45, the right can comfort themselves in 43 and 37.

All four motions were recommended for acceptance by the national executive and all were passed on a show of hands. The debate saw little passionate conflict. Hugh Jenkins, for example, seconding the unilateralist composite 45, went out of his way to reassure doubters that it did not involve withdrawal from NATO.

What is also interesting about the debate on these motions at conference is that there was none of the 'fight, fight and fight again' opposition from the right-wing that occurred in 1960. Perhaps this is because they have learned since then that they can safely live with unilateralist conference resolutions. Because 1980 was not the first time that conference has 'gone unilateralist' since 1960.

In 1972 it carried a unilateralist motion similar in wording to the 1980 Composite 45. It said '... This Conference is opposed to any British defence policy which is based on the use or threatened use of nuclear weapons either by this country or its allies and demands the removal of all nuclear bases in this country.' It was passed on a show of hands, with NEC support (given by Joe Gormley!)

By 1973, with an election approaching, a more tightly worded resolution was put to conference, not only reaffirming the 1972 policy but demanding 'the closing down of all nuclear bases, British or American, on British soil or in British waters' and demanding that this pledge be included in the general election manifesto...'

This time, perhaps also with a view to the approaching election, the NEC opposed the unilateralist motion. Nevertheless it was carried on a card vote by 3,166,000 to 2,462,000.

That, then, was how conference policy stood when Labour took office in 1974—and proceeded to implement the Chevaline Polaris improvement programme! In other words, a unilateralist policy, at least as clear as today's, was simply and quietly ignored.

What would cause real embarrassment to the right wing would be a coupling of the unilateralist position with its obvious corollary, withdrawal from NATO. Much of the official Labour left fudge this issue, but nevertheless it has been put to conference on a number of occasions. Last year it was the only resolution in the defence debate which the NEC opposed. It was defeated on a card vote by 6,279,000 to 826,000. (By the way,

Inside the system

The Tories whine on endlessly about the need to restore incentives for the rich. Without tax hand-outs, they say, there is no chance of the economy reviving. This promise probably won them the last election, and they use it endlessly against the mad reeds in the Labour Party. The reality turns out to be very different. Of course it is true that the Tory policies favour the rich, but so did those of Labour. According to the Central Statistical Office:

...since the mid-1970s higher income groups have been steadily increasing their share of the nation's total personal income, both before and after tax.

The after-tax income of the richest one per cent grew by 14.2 per cent in the last year of the Labour Government. The after tax income of the poorest 50 per cent, by 13.9 per cent.

If we are to believe some 'revolutionaries' the working masses, inspired by left victories, are flooding back into the Labour Party. Well, the 'left' have just won a victory over the moderates in the London Labour Party. Their proletarian candidates for the GLC election are:

George Nicholson, community planner, in Bermondsey.

Frances Morrell, ex-adviser to Tony Benn, in Islington South.

John Carr, equal opportunities officer, in Hackney Central.

Alex McKay, dairy supplier, in Deptford.

Paul Bouteng, solicitor, in Walthamstow.

Steve Bundred, NUM research officer, in Islington.

Odd man out is Paul Moore, post office engineer, in Lambeth Central.

A lot posher than the average *Socialist Review* editorial meeting.

Cmid 8175 might not sound like good bedside reading, but it does have a certain interest. It is the serial number of *The Government's Expenditure Plans, 1981-82 to 1983-84*. Of course, some of it is familiar stuff. For example, defence spending will go on rising.

Some is more new, at least to me. The government is trying to hold public sector wages down to a target of six per cent. To this end, they have ditched various comparability bodies and they wax stern about the need to keep to cash limits under all circumstances. Well, not quite all:

An exception is that, if the decision taken by the government in the light of the recommendations of the Armed Forces Pay Review Body should entail an increase in Forces' pay beyond the 6 per cent provided in the overall cash limit for the Defence Budget, that limit would be increased by the amount involved.

Another example of this determination to keep the Praetorian Guard happy is that

every specified area of local authority spending will fall, with the exception of 'Law, order and protective services'. It will rise from £2261m in 1979-80 to a planned £2378 in 1981-82—a real rise since these are constant prices. Housing capital expenditure will fall over the same period from £2374m to £1259m.

National government can't quite match that, since, unfortunately, 'expenditure on the unemployed is expected to increase by about 40 per cent as a result of the rise in the number of unemployed.'

As is well known, the new SDP is a rag-bag of old renegades and failures without two ideas to rub together. Some people might think that this lack of policies disqualifies them as a political party. Apparently not. One of their leading supporters in the mass media is a man called Peter Jenkins. This is the advice he offered to the new party in *The Guardian* the day before their launch:

...if they are wise, they will not be drawn into exaggerating the importance of policy. Most people do not know what the policies of their parties are and when they find out they usually don't much like them. People need to have a good idea of what parties stand for but too much policy is a nuisance. Jenkins, the SDP and the whole system of official politics drips with contempt for working class people and their aspirations for a better life.

The SDP finance committee whose job it will be to provide the 'credible argument' for Jenkins and his friends is well equipped for their job. Among its members are: Clive Lindley, a private business man who made a fortune in various non-union service industries.

Sir Leslie Murphy, ex-chairman of the National Enterprise Board and Church Army (what?) fund-raiser.

Mr David Astor, former editor of *The Observer*.

Lord Diamond, made a peer by the Labour Party but also very rich.

This is an unabridged quotation from an article on the SDP which appeared in the *Financial Times*, who know about these things, on 10 March 1981: 'Many industrialists have favourable recollections of Mrs Shirley Williams as Prices Secretary and identify with her on many issues.'

Here is another, from the same source, attributed to 'the chairman of a major manufacturing company': 'If I feel I can produce a credible argument for my board during the summer as to why they should provide financial support, then I will do so.'

those who believe that left voting strength at conference is at an unparalleled height should note that in 1973 the anti-NATO resolution got 1,425,000 votes)

The next government

If the last Labour government simply ditched a unilateralist conference policy are the leaders likely to compose the next one of any different mettle? True they are making rather more fuss over the question of nuclear weapons than their predecessors in opposition. But what sort of fuss?

Take the House of Commons debate on Trident on 3 March of this year. Labour's argument was led off by Brynmor John, the shadow spokesman on defence, and presumably the man most likely to be minister of defence in the next Labour government. Mr John, it should be remembered, is not a man who Foot is forced to accept in the shadow cabinet by the votes of right-wing Labour MPs. He was not elected to it, but was appointed to his position by the leader.

Brynmor John is opposed to the Trident programme. So is the rest of the Labour front bench (so, by the way, are the Social Democrats, the Liberals, and, it is believed, some Tory ministers, though a sprinkling of Labour right wing die hards, like Douglas Jay, are in favour of it).

But why?

Mr John has picked up one or two pieces of rhetoric from the new movement. 'The new generation of deterrent is passing from deterrence to the capability to fight a sophisticated nuclear war...' he said to get himself out of one tight corner. But, as he said in opening, 'the main thrust of the argument against the independent strategic deterrent, and in particular Trident, will be based on defence and economic grounds.'

It is the same old pre-64 Harold Wilson argument that the deterrent isn't independent and simply wastes money duplicating American bombs. You can hear the echoes of the 1964 election manifesto when Mr John complains about spending 'a great deal of money on a project which adds little to deterrence' and thus having 'to distort the whole of the rest of our defence effort.'

And it has the same more-NATO-than-thou approach to the Tories. Against their open belief in an independent British nuclear deterrent Brynmor John proudly affirmed:

'Honourable members on the government benches may not think the NATO alliance is worth the fine words... But I believe in the words of the alliance and I am content to rely upon them.'

Over Cruise, perhaps? Of course Brynmor John has always been an opponent of unilateralism. But what of Michael Foot? Surely this Aldermaston veteran is an altogether different matter? And

'Members on the government benches may not think the NATO Alliance is worth the fine words ... But I believe in the Alliance.'

Brynmor John (Labour front bench spokesman on Defence)

he, after all, will, barring accidents, be the next Labour prime minister.

Michael Foot's most recent major statement on nuclear disarmament was in an interview with David Dimbleby on the BBC's *Panorama* on 23 March.

Foot did give some fairly clear answers. On Cruise for instance:

'I still hold to the view that I expressed before I was elected to this job, that, in my opinion they should be sent away because I don't believe they add to our protection.'

And would he cancel the Trident programme?

'Yes, indeed.'

But his answer to David Dimbleby's supplementary was rather less certain. If the Trident programme had already been initiated would he cancel it?

'Yes, indeed. I think we would... I hope we would come in in a year or two's time and I think there will be full time for us to put into operation our policy on the subject.'

Remember Wilson's reasons for keeping Polaris.

Once we come on to the subject of Polaris the old unilateralist begins to get really shaky.

'Well, I think its going to fade out of existence. That's a different matter.'

Such fading would be a very slow process, because, at the moment, *Polaris* is scheduled to be operational until the first half of the 1990s.

So would Foot, Dimbleby asked, as Prime Minister support Britain's unilateral nuclear disarmament? His reply is worth quoting in full:

'No, all those subjects, which are perfectly right ones for you to raise and for the country to put to us, there's no dodging it at all—all those subjects are going to be comprised in the discussions we're going to have in the next few weeks and what we will present to the country at the next election but, because we know that we will present it openly and fairly so that people will know what they're asked to vote about, but what I want to stress is the immediate danger of the whole race being intensified over the next coming weeks and months and we want to get negotiations started even before we get back and I believe that we can play a considerable part—not going only to be Labour Party but in association with our fellow Socialist Parties Europe. I believe we can play a very considerable part in changing the whole international atmosphere.'

I only wish the British government was as eager to change that atmosphere as we are.'

Dimbleby noted that Foot hadn't answered the question. Was that because he hadn't made up his mind?

'No, I under ... the Labour Party has to make up its mind then to present it to the country and we will do it fairly and we are still having discussions about it and these are great issues on which people ... intelligent people have to discuss but I don't want anybody to be ... any misunderstanding of the urgency that we attach to the question. There is no matter so supreme as this one of getting the world on the course of disarmament instead of rearmament.'

'At the moment, we are engaged in a reckless course to disaster.'

Clear as mud! And if that is what he is saying now, what on earth will he be doing when he is in office with the Chief of the Defence Staff breathing down his neck?

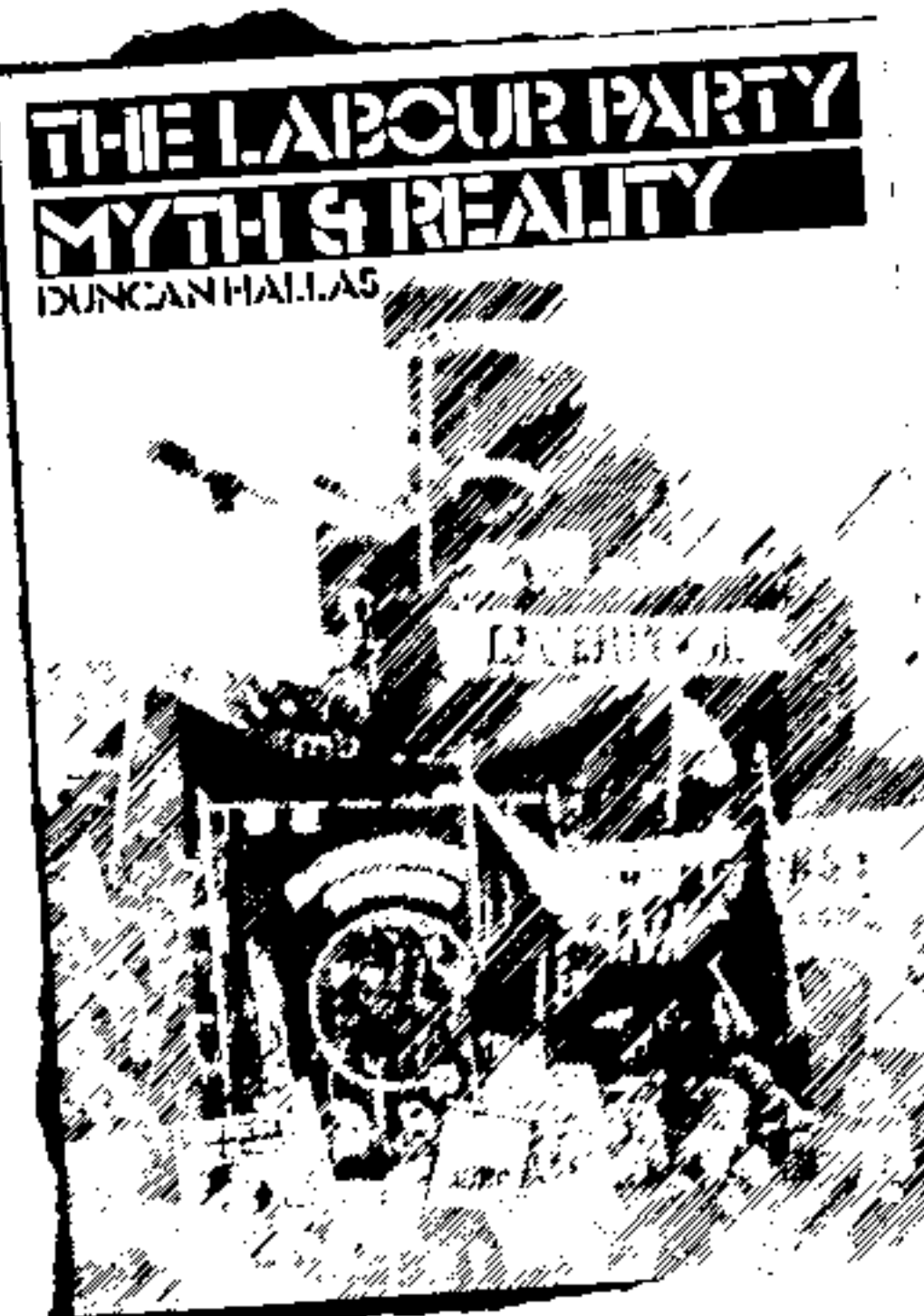
No wonder the Tories are openly mocking about the Labour leadership's recent concern over nuclear weapons. In the speech in the Trident debate we have already quoted from Tory MP Winston Churchill made the usual ritual accusations of Labour rejecting the 'bipartisanship that has served this country and its people for so well and so long' and of Michael Foot's election to the Labour leadership being welcomed by Radio Moscow! But then he turned to the future:



'I firmly believe that in the unlikely event that the Right Honourable Gentleman and his colleagues (the Labour front bench) should ever hold high office again, once armed with the facts, even the Right Honourable member for Ebbw Vale (Michael Foot) will find that his patriotic instincts will lead him to recognise that for Britain unilateral disarmament would be a dangerous gamble... (and) will lead him to reject the position he now holds.'

Given the record, given Brynmor John, given Foot's mind boggling evasiveness, there is only one thing that can prove him wrong. That is if CND activists renounce saviours from on high and build a movement of such strength and vigilance that it will force a Labour, or any other, government to ban the bomb forever.

**THE LABOUR PARTY
MYTH & REALITY**
DUNCAN HALLAS



**A new pamphlet
from the
Socialist Workers Party.
35p + 15p postage
10 copies £3 post free.
Socialists Unlimited
265 Seven Sisters Rd
London N4**

Nato:

OK YOU FILTHY REDS!
HANDS UP!

The move towards the new cold war lies in the breakdown of the model of Western security constructed after the end of the Second World War.

In 1945, the USA emerged as the absolutely dominant power in the West. Militarily it possessed overwhelmingly strength—it alone had the A-bomb, the guarantor of supremacy, and its armies were still fresh and intact, in comparison to the shattered European forces. Economically, it was just as powerful—as late as 1953, its gross national product was more than twice that of West Germany, France, Italy, Japan and the UK combined. Through the world monetary system, set up in 1944 at Bretton Woods, the supremacy of the dollar as an international currency was underlined.

From these two bases of power, military and economic, the US took on the job of policing the world.

This model of US dominance was already showing signs of weakness in the early 1960s.

But it was the events of the late sixties and early seventies that provoked the real breakdown of the post-war model of a dominant USA and passive, European side-kicks. Economically, the costs of providing military cover for the whole of the West had dramatically weakened the USA. The EEC and Japan, unhindered by the need to make massive military investments, had grown far faster than the USA and were threatening its economic dominance everywhere. The European NATO members now have a combined GNP greater than that of the USA. The collapse of the Bretton Woods system in 1971, which had ensured the economic dominance for the dollar, was only the symbol of a generalised economic decline. The USA, while still the most important single economy in the world, for ten years now has been unable to dictate to its allies.

Militarily, the situation was much more dramatic. The defeat in Vietnam demonstrated to the world that the US could not

The trend towards a new cold war is provoking arguments between the various capitals of the 'free world'. Tim Potter looks at the cause of these.

: the rulers divided

ponse the major European powers began to move towards a more independent role over a range of problems: the most obvious being the Middle East and relations with the Russian bloc.

The disagreements within the Western alliance came to a head last year. Schmidt and Giscard couldn't hide their low opinion of Carter and his policy. The farcical boycott of the Olympics and the splits over the trade embargoes aimed at Iran and the USSR were only the highpoints of a growing split within the alliance.

The last months of the Carter administration and the first 100 days of Reagan's rule show a new strategy arising, one which, it is hoped, will again guarantee US supremacy but with the burden more equally distributed amongst the allies. The aim is to weld the West together again under the leadership of the USA, to reassert its control over the markets and raw material supplies of the Third World and to beat back any threat that these areas could shift into the Soviet orbit or into independence.

El Salvador is the test-case of the new shift.

But while it is comparatively easy to intervene in El Salvador, the US faces instances of 'Soviet subversion' or 'international terrorism' throughout the world—the Middle East, Namibia, Europe, South East Asia, the list goes on. And the US can no longer afford to act on its own. It needs the Western allies to share the burden.

Specifically, the USA wants its allies to do three things: first, to increase their military capacity, so as to release US troops in Europe for action in hotter parts of the world and to be able themselves to join the US effort elsewhere. Second, to give the US some political backing for its anti-Communist crusade. And, finally, to agree to some voluntary co-operation in solving the economic difficulties confronting all the states.

On all three of the tasks the allies are hesitating. First, to take part in the international arms race is a highly expensive business in a period where all the Western governments are trying to cut spending. Despite Carter's order to the allies to raise defence spending

by 1% only the USA, Britain and Luxembourg have complied.

Second, the allies have been reluctant to give the US the political backing it needs.

Third, the allies have been reluctant to give the US the economic support it needs. When the question was in question they wanted to see together the billions necessary.

It is clear that the allies are not yet ready to share the burden of the US.

macy of the US is the best method of reasserting order to the 'Free World'. What they fears that in some part of the world the US, with perhaps their unwilling support, may get bogged down into another Vietnam which this time could escalate into a generalised clash with the Eastern block. Much better, reason the allies, to back those moderate forces which can stabilise the troubled parts of the world and keep them safely within the Western sphere of influence. After all, the strategy worked in Portugal, and its ex-colonies, and they haven't given up yet on Nicaragua, Zimbabwe and even Iran.

While the strategy is a bit more subtle than America's militarism in no sense is it more 'moral' or 'better'. The European states are not above direct political and military interference outside their boundaries: France was involved in the Chad civil war and sent its paratroopers into Zaire to prop up the corrupt regime of Mobutu in an operation which could be taken as a model for the Reagan administration.

The potential conflict between the USA and its allies is clearly exposed in all the hot points of the globe.

The Middle East

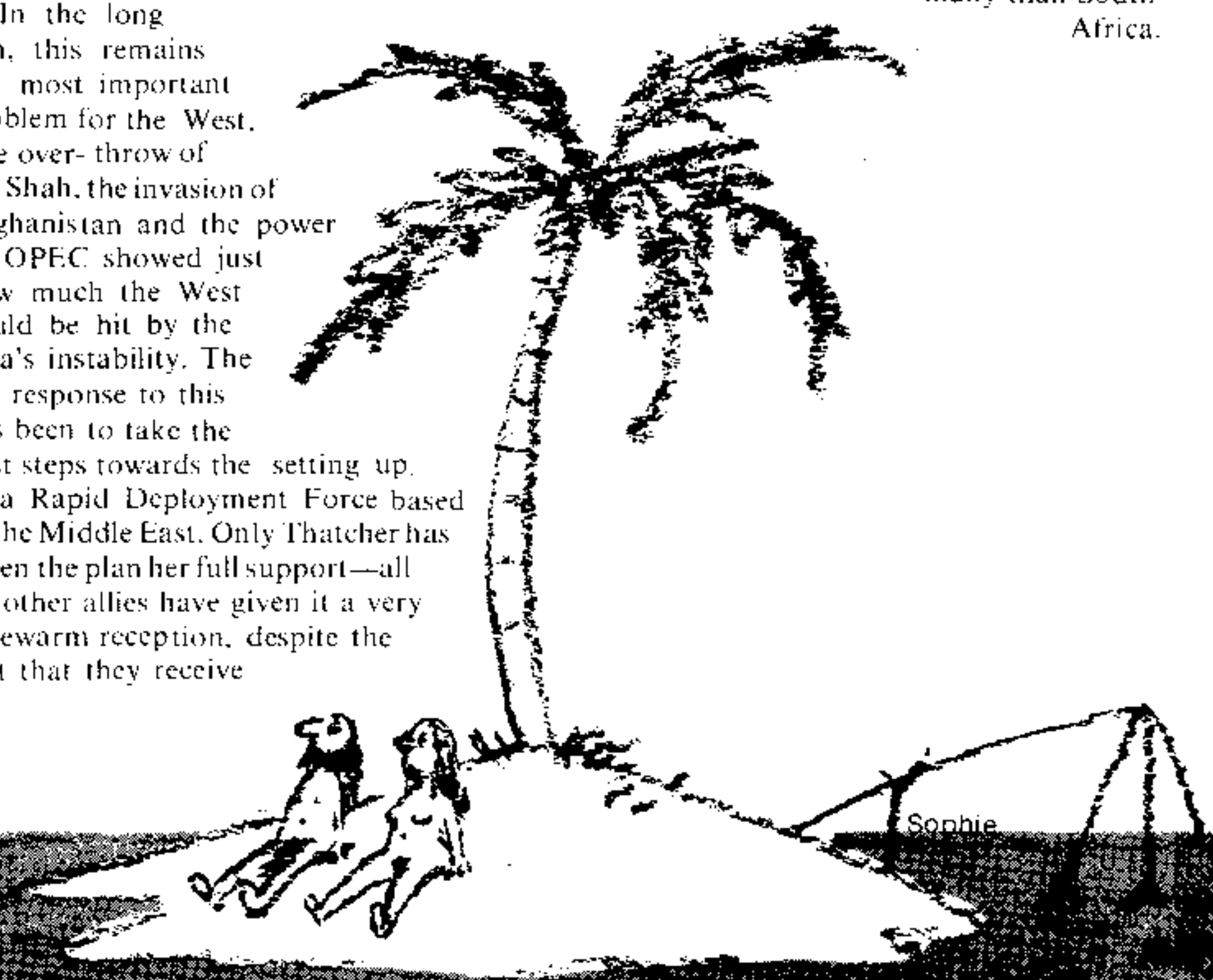
In the long run, this remains the most important problem for the West. The overthrow of the Shah, the invasion of Afghanistan and the power of OPEC showed just how much the West could be hit by the area's instability. The US response to this has been to take the first steps towards the setting up of a Rapid Deployment Force based in the Middle East. Only Thatcher has given the plan her full support—all the other allies have given it a very lukewarm reception, despite the fact that they receive the

majority of their oil from this area. They realise that the RDF may be seen by the Gulf states not as a defence against a Soviet threat but instead as an attempt by Western imperialism to re-impose its traditional control over the area.

For leaders like Schmidt and Giscard the return to what is not much more than crude gun-boat diplomacy is insufficient and may even be counter-productive. What is needed is an attempt to solve the roots of Middle East instability, in other words the problem of the Palestinians. Only if that can be solved can stable alliance of pro-Western states be built up. That is why the EEC is continuing its well publicised course of inching towards recognition of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation in the teeth of American and Israeli opposition.

Southern Africa

The same split appears to be taking place here. The USA appears to be switching back to a straight forward defence of the South African regime and its military might in holding back the liberation movement in Namibia and subverting Angola. This is anathema to the EEC, for it carries the risk of uniting black Africa against Western backing for apartheid. Yet countries like Nigeria are now much more important economically to Britain, France and Germany than South Africa.



Latin America

Reagan has made El Salvador the 'sticking point' of his anti-communist crusade. He has demanded the support of his allies, yet they have been extremely reluctant to grant their political cover to his adventures there.

What they are most preoccupied about is that heavy US involvement could spark off nationalist and perhaps anti-capitalist sentiment not merely in the isthmus but increasingly in the oil rich states of Mexico and Venezuela—two rapidly developing economies in which Europe has invested heavily.

Europe and Detente

A key point of Reagan's new course is the idea of 'the indivisibility of detente'—that the events in any part of the world affect relations with the USSR everywhere. For the European NATO states, this leaves them right in the front line. German and French diplomats are only too aware that a future war between the super-powers could be fought using Europe as the battle ground, leaving the two principal countries relatively intact. The Europeans then have a vital interest in continuing arms limitation talks and of trying to negotiate major trade deals with the Eastern block. Not only does it make Europe and the USSR mutually dependent but it is also excellent business. In Washington itself, the *Sunday Times* reported (8 March), 'a bitter internecine struggle (which) ultra-conservatives are fighting in the wings against the comparative moderates'. The split has led to a continued incoherence with compares well to the chaos of the Carter administration.

'To take the past week as an example, the White House has formally disavowed the State Department twice, Mr Haig was obliged to backtrack on his own words, and the dismal sequence ended with the president's press secretary disowning one of the White House's own advisers.' (*Guardian* 23 March)

What is so far lacking in the USA yet, is a mass protest movement against Reagan and his foreign policy, but in West Germany the room for manoeuvre for Schmidt is being narrowed by growing opposition both within his party against nuclear power and weapons and on the streets. Similar developments are taking place in Holland and, of course, in Britain.

These movements do worry our leaders, do force them on to the defensive and do widen the contradictions between them.

We should leave the last word to Richard Allen, Reagan's national security adviser:

'Right now, the second largest party in Britain has adopted as part of its official programme the renunciation of nuclear weapons. We are even hearing in other countries the contemptible 'better red than dead' slogan of a generation ago.'

He was wrong about the Labour Party (see the article in this issue) but we could prove him right about the 'contemptible slogan' if we develop our activity in the CND.



The largest mass movement yet

The most striking thing about the anti-bomb movement to date is its sheer size. It is much larger than the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign was at its height in the late 1960s. It is probably larger than CND was in the early sixties. It is a mass movement.

Although there are numerous peace groups and anti-nuclear groups, which have grown up in the last few months or have been churning on for years, the main pole of attraction is undoubtedly CND. Many of the other groups are busy changing into local centres of CND.

Some examples will indicate the scale of the movement:

Bristol area CND has 1100 members. In Moseley in Birmingham, CND claim that about three per cent of the local population are paid-up members.

In Leeds, the town CND has 200 members and is reprinting its membership cards to cope with a new influx. There are 150 people in the local END (European Nuclear Disarmament) group. There are 200 in the university CND. There are 50 in the poly CND. There is a big Youth CND. On top of this, there are a mass of other local groups which share the same basic aims.

In Burton-on-Trent, two people called a planning meeting and 100 turned up to join.

In general, the campaign is now growing rapidly. There seems to have been a bit of a lull around Christmas but today the new members are flooding in. Sometimes, it seems, CND does better in the small and medium towns than it does in the large cities. While there is a lot of CND activity in the vast sprawl of London, it does not really compare with the tiny places with a population of less than 2000 up in the Yorkshire Dales, where showings of *The War Game* have attracted audiences of around 100, or five per cent of the total population.

There are still some areas without an active group, and in case any of our readers find themselves in that position, this is what to do before reading the rest of this article:

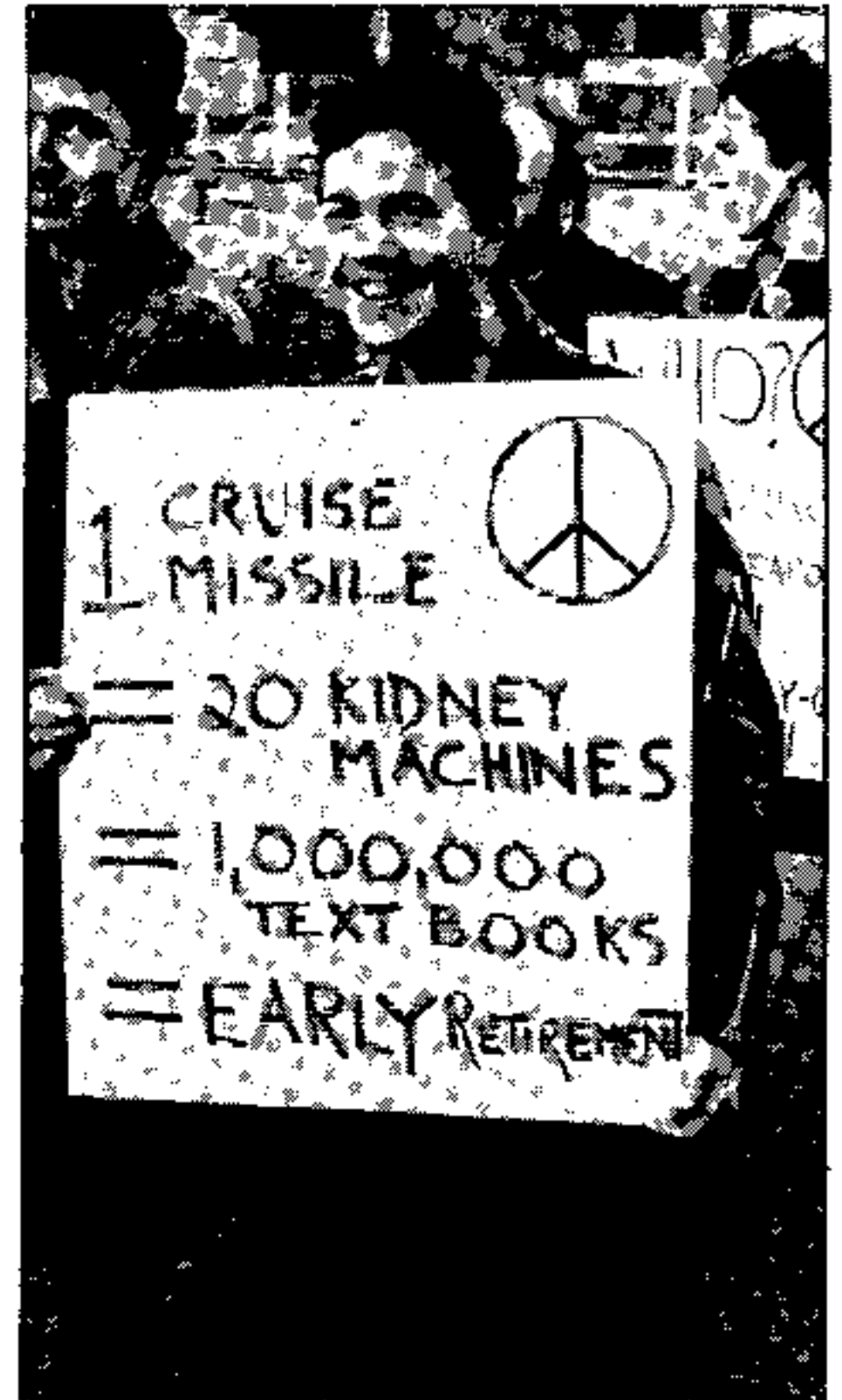
- 1 Advertise a founding meeting in the local press.
- 2 Book *The War Game* and hire a big hall.
- 3 Advertise the showing as widely as possible.
- 4 Print lots of local membership cards and think of lots of local activities.
- 5 Show the film, and you are away.

Of course, the number of activists who are prepared to attend regular business meetings and work consistently for the campaign is very much smaller than the hundreds who will come to a big public meeting or film show, but it is still very considerable. And people are very, very, keen.

In Edinburgh 110 people sat through a crowded two hour business meeting without batting an eyelid. In residential Whitley Bay, around 70 people attend regular business meetings. In nearby Gosforth, the person we talked to said their group was a 'small one with only thirty or so activists prepared to attend regularly.' In Derby, out of 800 people who came to the first big public meeting, around 40 are regular attenders at the monthly business meetings.

Usually the level of activity is very high. A well-known socialist teacher active in Hackney CND, who is noted for the hard work she puts in to every campaign, remarked: 'My good God, the pace is killing! People are so keen.' There is an immense range of local activities. There have been mass leaf-lettings, pickets of bunkers, street meetings, street theatres, local gigs, regular stalls in shopping areas, local marches, and hundreds of showings of *The War Game*.

Besides pure business meetings and large events, some groups have organised day-schools and series of meetings aimed at discussion and education. In Gosforth, for example, the local CND and the Adult Education Department have organised a successful series of



well-attended meetings on 'Nuclear War for Beginners'. They have led to very lively debates which have helped people work out the arguments they need to build the campaign.

By every standard that you can think of, CND is going very well indeed. Many thousands are prepared to make at least some contribution to the campaign. The people who have worked flat-out to build it deserve every congratulation.

Winning the workers

For all its fantastic success, CND faces real problems in the coming months. The history of CND in its first flush of the 1960s proves that it, just like every other mass campaign, can both grow very quickly and decline just as quickly. While that is not an immediate prospect, it is very likely that there will be setbacks of a less severe nature in the coming months. Already the most far-sighted people in the local groups are racking their brains for fresh activities which can keep up the momentum of today. Again, there are large sectors of the population that CND has barely touched—the manual working class is the most obvious, but there is a vast untapped potential among youth which is there for the taking. And, sooner or later, the national direction of the campaign will become of critical importance.

None of these problems are insoluble. Take the question of working class support. CND needs a big implantation there if it is to have any hope of winning. This is necessary not just because it represents a huge untapped source of activists and support but because it is a decisive force in society. Campaigns which are built purely on street mobilisation are the ones which are most open to the 'shooting star effect' of rapid growth and decline. And they are also the ones which find it most difficult to achieve real results against an entrenched enemy.

The enemy of CND is very entrenched indeed: it consists of the whole ruling apparatus of society. The backers of the bomb run the media, they run big

business, they run the political parties, they run the civil service, they run, of course, the enormous defence apparatus.

It will take more protest marches, even enormous protest marches, to shift this enormous social force. It will require an opposite and greater social force. And there is only one other social force of that scale in society: the organised working class. Unless the vast mass of trade unionists can be won over to a position of active support for CND, a readiness to use their industrial power against the bomb, then CND will fail for the second time around.

There is no reason to suppose that this is impossible: working class people are no less threatened by the bomb, and they are just as open to argument and persuasion as any other sort of people. It is simply a question of doing the work.

The trade unions

But the current shape of CND makes this rather difficult. The bulk of the activists in every local group are 'middle class': they are men and women in their twenties and thirties from the middle grade of white collar work. Many of them are completely new to political activity of any sort whatsoever. Some, perhaps the majority, are members of trade unions, but they do not automatically make the connection between the union card in their pocket and the struggle against the bomb, for they are rarely experienced trade union militants.

It is not that CND members are hostile to people with horny hands and working-class accents. On the contrary, most CND members will, when asked, agree that support from the working class is vital to the campaign. Much more important is that the unconscious attitudes are not those which lead them to think automatically of how to go about getting working class support. Unless there is a clear input of experience and ideas this area will simply fall by default, or at best consist of the very vaguest links with the local trades

council or lower-level union official.

A lot of the things which are almost second nature to regular readers of *Socialist Review* are new to many of the people in CND. The idea of targeting special leafletting at council estates, and of holding special showings of *The War Game* at times and in places where council tenants can get there easily is not an obvious one to local CND groups. The idea of leafletting factories and holding factory gate meetings in the dinner hour on a sunny day is a new one. The fact that it is possible to walk into a well organised factory, ask to see the convenor, and get her or him to raise CND on the shop stewards' committee, is not widely appreciated. Even systematic work to get everybody who holds a CND card to raise the issue in their trade union branch is not at all common.

In fact, this sort of work can have surprising results. In Gloucester, a commitment to trade union work showed that the composition of the local group was rather different from what it looked like on first sight. It had been dominated by a few articulate middle class people, but the new direction revealed that there were a surprisingly large number of ordinary workers there. The group turned out to contain builders, factory workers and unemployed people. As a result of some hard work, there have already been a number of showings of *The War Game* organised by trade union branches.

A more dramatic example comes from Bristol, where there was recently a big dispute between bus workers and the local transport authority over the collection of higher fares. A local CND group produced a leaflet headed 'Buses not Bombs', leafletted the bus depot and called for support for the bus workers' march. The leaflet went down very well

and about 70 CND supporters joined the workers' march. There were two responses: the local TGWU branch wrote a letter of thanks to CND and sent three delegates to the Manchester conference. The regional leadership of CND, described by the author of the leaflet as 'anti-working class liberals' tried to make a witch-hunt out of it, but failed miserably. There has since been a small but successful local trade union conference.

Not all of the local efforts to turn towards the working class have been as successful as these, of course. In Whitley Bay only three people mentioned their trade union affiliation on the membership list. But it is early days yet, and the potential is undoubtedly there. Even at the most elementary level, the organising committee of Edinburgh heard a speaker from the Lee Jeans occupation and collected £57 at the door. Most people in CND accept the 'Jobs not Bombs' slogan as a principle and only need a little advice on how to go about making it more than a slogan to be ready to respond to this sort of initiative.

Young people

Youth work is another area in which there are already lessons to be learnt. Most CND groups attract a number of young people along, but there is a danger that they get bored with the sort of meetings which appeal to people ten and twenty years older than them, and all but the most dedicated start to drift out of active involvement. On the other hand, where there are independent YCND groups which organise their own meetings and activities they can attract a mass of young people. It is possible not just to organise on an area basis but even to start to build groups right down at the level of the school. These can mobilise very large numbers of youth: Birmingham YCND last month took

1000 young people through the centre of Birmingham in the pouring rain.

The youth groups also illustrate an important point about the struggle against the bomb. In every case, the bomb starts to bring up much wider issues: for example, why is it that a country like Russia, which calls itself 'socialist' is armed to the teeth with nuclear weapons aimed directly at ordinary people here in Britain? This process takes place much more quickly among youth. Whitley Bay is a textbook case. There the CND group was slowly boring away the young people it had attracted. They decided to set up a youth group and have quickly built up to 70 people. The speaker at their first meeting was amazed that the discussion quickly turned to everything from Northern Ireland to Afghanistan. And the group is, understandably, most enthusiastic about 'Jobs not Bombs'.

People from Whitley Bay YCND went on the Labour Party unemployment march in Glasgow and were enthusiastic about it. Leamington CND and the local Right to Work Campaign picketed the army recruitment office. With the armed forces spending a good part of the summer going round the local carnivals trying to recruit unemployed kids for the slaughter, that sort of activity is likely to be very important in the next few months as a local complement to the CND support for the Peoples' March.

And in Birmingham, the local fascists decided to attack the YCND march — until they saw how big it was. One of the things that is going to undercut the NF/BM base in the schools is their mindless devotion to nuclear extermination.

The problem at the top

Finally, there is a problem with the national organisation. It has done very little to build the local groups. As one person from Manchester said: 'No one is at all aware of the national organisation. All the co-ordination is being done by ourselves. There just does not seem to be any national leadership. We never see their publications — although we seem to survive without them. No one knows what the national organisation is arguing for and frankly no one cares.'

In fact, while the atmosphere in the local groups is usually fairly good, the higher up the ladder one goes, the worse it gets. Regional leaderships tend to be a bit obsessed with structures and bureaucracy, and at the top there are quite sharp disagreements. This may not matter much today, but in the long term the campaign has to have a national direction.

An example is the 'Jobs not Bombs' slogan. In East Anglia, this is very difficult to win, since many of the workers are employed in defence establishments. One line coming from the national leadership is to present such workers with a moral choice. As a campaigning point, with the alternative of unemployment, this does not cut much

ice. The only way that the problem can be solved is if it is part of a mass movement of workers who can force through alternatives at a national level. Again, unless the campaign overall is very clear about where it is going, it would be easy for a future Labour, or for that matter Tory, government to take the steam out of it by means of a few token concessions.

Politics

There are no hard and fast political lines in CND. The old-style CP-Quaker leaderships at local level have been swamped by a flood of new people. Where they have hung on, as in Kings Cross in London, they have been a major obstacle, prepared to sacrifice activity and growth to the goal of retaining control. In most places, the people involved have little previous experience; many are passive supporters of the moderate left in the Labour Party. There is sometimes hostility to revolutionary ideas, but anyone who has proved that they are prepared to work hard for CND can usually rely on other people supporting them in fighting off attempted witch-hunts.

On the other hand, some people on the extreme left have been reluctant to get heavily involved in CND even though they fully support its aims. Sometimes this is for good reasons: there are an enormous number of things to do already and it can mean that CND gets pushed a long way down the priority list. Against that, it should be obvious that CND ties in with so many other things that it is folly to turn your back on it. It is not only that there are lots of people who are open to socialist ideas involved in CND, but the problems which the campaign will face in the near future are clearly ones to which socialists are best equipped to provide the answers.

Sometimes the failure to get involved is for very bad reasons. One prominent London militant went to one meeting and came back to argue: 'It is full of vicars and faith healers and I am not going again.' It should be obvious that there is more to the movement than that, but unless the work is done soon it is the vicars and faith-healers, or even worse the people who see the election of Michael Foot as the answer to all problems, who will lead the campaign. And they will lead it into a blind ally.

It is in the nature of great mass movements that they throw up all sorts of people looking for answers to difficult questions. Sometimes they hold ill-defined and even contradictory views, but it is also in the nature of such movements that the practical experience of building a campaign teaches people very much more quickly than even the best preaching. CND is such a campaign: by its nature it raises the most general questions and in its development it will give a sharp focus of practical politics to them. It is the duty of those who do have clear ideas about how to win to be in the thick of it arguing for their beliefs.

Colin Sparks and Marta Wöhrle

'You can overkill us 50 times, but we can only overkill you 49 times.'



MISSILE MADNESS

SWP pamphlet by Peter Binns on the new weapons system and how they threaten your life. 40p (plus 10p postage). Bulk orders £3.25 for 10 post free from Socialists Unlimited, 265 Seven Sisters Road, London, N4.

The CND Labour Movement Conference



The CND Labour Movement Conference Against the Missiles on March 28 was a quite unprecedented event. The fact that it happened at all shows how different the present movement against nuclear weapons is from the last one. The first great period of CND from 1958-63 involved huge numbers of individual trade unionists and had an echo in the trade union machine symbolised by the short-lived victory at the 1960 Labour Party Conference. But no serious attempt was made to bring together activists at the base to organise the fight against the missiles in the unions. Nor was any serious move made to link the fight against the bomb to the other concerns of the labour movement.

This time round, scarcely a year after the new movement was born over 700 delegates (just over half from trade union bodies, the rest from constituency and ward Labour parties) assembled to address precisely these tasks. Both the size and mood of the conference show how great is the immediate potential for rooting the anti-bomb movement in the labour movement.

Hopefully that is the most important message that will come out of the conference. But having said that it is also necessary to say that the conference missed a real opportunity to begin to fulfil that potential. And responsibility for that must be squarely put on the shoulders of the organisers, a strange combination of the International Marxist Group and the CND leadership.

Only one front

It was the IMG that initiated the conference last autumn from Manchester Against the Missiles. And all credit to them for doing so. But there the credit stops. For, having initiated the conference they then decided to accept an ultimatum from the CND leadership that the CND leadership itself appoint the overwhelming majority of the conference organising committee.

Most of the key CND leaders involved here are either members of or politically close to the Eurocommunist wing of the Communist Party. For them the labour movement is only one front among many of a 'broad' campaign and should be approached in such a way as not to upset this 'broad' approach nor the various trade union officials or Left Labour MPs who they see as embodying the labour movement. Not surprisingly

the format of the conference they decided reflected these concerns: a platform composed of the likes of Ron Todd and Frank Allaun, no workshops, no resolutions and no declaration.

More surprisingly the IMG, after a few closet protests on the organising committee, went right along with the format, right down to being put up by the organising committee to explain why no resolutions were being allowed.

Officialdom

Presumably the justification for accommodation to 'officialdom' was that it was an unfortunate but inevitable necessity to mobilise the 'big battalions' of the labour movement. If this was the justification then it was an almost totally mistaken one. The national unions which gave their endorsement to the conference did not even advertise it in their journals; despite the influence of CP members in the CND leadership the CP scarcely even mentioned the conference in the *Morning Star*; and CND itself gave it a miserable four paragraphs in its paper, *Sanity*.

About the only real mobiliser obtained from officialdom was circulation of all Labour Party branches for the conference, which must undoubtedly have increased the number of delegates from Labour Parties present. However against even this must be put the fact that the mobilising leaflet for the conference, saying that 'Michael Foot has taken a clear stand against the arms race', must have been a turn off in many trade union branches.

Given all this, the turn out on the day, coming very heavily from the far left and the newer CND activists, was

even more impressive — but despite rather than because of the conference organisation.

Such gathering was not altogether willing to go along with the deadening format presented to it. It sat patiently through the platform speeches. But it insisted that resolutions be put and that a speaker from Lee Jeans be heard (the chairperson, former CND vice-president, Olive Gibbs, resigned from the chair when her incredibly insensitive efforts to stop the Lee Jeans speaker were overturned). Of the resolutions passed two, moved by myself and another SWP member, constituted just the sort of declaration the conference should have had in the first place. It emphasised withdrawal from NATO (but it was opposed by the IMG because it also included opposition to the Warsaw Pact), a 'Jobs not Bombs' orientation (calling for CND support for the People's March and the CND demonstration in October to be on that theme) and the pressing need to establish nuclear disarmament groups in every union and industry.

The second step

All of this was to the good, and a testament to the mood of most of the conference. But the sheer haste in getting it through must have dispirited many of the delegates. Dispiriting, too, must have been the fact that the political differences on Russia, the Labour Party and the trade union bureaucracy, which inevitably have to be discussed, appeared as procedural or sectarian wrangles, given the strenuous attempts by the organisers to put the lid on them.

But above all, what was missing from the conference, was a detailed discussion of exactly how we organise against the bomb in the workplace and at the base of the unions. For those who see the 'labour movement' in terms of union officials and block votes, that of course is a problem that doesn't exist. For most of the delegates, on the other hand, that is our most important problem, on which we all have a bit of experience to contribute and of it to learn.

If this conference was a very faltering first step, then the second step must be directed to developing exactly that discussion and providing us with some of the tools to wage the campaign among the rank and file.

The problem now is how are we going to take that second step. On what I've seen I don't believe the present CND leadership ever really wanted this conference in the first place. I think they stepped in to control something they couldn't avoid. They didn't manage to completely control it and therefore I don't think they will care to repeat the experience. Nor will their suitors in the IMG persuade them. It will be up to some of us other delegates and the bodies that delegated us to take that second step.

Pete Goodwin

Avtar Jouhl



Organising Asian workers

Avtar Jouhl is the general secretary of one of the two national Indian Workers Associations. As such he is one of the most significant black leaders in Britain today. He is also the senior shop steward at Birmid Qualcast in Birmingham. In this interview, with Peter Alexander, he answers questions about the black and working class movements. We welcome contributions from other black workers and leaders on points raised in this interview.

Since you came to Britain in 1958, how has the situation, in terms of racism, changed?

It has deteriorated.

This is despite the argument for each Immigration Act that they would improve race relations.

We have always argued that race relations are not dependent on numbers, but on the economic situation. Today there's 2½ million unemployed, and in the West Midlands unemployment has jumped by over 80% in the last year. The ruling classes deliberately exploit the situation and try and use the minorities as a scape goat for the crisis. They did it against the Irish, they did it against the Jews, and in the last 20 years they've attacked the black people.

Do you support the slogan 'Oppose all Immigration Controls'?

In a socialist Britain, as long as there are states existing throughout the world, there will be some sort of control. Even if the SWP came to power tomorrow, you would not allow people to walk off planes at Heathrow as if they are getting off a train at Euston. As long as capitalism exists, whether it's Labour or Tories in government, any immigration control will be racially biased—from that angle we should oppose all immigration controls. We say the 1971 Immigration Act should be repealed—we're not saying it should be replaced by another one.

What policies do you have at Birmids?

No way can the police come into our factory, unless and until the trade union reps have been approached, and if they want to see someone the reps will ask the police to name a time when they would like that person to visit the police station. But to arrest a person there and then—no way. We advise our members to see the police with a shop steward and a legal rep. Certainly our shop stewards committee does fight these cases.

Now with the Nazis. At our place, NF slogans were scribbled in the toilets. At the first sign we went to the management and told them that they should be painted out, and it was done within a week. Then someone, we didn't know who, was sticking Union Jacks on every pole. We raised that with management and they said it was the national flag. We said yes, but it is the symbol of the NF as well and it is an affront to our people who are working here. If you want to fly a national flag you can do it at the front of the factory, but not everywhere. Then we had a discussion among the wor-

kers and we said if anyone has NF ideas they can come into the debate. No one came forward, and after that this sort of activity stopped altogether. Later, we had some voluntary redundancies and we think the suspect took the money and left.

According to union rules, every member should carry out the policy of the union. Since we have a policy against racism and fascism it would be madness to issue a steward's credential to anyone who is a member of the National Front, or sympathetic, or a racist. I don't even think such a person should be in the union. The bureaucrats often get cold feet on the issue. Look at the Imperial Typewriters in Leicester. It was only after massive pressure that they stopped a situation where only the old white committee members could be shop stewards because of the two year rule. NF members should be expelled from the union, and if it is a closed shop they should go away from that place.

What have been the main developments in the Indian Workers Association?

The IWA has existed since 1938, but it wasn't as strong as it is today. In 1962/3 there was the division with Southall IWA. The Central Committee argued that we should oppose immigration controls. The Southall people didn't want to campaign against the Immigration Act—they said it's the fault of our own people who are violating the laws. Anyway in 1963 they walked out and formed IWA (Southall).

The national body was fighting political campaigns—not only against immigration controls, racism and fascism, but also along with the working class. We've done a lot, well recognised in the trade union movement, to get black workers to participate in the unions, but Southall IWA concentrated on the cinema, and became commercial. For the last year they've been dominated by business men. We've never seen them on picket lines; support for strikes has been left to other organisations in the Southall area.

The national split came about in 1967. We objected to interference in our organisation by the Communist Party of India (Marxist) leadership in India. For instance the IWA in this country supported the peasant struggle in Naxalbari, which went against CPI(M) policy. It was about the struggle in India—China was not an important issue.

Also there was the question of state bodies. We said that it was hypocritical of the state to, on the one hand, place racist

legislation on the statute book, and on the other hand hoodwink the people with these CREs, CRCs, Race Relations Boards or whatever, and we should not participate in them. I declined a place on the National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants. The other IWAs were for participation. But I think our position was vindicated by Vishnu Sharma (of the Southall IWA) who went on the Committee and later resigned.

Are there other differences of policy?

Yes, there was also a difference on the question of the unions, which exists today. We say that we should work to strengthen the trade union movement, but at the same time we must not hesitate to expose the racism within the trade unions. We still think that is important. Some have said we are rocking the boat and upsetting our allies.

There was a similar attitude on the question of the Labour Party. We have continuously campaigned against the racist policies of the Labour governments. When we advised our people not to vote for two Labour MPs in this area in 1966 because they supported immigration controls—it was Brian Walden and I think Roy Hattersley—they said we were helping the Tories. But we think it is important to expose Labour.

How would you describe the significance of the magnificent march from Deptford the other week?

Sometimes it is said that the West Indian people are passive in the struggle against racism and fascism. The spontaneous response of 12,000 or more people on that day showed that West Indian people are conscious. The demonstration lifted the silence on the Deptford tragedy. As we are always saying, unless people come out onto the streets the establishment will ignore police cover-ups.

Why do you think there weren't more Asians on the demonstration?

That is a pity. Over the last two decades the establishment have encouraged a division between the Asians and the West Indians. Southall was a watershed. There were very few West Indians, and the police lashed upon the Asians. We sent representatives onto the Deptford march from our London area, but at very short notice it was difficult for us to get large numbers.

The leaders of the march, including supporters of *Race Today*, prevented trade union and student banners from being displayed. What is your attitude to that?

Also our banner was not allowed on the march. The banners and placards should be allowed on the march: they express the solidarity of the people with the cause.

What is your attitude to black separatism?

It is important for the black people to unite with each other, because they are in the fore-front of the struggle. Unless they raise their voice, the solidarity will not be there, because they are the victims. Ordinary white people are not at this time the victims of fascism. Black people's unity is of utmost

importance. If the black people expect that the TUC will fight for them, that's bad. They are not even fighting for their own members.

But black people alone cannot destroy racism. Until the time of socialist revolution racialism will remain with us. But that doesn't mean that we should say 'what's the point of fighting racism, we should fight for socialist revolution.' Our view is that fighting against racism is a contribution to the socialist revolution, while fighting for economic demands is also a contribution.

In all these struggles, against the cuts, the Nationality Bill and so on, we should build an alliance between black people and the white working class.

Do you think black people should be involved in the ANI?

Yes, certainly! We are living in the UK, and the Nazis are here. Therefore we should be shoulder to shoulder with the white people. Indeed in my opinion we should be in the forefront. We have sponsored the ANI from its birth, and we will continue to be an active partner in the ANI.

The ANI has made a tremendous contribution by highlighting the influence of the Nazis and effectively checking their advance on the streets and in the elections. Also, involving a broader section of the public in the movement, irrespective of their colour, was very important.

What are the main problems of the working class movement today?

There has been a tendency to usurp the leadership of organisations from the top, without a real connection with the rank and file—this has occurred in the peace movement and the trade unions. So when there was retaliation from the right it totally collapsed under the attack. The most recent example is Derek Robinson. As convenor, he was a shop floor bureaucrat, and completely out of touch with real working class organisation, if every worker had been involved, this would not have occurred. Compare this with Gardners.

Also during the late 60s and early 70s they said we are advancing leftwards. In my opinion that was superficial—it existed in the bureaucracy and the Labour Party, but not among the rank and file. See what happened in the 1979 election, and since then no real opposition to Thatcher has been built up.

When I speak of building the rank and file movement, I don't mean only around economic demands, but also political. Otherwise, economic demands are achieved, the members became happy, and then there's complete apathy. People should be politically educated. The temporary truce between the working class and capitalism will not last forever. It is important that workers learn that the destruction of capitalism is utmost importance. They cannot control or be free without revolution.

What has been the most significant event for black people in recent times?

The Labour government was exposed by allowing the police on 23rd April 1979 at Southall in massive numbers. The police calculated that through oppression they could frighten off the Asians. David McNee said

that if you keep off the streets there would be no trouble. But in West Bromwich one week later, there was another NF meeting. We organised to get many of our members into the meeting, and John Tyndall could not speak.

Can we talk about the Labour Party? There is a view that black people should join the Labour Party and be part of a 'left' which fights racism inside the Labour Party. What do you think?

I do not advise our people to join the Labour Party. The policies of the Labour Party are not socialist policies, and their record on race speaks for itself. I don't believe that by going inside any organisation you will change it. One has to build an independent vanguard party in the UK. I remember Johnny Gollan at a CPGB conference saying 'Harold Wilson is not Gaitskell'. In 1951, Wilson resigned when prescription charges were increased, but when he became premier he ran this capitalist system like the Tories. Regarding Benn, he is a social democrat, and history shows, social democrats cannot lead the working class to revolution. They will compromise with capitalism.

We have experience from India. In 1940, the Communist Party decided to send its members into the Muslim League, to change it from the inside. Those who went inside were absorbed and never came back to the Communist Party. For those who go into the Labour Party there are offers of council seats and so on, and these people will shift away from the revolutionary movement.

I agree with everything you have said about the Labour Party, the unions, the need for an independent workers party, and the struggle against racism and fascism. So what are your disagreements with us in the SWP?

I don't disagree with the policy of the SWP as a general guideline for the revolution in the UK. My disagreement is that the SWP believes that a revolution in the UK cannot be sustained without an international revolution. Secondly, the SWP only tries to implement the policy of Trotsky, and not Marxism-Leninism as a whole. On many issues Trotsky contradicts Marxism-Leninism.

How will an independent vanguard party be created?

Well rather than the IWA describing that, we leave it to the British working class political groups, to have bilateral discussions, and reach a common policy on the basis of Marxism-Leninism. We have a responsibility and a duty towards the revolution. But the IWA as such is a broad organisation and cannot be called a revolutionary group. It is important to have the scientific theory of Marxism-Leninism and apply it in the context of the UK, otherwise it is not possible to advance. The impact of existing Marxist-Leninist organisation on the working class is still small. That's not because they don't do much, but because of the attraction of imperialist ideas, which have existed for 200 years among British workers. It's not an easy task to break workers from that, but it will develop out of the struggle of the working class, it cannot be imposed from the top.



Avtar Jouhl (top) speaking at the demonstration against the Nationality Bill

Power without leadership

Sally Bild and Caroline Conway tell how the effectiveness of the civil service industrial action has been squandered

This year has seen the first civil service pay campaign that has united all nine unions round a common claim — 15 per cent with £10 underpinning minimum. The Council of Civil Service Unions (CCSU) have found themselves in the forefront of the public sector fight against the government's six per cent cash limit.

They have also been demanding the restoration of the 1974 National Civil Service Pay Agreement, a comparability exercise. The government very early on drew the battle lines by refusing to release the findings of the Pay Research Unit to the unions and by disallowing any arbitration.

The pay agreement is undoubtedly the spur to the leadership's decision to fight — its

removal threatens their traditional role as bureaucratic negotiators.

However, the question of this year's pay has been the overriding reason for the members' willingness to fight, especially among the clerical grades.

The official strategy has been one of selective strike action, mainly aimed at stopping the flow of income to the government. Processing of PAYE, VAT and national insurance contributions has been severely restricted by all-out indefinite strike action at four computer centres. At the time of writing only 3500 civil servants are involved in this selective strike action. They are being paid 85 per cent of gross pay from a central strike fund and weekly levies on the rest of the members.

A one-day strike was called on 9 March to launch this action and it was enthusiastically supported by at least 85 per cent of the members. Since then large numbers have been involved in mass walk-outs protesting against threatened suspensions (lockouts) — 200,000 on 13 March in defence of four clerical assistants in Customs and Excise in Liverpool, 60,000 on 23 March in defence of eight DHSS staff at Worksop, 100,000 on 27 March in defence of 29 VAT staff, and from 31 March at least 100,000 were involved in walkouts over the threatened suspension of senior management grades in the tax collection service.

The government has traditionally used suspensions to break any civil service industrial action. This time they have been taking a particularly hard line by threatening to suspend any union member who in their eyes refuses to carry out the 'full range' of duties — which in effect means any member who disobeys a management instruction. Clearly, selective strike action can only be effective if other members black the work of



Muscle in the ministry

One thing has been underlined even by the selective strike action in the civil service. The close integration of the state and industry under present day capitalism gives groups like civil servants a potential industrial muscle inconceivable 50 years ago.

A quick glance at the effectiveness of the action shows that an all out strike could have brought the government to its knees in days rather than weeks:

Customs

All goods entering or leaving Britain must receive customs clearance. Although this does not have to involve actual searches, customs staff record and document all trade movements. This documentation is particularly important for trade between EEC countries.

By bringing out customs members at ports and airports throughout Britain it would be possible to stop all trade in and out of Britain.

Selective action already taken by the union members shows that this can be done

Irish Blockade

The first week of the civil service action (9-16 March) saw massive queues of lorries waiting to cross the land boundary between the Republic and the North. At British west coast ports, including Liverpool, Fishguard and Holyhead, all lorries still arriving from the Republic were

impounded at the quayside to await customs clearance. For six days virtually all land and sea movements of cargo between Britain and the Republic of Ireland were at a standstill.

This blockade was achieved by pulling out 150 union members in customs at the land boundary between the North and the Republic and 130 more union members at British west coast ports dealing with Anglo-Irish trade.

However, just when the blockade was achieving maximum impact the strike was called off and action transferred to the South Coast ports. But what happened to the Republic during those six days could be repeated for the UK, if the civil service unions chose to, and were able to, deliver widespread strike action at all ports and airports.

Action such as took place at the west coast ports is crucially dependent on two factors. First, the refusal of other civil service union members to cover for those on strike. And secondly, dockers and lorry drivers refusing to handle or move cargo without proper customs clearance.

Heathrow

Because of the decision by air traffic controllers and assistants to support the national one day strike on 9 March, a total of 2500 flights throughout the UK were cancelled. Heathrow was shut-down completely for the first time in its 35 year history.

Although most publicity is given to the effect on passenger traffic, stopping Heathrow and other airports permanently would, combined with action at the ports, quickly impose a stranglehold on imports and exports.

Scottish courts

From 24 March, strike action by 300 members of the SCPS, CPSA and CUS shut down the Sheriff's courts in Edin-

burgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen and Inverness, and the Court of Session in Edinburgh.

Government revenue

In the first two weeks of the campaign indefinite strikes by 260 data preparation staff at the VAT computer in Southend and by 1065 IRSE members at the Inland Revenue computer centre for PAYE income tax in Shipley and Cumbernauld denied the government £620 million, ie 40% of their expected revenue. Both the Chancellor and the Prime Minister admitted this could lead to higher interest rates.

Defence

On 9 March, thousands of civil servants throughout the traditionally moderate Ministry of Defence joined the one day strike.

Scientists at the Atomic Weapons Research Establishment at Aldermaston walked out and production was brought to a standstill. Five armaments factories at Chorley, Bishopton, Bridgewater, Glaseod and Nottingham were closed. After supervisors walked out all manual workers were sent home. Dockyards at Rosyth and Chatham were also shut.

From 9 March several hundred union members have been on indefinite strike. Vital computers for naval supplies and stocks and at dockyards have been shut down and the operation of nuclear submarine bases at Couplport and Faslane on the Clyde has been disrupted.

Britain's participation in NATO's computer simulated run-through of World War Three (WINTEX) has been hampered by action taken within the Computer Signals Organisation which supplies essential information to the Secret Intelligence Service and Ministry of Defence's military intelligence establishment.

John Mill

the strikers and do not comply with government contingency plans.

By threatening mass lockouts, the government itself is dictating the pace of the action. So far the national leadership has not developed a strategy to regain the impetus. Their official policy is to take any disruptive action up to the point where suspensions are imminent, and then to back down. Where suspensions are threatened to individuals who refuse to do the work of strikers, those individuals are pulled out on strike themselves. This defuses the situation and leads to confusion, rather than providing the sort of escalation necessary to win.

When 80 members in eight DHSS offices around the Newcastle area were threatened with suspension for opening the post one day later as a result of 9 March, civil servants in offices across all government departments in the city walked out in protest. At the Newcastle central DHSS office, where 8,500 people work in the largest white collar complex in Europe, no action was taken. The branch executive committee of the clerical union, the CPSA, is totally controlled by the *Militant* tendency: they met that morning and rationalised their refusal to organise a walk-out by claiming that the supervisory union, the SPCS, and the manual union, the CSU, would not support it. The floor reps had an angry lunchtime meeting where it became apparent that many members wanted to strike that afternoon.

Unfortunately this was not an isolated incident. On Friday 13th, when mass walk-outs over the Liverpool Customs and Excise suspensions took place across the country, the Newcastle Central Office branch committee thought it more important to picket Keith Joseph 20 miles away than to organise action. Similarly at an all-members meeting three days prior to the one day strike, discussion on the pay campaign was ruled out of order.

The *Militant* tendency is the dominant force in the CPSA Broad Left and has a general line of calling for an escalation of the dispute. However, they are reluctant to lead any protest action of short duration. Yet this is the only way open to us to build up the confidence of the membership and to force the official leadership to call all-out action. In effect, they have been tailing the official line.

The organised intervention of the Broad Left during the dispute has been pathetic. No national leaflet have been produced. In London the only public meeting held was initiated by the rank and file *Redder Tape* grouping as part of a joint campaign. The Broad Left are managing, however, to organise an elaborate campaign for the forthcoming CPSA elections.

Redder Tape has argued for the the necessity of an all-out strike and an interim strategy of indefinite strike action in any office where suspensions are threatened. These arguments are gaining support among other activists in the local strike committees, but because of the undemocratic nature of the Council of Civil Service Unions set-up, it is impossible to influence national policy through normal channels. The only way we can influence events is by pressing for unofficial action on a massive scale.



The last stand that failed

The working class movement in Scotland suffered a serious defeat last month. The workforce of the Talbot car plant in Linwood, near Glasgow, overthrew a shop stewards' committee recommendation to fight the closure of the plant with an occupation. Hopes were buried of a decisive struggle against unemployment which could have aroused the whole of Clydeside as UCS did ten years ago. A few days later a major session of the Socialist Workers Party national committee meeting was devoted to a discussion on the lessons of the defeat. We print here five of the main contributions to that discussion.

Peter Bain (TGWU Senior Steward, Linwood):

Here was a factory with a deserved reputation of being well organised and militant, which even as late as May last year was the first factory in the West of Scotland to vote at a mass meeting to strike on the Day of Action. For a long number of years it was a militants' factory in which the SWP had a good presence.

It is important that we try and understand what happened at Linwood. Just over two years ago there were more than 9000 workers at Linwood. By May 22nd of this year the factory will be closed unless the mass meeting can be overturned and a fight back organised.

Six weeks ago, at the beginning of the campaign, we estimated that 20 to 25 per cent of the workforce were committed to a hard fight back. There was a smaller minority of total scum who were never going to do anything—the scum—who could always be relied upon to refuse to pay levies and to work overtime.

But five weeks later a mass meeting by two to one rejected the stewards' recommendation to occupy the factory.

I will try and summarise some of the

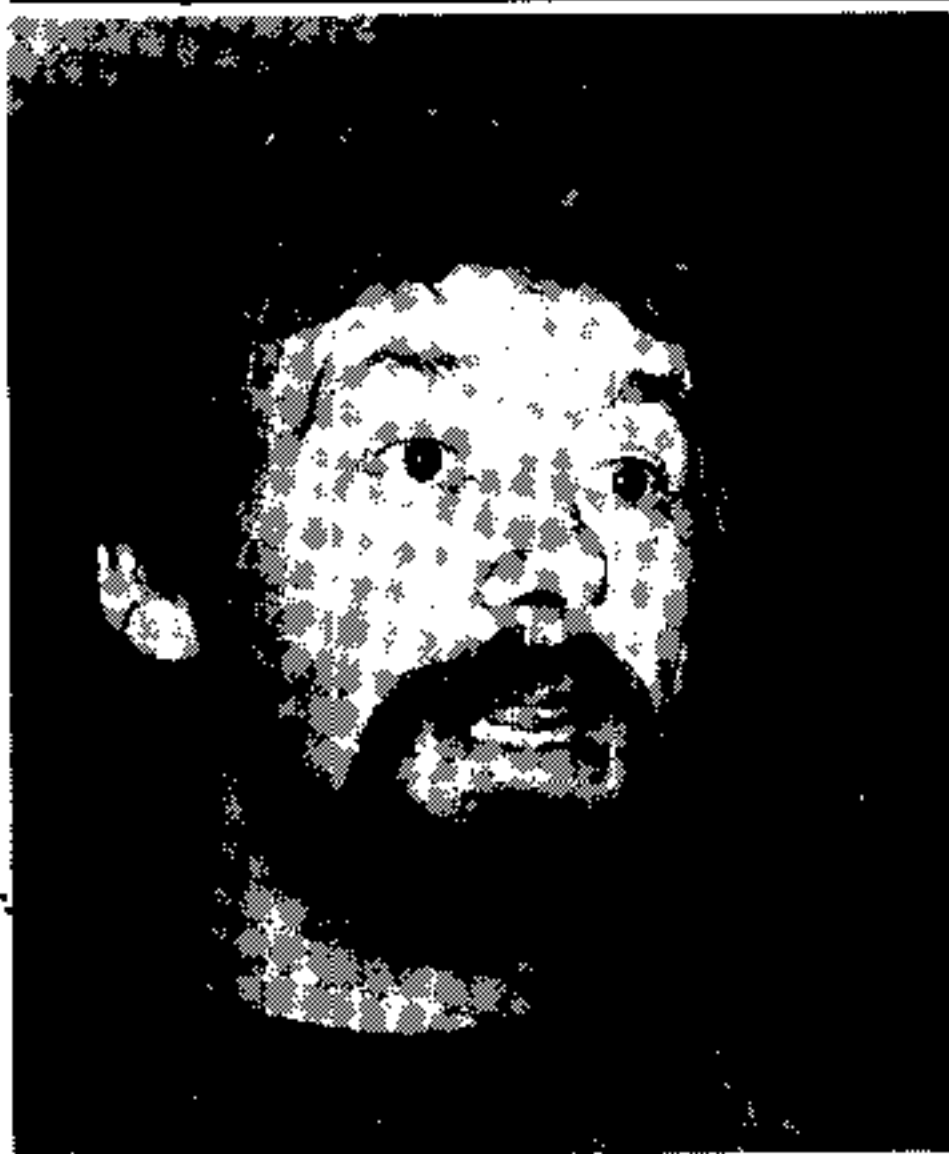
things that are important. We knew the place was going to close. We in the SWP argued that the rescue plan of five years ago was a stop gap measure and that the factory was still due for closure. Over the five year period there were a series of arguments about how to fight the company, which were in fact about whether you recognised that their long term intention was closure. We unfortunately failed to convince the majority of stewards and workers that this was the fight that we would have to face.

The majority of stewards embarked on a strategy to convince the owners that Linwood was a viable plant. As a result a whole series of concessions were made to them. Conditions inside the factory were undermined, and a single section would not automatically be supported if it took action. So that over five years the organisation was undermined.

The trouble we faced when the final closure was announced was that in a period of five weeks we had to overcome the legacy of five years.

That legacy was not of massive defeats, but of the continual battering of sections into backing off and from fighting on this or that issue. Even on wages we were not mas-

Photo: John Sturrock



Willie Lee

sively defeated. In fact in the last few years we have begun to catch up the Coventry rate. The trouble is that the fight for wages and conditions was confined to the senior stewards and didn't involve the mass of the workforce.

In the end we were able to convince the majority of the stewards that the strategy that we had outlined for five years was correct and that the only way to defend the factory was to occupy it. In addition we won the argument that in the present atmosphere the fight couldn't be won in isolation but we needed support from other workers. This support was not simply won at the bureaucratic level. There were rank-and-file dockers, seamen and lorry drivers who were saying that they would ensure that as soon as we gave the word a total black would be put on. Although we didn't rely on these assurances and would still have had to mount some strong pickets, the level of support was undoubtedly there.

In financial terms the TGWU executive had already agreed to make any action official and even the AUEW had been forced to indicate that they would also support us.

Even with that background we lost the crucial vote at the mass meeting. The reason was clearly the legacy of the past five years, plus the delay between the company's announcement in February and the final mass meeting to decide on action at the end of March. This is one of the lessons—in a closure situation there is no way you can afford any lulls in the campaign.

During this long period some of the back-

'We had to argue that it doesn't matter if the boss makes money. If there is no profit then the government will have to pay up because we have the muscle to force them to give us the right to work.'

ward elements began to feel more confident.

We had a bad mass meeting two weeks into the campaign in which it was clear that the stewards were backing off, followed by a two week period before another stewards meeting.

I believe our strategy was correct in building up support outside the factory in order to boost the confidence of those working inside and to try and keep the momentum of the campaign going without any lulls.

Lastly on the question of the specific tactics. We were in a situation where in order to convince people we could win we had to spell out exactly what the tactics were. We didn't simply talk about unspecified industrial action. This was used against us in the mass meeting as some argued that the company knew what we were going to do, but there was no alternative but to spell out the necessary tactics to win.

In the circumstances I think our organisation did as much as we could have done. We had at least one SWP bulletin a week. We did have once a week a Right To Work presence outside the factory which did relate to those who wanted to fight—they were pleased to see us there. Our standing inside the factory is as high as it has ever been.

But nevertheless it is a terrible defeat not just for our party but for workers everywhere and we must try and learn the lessons from the defeat and ensure that they are not made elsewhere.

Willie Lee

The last three months have been the most exciting of my life. The amount of work put in by the Linwood members and the district have been immense.

We knew that to win the struggle we had to win the political argument on the shop floor. We had to challenge the ideas that most workers have—ideas such as the boss has to make a profit, otherwise there won't be any jobs. We had to argue that it doesn't matter if the boss makes money. If there is no profit then the government will have to pay up because we have the muscle to force them to give us the right to work.

Another problem is the confidence to win

the struggle. Unfortunately in our situation it wasn't possible to use minorities to initiate action.

Immediately after the mass meeting those stewards who wanted to fight held a meeting to see if there was anything that could be done to reverse the situation.

We have to argue that there is no alternative work and the redundancy money is no substitute for a job.

There is confusion in the factory, with some of those realising the redundancy money isn't enough. Others have given up. But we have to continue the argument that we can fight the redundancies.

At the end of the day if the factory closes in May then we will have to leave the factory with the maximum number of members and contacts as possible. So that if the factory does close at least we can say we did our best. There is no doubt that the work the SWP has put in will have some lasting effect. We now have good sales of the paper round a number of doles in the area. The Right To Work presence of orange jackets outside the factory was great and not only influenced the workers inside the factories but those taking part in the picket. Despite the fact that the closure will affect a number of members who will lose their jobs and be blacked from working again we will have helped to increase the size and morale of the party.

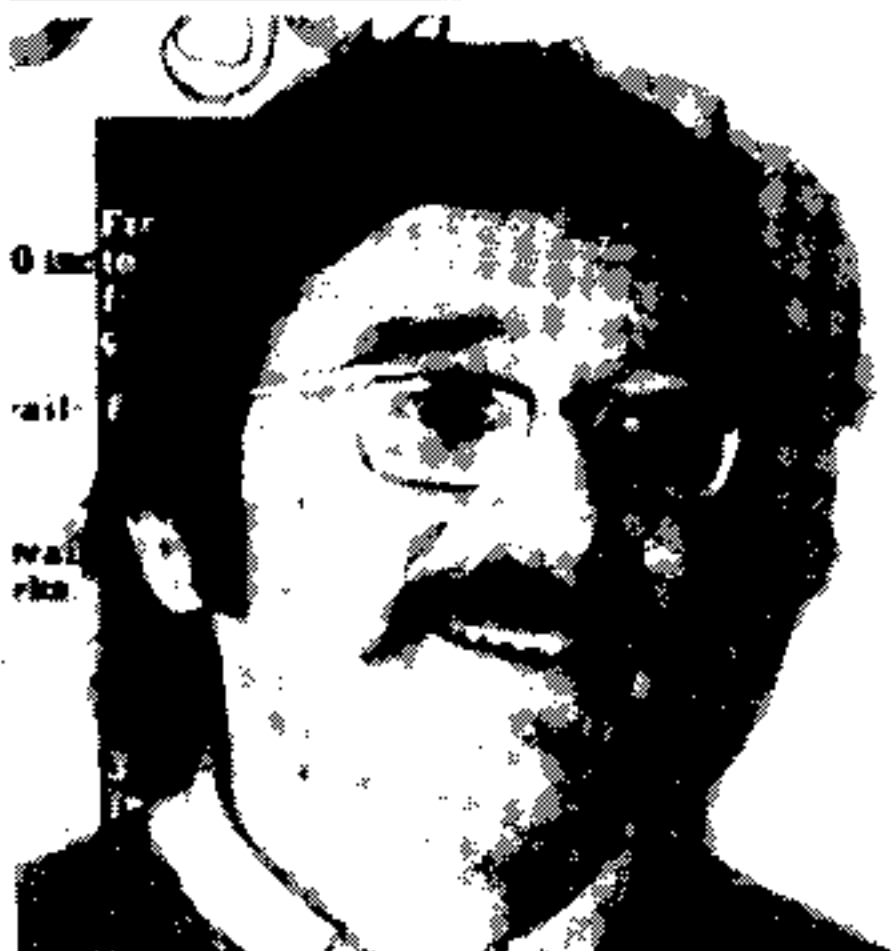
Mick Brightman (AUEW Steward, Gardners, Eccles)

It's interesting to compare Linwoods with Gardners. Gardners was different in that it was viable and part of a highly profitable multi-national. It was also substantially different in size.

But there are similarities. The emphasis at Linwoods seems to have been on getting an overall fight. Of course this is necessary and we tried to do it at Gardners. At the same time we always have to relate to the militant minority and challenge the idea that closures are inevitable. We have to relate to the militant minority because that's where our members are, that's where our potential supporters are and that's where the fight will start.

Let me give the example of Longbridge to explain what I mean. When the company victimised the six workers for organising a demonstration the way to defend them was to get the fight started from the sections these men represented and then to call on the rest of the workforce to support them. It wasn't done like that. A mass meeting of the whole workforce was called and asked to take action. But people at such a meeting can all too easily feel that they can avoid trouble by backing down. At Gardners my section would support me if I was victimised, but to expect the whole factory to just support is completely different.

In our propaganda we have to be very hard about the right of minorities to take action to defend jobs. No one has the right



Peter Bain

'We lost the crucial vote at the mass meeting. The reason was the legacy of the last five years plus the delay between the closure announcement and the final massive meeting to decide on action.'

'The problem is the disappearance of sectional militancy. We have to carefully identify the minority who will fight. Otherwise we will end up saying we are so small that we can do nothing.'



Tony Cliff

for not fighting. The downturn is not a reason for complete collapse of morale and struggle.

We have to carefully identify the minority who will fight. The problem is the disappearance of the sectional militancy. There is too much measured day work and not enough piece rate system. The piece rate system saved Gardners because it gave the individual stewards something to fight around.

We must always think about the minority and not the whole factory. Otherwise we will end up saying we are so small that we can do nothing. All or nothing is extremely dangerous, we have to work around the minority action.

There is also danger in saying that the problem is the politics of the leadership and therefore we can do nothing about it. Politics for revolutionaries is where industrial muscle meets with generalisation. It is not generalisation instead of industrial muscle. We don't accept the separation of maximum and minimum demands like those who on May Day demonstrations talk about the socialist paradise and at work only talk about a 5p pay rise. We have to make the political argument at the point of the industrial muscle and not in the abstract, otherwise there is no class politics.

Unless we understand this we will fall into the trap of talking about the downturn instead of arguing with and supporting the minority who are prepared to fight. We must start from the minority and generalise outwards, not the other way round. If we cannot get a minority fight then there is no real class politics.

to sell someone else's job. We have to support the right of the minority to take action, to occupy and put up pickets even with the difficulties this brings.

I'm not saying that this directly relates to Linwood. All the evidence suggests that the die was cast a long time ago and the situation was completely different there. Nevertheless I don't think we should forget our role in trying to create the atmosphere and support the minority that will take action.

In Gardners our section held its own meetings and decided that whatever the mass meeting of manual and staff unions decided we would take action. Although we carried the vote at the mass meeting at the end of the day a number of sections had already decided that whatever the outcome of the vote we were going to fight. I think this made a difference at the meetings. We were able to turn the inevitability of redundancy on its head into the inevitability of a fight, and that affected the morale.

John Deason (Secretary, Right to Work Campaign)

The real state of shop stewards organisation is extremely relevant to how the struggle develops. In a large factory with a full-time leadership if there isn't a strong sectional organisation of stewards between the full-time leadership and the shop floor then it's asking a hell of a lot to expect to just switch on mass meetings to vote for action. My reaction to the vote at Linwood when the vote for occupation was two to one against is not 'how miserable', but 'how marvellous that one third were still ready to fight'.

The reason we need the smaller unit within the factory is that to fight for jobs now is not simply a tactical operation occupying the factory, but you are calling for an occupation against the employer, against the government and for an immediate attempt to win support outside the factory. In the present climate occupations can't be won without a very high level of political action. Against you is the carrot of redundancy money and worse, the all-or-nothing situation that if you fight, all the redundancy money is threatened.

Even the best of militants hesitate in this situation.

Given this situation you can see why you

can't just go to a mass meeting without the smaller sectional units. It's a question of understanding that one militant can win over twenty of his workmates, but he can't win an entire factory. In a small factory two or three good stewards by their personal contact with every worker can overcome the odds, but in a large factory it's the fight within the sections that's crucial.

We have talked about the dangers of bureaucratisation within the workplace. You can see in Linwood how at the crucial moment the weakness of sectional organisation was decisive.

It's no use pretending that there is some other reason for it. I wish we could say that the fight at Linwood was sold down the river by the national union officials, but it isn't true. There has never been a factory that was pledged so much support before taking action. Support that included the TGWU executive, the STUC and even the AUEW executive.

Official blacking of all imported PSA goods was promised, a meeting of 700 West of Scotland shop stewards pledged financial backing and agreed to re-convene immediately in the case of any action at Linwood. Further, our comrades succeeded in convincing a large number of workers that the fight could be won given the massive level of support built up outside the factory and the present weakness of the government after the miners and their unpopular budget.

The problem was nothing to do with our comrades, but of the lack of sectional leadership capable of carrying the arguments. The importance of Linwood for us is that it pinpoints the problems inside many workplaces when it comes to resisting redundancy.

Tony Cliff

When we talk about the differences in situations between different factories we have to be careful. Of course we must look at the specifics, but we must integrate the specifics with the general. In 1971 there were more than 200 factory occupations including UCS and Fisher Bendix. At present the only occupations are tiny factories. This is what we mean by the downturn: there is a radical change in the situation.

The danger now is that the argument about the downturn can be used as an excuse

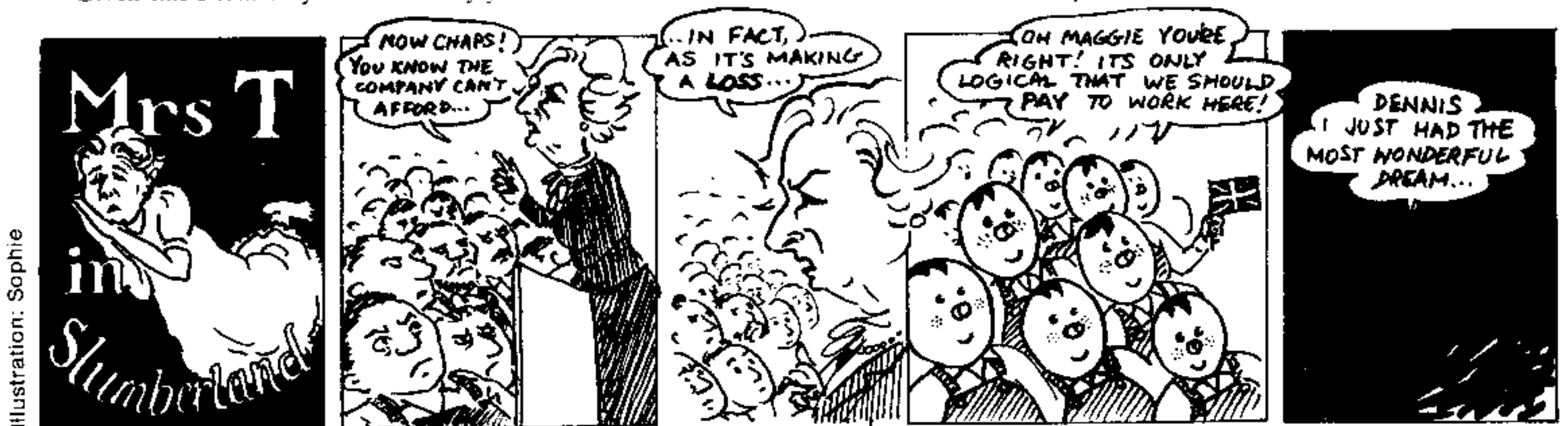
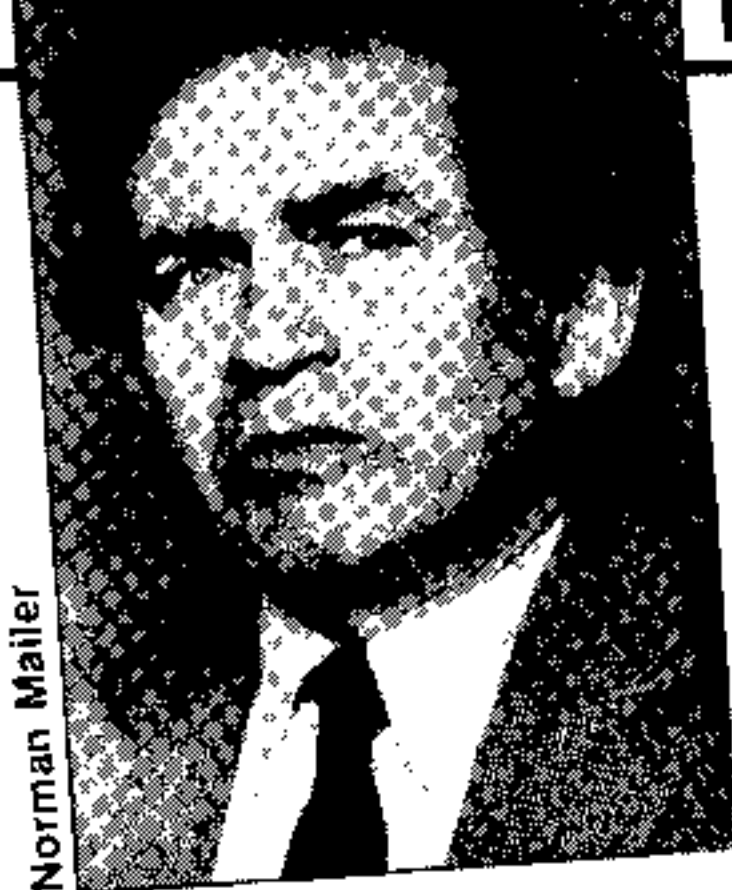


Illustration: Sophie

Norman Mailer



The best war novel of them all?

Jim Scott looks at Norman Mailer's *The Naked and the Dead*

War and our awareness of war has been a major determinant of socialist consciousness in this century. Conflicts which before would have been relatively localised affairs became global, involving millions rather than thousands. Humanity's ability to control technology became distorted beyond rational belief, and the great edifices of the labour movement crumbled before the national chauvinism of their leaderships.

For most of us growing up in the 40s and 50s it was the memory of the Second World War that impinged on our lives. War stories and games were part of our youth culture—long summer days spent ambushing Jerries and Japs, long TV-less nights spent reading war stories and comics. No wonder that when we got older there was continued interest in the crop of novels which appeared in the war's aftermath.

Mailer maintains that his reason for enlisting in the Second World War was to gather enough experience to allow him to write a war novel which would place him on a literary level with his earlier heroes, Dos Passos, Steinbeck and J T Farrell.

The result was a spell in a Texas rifle regiment of 'good old boys and share croppers' who were, to say the least, ambivalent to New York Jewish intellectuals—a couple of years learning to be a passable rifleman, keeping his mouth shut, observing and surviving.

The end result was 605 pages of what Mailer, modestly calls the best novel of the war—and what I think I would call the best novel so far of *any* war.

The difference between Mailer's novel and the other writers of the World Wars, is his attitude. It is not simply the 'War is Hell, but we had to do it' approach, nor is it in the liberal pacifism of the writers of World War One.

Mailer sees the war as an extension of politics and economics and comes closer to a Marxist analysis than any other novelist on the subject. He is also extremely pessimistic: we'll examine his pessimism below.

The story line concerns the misadventures of one small undermanned platoon during the invasion of one small but highly fortified island in the Pacific.

The hard core of the platoon have been together for some time and have received a battering at a previous invasion, in an incident concerning a landing in rubber boats, an incident which for them seems in many ways to be the beginning of time. All other experiences are determined from this one traumatic day: all friendships (or to be more truthful relationships, since this includes likes and dislikes) also.

The characters in the platoon are drawn

from all walks and varieties of American life. Croft, the master sergeant is, a cowboy, a Texas bigot who 'don't like Jews or Niggers or goddam commie union organisers', a mean man who has failed in his family life in a society where God and family are revered.

For Martinez, the Mexican American scout, the army is the only escape from the poverty of the *barrio*. Martinez regards his uniform as a licence to 'screw white protestant girls', but he is scared all the time and draws his courage from Croft's regard for him as the 'best goddam scout in the army'.

Red Valsen, the cynic, the escapee from the mining towns and Swedish communities of Montana, down the coal mine at thirteen, at eighteen on the bum following the great American hobo trail and doing in his kidneys in the process, is a human being frightened to make friends.

Gallagher is the Boston Irish prole, conned by the Catholic church, conned by the right wing Catholic politicians: Mailer calls him 'the revolutionary reversed' a 'premature anti-Communist'.

Wilson, the Good Old Boy, straight from Hazard County, is only interested in hooch, sex and repairing bicycles, but comes through the novel as one of the most human and sympathetic characters.

The officer caste

The interaction between these and other minor characters is in many ways the beauty of the novel. Mailer is in fact saying, 'This is the American working class, these are the people who died to save the arses of people who are not fit to kiss theirs, and by writing of them I salute them.'

If this was all Mailer was doing he would have produced a major war novel, but just one among others. What makes the *Naked and the Dead* a great novel is something more. It is his use of the officer caste to explain the real nature of the war.

Here Mailer uses what might seem to be an artificial confrontation between Hearn, a liberal-toying-with-Marxism member of the intellegensia, and the General in command of the invasion, Cummings. A more or less straight forward fascist, Cummings has Hearn appointed as his orderly officer and commences a cat and mouse game. This ends by Cummings given Hearn a practical example of the nature of power in totalitarian situations which leads to Hearn's death.

In one of his 'conversations' with Hearn, General Cummings explains the war.

'I like to call it a process of historical energy. As kinetic energy, a country is organisation, co-ordinated effort, your

epithet fascism. Historically the purpose of this war is to translate American potential into kinetic energy. The concept of fascism is far sounder than Communism if you consider it, for it is grounded in men's actual natures, it merely started in the wrong country, America is going to absorb that dream.

'Your men of power in America, I tell you, are becoming conscious of their real aims for the first time on our history. Watch. After the war our foreign policy is going to be far more naked, far less hypocritical than it has ever been. We are no longer going to cover our eyes with our left hand while our right is extending the imperialist paw.'

Is it any wonder that George Orwell described this as the greatest book to come out of World War Two? Is it any wonder also that when the Vietnam War came along Mailer, after fifteen years in an existential wilderness, could respond to the movement against such a war, a war which epitomised his worst fears as expressed in 1949. And perhaps it to this period, the years immediately after the war, that we must date Mailer's pessimism regarding the left and its ability to make any major impact on American society.

The years in which Mailer wrote *Naked and the Dead* were the beginning of a period of unprecedented reaction in American society. America found itself catapulted to the forefront in the defence of reactionary regimes through the world. The launching of the House Un-American Activities Committee and the McCarthy witch hunts, simply finished the American left for a decade or more. For Mailer to lose confidence in the left completely in this period and to adopt the craven road of his erstwhile heroes Dos Passos and Steinbeck would have been understandable.

His response was, however typically unorthodox, as if to prove to those who had lauded his book that they may have read it but they certainly didn't understand it. His next novel, *Barbara Shore* was an uncompromising attack on McCarthyism, secret police, Stalinism and the Permanent War Economy.

The resulting reviews were predictable. Consider just one:

'It is relatively rare to discover a novel whose obvious intention is to debauch as many readers as possible, mentally, morally, physically and politically.

Bad reviews from the right he could probably have stood. But the left was in general no kinder. He had made the fatal 'mistake' of including in his new novel a total synopsis of T N Vances' essays on the Permanent War Economy. This resulted in a review in the *American Militant* by J P Cannon which was at its best patronising, at its worst dismissive.

Mailer retreated under the blows from left and right and his next novel, *The Deer Park* came perilously close to being a pot boiler. His next fifteen years were devoted almost exclusively to journalism—but there would be enough there for another five articles.

A reformist solution to the crisis

The road that failed

The so-called Alternative Economic Strategy has become a virtual orthodoxy for whole sections of the labour movement. Its arguments that there is a way out of the economic crisis through import controls, planning agreements and state intervention in selected industries will be going through union conferences virtually on the nod, with only a handful of dissenting voices from revolutionaries.

Two new books contain the arguments for the Strategy. *The Road from Thatcherism* (Lawrence and Wishart £2.95) by Sam Aaronovitch is being widely pushed by the Communist Party as encapsulating its views. *The Alternative Economic Strategy* by the Conference of Socialist Economists London Working Group (£2.50) is being less widely pushed, but may be taken more seriously since it is by academic economists. But Sue Cockerill argues that neither offers a serious way out of the crisis, since, like the Alternative Economic Strategy itself, they are flawed by the belief that limited forms of state intervention can deal with the fundamental defects of the system.

With mass unemployment and few success stories in the fight against the Tories, the ideas of the Alternative Economic Strategy are bound to get a wide hearing and substantial support in the unions and the Labour Party. But it must be doubted how many people would be enthused by reading either of these books; both of them are obsessed with the details of the present economic and political set-up.

These are books by economists, discussing the methods available to reformist governments in managing an essentially capitalist economy and getting it back to full employment, higher productivity, and of course, better social services and housing. If this strikes a chord, it's probably because the AES is nothing more than Keynesian economics brushed up with more emphasis on public investment spending, planning agreements, import controls, and a large measure of rhetoric about democratic control, the women's movement, community groups etc, tacked on the end.

Of course, it isn't sufficient to label something 'Keynesian' and dismiss it. But it is important to note that the underlying analysis of the way the system works (leaving aside the role class struggle plays in the whole thing, which I'll return to later) doesn't go much beyond Keynes, and therefore the consensus which existed in the Labour and Tory leaderships from 1940 until formally repudiated by Callaghan with the Labour government's deflationary policy of 1976. Although the authors of these books state that governments must do more than just expand demand to get out of the crisis, they both seem to miss the point that actually it wasn't demand management which produced the long post-war boom at all. Nor is it government policy which has caused the present crisis.

Since neither book deals with the world crisis of capitalism, they avoid a number of awkward questions: why has growth slowed, profits fallen and unemployment increased in every major capitalist economy? Why is there a world crisis in steel, cars, shipping, engineering? Aaronovitch presents us with a picture of British capitalism's

weakness relative to West Germany and Japan, blaming it on excessive overseas investment by British capitalists and the persistent neglect of basic industries, stemming from the imperial past.

All this is undeniable. But it is very far from explaining why the long boom is over on a global level, why unemployment is higher in some other advanced countries than it is in Britain, why whole areas of industrial heartland in Western Europe and America resemble only too closely regions like Merseyside and the West of Scotland.

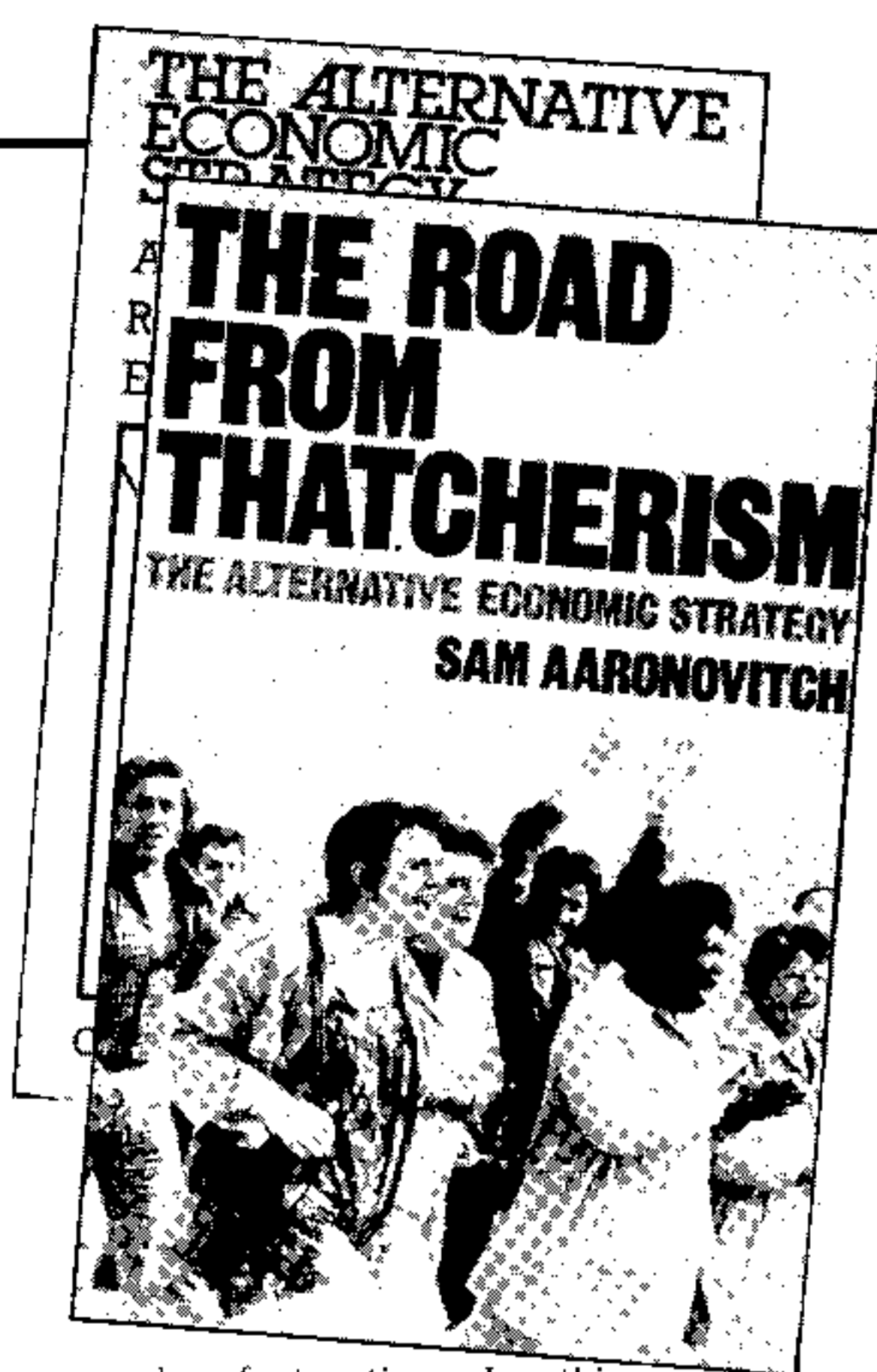
The Alternative Economic strategy is nothing more than Keynesian economics brushed up with more emphasis on public investment spending, planning agreements and import controls.

If those questions were taken seriously, it would soon appear that the solutions proposed by the AES actually don't face up to the reality of the crisis. It isn't simply a British crisis, caused by monetarist policies, but a world crisis in which the problem isn't too little investment, but too much. In terms of the logic of international capital, too many cars, too much steel, too much of everything is being produced for production to be sufficiently profitable. Of course, it's an insane kind of logic, and in a world where things were produced because they were needed, we would want (and could produce) more food, more steel and so on.

Aaronovitch states that the economy after the implementation of the AES will remain essentially capitalist:

'At a rough estimate such changes would leave nearly 80 per cent of manufacturing output in private hands, or 70-75 per cent of total industrial output.'

'Enterprises would operate on a basis of a code of conduct on which central government would, through consultation, exercise certain critical influences, such as on the rate of interest



and...of taxation... In this sense "the market" and the "price mechanism" would play an important role... Moreover, through the need of enterprises to supply what is demanded, competition stimulates innovation and responsiveness.'

So, somehow a system which remains capitalist can escape the logic of capitalism with the wave of a planning agreement.

The CSE Group tries to come to grips with the problem more seriously, but in so doing only illuminates its own confusion, and unfortunately along the way, tends to suggest that it is the rising share of wages and shop-floor strength which are to some degree responsible for the crisis. Capitalism would, apparently, expand indefinitely, if demand were kept up, were it not for the fact that rising wages begin to bite into profits.

So what is the solution?

'As we argue in Chapter 6, an essential part of the industrial strategy is to reduce the role of profit in the economy, both as a source of funds to finance investment and as the criterion that determines where investments should or should not be made.'

But turning to Chapter 6, we find: 'It is not entirely clear what role profit is supposed to play in the whole process (of planning).'

They go on to say, 'We would argue that the level of profit need not be the determining factor as long as appropriate accompanying policies are adopted.'

And off we go again, into control of finance, planned trade, democratic involvement in the running of industry.

But let's assume, for the moment, that the British crisis could be resolved by taking over the banks and insurance

'The fact that the Alternative Economic Strategy won't fundamentally touch capitalist production relations doesn't reduce the problem, but makes it more dangerous. It's like snapping around capitalism's ankles instead of going for its jugular.'

companies, and exercising leverage on private companies to take investment decisions which would lead to full employment (with price and trade controls to take care of inflation and balance of payments problems, could we expect the banks and the multinationals (as always the two prime villains of the piece compared to good old British industrial capital) to sit back and watch this 'great shift of power in favour of the working class?' Our authors' response to this appears to be twofold: resistance from the capitalists is to be expected, but it can be minimised/neutralised.

Aaronovitch pins his hopes on large numbers of managers seeing the basic reasonableness of the whole idea:

'A government of the left, with popular support and powerful leverage of its own, must attempt to harness the energy, resources, initiative and self-interest of many sections of employers and management, together with the small and medium firms and the self-employed who would still be crucially important for the fate of the economy.'

'Policies designed to expand the economy would benefit privately owned firms: there would be growing markets and opportunities for investment, with, where appropriate, substantial financial and other support. Profitability would come from improvements in volume and efficiency.'

Even the multinationals will not necessarily be excluded from making their contribution:

Inside the system

Capitalism is a system based upon money and, according to its apologists, the only motive for doing anything is money. They believe that it is possible to buy anything, literally anything. An example of this is the defence of Sir Roger Hollis offered by one of his friends: 'I am sure he was not the slightest bit inclined to have been a KGB stooge. I don't believe he would ever have been a spy. What could they possibly offer him? He had plenty of money.'

We don't know and don't care whether Hollis worked for the KGB. What we do know is that other agents like Philby and Blunt were driven to their acts by a disgust at the capitalist system and a genuine hatred of fascism. For us the only tragedy is that their idealism was warped by Stalinism. It is a symptom of the collapse of capitalism that its apologists cannot understand that a desire for peace and freedom might be a genuine human motive quite independent of its cash value.

'A second line of action is to try to bring the multinationals within a framework of cooperation so that they can contribute to the overall strategy. The more substantial their operations in Britain, the more reason they have for wanting them to be profitable. The key instrument would obviously be the planning agreement.'

But just in case they're not as keen as this to help the AES, the mobilisation of the labour movement will mean that their actions can be 'monitored'! Discussing the internationalisation of capital, Aaronovitch even lends some credence to the idea of codes of conduct enforceable on multinationals by such bodies as the OECD and the UN! (This is followed by ritual lipservice to international trade union solidarity.)

It is clear from these comments that the working class figures not as the initiator of the strategy, but as its supporters. What is required of organised workers is not independent action, but back up to a government of the left, a convenient threat to be waved in the face of the capitalists if and when necessary.

The likely outcome of such a strategy is either that the government of the left collapses before the power of capital, and abandons all but the most trivial of reforms, or that it unleashes a movement which is ill-prepared for a decisive confrontation with capital, with consequences similarly horrific to those in Chile in 1973.

The fundamental contradictions in the Alternative Economic Strategy can be summarised:

Firstly, the world economy is basically ignored except that Britain must insulate its economy from it through 'planned trade' and the control of financial flows, in order that expansion can occur. This expansion will then turn out to be good for everybody in the end, through increased trade especially with undeveloped countries. Given our earlier analysis of the nature of the world crisis, an expanding, modernised Britain (even supposing these measures would achieve that) cannot possibly alleviate the ills of the world system: exactly the reverse in fact. And to suggest that it would contribute to the development of poor countries is to ignore the whole complex reasons why such countries cannot develop within a world capitalist system. Although Aaronovitch dismisses the revolutionary perspective of world socialism, it is his ideas which are utopian.

In this context it is interesting to note his lack of understanding of why it is that 'planning' has failed in what he calls the socialist countries. This failure is attributed to over-centralisation,

excessive bureaucracy, the lack of sensitivity to demand through the absence of any kind of market. No mention of the arms race determining patterns of capital spending or international competition. Of course not, since it undermines the whole notion that countries can plan their economies within national boundaries, given the correct domestic and foreign policies.

Secondly, there is the question of what national and international capital will do if a left government attempts anything like the programme of the AES. Aaronovitch seems to suggest that the AES will enjoy broad support even among capitalists, and the CSE Group, though more worried, thinks that the problem can be overcome. Yet the reality is that withdrawal from the EEC, nationalisation of the financial sector and control over the rest of the private sector in one way or another, would deeply antagonise capital, not least because of the mobilisation of the working class which would accompany it.

The fact that the AES won't fundamentally touch capitalist relations of production doesn't resolve the problem at all, but makes it much more dangerous. It's like snapping round capitalism's ankles instead of going for its jugular. Either the AES is watered down so far that it can't deal with the problems of the economy or it is faced with a confrontation its proponents neither want nor are prepared for.

Thirdly, are we in the business of making capital more efficient and profitable? Aaronovitch seems to think so. He thinks we ought to be concerned about research and development into aerospace, for example. He thinks that a publicly owned ICL can have a revolutionary impact on technology in the economy (of course the workforce would be 'democratically controlling' it). Do we actually need or want these products? If we don't, if all this is important because of international competition, the AES is a strategy for tying the working class ever more closely to the needs of capital, not a transitional strategy towards socialism. At bottom, his analysis is that the crisis is caused by mistaken government policy, and that the working class has many common interests with capital in putting it all right.

We are left with a picture, not of the working class gaining in strength and consciousness through self-activity, in its battles with the employers, but with the image of the 'people' harnessed together to overcome 'Britain's' problems.

It is a strategy that will lead to disillusion or disaster, certainly not to socialism.



Painting for the Fuhrer

Art in the Third Reich
by Berthold Hinz

This is a fascinating account of the role of art under the Nazis. The book deals with the direction art took under Hitler's rule and the need Nazism had to develop a genre of its own especially in the visual arts and architecture.

The section on the 'battle for art' deals with the Nazi campaign against abstract art before they came to power. The Nazis fused two developments in their onslaught. They took over the argument of the old national cultural traditionalists, putting forward the line that modern art is 'degenerate art' and belongs to the degenerate Weimar republic; both needed to be destroyed, the state and its art.

Before the rise of industrial capitalism the German middle class held a strong unifying influence over the other classes by being the upholders of humanistic national culture which all in society shared. The middle class, having failed to be generals in carrying out their own democratic revolution like the Eng-

lish and French bourgeoisie did the next best thing and became the teachers and professors. After the rise of industrial capitalism in Germany such a culture came under pressure: no longer could it hold together the new classes being created by the rise of industrialism.

But that did not prevent those who yearned for the cultural past from putting up a successful fight against any new forms of art. Because they were the teachers, professors, critics and museum curators, they could prevent modern art from appearing and becoming acceptable in the pre-war German art world. The arguments that were developed by these art bureaucrats against the rise of modern art were taken over by the Nazis to be used against 'degenerate art.'

The Nazis were a mass organisation. For everyone who had a grievance, the Nazis strove to find an answer. The main centre of their support was the lower middle class: the shop keeper going broke, the student who couldn't complete his studies, the government clerk who had just lost his job. Painters belong

overwhelmingly to this class and many were ruined not only by the economic crisis but also by competing art forms especially modern art.

The creation of the Weimar republic destroyed the old control over art institutions and modern art flourished as in no other land. Hinz however makes the point that despite the success of modernism it made little impact on the masses, and, with the exception of a few artists who worked directly for the labour movement, the modernists made little effort to make their work meaningful to a mass audience. The Nazis linked the despair of life under the Weimar republic with 'degenerate' modern art. This appealed to conservative artists and it also deflected real problems into abstract arguments thus finding wide support. Even the German Communist Party were not above calling these artists nasty names. Clearly as the crisis deepened modern artists became more isolated.

Isolation

Hinz lays the blame for this isolation on the modern artists themselves, and I feel that a weakness of the book is a lack of reference to the political situation during the period. The blame must be put on those opposing Hitler. The failure of the Communist Party to unify and defeat fascism by providing revolutionary leadership is the core of the problem. It would be a miracle of human endeavour for a handful of artists to have survived and preserved their art against such odds and *on their own*.

It is not a difficult act of the imagination for us to see that if such leadership had been given not only would the position of the working class have been dramatically changed but the CP would have been at the centre of a polarisation of all those in society who were seeking real change. The success would not only have meant increases in party membership, but would have meant pulling the masses behind a party that delivered real deeds.

There can be no doubt that given such a lead the isolated artists would have flocked to such an organisation able to defy the Nazi taunts and that the sight of the working class fighting for power would have provided for such artists a real subject to depict.

Modernism

The bulk of Hinz's book is a detailed description of official Nazi art. He argues that the Nazis produced no new art. They only made official and forced on to artists a tradition of painting that had already been killed off by modernism. Hinz explains that the rise of bourgeois art meant the replacement of stylism by realism. The patronage of the courts gave way to the freedom of the capitalist art market. By the end of the nineteenth century realism was becoming restrictive and unrepresentative and was succeeded by modernism.

The importance of culture as a means of giving legitimacy to such a brutal regime as the Nazis cannot be underestimated. The adoption of the old tradition reassured their supporters and sustained the illusion that modern art never really existed. If the mighty German labour movement could be defeated entirely by 1933, the task of eliminating a decade of modern art must have proved a minor one for the Nazis.

Hinz's treatment of this development is excellent. It is clear and presents a powerful exposure of the use of art similar to Berger's *Ways of Seeing*, because he places Nazi art in the context of capitalist art. The book therefore not only explains in detail the nature of Nazi art but also gives a comprehensive account of art history and development.

The book should be read by all who have even the slightest interest in art and may be curious about life under the Nazis. Unfortunately it is expensive, but its stimulating style, clear argument and excellent reproduction place it high in the order of scholarship.

Roger Cox

WHY IMPORT CONTROLS WON'T SAVE JOBS

25p + 15p postage
10 copies £2.25
(post free)

Socialists Unlimited,
265 Seven Sisters Road,
London N4

In the face of growing unemployment and ever-falling living standards, the call for import controls—particularly from some sections of the trade union leadership—is rising to a hysterical chorus. But would import controls save jobs? Would import controls improve living standards? Would the prices in the shops go up or down?

This pamphlet answers these questions.

This is

THE SOCIALIST CASE against import controls.



How they built on buildings

Masters, unions and men

Richard Price

Cambridge University Press £18.50

For the pioneers of labour history, the Webbs and their school, the development of working class institutions, especially the trade unions, was synonymous with the development of working class influence and authority. The struggle to build a viable union organisation and to win recognition from the employers constitutes the bread and butter of the traditional account of the growth of particular unions and of the movement more widely. Early generations of labour historians were inclined to stress the heroic achievements of labour leaders, the battles which were fought and won

so that today we can reap the rewards of higher living standards and an apparently democratic society.

Richard Price's new book, *Masters, unions and men*, dealing with events in the building industry in the 19th century, does not fall into this trap. Price takes as his starting point the industrial experience of the working class and he stresses throughout that his objective is to restore rank and file actions to their rightfully central role within the historical process. Class conflict is key to his account and the central theme of his book is power—that is power and authority within the workplace. Price reviews the development of trade union organisation, both in the building industry and more

generally, and he argues that unions have operated as much to manage discontent as they have to express it.

His story of the building industry begins with the struggles of the 1830s and 1840s, struggles which were directed against the practice of general contracting which was then becoming more common.

Union organisation was still essentially limited, but Price stresses that resistance to the employers was vigorously conducted by rank and file workers before the unions had made significant headway. The central characteristic of relations between employers and workers was their informal and voluntary nature. Employer authority was constantly challenged in the workplace so that by the 1860s the masters prepared themselves for a counter-offensive.

Participation

The more formal structures of collective bargaining which emerged in the 1860s and 1870s were an indication of the employers' success in re-asserting their authority. Boards of conciliation and arbitration were set up, and Price argues that these new institutions did more than formalise relations between employers and workers. The 'mutual negotiation' which resulted from participation in these bodies transformed the status of the unions. Henceforth they could be seen as the legitimate representatives of the workers.

By the 1890s a modern system of industrial relations had emerged in the building industry—as in other major areas of employment. It was characterised by collective agreements and conciliation machinery. Unions had a vital part to play within these formal structures, but they were constrained by the need for employer recognition to 'legitimate' bargaining areas.

Grass roots

Price has a clear analysis within this book of the role of the formal union movement and the part which it played in limiting the unrestricted movements of 'work-groups' in their opposition to the employers. He effectively demonstrates the way in which tensions were built in to the relations between workers at the grass roots and the emerging union bureaucracy. Critics might suggest that he has over-stated his case, for the trade union bureaucracy was still very small in 1914, at least within the building industry, if we compare it with the structure which exists today. Negotiations with employers were, for the most part, still locally based, so that Price's emphasis on the formal, national machinery does seem to be something of an exaggeration for this period. Yet in spite of such hesitations, this book is of value insofar as it clarifies the role of trade unions and the function of the union bureaucracy. And as Price points out, he is dealing with problems which we still face today.

Jan Druker



Life in an institution

Ordinary People
Director: Robert Redford

Films which purport to be about Feelings and Emotions are usually pretty dire. The horrific encounter group movie *Bob and Carol and Ted and Alice* is one example. So too is Woody Allen's *Interiors*, an exposé of a number of extremely unpleasant people bleeding all over one another for ninety minutes. When Robert Redford pronounced on *The South Bank Show* that his new film was about 'middle class people getting back to touch with their feelings' it sounded as if *Ordinary People* would be equally grim.

But the film turned out to be a pleasant surprise. Obviously, as many people have remarked already, its main characters, a bourgeois family from Lake Forest, Illinois, are not ordinary. The father isn't on the point of being made redundant; the mother isn't trying to do two jobs at once and wondering where she's going to get the money to buy new shoes for the kids; the boy isn't going to leave school to face life on the dole. It's not about ordinary people in the real sense of the word and it doesn't pretend to be.

In its own terms however the film is totally authentic. It is about a family trying to regain equilibrium after shattering personal events. The death in a boating accident of the extrovert elder brother, Buck, calls in question the entire family relationship. They bob around helplessly like the overturned shell of Buck's boat, buffeted by feelings they can't understand, can't cope with and can't express. All their fluency, education and material comforts are no guarantee of personal happiness.

The strength of the film is that in the end it is—probably quite unintentionally—a powerful indictment of the family as an institution. The message is that if we are going to relate to one another at all honestly or with any gentleness and understanding then the emotional rules which govern families, both middle class and working class, have to be broken. Operating according to the rules the mother Beth says of her son Conrad: 'Of course I don't hate him. Mothers don't hate their children'.

But her words are totally at odds with her feelings and because she can't bear to face the contradiction she has no way of resolving it.

'People talk but they don't say anything,' Conrad says to his slightly zany, totally unsteretyped psychiatrist. Conrad's progress towards understanding what made him attempt suicide, his internalised feelings about his mother's opinion of him, are what drive the film forward. But there is nothing mawkish or self-indulgent about it. It is the kind of process we all go

through at various times and in our own particular, probably less extreme, ways in trying to sort out both ourselves and our relationships.

Survival in capitalist society usually means ignoring the feelings of others, exploiting weaknesses and so on. This extends to family relationships. If we are saying that life under socialism will be different, then that means rethinking relationships as well. It means sorting out how we really feel about ourselves and other people, rather than playing by the rules. It may be a painful process, but as the ending of *Ordinary People* shows, those who run away are the losers.

Denise Fenn and Jane Ure Smith

Great film, bad plot

The Long Good Friday
Director John Mackenzie

On one level I thought *The Long Good Friday* an outstanding film. The dialogue was good, witty at times in a colloquial way, and the acting was brilliant—especially Bob Hoskins. The filming of London, particularly of the docks area, gave a feeling of authenticity to the whole thing.

But it was the plot itself that in my opinion let the film down. It concerned the redevelopment of the London docks and the plans to site the 1988 Olympic Games there. An East End gangster sets out to enlist the help of the mafia to finance the

building of gambling casinos and clubs and so tap this forthcoming vein of gold.

To me the idea that a gangster from a working class background would be able to get even a sniff of these rich pickings is totally over the top when the establishment upper class mobsters have already got the whole thing well and truly sewn up.

The IRA are woven into the plot as a means of bringing about the downfall of the gang. But their portrayal as just another mob of Irish gangsters no better than their London counterparts is to say the least a slander, marring what in many ways is a great picture.

Jimmy Clarke

OUT NOW
Single copies £1.25 (plus 25p postage). One year's subscription £5 (post free) from: IS Journal, PO Box 82, London E2.

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM XII WINTER 1981

BARRY CLARKE
 Socialism and the State
 • 11
 IS AT THE JAW OF SUCCESS
 Britain, the North Sea
 1980s and 1980s
 • 21
 THE STRUGGLE
 Marx's Theory of Crisis
 and the Crisis?
 • 30
 LETTERS IN THE WATER
 • 72
 ANDY BRYAN
 The Labour of Man
 Morning
 • 73
 THE NEW LEFT
 The European Left and
 the New Leftists
 • 94
 ANDY J. JONES
 Revolutionary
 Anarchism in Spain
 • 99
 A. F. COLLINGS
 Politics of Abstract
 Anarchism?
 • 114

7:84 BLOOD RED ROSES

BY JOHN McGRATH

MON 16 - SAT 21
MARCH
THEATRE ROYAL
STRAFORD B15.

WITH MARY ANN COCHRAN JOANNA KERRIE
REBECCA MCGILVERIAN

70% of the population of this country were 64% of the world!

7:84 Theatre Company Scotland
Blood Red Roses
by John McGrath

Blood Red Roses toured throughout Scotland before ending up at Stratford Theatre Royal, where I saw it. It relates the struggles of Bessie Gordon, from wild rebellion against police and school to focussed anger as a CP militant—against the company she works for in East Kilbride, against her CP union official husband, and against international capitalism as a whole.

After losing her first strike battle, Bessie learns about the nature of multinationals and the need for solidarity action and the next strike is won. In 1979, she fails to save the factory from closure. Victimisation and sacking from a new job follow, and the other workers fail to support her with action. A familiar story.

The play also shows life off the shopfloor: the pains and the pleasures of family life, the husband's chauvinism and the break-up of her marriage. But despite everything, Bessie remains determined to continue fighting for 'a better life'. *Blood Red Roses* is an anti-capitalist play urging renewed industrial militancy, spirit and determination, and given the present generally low level of militancy and ruthless attacks on working class organisation it is to be welcomed.

Unfortunately, McGrath's play is badly flawed, both theatrically and politically. Toytown-style backdrops complement whole chunks of performance that are weighed down with a self-conscious 'charm' in the manner of a tired TV sitcom. Genuine humour and warmth, except in the case of Bessie's father, are lost. The play relates to real experience, but it fails to present it. The writing is sketchy and perfunctory, and often trite—for example, monologues and songs are formalistically presented in a way that actually substitutes for real development and insight in the scenes. The production also plods, and, consequently, feels much too long.

The defects in the writing and presentation inevitably affect the politics of the play, and vice-versa. In his programme notes, McGrath talks about the advantages and disadvantages of fashions like 'trouser suits, Cohn-Bendit, structuralism, the Anti-Nazi League', and states 'industrial militancy is now distinctly out of fashion'.

To see militancy as a 'fashion' implies a personal distance from struggle that very likely accounts for the overriding sentimentality which runs through the play, espe-

A long line of fighting women

In the last four weeks a number of good left wing plays have been touring fringe theatres in London and the provinces. Derek Newark looks at some of them.

cially regarding the role of the Communist Party's involvement in working-class struggles. General political criticism of situations Bessie has been in, of the CP, or even of an 'ultra-left' SWP daughter, is not invited. Identification with Bessie as an individual is invited.

Struggle is individualised, and failures are seen primarily as personal defeats with the real causes hidden from view—why did the factory *have* to close? Why did the workers *not* support Bessie's reinstatement? Leadership is seen as to do with a strong, lionised personality rather than a political analysis and method of organisation. Bessie is presented as superior, above her class, rather than of and with them, and the 'humanity' the play seems desperate to depict is totally undermined.

Concerning Bessie as a woman, she is supposed to be in a long line of fighting women—but she's treated like some sort of super fighting freak. The audience is invited to share in the amazement, fear, anxiety of the male characters at this 'Boadicea' who's also 'a brave wee wifey' when, in fact, she only does what men and women have done before her and what many other women are capable of doing, and it's much more valuable to us all to stress that point than to indulge in male patronage.

Finally, McGrath says that if reality is to change in a way that will make living better, then 'an open, clear analysis is needed', but this is exactly what you don't get in *Blood Red Roses*. The play, no doubt, has given moral support to workers in struggle through its fighting message and the importance of that should not be underestimated, but theatre, although not an instigator of change in itself, can do more to clarify, educate, entertain and contribute to furthering struggle than *Blood Red Roses* allows.

Derek Newark

7:84 Theatre Company England
Night Class
by John McGrath

Night Class opened in London on March 21st and goes off on a nationwide tour until April 23rd. It is billed accurately as a musical extravaganza on the British Constitution and state.

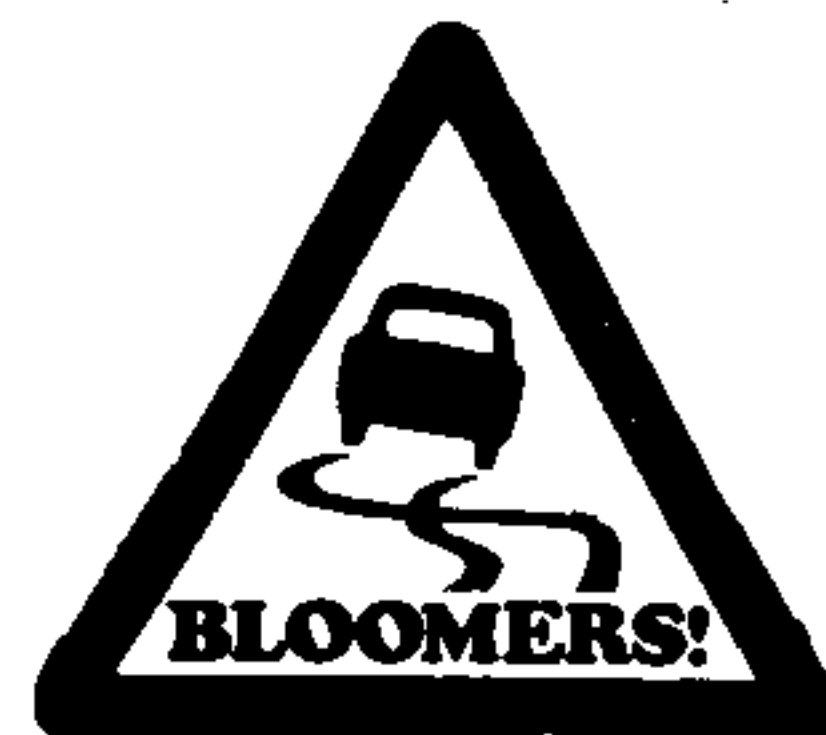
Four people attend a night class on the subject run by a junior polytechnic lecturer who, through wit, provocation and anger exposes the 'armed bodies of men' behind the facade of free parliamentary democracy, angering a true blue Tory lady and awakening feelings of revolt in the other three students.

McGrath's programme notes contain, in fact, more interesting details than he puts in the play, which presents a very skeletal analysis of the state and ruling class politics in a

way that is hardly original after over a decade of new political theatre. However, the efforts of Diane Adderley, Dona Croll, Alan Hulse, Alfred Molina, and David Straun, who act, sing and dance excellently together, compensate for the thinness of the writing, and there is real identification with the lives of the characters and their feelings, a genuine humanity in this piece.

Unfortunately, there was a final sentimental song about the dignity of the fruit and earth of England, of Lancashire weavers and 'wise, knowing girls of Birmingham', following hot on the heels of the view that workers need academic intellectuals to learn anything, and the latter need the former to feel anything—a view that, in my opinion, is romantic, patronising, and ultimately elitist, populism not Marxism.

However, the production makes an entertaining evening, the performers are great, and it aims to serve the labour movement, not to attack it. Watch out for it in your area.



Bloomers

The Bloomers company consists of Norren Kershaw, Eileen Pollock, and Eve Bland. They are touring their second show together, and like the first it deals with discrimination against women, female roles, stereotyping and male behaviour in its more unpleasant forms.

The show is fast-moving, tight, snappy—with only occasional sags—full of gags, energetic, flamboyant, colourful, and has some of the funniest visual jokes I've seen; for example, a housewife struggling to create a painting with four monster kids literally swinging from her body. It is also incisive in its observations, and the three performers have a wonderful control over their material and well-related performances. Bloomers concentrate on what the situation is for women and the need to rebel against it, and they leave out the causes—the style they use isn't aimed at great profundity—but some appraisal of the origins of oppression might make the material even sharper, and it would be interesting to see how they employed their considerable abilities on additional and allied subjects in future shows.

Derek Newark

W is for all willing workers



Illustration Ken Sprague

There was some argument among the editorial team of *Socialist Review* about the exact meaning of this line in Alex Glasgow's song. But one thing is clear: people were not always willing to be locked up in factories and tied to machines 40 and more (often many more) hours a week, 48 weeks of the year, from the moment they enter adulthood until the moment their life's energy begins to ebb. Stuart Axe explains how capital had to create a workforce prepared to toil as it wanted.

Industrialisation brought a total transformation of life to the men, women and children who were forced into the new discipline of work in mills, factories and mines. The first generation of factory workers had to be taught by their masters the importance of time. The second generation formed their short-time committees in the ten hour movement. The third generation struck for overtime at time and a half. They had accepted the categories of their employers and learned to fight back within them. They learned their lesson, that under capitalism time is money, only too well.

PEEP

Leaving the peasant holding or domestic workshop, typical of the 18th Century, the worker entered a new culture. He or she no longer worked for a subsistence living, but was now forced into obedience to the machine and to wage slavery. The new system required willing workers who had lost command of their daily lives.

Under these conditions, manufacturers—especially in the cotton industry—found discipline difficult to impose. One employer had to admit, 'I have not half my people come to work today, and I have no great fascination in the prospect I have to put myself in the power of such people.' There was constant conflict between workers and employers over the enforcement of strict timekeeping, a virtue that the managers attempted to impose by every possible means. Beatings and severe fines were the most common forms of punishment for bad timekeeping.

But despite measures taken against them, workers in many trades continued to honour the 'St Monday' holiday, partly to recover from Sunday's drinking. In South Wales as late as the 1840s, the workers lost one week in five; and in the fortnight after the monthly pay day, only two thirds of the time was being worked.

In the Staffordshire Potteries, workers who didn't turn up on Mondays and Tuesdays were imprisoned, following prosecutions by their employers on the grounds that they'd broken their contracts.

Employers sought to keep machines in constant use, driving their workers six days a week, 14 to 16 hours a day. Children, as well as women and men, worked these hours. In mining, textiles and the light metal trades a large proportion of the workforce was children—their lives of toil starting at the age of six or seven. In the key industry of

the industrial revolution—cotton—40 to 45% of the workers were under 18.

In the early days of the factory system, a quarter of the children were crippled or deformed. *The Memoir of Robert Blincoe*, a boy who had been 'apprenticed' out of a London workhouse to a northern cotton mill described how. The machine set the pace and any boy who was slow was savagely beaten. Once, when one of Blincoe's fingers got crushed in a machine, he was not allowed to stop working. And on one occasion, a sadistic overseer had punished Blincoe by hanging him over a machine, so that he had to lift his leg, to avoid losing it, every time the machine turned.

As well as beatings, dismissal and the threat of dismissal were deterrents in enforcing discipline. One child reported: 'Have worked here two years, I am fourteen, work sixteen hours and a half a day, I was badly, and asked to stop at eight one night lately and I was told that I must not come back.'

Fines were another means of enforcing control. They were meant to hurt—ranging from 6d to 2s—the equivalent of 2 hours to a day's pay. In some mills, swearing, singing, or being drunk were punished by a fine of 5s.

PEEP

Resistance to the beatings, dismissals and fining came in the form of riots, insurgency, machine breaking and demonstrations of revolt, and in more organised forms of combinations and early union organisation. Here the workers faced the full force of the law which was at the service of the employer. Even when the law was not explicitly against combination—the Combination Acts were law from 1799 to 1824—employers treated the organisation of workers as a criminal conspiracy. In 1833, one employer's rule stated that 'any hands forming conspiracies or unlawful combinations will be discharged without notice.'

In this situation employers were unchallenged masters, able 'to do as they liked with their own'; workers became part of their property, and young women were especially vulnerable. Many employers, particularly in the cotton mills of Lancashire, made seduction a condition for women to work at their factories. If they refused they had to quit.

To enforce time and work discipline, employers became advocates of a harsh new morality. Some used full-time staff to check the morals of their workers. Throughout the country, the churches, chapels and Sunday schools were supported by bosses, both to

foster their so-called morals and to enforce obedience, order, and other bourgeois virtues. Drink became a major target for reform, and much of the pre-industrial culture came under attack. This often meant the suppression of sports days and fairs.

One of the most barbaric attacks on children came when bishops and bosses launched a campaign against leisure on Saturdays and Sundays, as immoral idleness.

PEEP

'Morality' as defined by the employers became yet another weapon of the ruling class. Priests and evangelical ministers gave force to these ideas. Wesley in particular preached in emotional terms about sloth, idleness, and the wages of sin. Preachers of the new Methodist morality introduced an appalling system of religious terrorism, in which they aroused fears of death and the unending tortures of Hell in order to enforce their code of 'thou shalt not'.

One little girl who worked down a pit told a Commissioner on Child Labour in the Mines: 'If I died a good girl, I should go to heaven—if I were bad I should have to be burned in brimstone and fire; they told me that at school yesterday, I did not know it before.'

The ideological offensive was not just waged on children. A key book published in 1835 by Dr Andrew Ure said:

'It is, therefore, excessively in the interests of every mill-owner to organise his moral machinery on equally sound principles with his mechanical, for otherwise he will never command the steady hands, watchful eyes, and prompt co-operation, essential to excellence of product ... There is, in fact, no case to which the Gospel truth, 'Godliness is great gain', is more applicable than to the administration of the extensive factory.'

We might conclude from this brief look at the introduction of wage slavery and the factory system that produced 'willing hands', that in such conditions despair and demoralisation would suffocate the new working class. But the history of revolt and organisation against capitalism at this time stands as a tremendous testament to the spirit of defiance and challenge that was built through illegal trade union organisations, strikes and demonstrations, and by attempts to establish a working class press.

Despite every possible repression and intimidation, the period from the 1780s to the 1830s was one of struggle and advance, as the new working class, becoming conscious of itself as a class, entered the heroic age of Chartism.