

A Socialist ACTION

National demonstration

No more Chiles — hands off Central America!

Sunday 11 September in London

Defend the workers of El Salvador and Chile!

Debate grows in labour movement

Britain out of Ireland

THE WEEK of clashes between youth and police in Derry, Northern Ireland's second city, has further demonstrated the failure of the Tories' attempts to subdue the nationalist population of the North through repression.

Tony Benn has called for the question of British withdrawal to be placed at the centre of public debate. This should provoke a necessary discussion on the alternative policy that the labour movement must develop if it is to pursue its aim of a united Ireland.

Benn's statement came after a week where security forces in the North suffered their worst casualties this year and reactionary Loyalist mobs forced Catholic families from their homes in Donemana near Derry after last week's sectarian Orange parades.

political gains for their message of immediate British withdrawal. These developments have had their impact on the labour movement.

Resolutions to his year's Labour Party conference from Brent East, Islington North, Oxford East, Birmingham Erdington and others call for a dialogue between the Labour Party and Sinn Fein, and for a break by the Parliamentary Labour Party from its traditional bi-partisan support for the government's policies in the North.

Advances

The Tories' response will combine a stepping up of repression with new advances to the Southern Irish government to achieve joint collaboration on security and new political initiatives. Southern Irish Taoiseach Garret FitzGerald and Margaret Thatcher are due to hold talks at the end of the year to this end.

In the North Sinn Fein have continued to make

Clarify

Some resolutions like that of Hackney North also call for the Labour Party to clarify that it will not abide by the principle that the British government should accept the unionist veto on its policies for the North.

Kensington CLP has also put forward a resolution on Ireland. Their delegate to the Labour Party conference this year is Tony Benn, who is therefore likely to play a prominent role in the conference debate on the topic.

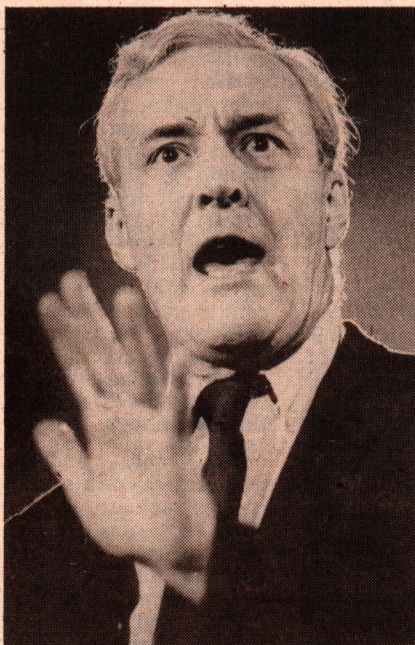
Benn's article in the *Guardian* last Monday applauds those who have so courageously advocated British withdrawal against charges that they supported terrorism.

His own five point plan for withdrawal calls for

- The setting of a date for withdrawal 'two or three years ahead'
- A United Nations peace-keeping force to replace British troops
- A tripartite agreement between the British government, the South



Army snatch squad



Tony Benn



Garret FitzGerald

and 'a new Northern Ireland government'

- An amnesty for prisoners
- Financial aid to the new government from Britain.

But Benn's policy is thoroughly deficient. The call for withdrawal after a period of 'two or three' years concedes the right of British troops to be there in the first place. Opponents of his plan will reasonably ask why two or three years. Why not five or ten?

Secondly, the proposal for a new Northern Ireland government would inevitably, given the artificially drawn boundaries of the North, mean a

Loyalist government with no interest in dissolving those borders in the cause of a united Ireland.

Thirdly, the proposal for a United Nations peace-keeping force in this context would be to learn nothing of the lessons of the Lebanon where such a force was completely ineffective in preventing the terrible consequences of the Israeli invasion, or worse the reactionary role that such troops have played in countries like Cyprus, the Congo and Korea.

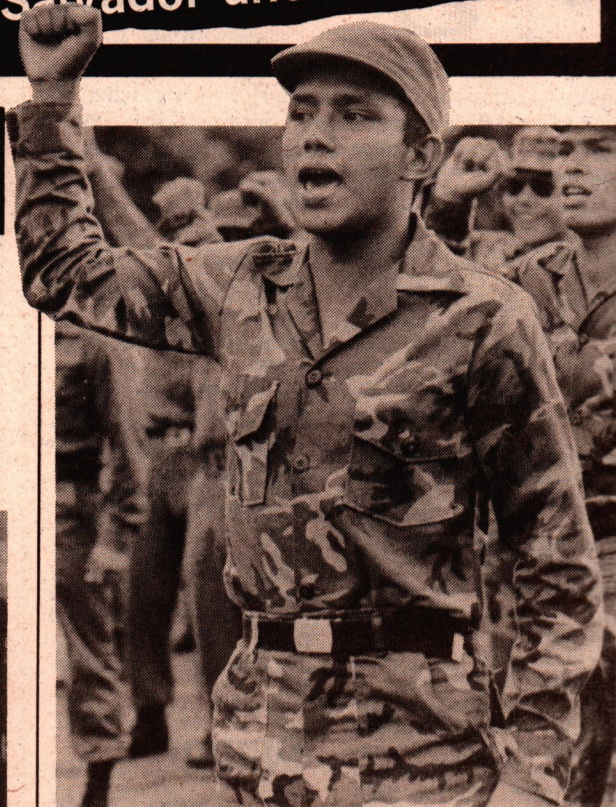
In the debate in the labour movement only a policy which starts from

the fact that British has no right to be in Ireland in the first place and supports the right of the Irish people as a whole to self-determination can begin to right the wrongs done to Ireland in the name of the British people.

That's why the alternative policy that the labour movement should develop to the cause of a united Ireland should be:

- * Troops out Now!
- * Self determination for the Irish people as a whole

● A carnival of reaction — see page 4



Sandinista Soldier

Nicaragua invasion imminent

NICARAGUAN interior minister Tomas Borge reported earlier this week that 12,000 Honduran troops had been assembled along the border between the two countries.

Claiming that among them was a unit of the US 'Special Forces' — the 'Green Berets' — he said that 'war is now inevitable'.

Sources close to the counter-revolutionaries in Honduras claim that an invasion of Nicaragua is being timed to coincide with the anniversary of the Nicaraguan revolution — 21 July.

A sure sign that the US intends to step up its destabilisation attempts against Nicaragua is the appointment of a special commission to advise Reagan on 'ways of stopping communism' in Central America. The commission will be headed by Henry Kissinger, an old hand at covert operations. When Kissinger was US Secretary of State he was a key mover in the destabilisation campaign against the Allende government in Chile.

Last week anti-Sandinista rebels in Honduras claimed that they had had contacts with the British government and that Margaret Thatcher was 'taking a keen interest in Central America'.

In fact, Britain is the only Western government to give open support to the US role in Central America. A fur-

ther sign of the stance of the British government is the visit to Britain this week by Salvadorean ex-president Napoleon Duarte, who is being given the red carpet treatment by foreign office.

The imminent threat to Nicaragua, and the complicity of the Tory government must be raised immediately in every labour movement body and in the peace movement.

The latest threats to Nicaragua underline the need for a massive turnout for next September's demonstration in solidarity with the people of Chile and Central America.

● Fourth Anniversary of Nicaraguan revolution — see page 8.

MODERN TIMES



The difference is that Hattersley wants to ditch the policies and step up the witch hunt, whereas Kinnock wants to step up the witch hunt and then ditch the policies ...



Ousting of Golding big step forward

LAST WEDNESDAY saw a significant advance against Labour's witch hunting right wing, when the new Post Office Engineering Union executive voted 10-7 not to renominate John Golding MP to the Labour Party NEC this year.

This decision follows a motion calling for renationalisation without compensation if British Telecoms is sold off by Thatcher's government.

Both these moves give hope that the union's new Broad Left dominated executive means business.

It represents a strategic gain for the left in the fight for socialist policies.

Since his election to Labour's NEC in 1978, Mr Golding has been the chief architect of the right's offensive, and his demise will be a blow for their plans and morale.

In a letter to POEU branches, also issued as a press statement, the POEU executive point out that Mr Golding will continue his role as a sponsored MP. But the decision represents a clear break with the union's complicit support for the witch hunt.

No Labour Party NEC nomination has been made this year and the same letter points out that a full report of the executive decision will be made at the union's reconvened annual conference in

November.

At the same time a proposition will be put to delegates to allow the membership to decide the union's nomination to the Labour Party NEC in the future.

By Carol Turner (POEU, London West Branch)

The decision on Golding is a bold one by the new executive, facing a frontal fight with the Tories on one of their central policies — privatisation.

Support

Constituency Labour Parties and POEU branches should send letters of support for this decision, and should urge the new POEU executive to confirm its implicit opposition to a witch hunt by:

- supporting anti-witch hunt resolutions to this year's party conference



Mass meeting of POEU engineers discuss fight against privatisation — see page 4.

- submitting an amendment to this effect

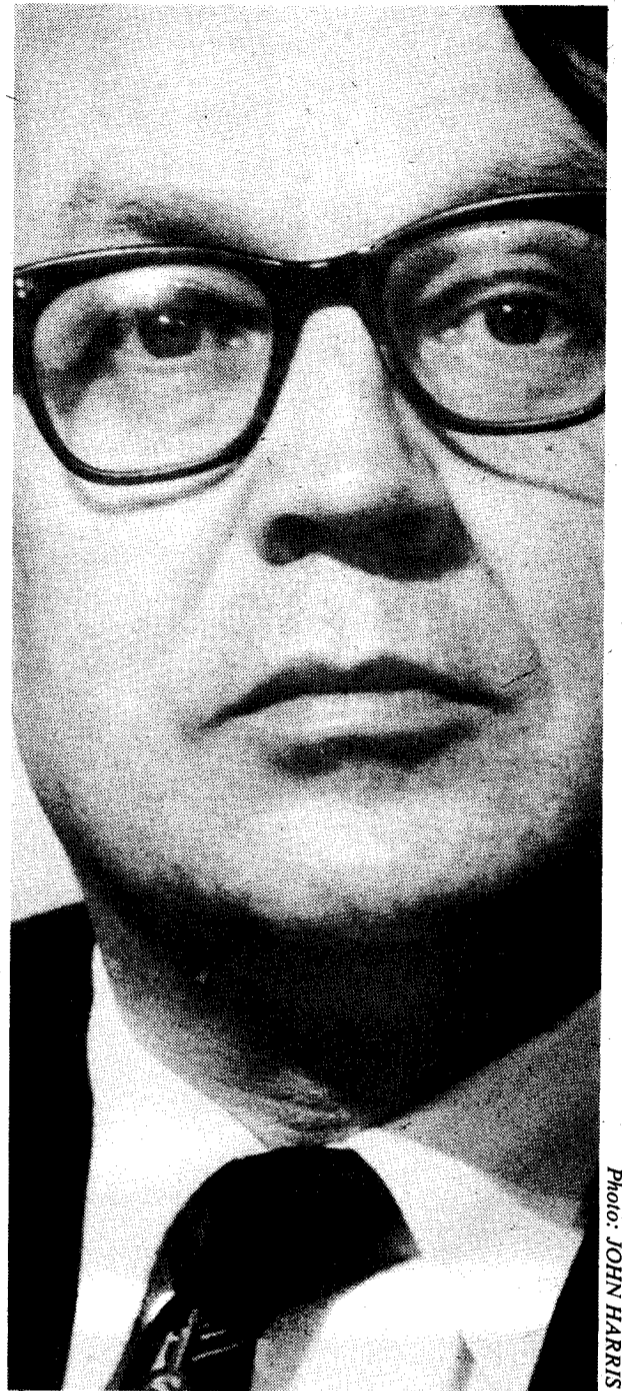
- supporting Heffer and Meacher in the leadership/deputy leadership election — the only candidates opposed to the

witch hunt

Ousting Mr Golding is the first important step in the left fightback against Tory policies and against the undercover Tories in Labour's own ranks. Such union support is a vital

step forward.

* Letters of support should be sent to POEU Executive, Greystoke House, 150 Brunswick Road, Ealing, London W5.



John Golding

Photo: JOHN HARRIS

Why the left should support Heffer/Meacher



Eric Heffer

IT IS THE MARK of the apolitical character of the leadership elections in the Labour Party that the result was a foregone conclusion before the publication of the candidates' manifestoes.

The manifestoes published this week contribute little to clarifying the choices in front of the labour movement. Neil Kinnock regards withdrawal from the Common Market as a 'last resort', favours strong national security by conventional means in partnership with NATO, and declares himself in favour of Britain ridding itself of all nuclear weapons.

By the Editor

He has invented a new euphemism for incomes policy calling it 'a reasoned and practical policy for rewards'. However the message is that he will continue to play a Foot-type balancing role as leader, while revising certain of Labour's key policy positions.

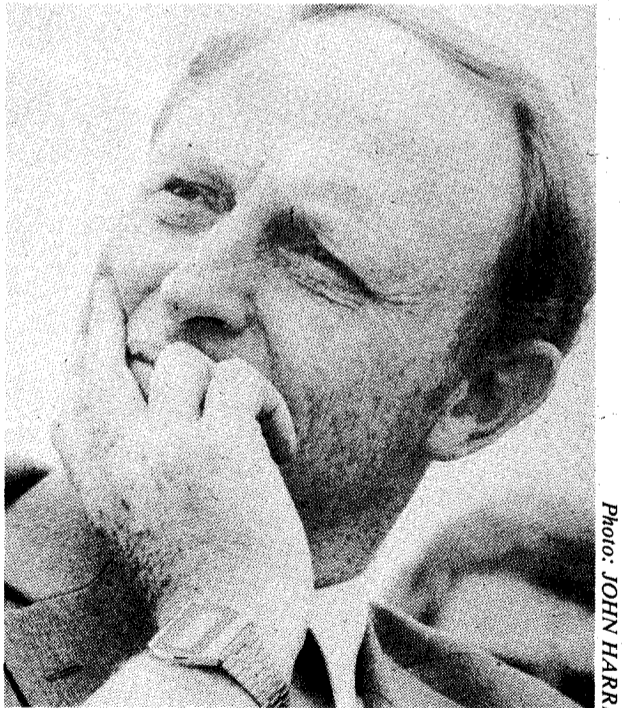
Roy Hattersley demonstrates in his manifesto why he would be a natural successor for Healey in the role of Deputy Leader. Like Healey he would aim to have an effective veto over Kinnock, continually helping him on his road to the right. His manifesto, a mixture of radical verbiage on democratic rights and right wing economic policies, calls straightforwardly for an incomes policy, against any cuts in defence spending, and welcomes what he calls Kinnock's 'conversion to acceptance of EEC

membership.'

He also aims sideswipes at his right wing rival attacking Peter Shore's strategy of 'borrowing out of the crisis.' Shore, not in serious contention for either leader or deputy leader, contents himself with decrying the advances in constitutional reform and policy made by the Labour Party over the last period, and calls for an offensive against those who have chosen a revolutionary strategy.

The only candidate with any elements of a policy to take the Labour Party forward is Eric Heffer. His manifesto deplores the expulsion of the *Militant* editorial board and calls for defence of the status quo on constitutional questions in the Party. On policies Heffer calls for a nuclear free Europe, but in his objection to the Common Market does not make it clear whether he objects to the institution as such or merely to the Treaty of Rome, which elsewhere he has called to be renegotiated.

There are mountainous deficiencies in all the manifestoes. None address themselves to the central problem of how the Labour Party is going to act alongside the trade union movement and all those fighting the Tories, to get rid of Thatcher before she has a chance to inflict five years damage on our basic rights. None have the



Neil Kinnock

Photo: JOHN HARRIS

perspective of building a mass campaigning party that can do it. But because of Heffer's stand against the witch hunt and his defence of the constitutional and policy gains made by the left of the last three years, the left must organise and campaign behind him.

It is a mistake for Michael Meacher, the only candidate among those standing for the deputy leadership, to fail to associate himself with Heffer's campaign. Meacher will not be able to co-exist with Kinnock unless he declares his colours beforehand — that includes declaring long and loud his preferred choice of running mate.

How often must the Labour left fall into the trap of thinking that winning office is the key thing, without regard to the problems that await the victor?

The Heffer/Meacher slate should be discussed and supported throughout the entire rank and file of the labour movement. That is the way to politicise the trade union membership. That is the way to start to rebuild the Labour Party and its policies to fight the Tories. And it is in that discussion that the revolutionary socialist alternative, which is missing from all the candidates' manifestoes, can be put forward.

Durham miners' gala



Photo: JOHN HARRIS

The parade for the Durham Miners' Centenary Gala passes the platform.

Labour NEC elections

How should the left choose its slate?

FOR A number of years pressure groups in the Party have put out 'preferred lists' of candidates for positions on the NEC. However, last year the left decided that more drastic action was needed to 'save the NEC' and it was agreed to run slates in an attempt to maximise votes for the left candidates.

Consultations took place through the ill-fated Labour Liaison '82 and a number of comrades who had stood for the NEC in the past (without success), stood down in favour of the slate.

A number of people had doubts about the slates, not least for the Women's Section, but compromise was reached and the slates were supported. This support was in large part of the understanding that this was a 'one-off' exercise to cope with exceptional circumstances.

This year, however, we have been presented with slates again, and a number of worrying features emerge from them. For instance, who has drawn them up? Unlike last year, no attempt at rank and file consultation has been made. For all its faults, Labour Liaison '82 did attempt to draw together representatives from a wide range of organisa-

tions on the left in open discussion — that has not happened this year.

It appears that there is self-appointed elite on the left who have set about 'fixing' things, which the rank and file is then expected to accept.

By Mandy Moore

Instead of discussions taking place and then slates being drawn up, the discussions now take place after the fixing has been done, and consequently, unless we want to 'rock the boat', we have to go along with it.

Another major concern is the principle of slates in themselves. I have no disagreement with organisations putting out 'preferred lists' but I do see a number of problems with fixed slates.

The first of these is lack of choice for constituencies. Democratic choice should be available

to constituencies not only between left and right (or soggy centre), but also within the left itself.

Not all people believe the same things and it is important that comrades standing for the NEC get genuine support for their views and record from constituencies, not blind support just because they are on a slate.

A second problem is that by limiting those standing for election on the left to those who we hope will win, no new candidates emerge with grass roots support. In the past comrades have built up their support over years and as vacancies have arisen, or views changed, so they have been elected. This is not possible if pressure is exerted to stop comrades standing who are not on the slate.

And this year a classic example of this problem has arisen. Frank Adams, a national member of the slate, is not standing — what's more, the election slip election may remove another left contender for the NEC.

So where does the 'extra' person on the slate come from? Answer, out

of the heads of the self-appointed elite who fix the slate.

Now the person chosen may be highly acceptable — but that is not the point. The people who should be choosing any new candidates are the rank and file members in the constituencies.

Fix

There are more general problems involved as well. For instance, in attempting to fix slates in the Constituency Section and the Women's Section of the NEC, we are not dealing with the real source of the problem. Left to its own devices, the Constituency Section, as in the past, would turn up a left majority with perhaps a smattering of softies, and an occasional right-winger.

The real problem exists in the Trade Union Section and more importantly in the Women's Section.

The most effective move the left could make to deal with this would be to campaign forcefully for the election of the



Photo: CHRIS DAVIES (Report)

Renée Short

Women's Section by the Women's Conference — no decision of the Women's Conference could be as bad as the present situation, and I believe it would actually be a hell of a lot better!

However, far from mounting an effective campaign to make this change, the left fixers are perpetuating the domination of the Women's Section by drawing up a slate against the interests of the women in the Party. The most effective move the left could make to deal with this would be to campaign forcefully for the election of the

London youth march for peace and jobs

Leggin it for peace

THANKS to the courage and endurance of the Greenham Common peace women everybody knows that this is the year of the missiles.

With unemployment in East London running at 20 per cent (and that's the government's figures!) young people in this area know where Thatcher's priorities lie.

By Sue MacDonald

The fight for jobs, the campaign against weapons of mass destruction and the exposure of the civil defence farce is the purpose of a two day march we're organising called 'Leggin' it for Peace'.

The march, on 17-18 September, will start out from Kelvedon Hatch — a civil defence HQ. The

first day will finish at the Wanstead bunker — the 'control' for East London until the GLC closed it down. We hope to open it up for a disco!

The next day the march will continue through East London to London Fields in Hackney where we will rally. Tony Benn and Ken Livingstone are invited speakers.

The best way that you can help is by joining the march if you are young or helping us financially if you're not!

All individual donations will be gratefully received, but try to sponsor a marcher in your trade union, political organisation or community group.

Together we can stop the bomb!

* Further details from East London YCND, 39 Albion Road, London E17.

West London Youth March for Peace

FROM GREENHAM COMMON to Greenham Fields in Hounslow — that's the route of an August Bank Holiday Youth CND march for peace.

Hounslow Youth CND hope to have 50 young people marching the fifty mile route from 27-29 August passing through Reading and Slough.

By Ian MacDonald, secretary Feltham & Heston YS

The June election result has made youth in West London more determined than ever to mobilise against the

Tories' war plans, and Cruise missiles in particular.

Support for the march is pouring in from the labour movement. Tony Benn, Jo Richardson, Syd Bidwell and four local Constituency Labour Parties have sponsored the march. Every Young Socialist branch in the area has been contacted and Feltham & Heston branch has agreed to sponsor a marcher.

But we still need more support and more money! (Every marcher costs about £25 for food and accommodation).

* For messages of support, money or more information, please contact Judi at 42 Wellington Rd North, Hounslow. Ring 01-577 3429

Women's Organisation standing, was on the slate.

This year Frances has been left off — because those men on the left fixing the slate don't like her. Instead they have drawn up a slate which is a joke as far as radical policies for women in the Party is concerned.

Some of the women on that slate may be perfectly acceptable — but it should have been drawn up in consultation with as wide a group of women on the left as possible not by a few men.

Further, we need to campaign to widen the eligibility to stand for the NEC. Until we break the principle that you have to be a delegate to Conference to stand, we will not be able to elect — except in exceptional cases — grass roots members to the NEC.

We will be stuck with a narrow limited range of MPs who are not representative of the Party's membership.

The NEC is important — far too important to be left to the fixers!

organisations have decided not to accept the slates.

In the Constituency Section the Labour Co-ordinating Committee is supporting David Blunkett instead of Norman Atkinson, and in the Women's Section they will not be supporting Renee Short (the woman put on the slate instead of Frances Morrell!).

The Women's Action Committee will only support those candidates in both the Constituency Section and the Women's Section who support the constitutional changes for women in the Party, and Labour Against the Witch Hunt will not support the Women's Section slate but will support a slate drawn up by women in the Party.

If the left is concerned about the state of the NEC, then wide ranging and open discussions are needed to decide what to do about it. New radical candidates need to be found and support given for them, and radical thinking such as democracy and accountability need to be altered to

IRELAND UNFREE



Carnival of hatred

By Phil Casey

IN THE North of Ireland, 12 July saw the ritualistic celebration of King William's victory over James II in 1690, with Ulster Loyalists taking to the streets at nineteen separate venues.

The emphasis in the press is on the carnival atmosphere of the demonstration — as though it were a spectacular festival enjoyed by the entire population of the six counties. Nothing could be further from the truth. The '12th' celebrations are a time for reaffirmation of Unionist superiority, discrimination and bigotry.

The major theme at this year's 'celebration' was capital punishment. Ian Paisley, Martin Smith and Harold McCusker, to mention but a few, informed their audiences that they would be voting for the restoration of hanging. In typically 'old testament' style the Rev. Martin Smith said: 'I will be voting for the availability of capital punishment as one of the penalties God has given in his word for the punishment of evildoers'.

Prior to the marches on 12 July the traditional lighting of bonfires took place at which effigies of the Pope are still burned to resounding chants of 'The Sash My Father Wore' — all very non-sectarian stuff!

Realising that the decision on capital punishment might go against them, a mob of Loyalists attacked an isolated Catholic house in a Protestant estate in the Co. Down town of Ballinahinch. The *Guardian* in all its liberal wisdom practically laid the blame at the door of those being attacked for possibly being related to an alleged IRA member. There is nothing unusual about this — anti-Unionists have suffered such attacks for years and it is because of them that Catholics migrated to West Belfast for safety in 1969 and 1970.

One interesting fact is that during this incident there were no arrests, and after the mob moved on to a small Catholic estate where the police did prevent them from burning down all the Catholic homes (God bless 'em!) four people who were arrested were later released without being charged.

During the later demonstrations the police allowed an Orange band to march into the same estate, obviously intimidating the residents who had come close to having their houses gutted the night before. Anti-Unionist demonstrations are banned totally from entering the city centre of Belfast without reason.

Pub crawl

THE SPECIAL Criminal Court in Dublin has cleared four RUC men of all charges. The RUC men went out for a drink in plain clothes, but fully armed with Lugar Magnum revolvers.

They went to a disco at Frank's Tavern in Castleblayney — which just happens to be across the border in the free state. When their identity was discovered the unfortunate drinkers had to draw their weapons to defend themselves against an angry mob. After getting to their car, fortune deserted the four yet again, and they ran into a Garda patrol car.

Their excuse for carrying the guns without a necessary certificate was that they feared for their safety and that carrying a loaded gun while off duty was second nature to RUC members.

Obviously the Guinness in Castleblayney is so good that the four thought that putting their lives on the line for a pint was worth it. Strangely, someone shouted 'SAS' after them as they left the Tavern.

Telecoms engineers say:

'We are starting the fight against privatisation'

AS THE second reading of the Bill to privatise British Telecoms goes through parliament BT bosses have started to help the Tories in earnest.

They have sent propaganda to our homes, printed lies in official BT newspapers and pumped out the message that there is no point in resisting. 'Privatisation is the will of the electorate,' they say.

But only 31 per cent of the electorate actually voted Tory. And as one of our Datel engineers on strike said: 'People vote for a package and don't agree with all that's in it ... you can't say people voted for selling off BT because the Tories didn't mention it in their election campaign.'

the strike fund before the action escalates.

The Datel engineers thought the levy a very good idea and one that should be copied by the miners. They say, 'We've got to get an alliance going with the miners and with the rail workers.'

The need for an alliance is clear to

By Marcella FitzGerald
(London North Central Internal Branch, POEU)

The engineers working on Datel, the telephone-linked computer system, were the first group to be called out on strike after management stabbed the workforce in the back.

Post Office Engineering Union members had refused to inter-connect Project Mercury, the private business-only telephone network, with the public network and were sent home by management, who then sent in three of their own stooges to connect Mercury in the dead of night.

Campaign

But the struggle against privatisation is just beginning. The industrial action so far is limited, but the POEU membership is becoming more informed and more involved in the campaign.

Discussions at work are not about whether to fight the Tories' plans but how. Which workers would be the best to pull out causing most havoc for the least cost? What to do on the day that the Telecoms Bill comes back into Parliament in September?

Levy

Likewise there is a positive response to the £1 per week levy which the new National Executive Committee of the union has initiated to build up

everyone after the Day of Action we took last year came in a week when rail workers, healthworkers and waterworkers all struck too — on separate days!

This time around we need to be coordinated. The new NEC has already taken measures to set this up. Over the past weeks two other groups of POEU members have been called out by the union in retaliation for management strike breaking on further occasions.

One group provides private lines for business in the Shoreditch area and the other maintains a public exchange (379/404) in central London with very few domestic subscribers.

Action

Within a short time of the workers' action the Confederation of British Industry and a major commodity brokers were badly affected (see last week's SA).

But they haven't seen anything yet. The POEU membership have a lot more in store for the monied interests that plan to make a killing if BT is sold off.

We are just starting the fight back, and with the miners, the railworkers and all those fighting the Tory attacks we know that we are not alone.



Mass meeting to support LNCI Branch's fight against privatisation

Photo: PAUL PATTEN/LNCI

Epsom hospital closures

A RECENT report published by the South West Thames Regional Health Authority, which proposes the closure of five Epsom hospitals and one in nearby Banstead, is the clearest indication since the election of the callous and brutal way in which the new Thatcher administration intends to treat the old, sick and the needy.

The people responsible for the report claim it is a huge step forward in the care of the mentally ill, but the truth is much different. It is the clearest example yet of the planned mass sell-off of health service assets for the profit and benefit of those who can afford private health care and who have no interest whatsoever in the service available to the rest of us.

By Geoff Martin, Chair of Sutton Area Hospitals Branch, NUPE.

The land involved, over 650 acres of prime Green Belt, will prompt near-hysteria amongst the speculators of the City of London who will be clamouring to get their hands on it.

Although the land is classified as Green Belt there is no doubt that this Tory government, and their Resident Association friends who control Epsom council, will be only too pleased to relax regula-

tions and give their big-business associates every encouragement in their asset-stripping exercise.

Relatives of the hospital patients will be pressured into taking them back home, whether or not they themselves are capable of looking after them.

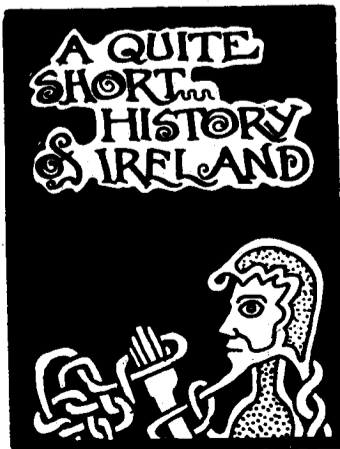
Those who have no relatives, or whose relatives insist they cannot cope, will be pushed onto

psychiatric patients sedated by unqualified staff while their tills ring with government money which has been diverted away from the National Health Service.

The loss of jobs involved if the Regional Health Authorities proposals are carried out is the other area that the report has glossed over. Over 5000 people are directly employed by the hospitals and union representatives are already planning a campaign to fight the proposals at all levels.

The unions and their supporters will run the risk of being accused of taking political action by certain sections of the trade union leadership if they strike or take any other direct action. They will be opposing a key part of the government's policy and will need all the outside support they can get.

If Chapple, Duffy and Murray won't support workers fighting to defend jobs and public services, and would rather go and discuss the TUC's funeral arrangements with the Chingford undertaker, then let them. But if they expect the rank and file to follow quietly like lambs to the slaughter then they're going to be in for a nasty shock.



International assault on a woman's right to choose

FOR SOME time now the right-wing has been engaging in an offensive to restrict women's abortion rights.

The anti-abortionists of the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child and LIFE in Britain are taking advantage of the economic crisis and women's increased economic dependence on men to refurbish and revitalise their macabre propaganda. But this offensive is an international one and it requires an international response from women.

A brief review of these attacks will serve to highlight this point. In the South of Ireland anti-abortionists are campaigning for an amendment to the already reactionary constitution enshrining the right to life of the unborn child.

On 5 March in Madrid 150,000 people gathered under the slogan 'No to abortion — Yes to life' outside the place visited by the Pope. They were opposing the very limited relaxation in the abortion law being proposed by Spanish government. In Israel the AGUDA, an ultra religious right-wing group, succeeded 4 years ago in having the social clause in the abortion law repealed.

Akron anti-abortionists in the USA carried out a wave of violence against abortion clinics, including firebombings in 1978. Although the Supreme Court ruled on 15 June that some of the Southern states had gone too far in their anti-abortion mania the Hyde amendment, banning federal funding for abortion, remains on the statute books.

to turn to private clinics and the latest round of swinging cuts in the NHS will make it even more difficult.

Black women will come under greater scrutiny as to their eligibility for treatment, as women visitors from overseas who have been in the UK for less than six months are forced to pay charges for medical treatment.

By Valerie Coultas

It's not simply abortion rights that are under attack. The struggle for abortion comes out of the struggle for free contraception and this is too under threat.

Oxford Area Health Authority intends to remove contraception from the NHS. The new 'morning after' pill has been officially approved, but

the likes of Keith Joseph — who is very concerned about the irresponsible behaviour of young women — are reluctant to encourage its use.

Women's access to fertility control is a prime target for Tory privatisation. Rich women will continue to have access to the highest standards of fertility control. It will be the working class woman who faces the butchery and trauma of the backstreet abortionist.

It is with this in mind that we have to view SPUC's latest offering, a national newspaper advert headed 'If women had glass tummies would they ever have abortions?' and their two million leaflets for the two million 'unborn children'.

The Abortion movement has to counter these arguments and counter them in a far more effective way than the 'Ladies Against Women' lobby did two weeks ago when SPUC had 20,000 on the streets.

We have to get our arguments crystal clear. Human beings are social animals. A woman's life and her control over her own body is a right and a freedom that society should fully respect.

To compare the 'rights of the foetus', suggesting



No complacency — we have to fight the anti-abortionists at every stage

that it is simply a smaller version of an adult, to the rights of a pregnant woman is not only deliberately misleading it is an insult to women as a sex.

Women do not take decisions to have abortions lightly. They are programmed daily to sacrifice themselves for their fathers, brothers, lovers, husbands and sons. When women come to take this decision they come to it because they have no other option.

Adoption is not an alternative. Why should women suffer nine months of pregnancy and the psychological pain of giving up their child to satisfy the moral rantings of Mary Whitehouse, Lord Longford and the Catholic hierarchy?

Millions of women who follow the Catholic faith live in fear of their

lives because of the totalitarian strictures of these bigots. Women don't campaign for laws to sterilise men. Why should men and right-wing women campaign for laws that force pregnancy on women? If women take the decision to have an abortion it should be freely available, safe and legal.

Abortion is not a matter of life and death, it's a question of the dignity and freedom of women's lives, particularly the lives of ordinary women.

The National Abortion Campaign in Britain and the International Campaign for Abortion, Sterilisation and Contraception have a big task ahead of them.

The backlash on abortion by the National Executive of the Labour Party in their manifesto to a promise to restore cut-backs and defend 'women's existing right to choose' shows how vital it is that the pro-choice lobby remains active and alert, particularly within the labour movement.

Facing up to this task will involve rallying women behind the pro-choice slogans of the National Abortion Campaign in Britain. Over the past period NAC hasn't really been sharp enough in its response to the anti-abortion lobby in Britain — because there has been no major legislative attack there has been a certain

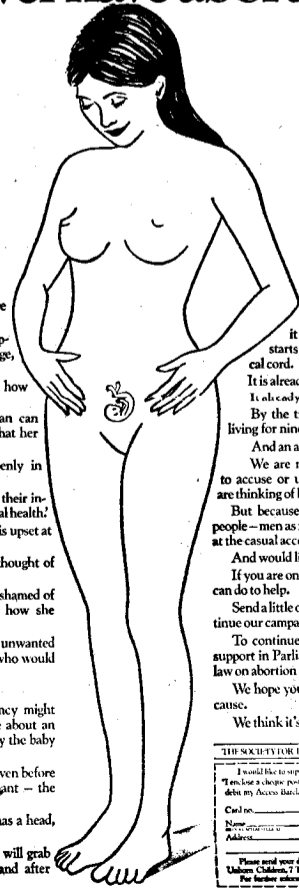
complacency among women about abortion rights.

The so called right-to-lifers never give up. They are always vigilant, always ready for an opening to secure their anti-women goals.

The National Abortion Campaign's national conference meets on 1 and 2 October. Don't be complacent. Get your Labour Party, trade union or NAC group to send delegates and make sure they are affiliated to this campaign.

● For details of the NAC national conference write to NAC at 374 Grays Inn Road, London WC1 or telephone 01-278 0153.

If women had glass tummies would they ever have abortions?



Over 172,000 unborn babies are aborted in Britain every year.

That's more than the entire population of Swansea, and one, on average, every three minutes.

From figures like this you can see how easy it is to get an abortion.

Yet, as the law stands, no woman can have one unless two doctors testify that her 'mental or physical health are at risk'.

Of course, some doctors are openly in favour of 'easier' abortion.

And they can be very generous in their interpretation of 'risk to mental or physical health'.

But should it cover a woman who is upset at the prospect of interrupting her job?

Or a woman who can't face the thought of dirty nappies and teething again?

Or an unmarried woman who is ashamed of being pregnant. And doesn't know how she would cope with a baby, anyway?

(She wouldn't have to. For every unwanted baby, there are 30 childless couples who would love to adopt it.)

But one thing is certain.

However inconvenient a pregnancy might be, many women would think twice about an abortion if they could see how quickly the baby develops inside them.

After 23 days from conception — even before most women are sure they're pregnant — the baby's heart is beating.

As early as the month the baby has a head, with eyes, nose, mouth and brain.

As early as two months the baby will grab an instrument placed in its palm, and after nine weeks it can suck its thumb.

As early as three months the baby can kick legs and feet, it has its own fingerprints, and starts to 'breathe' through the umbilical cord.

It is already perfectly formed.

It already has its own personality.

By the time a baby is born it has been living for nine months.

And an abortion takes that life away.

We are not using such emotive phrases to accuse or upset women who have had or are thinking of having an abortion.

But because we believe that a great many people — men as much as women — are concerned at the casual acceptance of abortion.

And would like to see this trend reversed.

If you are one of them there is something you can do to help.

Send a little of your money so that we can continue our campaign to protect the unborn child.

To continue to educate the public, to rally support in Parliament, and eventually to get the law on abortion changed.

We hope you will consider this an important cause.

We think it's a matter of life and death.

THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE UNBORN CHILD

I would like to support your campaign to protect the unborn child.

Please tick a box to indicate how you wish to be contacted:

Yes, please send me your leaflets, etc. No, please do not.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Postcode: _____

Phone: _____

Signature: _____

Please send your donation to: The Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child, 7 Telford Street, Westminster, London SW1P 2NQ. For further information telephone 01-222 5665. Not an

Victory

Sandra O'Connor, the Supreme Court Judge whose rise to power was hailed as a victory for women's liberation, has argued that the 'fate of the foetus is more important than the life of the pregnant woman'.

In Britain since the 1967 Abortion Act became law we have had five attempts to reverse this legislation.

The fifth attempt succeeded when Parliament sanctioned an arbitrary change in the regulations to prevent doctors giving abortion on non-medical grounds. This means that doctors can be prosecuted under the Offences Against the Person Act 1853 if no medical reasons for abortion are given. Already one gynaecologist, Professor Huntington, has been interviewed by the police and cautioned.

It is very difficult to get an abortion in Britain today later than 20 weeks of pregnancy. Lack of abortion facilities in the NHS have forced many women



Unnecessary cuts

A RECENT report published by Maternity Alliance has revealed that the number of caesarian births has doubled in the past ten years. One woman in nine can now expect to have her baby by caesarian section.

Alarming, this trend is beginning to follow the situation in the US where the figure is one in five.

Caesarian sections are needed when complications make it impossible for women to give birth normally, but nowadays it seems to be becoming a hobby with doctors.

● One Birth in Nine — Caesarian Section Trends since 1978 is available from Maternity Alliance, 309 Kentish Town Road, London

NW5, £2 inc postage. (Information from City Limits)

Whale warning

AN interesting play was shown on TV last week called *Whale Music*, about a student who is pregnant and decides to have the baby and give it up for adoption.

The play involves the student and her four friends discussing life, sex, men and so on.

The TV bosses obviously decided that this was all too much, and so the following 'warning' was issued by the announcer before the play started:

'And now, *Whale Music* — the drama of a young student who finds herself pregnant at university. Viewers should know that the play deals with the

women's attitudes towards men in a frank and explicit manner'.

Wow, they are getting touchy!

But will they start broadcasting warnings before most of the rubbish on TV, 90 per cent of which reveal men's attitudes towards women?

Women's control

THE International Contraception, Abortion and Sterilisation Campaign (ICASC) are organising an international women's tribunal and meeting on reproductive rights in 1984 entitled 'Women's control not population control'.

The meeting will be held over a five day period in Mexico in the summer of next year.

It is being organised by ICASC groups in Europe, CIDHAL and women's groups in Mexico with the support of ISIS and the Boston Women's Health Collective.

● For further information about ICASC or the National Abortion Campaign write to 374 Grays Inn Rd, London WC1 01-278 0153.

Compiled by HILAKY DRIVER. Send contributions to 'Male Order' Socialist Action, 328 Upper Street, London N1 2XP to arrive not later than Thursday a week prior to publication.

IN DEFENCE OF

By Leon Trotsky

THE NEW LAWS proposed by Employment Secretary Norman Tebbit aim to do away with the compulsory political levy in the unions. In this article, written in 1926 under the title of 'The Trade Unions and Bolshevism', Leon Trotsky, leader of the Russian revolution, comments on a parliamentary debate on the same question of the political levy to finance the Labour Party.

Some of the context is historically dated — such as the reference to recent trade union support for the Liberals. But the essence of the argument exactly applies today.

THE TRADE UNIONS have as their object the improvement of the working and living conditions of wage labourers. For this purpose, the members of the unions contribute certain fees. In political matters, the trade unions have been considered — at least in form — as neutral; in actual fact, they have often followed in the train of the Liberal Party.

Needless to say the Liberals, as well as the Conservatives, who sell honours of all kinds to the rich bourgeois in return for generous contributions to their party treasury, have not needed the financial aid of the trade unions, but only their votes.

The situation changed as soon as the workers, through the trade unions, had created the Labour Party. Once having brought the latter to life, the trade unions were obliged to finance their party. Additional contributions were needed for this purpose from the trade union organisations of the workers.

The bourgeois parties unanimously raised a howl against this 'crying violation of individual liberty'. 'The worker is not only a worker, but also a citizen and a man', MacDonald profoundly instructs us. 'Precisely so', is the echo from Baldwin, Asquith and Lloyd George. In his quality as a citizen, the worker, whether he supports the trade unions or not, has the right to vote for any party he likes.

Compulsion

To collect from him a compulsory contribution to the Labour Party is a violation not only of his purse, but also of his conscience. And finally, it is an outright violation of the democratic constitution which forbids any form of compulsion in the matter of support given to this party or that!

As a matter of fact, these conclusions must have considerably impressed the leaders of the Labour Party, who would gladly have renounced the compulsory anti-Liberal, almost Bolshevik methods of the trade union organisations, had it not been for this cursed need of shillings and pounds, without which it is impossible to obtain a representative's mandate even in the Arcadia of democracy.

And it is the sad destiny of democratic principles that shillings and pounds are the weapons that give black eyes and bloody noses. Such is the imperfection of this best of all worlds ...

If we may believe the report in the *Times* (March 7, 1925) about 10 per cent of all the members of the trade

union organisations of the workers have taken advantage of their right to refuse to pay the political contributions. Thus the principle of individual liberty has been saved at least in part. A full victory of 'liberty' would be attained only if the contributions could be collected only from those members who should declare their willingness to contribute ...

The essence of the matter is, of course in the fact that the workers' organisations, having established their anti-Liberal, 'despotic', Bolshevik rule of compulsory collection of political contributions, are in this manner fighting for an actual, real, not merely metaphysical possibility of a parliamentary representation of labour; while the Conservatives and Liberals, who advance the principle of 'personal liberty' are actually attempting to disarm the workers materially and thus to drive them over to the bourgeois parties.

It is sufficient to consider the distribution of roles: the trade unions are for the unconditional right of compulsory collection of political contributions; the House of Lords is for the unconditional prohibition of such collections, in the name of the sacred principle of personal liberty; finally, the House of Commons forces a concession from the trade unions, which amounts in fact to a rebate of 10 per cent in favour of the principles of liberalism.

Even a blind man can here perceive the purely class character of the principle of personal liberty which in the present concrete conditions means nothing more or less than an attempt by the possessing classes to expropriate the proletariat politically, by reducing its party to nothing ...

Tyranny

The Liberal Cobden once declared that he would rather live under the authority of the Bey of Algiers than under that of the trade unions. Cobden was thus expressing his Liberal indignation against the Bolshevik tyranny involved in the very nature of the trade unions. From his standpoint, Cobden was right. The capitalist who falls into the hands of the trade unions will fare very badly. The Russian bourgeoisie can tell a few tales in this connection.

But the essence of the matter is that the worker actually has over him a permanent Bey of Algiers in the person of his employer, and the tyrannical power of this Bey can be weakened only through the activity of the trade unions. Of course, the worker must make some sacrifice for this purpose, not only in money, but also personally.

However, individual liberty will in the last analysis gain incomparably more than it loses through the intermediation of the trade unions. This is the class point of view from which it is impossible to get away, and which is the basis of the right to collect political contributions.

The bourgeoisie, in the mass, at present considers it necessary to *reconcile itself* with the existence of the trade unions, but it wishes to keep their activities below the line where the struggle with the various groups of capitalists becomes a struggle with the capitalist state.

The Conservative member, Macquisten, pointed out in Parliament that the refusal of the trade unions to pay political contributions is observed chiefly in the small and scattered branches of industry while in the concentrated branches of industry, he regrets to say, there is observed moral pressure and mass intimidation. This observation is extremely interesting! How characteristic of the English Parliament that it should be spoken by an extreme Tory, the author of the proposed prohibitive legislation, and not by a socialist.

This observation means that the refusal to pay political contributions is found in the most backward branches of industry, in which a powerful petty-bourgeois tradition and consequently also petty-bourgeois conceptions of individual liberty, are found usually coupled with voting for the Liberal and even for the Conservative Party.

In the newer, more modern branches of production, class solidarity and proletarian discipline are found, which impresses the capitalists and their ser-



AN UN
Trotsky was denied political asylum

vants, the deserters from the workers, as terrorism ...

During the debates concerning the political contributions, the author of the prohibitive legislation, Macquisten, who has already been mentioned, made a remark on the subject of this same democracy which was received by the opposition with gay laughter, but which should, as a matter of fact, not only be engraved on the walls of Parliament, but proclaimed and expounded at every workers' meeting.

Elucidating with figures the significance of the political contributions of the trade unions, Macquisten declared that before the Liberal Bill of 1913, the trade unions had expended annually only about 10,000 pounds for political purposes, while now, owing to the legalisation of the political contributions, they have in their hands a fund of 250,000 pounds. Of course, says Macquisten, the Labour Party has become strong. *When you have 250,000 pounds of annual income, you can create a party for any purpose.*

Resources

The infuriated Tory said somewhat more than he intended. His remark is a frank recognition that parties *can be made*, that they can be made with the aid of *money*, that funds play a *decisive part* in the mechanism of democracy. Must we point out that the financial resources of the bourgeoisie are incomparably more plentiful than those of the proletarians? This simple fact should be sufficient to disperse the hypocritical vapours of democracy.

Every wide-awake English worker should say to MacDonald: It is not true that the supreme criteria for our movement are the principles of democracy. These very principles are under the thumb of financial resources, and may be distorted and falsified at will ...

The trade unions are — in spite of all the subtleties of Liberal casuistry — a class organisation of wage workers for combating the greed and avarice of capitalists. One of the most important weapons of the trade unions is the strike. Members' contributions go to support strikes. In times of strikes, the workers are engaged in a fierce struggle with strikebreakers who are the product of another Liberal principle, that of the right to work.

In any general strike, the union needs political support, it must turn to the press, the parties, the parliament. The hostile attitude of the Liberal press



Leon Trotsky

THE POLITICAL LEVY



IRABLE.
by a Labour government.

oward the trade union struggle was one of the causes impelling the latter to create a Labour Party.

If we examine the history of the origin of the Labour Party, it will become clear that from the point of view of the trade unions, the party is their political section. It needs a strike fund, an organisation of reliable men, a newspaper, dependable members of Parliament. Expenditures on the elec-

tion of members of Parliament are for these unions as legally necessary and obligatory an expenditure as that which goes to clerical and secretarial work.

The 10 per cent rebate obtained by the bourgeoisie is by no means such an innocent matter. It signifies that one out of every ten members of the trade unions is a conscious political (i.e. class) opponent.

Of course, some of these may be won over, but the remainder may be a priceless weapon in the hands of the bourgeoisie, in the case of a real struggle, against the workers. We must therefore inevitably fight, in the further course of our struggle, against the breaches torn in the wall of the trade unions by the Act of Parliament of 1913.

Education

Generally speaking, we Marxists hold that any honest, straightforward worker, regardless of his political, religious, and other convictions, may be a member of a trade union. We consider the trade unions, on the one hand, as militant economic organisations, and as a school of political education, on the other hand. Although we favour, as a general rule, the admission of backward and non-class-conscious workers to the trade unions, we do not start from the abstract principle of liberty of opinion, liberty of conscience, but from considerations of revolutionary expediency.

But these very considerations tell us that in England, where 90 per cent of the workers organised in trade unions pay the political contributions, some because of their direct desire to do so, others because they do not wish to disturb the spirit of solidarity, and where only 10 per cent decide to disregard the open appeal of the Labour Party, a systematic struggle becomes necessary against these 10 per cent. They must be made to feel that they are deserters, and the trade unions must be given the right to exclude them as strikebreakers.

In the last analysis, if the abstract citizen has the right to vote for any party he pleases, the workers' organisa-

tions have the right to refuse to admit to their ranks such citizens as show by their political conduct that they are hostile to the interests of the working class.

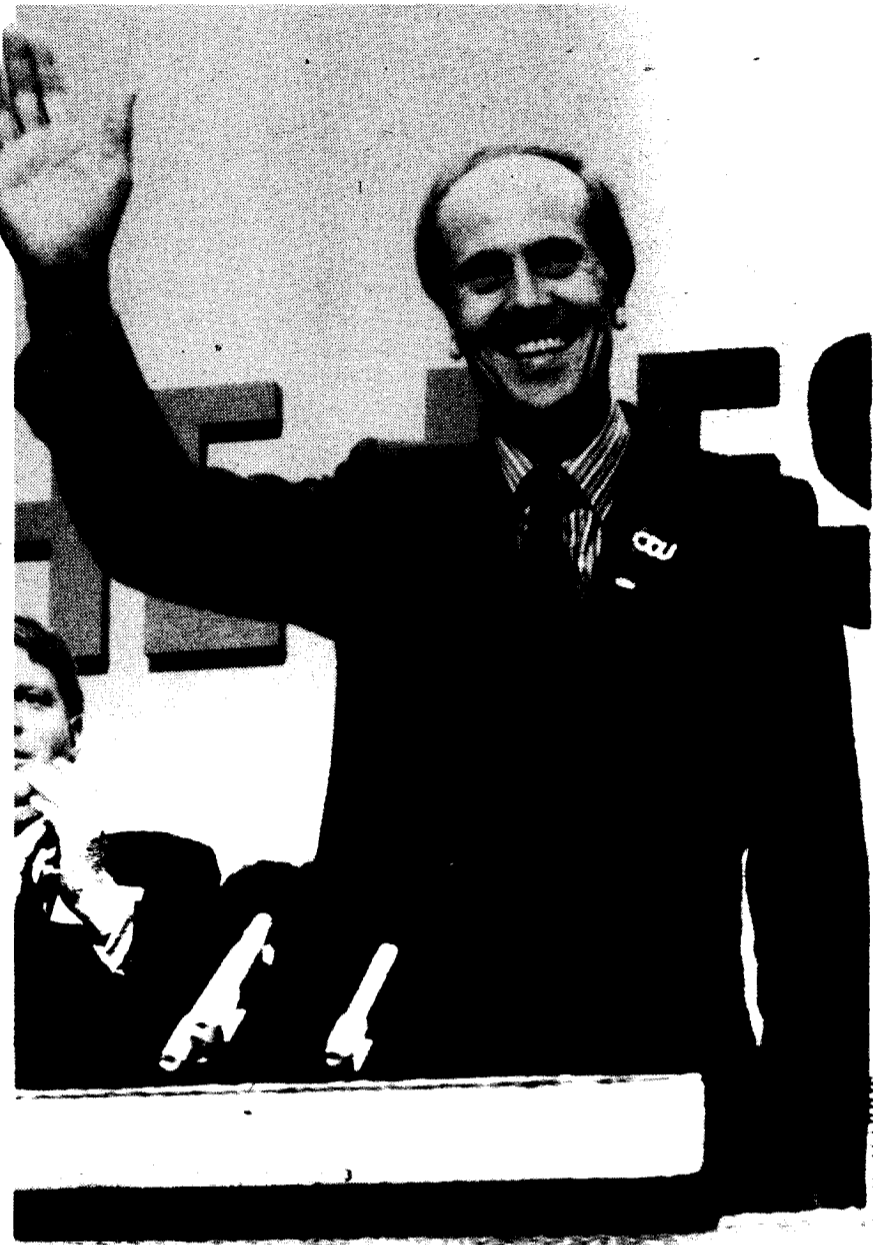
The struggle of the trade unions for the exclusion of unorganised workers from the factories is already known as a manifestation of 'terrorism' or — in present-day parlance — Bolshevism. Precisely in England, these methods can and should be transferred to the Labour Party, which is a direct continuation of the trade unions ...

The compulsory, anti-Liberal, despotic collections of political contributions contain, as the future stalk and ear are contained in the grain, all those Bolshevik methods against which MacDonald tirelessly sprinkles the holy water of his aroused mental limitations. The working class has the right and duty to place its deliberate class will higher than all the fictions and sophisms of bourgeois democracy.

It should act in the spirit of revolutionary self-confidence with which Cromwell filled the young English bourgeoisie. Cromwell exhorts his Puritan recruits, as we have already seen, as follows: 'I will not cozen you by perplexed expressions in my commission about fighting for King and Parliament. If the King chanced to be in the body of the enemy, I would as soon discharge my pistol upon him as upon any private man; and if your conscience will not let you do the like, I advise you not to enlist yourselves under me.'

These are not the words of blood-thirsty despotism, but the consciousness of a great historical mission, permitting its bearer to annihilate all obstacles in his path.

Throughout this article Trotsky, in common with the usage of the time, uses the terms 'he' and 'man' when referring to individual trade unionists or political activists. We have chosen not to change this sexist language because to do so would be to distort the level of consciousness of the workers and revolutionary movement of the time.



Trotsky's proposal of political education in the unions.



Labour Party election

No
postal
ballots!

AS THE fight for the Labour leadership hots up, Fleet Street are back on their old hobby horse — the need for postal ballots in the unions and the Labour Party.

ALAN FREEMAN argues that the way forward to democratic control of working class organisations is the very opposite of postal ballots.

SOCIALISTS have always argued that many trade unions are undemocratic. We've pointed this out on many occasions when Fleet Street was strangely silent.

● For example, when the late unlamented rail workers' leader Sidney Weighell unilaterally sabotaged the train drivers' strike by refusing to back it — against the wishes of his executive and his members.

● For example when the same gentleman used his block vote at the Labour Party conference, again on no-one's authority but his own, to help saddle the Party with a witch-hunting leadership under right-wing baron John Golding.

● For example, when the leadership of unions like the TGWU, GMBATU and USDAW voted for the witch hunt against *Militant*, despite the votes of their own conferences against any witch hunt. Fleet Street on that occasion held up these unions leaders as models of moderation and democracy.

Fleet Street is of course strangely silent about democracy in other parts of British society.

We haven't noticed any demands for a postal ballot or a referendum on whether to bring cruise missiles to this country, or whether to push the button to start a nuclear war!

Or what of those who are not elected, like the House of Lords, who inherit powers over us?

Faceless

And what of that whole array of establishment figures who are never elected but make most of the vital decisions which affect our lives — the bankers, the faceless people who run industry and finance, the judges? And what about the owners and editors of mass circulation newspapers? When are they going to be elected?

So perhaps we ought to be a little cautious about Fleet Street's concern for democracy. When they propose more democracy for the workers' movement they do it in a very particular way — not more democracy in general, but postal ballots in particular. Why?

The establishment and the press favour the postal ballot for the simple reason that at home workers hear only one voice — the voice of money. Money speaks through the newspapers, through the television, through special management circulars, through a hundred and one propaganda devices which the workers movement cannot possibly rival.

In their homes workers cannot hear contending arguments, and above all cannot put their own point of view in

argument and discussion.

What is the alternative? The road to union reform is to maximise participation and discussion with voting.

There are many ways in which voting can be organised — branch ballots, workplace ballots, conference votes. But it is around conference votes that the participation of the union membership is most fully reflected.

The left in the unions has to fight for the most democratic possible conduct of union conferences. Discussions of the motions at local level, and the mandating of delegates is vital.

In general, voting after a discussion with the right to put contending views is always more democratic than a postal vote dominated by the media and the bosses.

Democracy

If any rival point of view to Fleet Street's is heard during a postal ballot, it is only the voice of the union barons who the press vilify. Rank and file workers never get a look in.

And that is the real reason that Fleet Street favours the postal ballot. Not to clip or silence the union baron's power, but to use it for their own ends.

This is not democracy; it is a travesty of democracy. We should resist the postal ballot and use our own kind of democracy — the democracy of the workplace and the meeting hall, to challenge and overthrow both the union bureaucrats and Fleet Street, Whitehall and the City barons.

NICARAGUA four years of revolution

A TINY COUNTRY of just three million people has become a focal point in world politics.

Four years ago this week the people of that country, led by the revolutionary Sandinista Front for National Liberation (FSLN) overthrew the pro-American dictator Somoza, and swept out his murderous National Guard.

Four years have brought immense gains to the people of Nicaragua as the revolution has deepened and consolidated. But in July 1983 the Nicaraguan revolution is under siege — not from the people but from the remnants of the Somoza's national guard, from the Honduran army and above all from the United States.

The US knows full well that the example of the Nicaraguan revolution has spurred the revolutionary process throughout Central America. Reagan is determined to destroy it.

Here, PHIL HEARSE looks at four years of the Nicaraguan revolution.

Anastasio Somoza turned Nicaragua into his personal fiefdom. His family ruled the country from 1936 — he took power after the death of his uncle in 1967.

But post-war economic growth and partial urbanisation created new working class and middle class forces which felt constrained by the personal rule of the Somoza dynasty and his praetorian National Guard.

After the earthquake in Managua in 1970 Somoza stole virtually all the aid funds. A new middle class opposition crystallised around the Democratic Liberation Union (UDEL) in 1974. The assassination of opposition leader Pedro Chamorro in 1977 led to an explosive growth of opposition.

From the beginning of 1978 the FSLN began armed actions against the regime. The FSLN's final offensive took place between March and July 1979.

The National Guard mounted determined resistance. The fight for

power was completed by a week-long insurrectional uprising in Managua, which Somoza's troop resisted by indiscriminate bombing raids against the working class barrios. Tens of thousands were killed.

Armed

The FSLN formed a 'Government Junta of National Reconstruction' (JGNR). While the FSLN were in a small minority in the Council of State, they held sway in the government 'junta', despite the presence of bourgeois opposition figures like Violetta Chamorro and Alfonso Robelo.

Among the first acts of the revolutionary government was the creation of huge public sector of the economy. Decree no 3 of the JGNR decreed nationalisation of the finance system and in mining, fishing, industrial, agricultural and commercial enterprises belonging to the *Somocistas*.

But a large private sec-



FSLN leader Ortega speaks in front of portrait of Sandino

Photo: CARLOS AGUSTO GUARITA (Photon)

tor was allowed to stay in existence. The FSLN attempted to use the private sector to re-build the economy, while keeping the bourgeoisie under supervision and control.

At the top of the Sandinistas' agenda has been the re-modelling of the state apparatus, basing their authority on an organised and armed people.

In addition to the half-million strong Sandinista militia, led at the time of its founding by Eden Pastora — who has now deserted to the counter-revolution — the government created the CDSs, the Sandinista Defence Committees.

Literacy

Based on the local network of organisations created during the fight against Somoza, the CDSs are responsible for the organisation of local security, organisation, education, propaganda, health, community work and so on.

In addition the Sandinistas created a network of other mass organisations, the most important of which were the Sandinista Workers Federation (CST), the women's organisation (AMLAE) and the Sandinista Youth Movement.

In the spring and sum-

mer of 1980 the FSLN launched the Literacy Campaign. One hundred thousand volunteer youth and students were sent to the countryside in an attempt to wipe out illiteracy. Apart from literacy being an immense aid to economic reconstruction, the campaign was a huge process of politicisation and self-organisation.

Despite aid cut-offs, despite cut-backs in

quotas of Nicaraguan imports by the US, and despite the cost of financing of Nicaragua's huge foreign debt, great social progress has been recorded.

Food consumption has increased by 40 per cent since Somoza's time. Illiteracy has fallen from over 50 per cent to around 12 per cent. Free public medical and dental care is available to those who need it.

Nonetheless, the economy is still beset by problems. The first problem which the Sandinistas had to confront was sabotage by the private sector of the economy.

During the first two years of the revolution immense amounts of currency were illegally sent out of the country. Industrialists and farmers refused to invest, or to maximise cultivation of the land. The FSLN has been forced into harsher and harsher measures to stop these abuses.

As the revolution has gone more and more in a socialist direction, sections of the bourgeois opposition to Somoza have gradually split away from the government, going increasingly in a counter-revolutionary direction.

The first defection came in March 1980 when Robelo and Chamorro left the government. This was the response of sections of the bourgeoisie to the laws against economic sabotage and decapitalisation.

In April 1980 the FSLN announced that it would take a working majority in the Council of State, to ensure revolutionary hegemony in the state apparatus.

Crisis

Robelo's MDN (Nicaraguan Democratic Movement) was trying to break any alliance between the Sandinista and sections of the bourgeoisie. Despite these events, the employers federation, the COSEP, took its seat in the Council of State in May 1980.

Throughout the summer of that year, the anti-Sandinista bourgeois intensified its campaign. It culminated with a series of anti-Sandinista demonstrations in November, supported by the MDN, the Church and the COSEP.

Robelo planned a mass demonstration in Managua on 9 November which was banned by the FSLN. MDN offices were sacked by Sandinista youth. On 12 November the bourgeois representatives left the council of state.

The crisis reached its crescendo on 17 November when Jorge Salazar, COSEP vice-chairman, was shot dead by Sandinista police while trying to smuggle arms into the country. Two days later, in response to an FSLN appeal 100,000 people took to the streets of Managua. Mass mobilisation defeated the counter-revolutionary campaign.

Aid

The last two years of the revolution have been characterised by a deepening class polarisation, further inroads into the power of private capital, and above all the massive escalation of the imperialist build up against the country.

Nicaragua has far from overcome the consequences of 'underdevelopment'. The imperialist economic squeeze on the country and the huge foreign debt have made the development of industry very difficult.

Nicaragua needs massive foreign aid to sustain the investment process — so far only Cuba has given substantial aid.

But here and now, the vital question is the very survival of the revolution. After the devastation of the war waged by Somoza against FSLN, Nicaragua faces a war with Honduras — backed by the United States.

Despite all the difficulties and setbacks the Nicaraguan people know that the revolution has taken them a giant step forward. Its gains will not be surrendered to an invader without a bitter fight to the end.



FSLN fighter during 1979 uprising

War threat grows

HONDURAS is preparing for war against Nicaragua. The country has an immense foreign debt — and the debt repayments are financed almost entirely by the United States.

General Alvarez, the country's strong man, went to the US last month and was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honour for services to the US. That 'service' is the decision to go to war on behalf of imperialism.

The difficulty of using US combat troops makes the use of a surrogate vital. The oligarchy in Honduras realise that in any case the advance of the revolution in Central America threatens their rule.

The revolutionary FMLN in Salvador is on the advance and looks invincible, unless US combat troops are sent. The most decisive blow that the US could strike would be to overthrow the FSLN.

The counter-revolutionary 'contras' have been carrying out an offensive over the border since January of this year. But this has been thrown back and defeated. Now, roads are being built to carry Honduran military vehicles to the

border.

Alvarez will soon take possession of fighter planes, tanks and armoured vehicles from the US. Honduras has just instituted a military call up.

When Honduras goes to war, it will be no push over. Its fighting forces are smaller and less motivated than those of Nicaragua. But the Hondurans will have the advantage of air superiority.

Their crucial disadvantage is that they will be fighting a people in arms; hundreds of thousands of militia members, a network of popular organisations prepared to fight to the end. One military asset Nicaragua does have — a rifle for nearly every adult member of the population.

The key weapon above all of the Nicaragua revolution is international solidarity. The labour movement must be prepared to act decisively against any all-out attack on Nicaragua.

As a start, the 11 September demonstration can be a powerful demonstration of the British labour movement against the US plans for Central America.



The thrill of victory — Patrice Donnelly, Mariel Hemingway and Jodi Anderson in 'Personal Best'.

Personal best

I'VE NEVER understood the popularity of *Chariots of Fire*. I struggled to stay awake as our heroes puff bravely away for god, king and John Gielgud.

Personal Best is also a film about two competing athletes — this time women. It doesn't offer the formidable background of Cambridge University. It doesn't ponder over such lofty moral dilemmas as to-run-or-not-to-run on the Sabbath.

And you can bet it won't win eight Oscars. But for what it's worth, it certainly kept my attention.

Young aspiring runner Chris (Mariel Hemingway) meets successful pentathlete Tory — short for Victoria! — (Patricia Donnelly). They strike up an intense relationship as lovers, friends and co-competitors.

The film takes us through their four years together. Much of their time and energy is devoted to developing Chris as an athlete of Tory's calibre. The relationship is fairly conventional — it is all consuming, self-absorbed, but also satisfying and supportive.

But eventually the tensions of the inequalities in the relationship cause it to collapse. As Chris becomes more independent and confident as an athlete and as a person, Tory feels threatened. She becomes jealous and demanding. They split up in bitterness and silence.

Despite the disgusting advertising for the film — 'How can you compete

with a body you've already surrendered to your opponent' — the relationship is portrayed with surprising sensitivity.

Reviewed by Pam Singer

The weaknesses and vulnerabilities of the two women are handled very sympathetically, even through the break-up. This alone makes the film worth seeing.

But Hollywood being Hollywood couldn't leave it at that. Enter what's-his-name — I honestly don't remember — Chris's new lover. He's a handsome non-entity who adds nothing to the story.

His gratuitous addition to the plot conveys the insidious final message that, really, the relationship with Tory was all very well as a teenage phrase. Now that Chris is a grown-up,

she's ready for the 'real thing'.

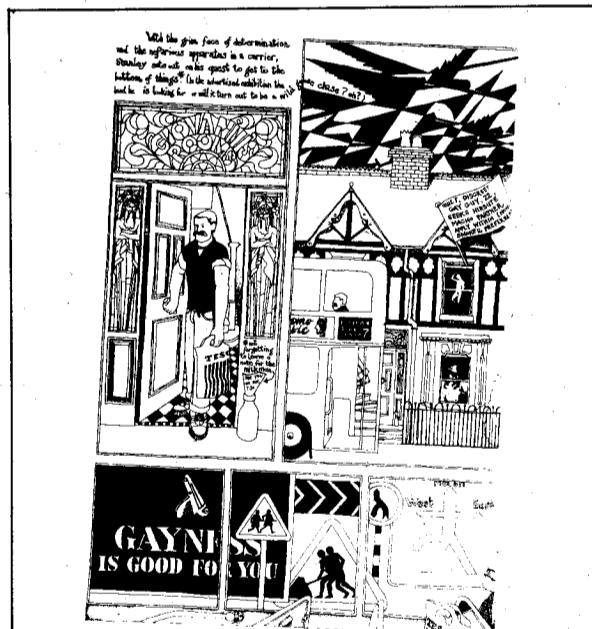
Tory's reaction — 'He's kind of cute — for a guy!' — just about sums it up.

There is much discussion in the film about the 'killer instinct' needed for competitive sports. But the women competitors are all very supportive and

comradely.

Even when their frustrated male coach tries to set up competitive suspicion and distrust between Chris and Tory, he doesn't succeed.

Yes, it's the predictable heterosexist cop-out. But as a positive attempt to treat women seriously, it's worth a glance.



An illustration from a cartoon thriller called *Stanley and the Mask of Mystery* by David Shen-ton. Published by Gay Men's Press, £3.50

Year of living dangerously

SET against the rise and fall of the Sukarno regime in Indonesia, Peter Weir's film tells two stories.

The least interesting has a hero and a happy ending in a rerun of the very worst newspaper movies.

Guy, a hunky ace reporter, is on his first big assignment. His sincere warmth extends to faking defeat in a swimming race, losing to the true Brit military attaché who played the bagpipes while the embassy burnt.

But Guy's liberal concern is slave to his ambition and he willingly betrays his lover to get a scoop on arms shipments, said to be destined for the communists. There is a

sunset reunion as Guy flees from his own confusion and the confusion of the counter-revolution in Jakarta.

Reviewed by Martin Collins

He leaves colleagues dead and doomed to die, for the safe haven of Saigon in 1965.

But the real star of the film, the guy who has set

up all Guy's breaks, is diminutive photographer, Billy Kwan, brilliantly portrayed by Linda Hunt.

Through Billy, we see the misery of a people whose destiny no longer lies in shadow puppets of Javanese mysticism but in puppets of a more powerful evil.

A people whose spirit is ground down and whose bodies are sold for money. Sukarno seemed to offer a new hope. We are lifted as a gravel lorry is overturned to provide rocks enough to for all to stone the United States embassy.

The clandestine Com-

munist Party of Indonesia has hit lists drawn up, but has no intention of taking power from the rulers.

Billy, like more than 500,000 Communists is murdered. His banner, unfurled from a hotel window, read 'Sukarno — feed your people!' As he lies dying Sukarno, turned butcher, drives past in a chauffeur driven limousine.

For Guy, it was 'the year of living dangerously'.

For Billy and thousands more, there was no escape. Definitely a film to look out for.



Greenham protest

WE FELT we had to write to *Socialist Action* to protest strongly at the absence of coverage of the week-long blockade at Greenham in the issue of the paper coinciding with the action.

The national press were clearly determined to only give the events at Greenham minimum coverage, always emphasising the success of the police tactics.

It was a pity that *Socialist Action*, which has had a high reputation for consistent reporting on Greenham, could only

manage one short article on page five.

We felt that the events at Greenham merited the front page, but if not, they at least deserved a high level of coverage inside the paper.

While we do not think that blockades are the answer to stopping the missiles this does not justify ignoring them when they occur.

Particularly when no other forces in CND or the labour movement are organising any other kind of action against the missiles.

Indeed, the week of

the blockades was just the time for *Socialist Action* to carry a serious article explaining its strategy for stopping cruise, in dialogue with the forces organised around the blockades.

We hope that this absence of coverage is not the beginning of a trend in *Socialist Action* and that future events at Greenham will get the coverage they deserve. LINDA WONGSAM, Jude Woodward, Kay Bastin, Martine Bonadona Manchester

It doesn't. See SA no 18

END, where we stand

THE British co-ordinating committee for European Nuclear Disarmament has recently convened a constitutional conference with a view to establishing a permanent organisation.

As founders of this committee, we have therefore had to decide how to relate to the new organisation. We have considered this carefully, and it is our agreed decision not to participate further in the work of this body.

We feel that a structured British organisation of this kind does not have any particular function. There exists a representative international committee for European Nuclear Disarmament in the Liaison Committee which convenes the European Nuclear Disarmament Conventions.

There are also a variety of other international co-ordinating mechanisms, grouping both general and particular interests.

At home, in Britain, it is difficult to see what the new grouping will seek to do that is not already being covered by the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament or other specialist bodies.

When we established the co-ordinating committee it was agreed that it would offer no competition to existing organisations, and that it served only to present the idea of European Nuclear Disarmament to the peace movements as they already embodied themselves.

The initial project which we launched was an idea, not an elaborate apparatus. Such a structure absorbs purposes, energies and resources which might

better by deployed for other purposes, without actually advancing the cause for which the committee was originally established.

The body which it is proposed to create will be a purely British organisation, and obviously this cannot aspire to direct a European movement. Many of the members of the British committee do not seek any such European role, but there is sufficient ambiguity about the proposals to cause unnecessary confusion.

The strength of END in Britain lies in the many groupings to which it has given birth. These now have an independent life as the European perspective within the overall disarmament movement and as the British input to a growing range of European lateral committees.

It was always envisaged that lateral committees (of Churches, trade unions, women's groups, professional bodies) would grow to form links on a European scale, but it is not at all evident that such work of international liaison derives any practical support from a purely national framework.

On the contrary, there is a danger that such a framework may lead its supporters into a declaratory style of work, submitting 'ex-cathedra' pronouncements for real exchange and dialogue.

For these reasons, we



END leader EP Thompson

do not wish to continue our formal association with the British END committee now that its character has been changed.

However, we remain at all times ready to exchange ideas with others interested in the original aims of the END Appeal, and will maintain all our contacts with the regional, local and lateral groupings with whom we have been privileged to carry on joint work up to now.

KEN FLEET, Secretary, The Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation

Racism election issue

THE general election confirmed the fact that the Labour Party made a colossal mistake in using mass unemployment as the main issue. It ought to have made racism the main issue and the result would have been very enlightening.

ALBERT ELDER, Eastbourne

DIARY

(These listings are free for all major labour movement and campaign activities. Semi-display advertisements cost 5p per word and must be paid in advance. Send to: *Diary, Socialist Action, 328 Upper Street, London N1 2XP* to arrive not later than Thursday, one week prior to publication).

● **National Abortion Campaign** conference is on Oct 1-2nd. For details please contact NAC at 374 Grays

Phew, what a scorcher!

A TOUR around the Socialist Action office this week revealed more than the usual quantity of sweat dripping from brows onto overworked typewriters.

There was the suggestion that a fan drive was more needed than a fund drive.

But this week's total shows that our readers have not got so carried away by the heat.

We hope that the summer will go on like this. Just what we need — plenty of sun, plenty of vital money coming into help the paper just when it is most needed.

Whether you are sitting on a beach sipping iced Martini or sinking into the bath after a day in a stinking factory, don't forget your paper.

Thanks this week to:

I Parker	25.00
Camden	410.00
Southampton	60.00
Leamington	34.00
East London	578.00
Martin	30.00
Liverpool	40.00
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Crawley	15.00
Brighton	5.00
Harringey	12.00
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SW London	2.00
E Saraga	5.00
Amos	1.00
Amos	1.00
David	6.00
P Holbourne	1.00
Amos	5.00
Amos	7.00

Total this week £1,605.00

Inn Road, London WC1. Tel. 01-278 0153.
 ● **Fourth Anniversary of the Nicaraguan Revolution** — concert and speaking tour: Manchester Wed 20 July, 7.30pm, UMIST SU; Newcastle Thu 21 July, 7.30pm, St Thomas' Church, The Haymarket; London Fri 22 July, 7.30pm, Friends House, Euston Rd, WC1. Presented by Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign, 20 Compton Terrace, London N1.
 ● **Release Nelson Mandela! Victory to the ANC!** Weekly picket of South Africa House, Trafalgar Square 5.30-7.30, Fridays. Called by City Anti-Apartheid Group.

● **Has socialism a future?** Conference organised by the Labour Co-ordinating Committee. July 22-24, Manchester Poly SU. Details from LCC 9 Poland St, London W1.

● **Glasgow Polish Solidarity Ctee** Conference 17/18 September. For details contact Gordon Morgan, 59 Durward Ave, Glasgow 041-649 8958

● **GLC Women's Committee** next meeting is discussing Defence and Disarmament. Fri 22 July, 7-9pm, County Hall, London SE1. Women only.

● **Troops Out Movement** is organising a mass delegation to visit Belfast in August. See for yourself what's going on in the North of Ireland. For details contact Gail on 01-250 1293.

● **Ethnic Switchboard** — a new telephone service offering information and advice on health services; a

The Other BOOKSHOP

For Marxist books, posters, postcards, badges Feminist literature

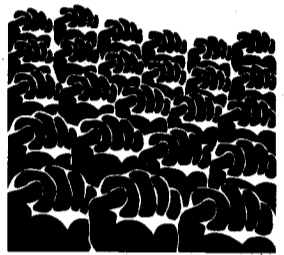
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● **Leggin' it for peace** East London Youth CND March, 17/18 September from Kelvedon Hatch Civil Defence HQ to London Fields, Hackney. For details contact East London YCND, 39 Albion Road, London E17.

● **GLC Women's Ctee Coordinating Group**, Weds 27 July, 7pm County Hall, SE1. Discussing nominations for advisory members to cover childcare, health, older women, planning and transport.

4th ANNIVERSARY OF THE NICARAGUAN REVOLUTION ANTI-IMPERIALISM Year of England



● **The role of the left in the Labour Party** Camden Labour Left meeting with Jeremy Corbyn MP. Thurs 28 July, 8pm, Labour Centre, 8 Camden Road, London NW1.

● **Armagh group benefit disco** 22 July, 9pm-1am, Room 119, Lambeth Town Hall (Brixton tube). Bring own drink. Entrance £1.50/75p unwaged, women only.

● **Hounslow Youth CND March: Stop Cruise!** March from Greenham Common to Greenham Fields, Hounslow, August bank holiday 27-29th. Details from Hounslow YCND, 42 Wellington Rd North, Hounslow, Middx.

● **Women for Life on Earth, 1983 Star** marches converging at Greenham on Hiroshima day, 8 August. Leaving County Hall, London on 29 July. Mixed. Contact 01-699 6712 for details.

● **Preparing for Power** Conference organised by the Revolutionary Communist Party. 16-22 July, Polytechnic of Central London. Over 80 workshops including Marxism after Marx, racism, women's oppression, Ireland etc. Phone 01-274 3951 for further details.

● **The Politics of Health in Zimbabwe** Hour long video available for meetings or functions. £10 (payable in advance). Send to Books for South Africa Fund, PO Box 50, London N1.

HOMES wanted for very cute socialist kittens. Phone Sue 01-359 8288 (day), 01-806 9181 (eves).

Socialist Action Forums

EDINBURGH Socialist Action readers forum is on the last Thursday of every month. Phone 031-667 9630 for further information and details of venue.

SOUTH WEST LONDON Socialist Action & Revolution fundraising Sunday afternoon social. Middle Eastern dinner, music. Children very welcome. 24 July, 2pm-8pm. Tickets £2.50/£2 unwaged. Phone Anne or Ros 01-228 7000 for more info.

TURKEY

INFORMATION BULLETIN

Available from Turkey Solidarity Campaign, BM Box 5965, London W1N 3XX, 46p (includes postage).



Privatisation doesn't work

HEALTH authorities will be receiving yet another government circular telling them how they can privatise services such as laundry, cleaning and catering. John Patten, the parliamentary secretary for health, unveiling the circular, challenged health unions to give examples of where privatisation didn't work.

Well, Mr Patten: ● **St. Stephen's Hospital, London** — domestic services contract ended due to bad supervision and management

● **St. Albans City** —

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domestic services contract cancelled owing to poor work quality

● **Lister Hospital, Hertfordshire** — laundry contract cancelled and given to NHS laundry which was cheaper

● **Paddington and North Kensington Health Authority** saved £100,000 by going in-house

For another 16 examples get the Birmingham NALGO Health Branch Pamphlet *Profit out of Health*, price £1. Available from 6th Floor, Trafalgar House, Paradise Circus, Queensway, Birmingham, B1 2BQ.

Dick Turpin rides again

THE FIRST government service in Gloucestershire to go private will change hands later this year. Wages will be slashed and there are fears that dozens of jobs could be at risk.

Catering and house-keeping at the Fire Service Training College in Moreton-in-Marsh will be taken over by Grandmet on 30 August. 140 workers are affected and they have been invited to apply for jobs with Grandmet. There is, however, no guarantee that they will get them.

Those staying on with Grandmet will see their living standards fall back to 1975/76 levels. Most will suffer cuts in pay of between £20 and £30 per week.

The Home Office, the ministry responsible for the training college, is expecting to pay out between £150,000 and £200,000 in redundancy payments. That will only compensate most of

those who stay for less than twelve months. As the money runs out, their living standards will fall dramatically.

The Managing Director of Grandmet Catering in London is none other than a Mr Dick Turpin. 'His name fits his job', said Jack Dromey, the national officer for the Public Services Trade Group of the Transport and General Workers' Union whose members at the college are affected.

The TGWU has written to the new Home Secretary, Leon Brittan, asking him to intervene. Their protest has been supported by the Fire Brigades Union. The matter is also to be raised by the parliamentary group of the TGWU in the House of Commons.

'The first Dick Turpin used a gun. Nowadays the weapon is the fear of the dole. Times may have changed but robbery doesn't', said Jack Dromey.

Manchester hospital

ON 13 JULY a demonstration of over 150 healthworkers from all over Manchester occupied a Regional Health Authority meeting discussing the closure of the Jewish Hospital — a small local hospital which originally just served the Jewish community, but now is open to all.

The Jewish is one of several small hospitals facing partial closure, or 'change of use' in the area. All the workers have been promised jobs elsewhere — but as one health worker put it 'jobs are like biscuits, there to

be broken.' Looming over the heads of all healthworkers is the threat of privatisation, job loss and attacks on our working conditions and trade union organisation.

Management of North Manchester General Hospital refused premises for a mass meeting of healthworkers to fight further cuts because they said it would incite members to demonstrate. But the meeting went ahead, and was well attended despite management hopes. (Kay Bastin, ASTMS, Manchester)

No mothers at Smiths

IN AN interview for a job at the Smith's Foods factory in Swansea a divorced woman was questioned in depth about care arrangements for her teenaged son.

Eventually the interviewers offered a job saying that as her son was 13 they were confident that she would not be unreliable.

They added that they

were not taking on any more women with young children — in line with Tory plans for the family to encourage mothers to stay at home.

If carried through this policy would mark an about-turn for Smiths who have relied heavily on a female workforce in the past.

(A Smiths worker)

International

IFACING

1984

New issue out now!

Facing 1984 with articles by Alan Freeman on *Rebuilding the Labour Party, the 1983 Peoples March & the CP, John Ross on Facing 1984, Margaret Ward on women and Irish nationalism, George Kerevan on Scotland after the election, Charlie van Gelderen on the 50th anniversary of the Left Opposition.*

All for just 75p! Or subscribe for £5.50 inland, £6.50 overseas surface mail, £13 overseas airmail. Send monies to 'International', PO Box 50, London N1

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Photo: JOHN HARRIS

LT workers on the march against Serpell

Save Marylebone Station!

THE THREATENED closure of Marylebone station means that the rail unions will have to step up their fight to save the industry. Marylebone rail workers are at the sharp end of the government's aim to rationalise the system, increase productivity in preparation for eventual privatisation.

Whether the British Rail Board talks about flexible rostering, one-person operation of trains, 'open station' concepts or the closure of depots and lines it all adds up to one thing — massive job losses.

The government plans to cut 30,000 jobs on the railways in the next three years. They have promised to redeploy the workforce. But this is another con. How can 11,000 guards all become drivers?

The closure of both the station and the depot at Marylebone will inevitably lead to job losses at every grade. How can 160 workers in the Marylebone depot be absorbed elsewhere — especially when the whole workforce is being squeezed through redundancies?

The campaign to ensure the depot remains open is essential to save both jobs and services.

Our campaign started in May when Geoff Hensby (secretary of nearby Paddington No.1 National Union of Railwaymen) came to speak at an open Marylebone NUR branch meeting.

We saw the fight to stop the closure of Marylebone as part of the same fight to campaign against the Serpell Report — the official report which proposes the decimation of BR.

We agreed to set up a joint campaign committee which so far involves Marylebone NUR, the Marylebone branch of the train drivers' union ASLEF, NUR branches along the Marylebone lines, and Paddington NUR.

We also have links with London Transport Underground workers on our line who are also faced with cut-backs and job-loss through the Tory scheme to take London Transport out of the control of the Greater London Council.

**By Jane Austin
(Marylebone NUR)**

A public meeting is planned at the end of July with speakers from the rail unions and the Labour Party. This will be the springboard for building a wider campaign based on the combined strength of the trade unions and the Labour Party.

This needs to be the pattern of a wider response in the rail industry. The denationalisation process is well underway on the rail. BR has sold its hovercraft service, laundries, 27 hotels and has given away its 'Super-break' holiday venture. Sealink, Travellers Fare and various profitable routes are next in the firing line.

BR is considering contracting out track maintenance and the railway workshops at Horwich and Shildon are to be closed because of the increased private ownership of freight wagons.

The Tory assault on the railways has been carefully staggered. In this way they hope to head off any organised opposition.

But rail workers have had enough. Guards at Lincoln recently took action against the removal of track on the March-Spalding line. And the NUR Annual General

Meeting voted for industrial action against Serpell, against the British Rail engineering closures and against further productivity and one person operation deals.

Solidarity must be organised with workers in all depots under attack. We must link up at every level with other public sector unions — workers in British Telecoms, British Steel and the miners.

The timid, disunited and bureaucratic response of the TUC in the last period has presented no challenge to the Tories. Negotiation with the Tories will not halt the attacks.

There must be no more trade-offs by rail union leaders between jobs and productivity deals or bonuses. The bosses, never content with this, will return for more.

GLC veto on London Transport Board

THE FIRST blow was struck last week against the government's plans to take London Transport out of the Greater London Council's control.

The GLC Transport Committee has successfully nominated five new part-time members onto the LT Board — all Labour supporters — thus giving the GLC a veto on the Board.

**By Judith Arkwright
(NUR)**

The new committee members are now placed in the firing line for the government's plan to set up a regional transport authority with their own mouthpieces on it.

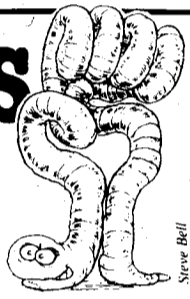
Hopefully the new members will also oppose LT chief executive

Dr. Keith Bright's three year plan for London Transport, which includes the loss of 6000 jobs and the proposal to privatise certain bus routes.

Unfortunately for LT workers aspects of these proposals are already being implemented by the back-door, with the sacking of at least 25 workers on the Underground alone for various petty disciplinary reasons. Indeed the transport committee's own plan for London Transport is no alternative, as it puts forward the need for a reduction of the workforce.

The new Board members and the Labour Group on the GLC should come out with a clear policy of no cuts or job losses and against privatisation, if they really want to galvanise the workforce and the public against the Tories' plans.

WORM'S EYE VIEW



Honour

VETERAN Trotskyist Charlie van Gelderen will be 70 in a couple of weeks time. In order to honour this event, the South African government has once again included him in its recently published list of 'banned persons'.

The 'banned' list which prohibits just about everything including the publication of writings of those listed, is a very select honour — only about 35 people out of South Africa's thousands of exiled opponents.

True story

YOUR friendly Socialist Action journalist is wandering down Upper Street, with, let it be said, no more evil intention than that of going in the Hare and Hounds pub, when lo and behold he is accosted by a policewoman.

'Excuse me sir' says she. 'They've got me at last' thinks he. 'We were wondering whether you would like to step inside the police station to join an identity parade'.

Questions flashed through your reporter's mind. Who was the 'we' who were wondering such a thing? And why me?

Gradually, the truth dawned. This wasn't a special invitation to me arranged by the Commissioner. It was just that when Upper Street police station run out of line-up fodder they send young policewomen (my inquisitor couldn't have been more than 20) to lure in the punters.

I must say I was sorely tempted, but eventually declined the kind offer, despite the 'Oh, go on' banter from my accoster. If you get picked out, you're knicked regardless.

And anyway, given recent events we all know a bit too much about what goes on in Upper Street nick, don't we lads?



Eye of the beholder

NOW, dear reader, study the accompanying picture carefully, and form your own judgement about what it depicts. According to last Friday's *Times* it's 'Police dealing with demonstrators outside

Walton jail'.

The *Guardian* says 'Police tackle demonstrators outside Walton goal'. For once the *Sun* was a little more accurate: 'Copper puts the boot in'.

Yops deaths

AS LAST WEEK'S TV *Eye* revealed, there have now been 17 deaths on Youth Opportunities schemes, including seven last year.

In nearly every case, the employer was found to be at fault, and fined a couple of hundred quid. Some of the accidents have been truly horrifying, and one parent of a youth killed — aided by Joan Maynard MP — is bringing a legal case

against Norman Tebbit. The Manpower Services Commission, while 'regretting' any unfortunate accidents, thinks that nevertheless the YOPs schemes are twice as safe as the rest of industry. Which is evidently not something to be proud of.

Meanwhile the number of factory inspectors continues to be cut to save money — but obviously not lives.



Repression continues in Poland

Socialist ACTION

Another death in police custody



French union leader Edmund Maire with Walesa

MARTIAL LAW is to be lifted in Poland, but the repression against Solidarity and all forms of opposition to the regime is to continue.

General Jaruzelski and his 'Military Council for National Salvation' which took control in December 1981 have finally agreed to lift the harsh martial law regulations in a bid to normalise relations with their Western creditors.

By Davy Jones

But don't be fooled by this slick public relations move, nothing is really going to change. At the same time as lifting martial law the Polish parliament is being asked to approve a series of repressive bills which give the government

similarly sweeping powers to martial law.

The measures which will last till the end of 1985 include the outlawing of independent unions, restrictions on intellectuals and students, making participation in banned organisations like Solidarity a criminal offense subject to imprisonment, and a reinforcement of laws against 'anti-state activities'.

As former Solidarity leader Lech Walesa commented: 'If I were to choose between the new regulations and martial law I would take martial

law. I can only hope that society will not allow this to be imposed.'

Needless to say the Western banks and governments have no such qualms about the Polish bureaucrats new regulations. In their haste to re-establish 'normal' economic relations with Poland the rights of the workers are a small consideration. So much for Reagan and Thatcher's 'concern' for Solidarity.

The real friends of the Polish labour movement are the workers of other countries. Let us hear some voices of protest against the repression by the Polish bureaucrats from our own Labour lefts!

THE INQUEST into the death of Nicholas Ofusu, a Ghanaian who died in police custody in May this year, ended last week. The verdict was 'misadventure'. The Coroner was Dr Arthur Gordon Davies, coroner to the royal household and of the Deptford Fire inquest.

Medical evidence revealed that Nicholas had died by 'drowning in his own vomit', and that his death was likely to have taken some time — a prolonged period of choking.

Nicholas suffered from periodic attacks of violent insanity, the cause of which remained a mystery to his doctors. When he wasn't ill, though, he was described by members of his family as being a very pleasant, kind and intelligent person.

Violent

On the day of his death he suddenly became violent while watching TV with his niece. She, not knowing of his attacks,

became very frightened.

By Tim Wright

Ultimately she ended up on the balcony of their seventh storey flat, screaming and calling for the police. They arrived, arrested and handcuffed Nicholas Ofusu and took him away laid flat on his stomach on the floor of a transit van. It was in the van that he began to vomit.

Police accounts claim that his vomiting was

slight. But by the time they reached the police station he was unconscious and close to death. Attempts to revive him failed.

Evidence

The evidence of most of the witnesses was that the police had not acted with excessive violence. But one witness, Gary Young, claimed that the police had acted with a lot of unnecessary violence, had held Nicholas tightly by the neck and flung him into the flat block lift.

Gary was viciously attacked by the coroner who claimed that the unsigned statement he had given was 'suspect, untrue and malicious'.

The jury were instructed to ignore his evidence. The Nicholas

Ofusu Inquest demonstrated, as the Colin Roach Inquest before it, that the coroner's system works to prevent the truth being known in cases of death in police custody.

The coroner has complete power to decide what evidence is presented before the court, and is able to discredit evidence which points to police malpractice. If the Police Bill becomes law we may be sure that the numbers of deaths in police custody will rise dramatically.

Inquiry

The need for the black community and the labour movement to challenge the verdicts of the coroners' courts and to demand full and independent public inquiries will become ever more urgent.

Police 'monstrous and wicked'

READERS of Socialist Action know about the Colin Roach case, where the inquest jury into his death at Stoke Newington police station called for a police investigation into the treatment of the death.

One notorious case of such an investigation may be of interest.

By Jeff Charlton

Five years ago Mr and Mrs White, an elderly black couple were charged with police assault and later acquitted. In May last year at the end of a long legal battle, the Whites were awarded £51,000 compensation.

Mr Justice Mars-Jones said the officers involved in the raid on the White's home were guilty of 'monstrous, wicked and shameful conduct'.

Also, 'the most favourable view of the conduct of these officers is that they over-reacted and subjected Mr White to excessive, unreasonable and unnecessary force.'

'Taking a less charitable view, they assaulted this defenceless man in his own home and beat him up in a brutal, in-

human way with the object of inflicting pain and injury on him'.

As a result of the case, Scotland Yard's Complaints Investigation Bureau looked into the incident.

They compiled two hefty files of material after a year of delving into the action of the 17 police officers involved.

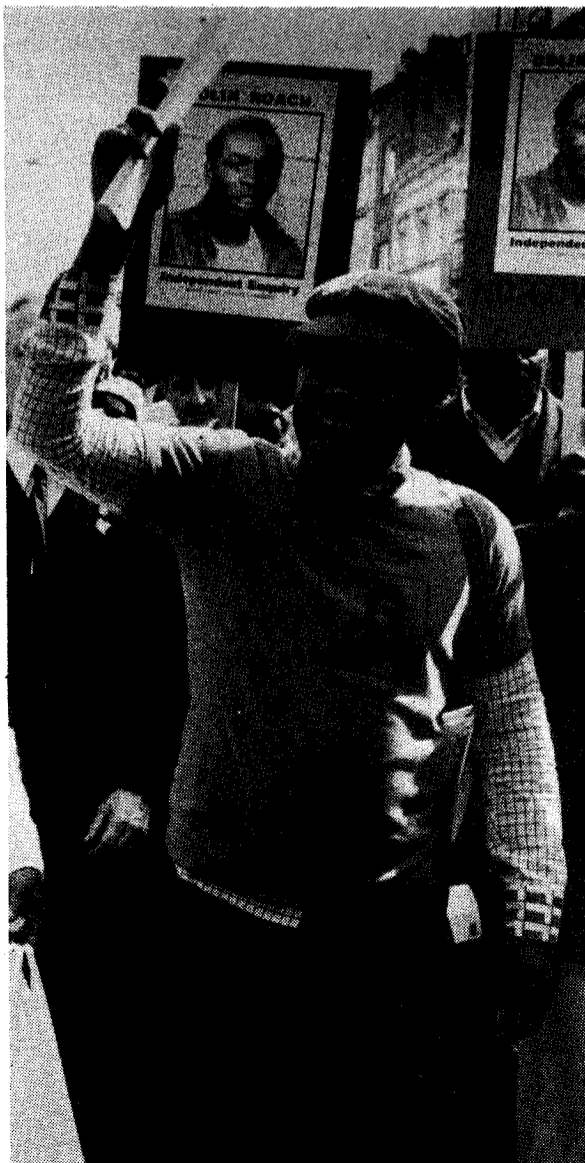
The chief officer in charge of complaints against Hackney officers, Chief Superintendent Alan Burgess, was asked by a journalist if he thought that the investigation should be done by an outside body.

Thorough

He refused to answer, saying it was a political decision. But, defending the present complaints procedure, he said:

'The investigation of any complaint is so thorough and exhaustive that I cannot see any outside body doing it better'.

The result of the White investigation was that the Director of Public Prosecutions decided that there was less than a 50 per cent chance of getting a prosecution of the 'monstrous, wicked and shameful' 17!



Colin Roach demo — the inquest jury called for a police investigation into the treatment of his death

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