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Socialist Organiser

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Belated call for all-out strike

IT'S
NOT
TOO
LATE
TO
WIN!

by Anna
Lunts

AT LAST, after seven months of dispute, the TUC health services committee has decided to recommend an all-out strike.

So far, so good. But the problem is that many health workers feel that they have been led up the garden path for far too long.

It will be a real fight now to get majority support for all-out action. It can be done. But it will need a major campaign to mobilise our members, pointing out the stark choice - either fight now, vote yes for an all out strike, or relinquish not only the 12% but thousands of jobs and services to the Tory blood-letters.

Arthur Scargill's energetic campaign in the coalfields for miners to vote yes to strike action should be a model for us.

Several months ago, the response of the membership to an all-out strike call could not have been in doubt. But far from providing the escalation that was demanded, the Health Services Committee continued to pursue the weary tactics of selective and partial action.

Let-down

In many hospitals, militancy and workplace organisation had never been stronger. The membership were clearly beginning to flex their muscles for a real fight with the government. Real practical solidarity action was beginning to emerge, culminating on September 22 in the most widespread class action since 1926.

But the call for an all-out strike never came. September 22 was followed by the let-down of the regional days of action.

On October 21, at a four hour meeting, the TUC health services committee announced the all-out recommendation. A cynical view of the committee's decision would indicate that the health union leaders doubted the willingness of the membership to respond, so now felt it was safe to make the call and wrap up the dispute.

Wrong

We must prove them wrong. Although the regional stoppages have taken their toll it is still possible to win.

Many stewards and activists have welcomed the strike call, whatever the motives of the Health Services Committee, and are preparing to fight for a 'yes' vote among the membership.

We must demand that the TUC leaders actively campaign in the hospitals and areas, putting the argu-

THE TUC DEMANDS
JUSTICE
FOR NHS
WORKERS



Union leaders have squandered militancy in dribs and drabs. But it's not dead yet!

ments for all-out action at mass meetings and appealing for a solid vote in favour.

NUPE leaders, in particular, should be doing in the hospitals what Arthur Scargill has done in the coalfields.

And we should call for the TUC health services committee to convene a national conference of

health shop stewards' committees, to endorse the all-out strike call and launch the campaign for it.

They should give the all-out strike call bite and weight by calling for a commitment from the TUC for a one-day general strike on the first day of all-out NHS action, as preparation

for a full-scale general strike if the Tories still refuse to budge.

The fight against pit closures, against job cuts in steel, and against privatisation of British Telecom, should be linked with the NHS fight.

The consultation procedures of some of the unions have yet to be determined.

NUPE already has a mandate for all-out action from its annual conference. NALGO is committed by its constitution to call a ballot of the membership.

Continued
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Not too late

-from front page

COHSE's executive has yet to decide whether to go for a branch ballot or a recall conference. Activists in COHSE should demand a recall conference - and fast!

There is no good reason why convening a recall conference should take more than a week or two. But if the process is spun out longer, then it will be a question of an all-out strike to start just before Christmas.

We must press for a quick decision, at least by the major unions, and a quick move to action.

No doubt the bosses' press will break into action, telling hospital workers about the folly of an all-out strike. We have to arm our members with our own leaflets and bulletins.

The 'transport day of action' on November 8 poses a problem, since many hospital workers are absolutely sick of one-day stoppages.

The TUC is recommending a 24 hour strike by transport workers on that day. The unions are not doing much to mobilise

action. But the trains and buses can be stopped if health workers go out to the depots campaigning for strikes - and if they are stopped, that will make November 8 a success to take away the taste of failure from the regional days of action.

It is crucial that hospitals come out, even if we have to grit our teeth over yet another one-day action.

Depots

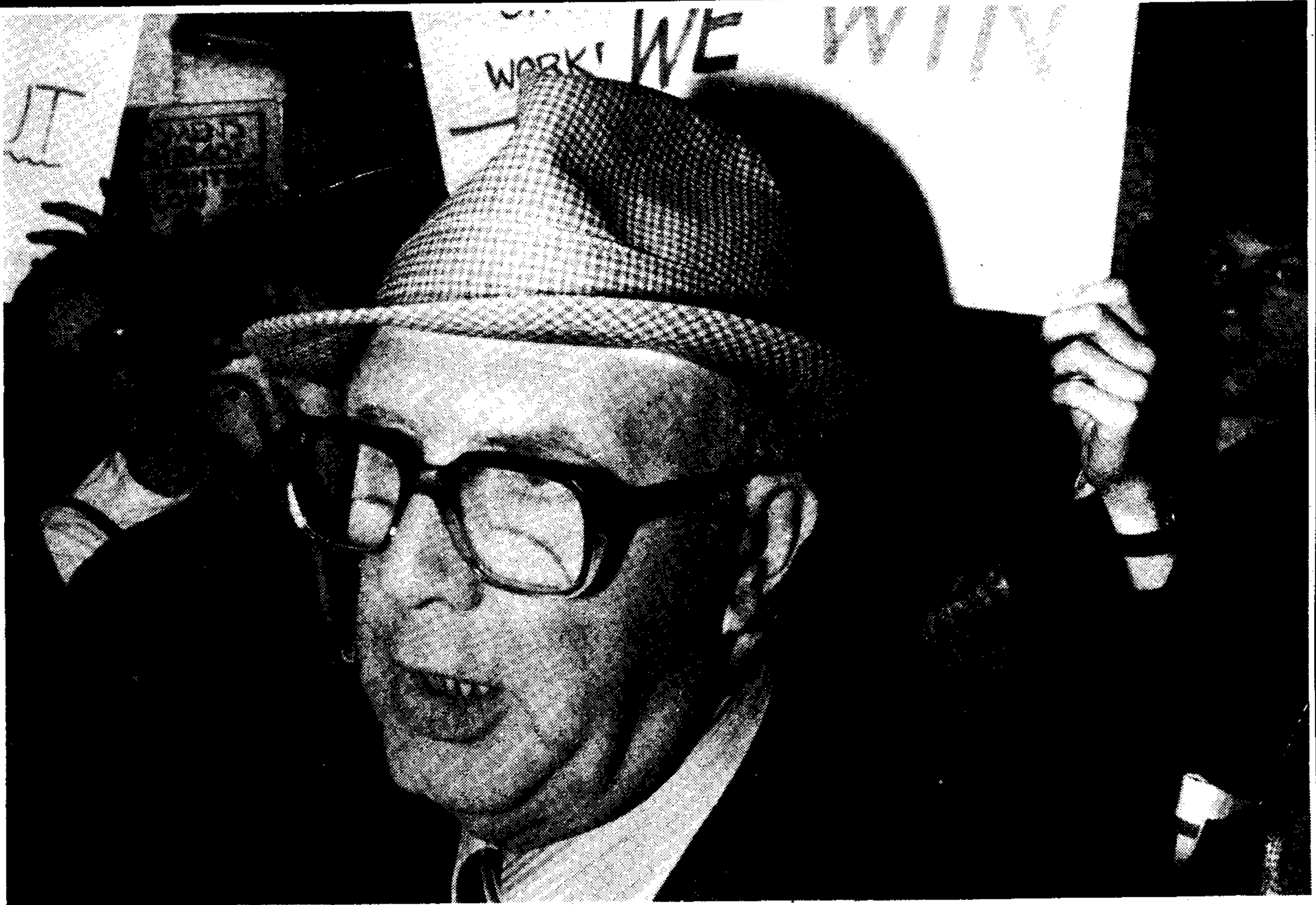
Mass leafleting and health workers' pickets at rail and bus depots are essential. And if hospital workers go to work on the 8th, it will be a blow to the unity that has been built up between us and other workers, and it will be seen as a moral victory by Fowler and Fleet Street.

A good turnout on November 8 can also boost the campaign for an all-out strike.

We have now been given a chance to take effective action, and we must not waste it. The health shop stewards' conferences forthcoming in Sheffield and in Scotland will provide an opportunity to launch the campaign.

Albert shouted down

JOHN HARRIS



Health workers lobby Spanswick for all-out action at the TUC health services committee meeting on August 26

THE TUC's regional days of action ended on a high note in Scotland on October 20.

At a 2500-strong rally in Glasgow, Albert Spanswick was forced to sit down half way through his speech by angry health workers chanting 'All out, all out!'

Speaker after speaker from the floor also demanded an all-out strike with emergency cover, and Spanswick was visibly shaken. Glasgow health shop stewards met on Friday 22nd and decided to organise an all-Scotland shop stewards' conference.

In Edinburgh, a much smaller rally (200 strong) only came to life when NUPE assistant general secretary Tom Sawyer made a call from the platform for an all-out strike.

The Royal Edinburgh Hospital Joint Shop Stewards' Committee is pressurising the official Lothian Joint Trade Union Committee to call a local health shop stewards' conference.

Most health workers had not much enthusiasm for yet another one-day action. But they came out in order to make sure that the union leaders would have no loopholes to escape from the pressure for extended action.

Fred Hessler

Coventry back 'all-out' call

At the recent monthly joint health stewards' meeting in Coventry, it was agreed that all-out action was the only way left open by this government's intransigence and the threat to the health service.

The call for all-out action will now go back to the membership for discussion.

A delegation of about a dozen stewards will be going to the Sheffield conference on October 30. The meeting also voted to seek support from the membership for a one-day stoppage on November 8.

Set backs for sit-in

THE occupation of Wood Green and Southgate hospital is near collapse.

Last week saw two demoralising setbacks for the staff and supporters of the occupation. The DHA moved in during Monday afternoon and took out the operating equipment from the hospital. Later that same day, a meeting of GPs and consultants took place to discuss the situation and to give up with 'dignity'.

While this has had a demoralising effect on the staff it doesn't mean the occupation is at an end. Staff and supporters of the Hospital are looking to put pressure on local GPs to continue the occupation and to bring patients to the hospital.

If this is to be successful it will provide the right basis for the occupation to continue. It will be another chance to halt the DHA's steamroller of closing down vast chunks of local health care in the borough.

Sackings at Gay News

FEW TEARS were shed when it was revealed that the financial crisis at Gay News might mean the company car had to be sold.

Nor were they sehd when owner Robert Palmer told the staff of 23 that there would have to be between 7 and 11 redundancies, and asked the staff if they'd like to work out who should go. They merely refused.

So Mr Palmer issued redundancy notices anyway.

Interestingly enough, of the three workers sacked, two were women, and of the six put onto half-time working, four were women - this out of a total of 8 female staff on the paper.

breakdowns before accepting this figure.

Meanwhile, Gay News is appearing at 40 pages, instead of the usual 52, as overtime has been cut.

At a meeting on Monday, the unions - NUJ, SOGAT

and NGA - will press for alternatives to redundancy and management will press for redundancies to be implemented.

Whatever happens, working on Gay News will be different in future. The

seven worker-directors on the Board have been removed, leaving a Board of two, the owner and a of two - the owner and the company secretary/finance manager.

JENNY FISHER

NUJ expels 'Sun' hack

THE National Union of Journalists has had a code of ethical and professional conduct which it has expected its members to observe, for 46 years. The purpose of the code is to promote an attitude of responsibility in the profession, with the upholding of certain ethical standards, and with protecting the profession.

On October 16 the National Executive of the NUJ voted to expel Ronald Spark, a member on the Sun newspaper, for a leader which appeared in the 7 May issue.

Traitors

The article began "There are traitors in our midst". It went on to accuse Peter Snow, a Newsnight presenter of treason because he had dared to suggest that British reports of the sea battle around the Falklands might not be entirely true. And it accused the Daily Mirror of the same crime because they had persistently supported a diplomatic solution to the crisis.

There is nothing in the NUJ code of conduct to prevent journalists on the Sun or on any other newspaper supporting a Tory government's warmongering. What cannot be tolerated is for an NUJ member to seek effectively to prevent another journalist from expressing criticisms.

Clause 2 of the Union's code of conduct says:

"A journalist shall at all times defend the principle of the freedom of the press and other media in relation to the collection of information and the expression of comment and criticism. He/she shall strive to eliminate distortion, news suppression and censorship."

Simon Collings explains the NEC decision

The reason why this is a part of the union's rules is simple. Without the right to criticise there would be no profession of journalism. Beyond this, many other things we cherish would disappear from our society.

Over the last few years, in this country there has been a steady erosion of established civil liberties and an increased interference with journalists seeking to comment on the activities of the state.

This has gone hand in hand with an increasingly belligerent posture by the British government, particularly towards Eastern Europe.

Against such a background it is all the more important that we guard against further encroachments on our freedom.

Ronald Spark, both in his original article and in his subsequent submission to the union, showed himself to be utterly contemptuous of the NUJ's ethical and professional objectives. In a letter to the union, dated 2 September, and published by Mr Spark in the UK Press Gazette he wrote:

"For myself, I write the things I believe to be true, and in the interests of the paper's readers and the country. I accept the dictates of my conscience. I will in no circumstances accept the dictates of any trade union."

He finishes his letter.

"Had I the common touch of say, a Guardian leader writer, my attitude to your committee would be summed up in two words - get stuffed."

In my view, Mr Spark is a disgrace to journalism and has been served with the treatment he deserves.

Racist cops jeer Whitelaw

LAST Wednesday, 20th, Home Secretary William Whitelaw had to abandon a prepared speech in face of heckling and jeering at a 2,000-strong Police Federation meeting. The cops also heckled and slow-hand-clapped London's new police chief, Kenneth Newman.

Margaret Thatcher complained, truthfully enough: "The police have had a very good deal from this government." For four years running they have had pay awards well above the odds - 13.2% last year, 10.3% this year - and real wage costs for the police are now 11.6% above 1976-7.

But clearly this has only encouraged hard-line right-wingers and racists in the police to assert themselves more.

Meanwhile a High Court judge last week authorised a court official to seize a meeting hall in South-west London, from the local Labour coun-

cil and hand it over to the National Front for a meeting. NF leader Martin Webster is going to court again this week to try to

get Southwark councillors jailed for refusing to cooperate with an earlier High Court order to hand over the hall.



JOHN HARRIS

Webster: High Court hands him the council hall

Defend Pinon Khan!

THERE was a picket of over 50 on Monday at Birmingham Crown Court on the first day of the trial of Pinon Khan.

The trial stemmed from an incident several months ago, when Pinon and his family were the victims of a racist attack. When Pinon rang the Sparkhill police, during the attack they didn't come, but after he had been forced to defend himself in order to beat back the racist, the police responded promptly to a call from the racist. Pinon was left facing possibly a very long prison sentence. There is a demonstration to drop the charges against Pinon Khan on Saturday, October 30, at Sparkhill Park, Birmingham, 10.30 am.

Donations and messages of support to Pinon Khan Defence Committee, Box 12, 134, Alcester Rd., Birmingham.



LABOUR PARTIES AGAINST THE WITCH-HUNT

Conference of delegates from CLRs, LP branches, affiliated trade union branches, women's sections, YSs, etc.

Saturday October 30, 10am to 5pm, at County Hall, London SE1. Credentials for delegates from CLPs (two each) and others (1 each), £1 from 107 Neville Road, London N16 0SU. Cheques payable to Hackney North and Stoke Newington Labour Party.

Sponsors include: Hackney North, Bermondsey, Hornsey, Wood Green, Chipping Barnet, Peckham, Vauxhall, Brent South, Islington North, and Islington South Labour Parties.

No expulsions!

John Bloxam outlines the plans for fighting the purge

SATURDAY'S 'CLPs against the Witch-hunt' Conference, initiated by Hackney North CLP, can be crucial in organising to stop the purge in its tracks.

Time is short. By Saturday the initial target list and the starting date of the purge should be known. In fact, if the right wing can organise their take-over of the NEC's committees quickly enough on Wednesday, the expulsions might well have started by the Conference.

With a week to go, 59 CLPs have indicated either support or sponsorship for the Conference, together with a similar number of other Party organisations. 20 MPs, including Tony Benn, are also giving their support.

The Steering Committee is calling for the Conference to resist any attempts to expel socialists because of the Register.

The focus has rightly been on resisting expulsions rather than on registration, although this is still a very important issue. No one can now doubt that the Register is a blatantly rigged device to provide a cover for a purge of the left. For groups to register now can only help the right, giving the register legitimacy and making it easier for them to try to chop Militant.

The fight for an effective boycott must still be organised, concentrating on a 'no' vote in the CLPD's consultative ballot on whether they should register now.

But the argument that



John Golding, key figure of the stone age right wing, favours a wholesale purge

we must accept the register because it is a Conference decision has divided sections of the left which are nonetheless pledged to oppose the witch-hunt and resist expulsions. And the purge will stand or fall on whether the right can carry through expulsions — if they can't, then the Register will be of little importance.

Saturday's conference will be judged by how effectively it can organise the solid and widespread opposition to expulsions, and lay the basis for effective resistance. The Steering Committee for the Conference will be putting forward proposals on how to organise the campaign

and on establishing a delegate-based National Council to organise from the Conference.

An organisation is needed which is based on and directly accountable to those Party organisations who will have to fight the witch-hunt — especially the CLPs — an organisation, in short, that can deliver action.

The October 30 Conference and an organisation based on it will be complementary to the Militant-dominated 'Labour Steering Committee against the Witch-hunt', and proposals to dissolve the Conference into the Militant campaign should be rejected. The Steering Committee will be

proposing instead that the two campaigns should work as closely together as possible, including for the Regional Conferences organised for November 27 by the 'Labour Steering Committee'.

A united response must also extend to those MPs and other Party members and affiliated organisations who want to fight. It must regard work in the trade unions as a priority, and establish close links with union Broad Lefts.

These and other proposals will be presented by the Steering Committee for the October 30th Conference. We urge all delegates to support them.

Members would not forgive them

THE WITCH hunt is the right wing's response to the fact that they have lost the arguments over policy in the Party — over the Common Market, over unilateralism, but, most of all, over mandatory reselection and Party democracy in general.

They've never been too concerned about conference policy, but mandatory reselection — while it hasn't bitten hard yet — does create a way for the rank and file to bring MPs to book. If they constantly fail to deliver the goods — and that, of course, has been the case so far and looks like being the case even next time — the rank and file can take them to task.

Some of the support for the witch-hunt comes from MPs who feel threatened, in some cases by Militant caucuses. The truth is, though, that Militant has little influence over policy-making in the Party.

Perhaps they've been singled out because they're an easier target. But once expulsions begin, it won't just be the Militant supporters who are victims: right-wingers will be given the green light to finger individuals who obstruct them whether they're associated with a left tendency or not.

My reaction is a gut reaction: this is our Party and I'm not going to be involved in kicking people out of

The October 30 conference was initiated by Hackney North CLP. Andrew Hornung, who moved the original proposal for the conference, spoke to Keith Lichman, vice-chair of the CLP and secretary of the conference steering committee.

it who have fought for working class interests for years and who want to build a socialist society.

The leaders of our Party nationally responded to the SDP's founding by inviting Williams and the others to stay in the Labour Party even though they had been hard at work organising against it. Now these same leaders respond to those that really are fighting to build the Labour Party as a socialist party by trying to kick them out.

Perhaps they think that if the Left is smashed, they might be able to effect a coalition with the SDP and merge with it later.

What about the aims of the conference?

The idea is to link up those who are opposed to the witch-hunt. After all, five sixths of the CLPs voted against the register at Party conference. From the conference, we will set up a national council to coordinate the campaign. We will try to get regional Labour

Parties to oppose the witch-hunt and build up to getting these anti-democratic measures overturned at the next Labour Party conference. This will mean a lot of work in both the CLPs and the trade unions.

The cornerstone of this campaign is the CLPs. The crucial question is, what will the NEC do when CLPs refuse to expel people.

I like to think that the majority of Party members would never forgive a leadership that in an election year disaffiliated between 60 and 100 CLPs. They've done it before, of course, in the 'twenties.

What is your reaction to Militant's proposal that the conference elect two delegates to the steering committee set up from the Militant-sponsored rally last month, and then disband?

I'm happy to see an exchange of delegates, but this campaign won't end... not so long as there are CLPs who want to fight the witch-hunt and want a campaign to express that fight.

I'm in favour of working closely with the Militant rally's steering committee, but it is difficult to see the democratic mechanism for influencing that committee, while we are a strictly democratic body accountable to the organisations from which the delegates come.

Miners' campaign shows the way



by John Cunningham (Dinnington NUM)

THE campaign by the leadership of the National Union of Mineworkers over the union's wage claim is something which has not been seen in the British labour movement in most people's lifetime.

It has seen the entire National Executive of a major national union touring up and down the country, campaigning and fighting amongst the rank and file.

Gone are the days when Gormley stitched up deals in the corridor, gone are the days when national leaders were only ever seen on Gala day. It is a welcome trend and one which the rest of the trade union leadership would do well to emulate.

Even within the history of the miners' union you would have to go back to

1935 when the Executive of the Miners Federation of Great Britain went round the country campaigning. The result of that campaign was a victory, the famous miners' 2/-.

It was during this campaign that miners' leader Arthur Horner told a meeting in South Wales: "The historical role of the miners of this country is to lead the workers of this country. The miners have always lead the workers and now we reclaim that right."

Agitation

These words are as true today as they were then. Coalfields have been attacked with an agitation and propaganda never seen before — meetings, leaflets, special issues of 'The Miner' and 'The Yorkshire Miner', posters, stickers and never-ending arguments and discussions — all urging a yes vote in support of the National Executive. The urgency of the task

facing the NUM has stirred local branch committees to carry the message right to the pits. Many branch committees have held their own membership meetings to get the message home. The unity and sense of purpose deriving from the national campaign was represented at a mass rally held in the City Hall in Sheffield on 21 October.

Along with Arthur Scargill and Mick McGahey were Jack Taylor, the Yorkshire President, and Peter Heathfield, the Derbyshire President and virtually all the National Executive members who could attend that evening.

Only South Wales wasn't represented.

Even the right wingers Sid Vincent (Lancashire) and Ray Chadburn (Nottingham) spoke strongly in favour of a yes vote.

When Chadburn was heckled by Yorkshire miners Nottingham miners who came up to Sheffield by the coach load, turned round

and said, "Don't worry, if he doesn't do the job, we will."

Only about half of the 4,000 who turned up could get into the hall and over-spill meetings were organised and video screens set up to relay the speeches.

Rallies

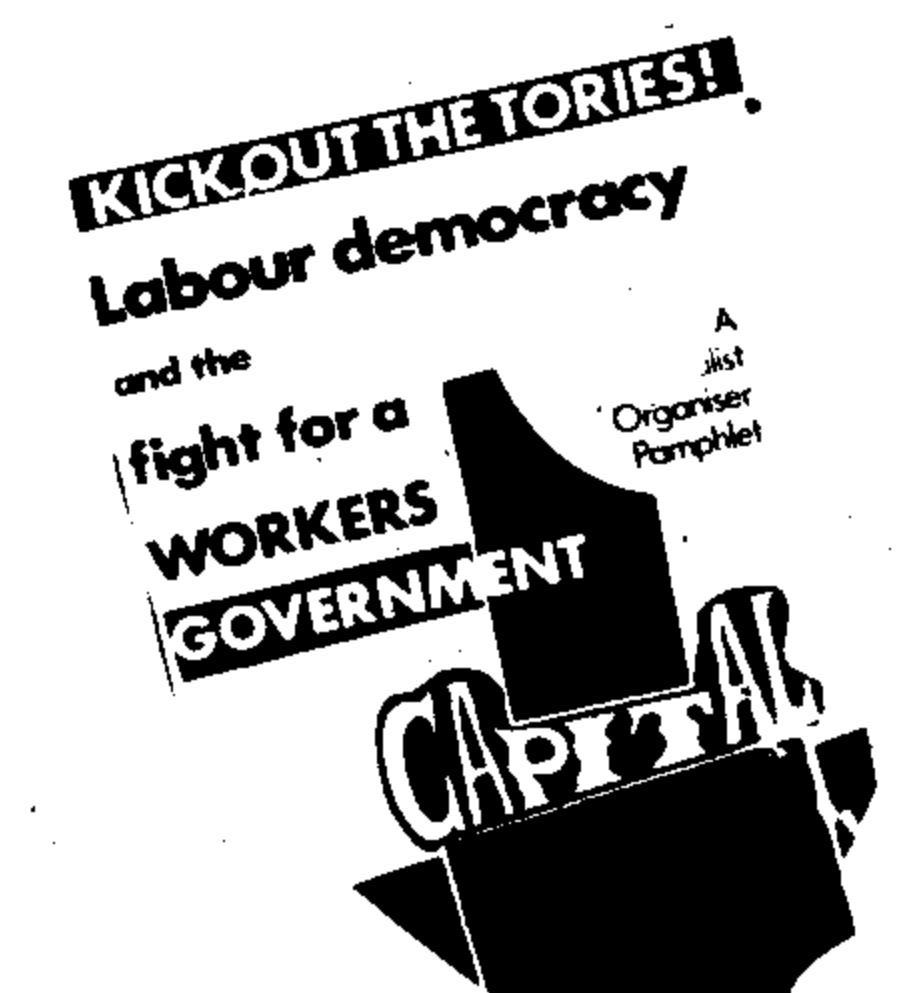
Attendances at rallies elsewhere have been good. The following Sunday, for example, a rally in Worksop Town Hall drew an audience of over 900 from the three local pits, one of which is probably the most right wing in the Yorkshire coalfield.

Whichever way the vote goes, this campaign can only do good to the NUM and trade union movement as a whole. It has forged a new sense of purpose, a new sense of pride and a new dynamic and has set a clear example to the rest of the movement.

Think how different the National Health Workers' dispute could have been if the Executives of NUPE,

COHSE, etc., emulated the miners.

Socialist Organiser has argued for a long time for turning the labour movement outwards and transforming labour movement organisations into fighting units of the class. Now there is a chance for everyone to see what can be done with a bit of effort.



Available from SO, 28 Middle Lane, London N8 for 60p incl. postage.

International News International News International News

'KHOMEINI HAS REBUILT SAVAK'

A supporter of the Fedayeen, a left wing organisation active in Iran, told Stan Crooke about their struggle against the Khomeini regime and their analysis

Can you start off by saying something about the present level and nature of the repression in Iran?

The present repression has to be seen in the context of the recent history of the country. Under the Shah democratic rights were minimal, and those that did exist were designed to facilitate exploitation — to bring the peasants into the towns, to draw women into the labour force, to monitor and control the activities of the workers. Any elements trying to break out of this system of control were subject to execution.

During the Revolution there was a relaxation of this system of control. Women organised themselves independently to fight for their rights, and the workers set up factory committees to demand the right to strike and to hold meetings, rights which did not exist under the Shah.

But the demands could not be met, because the capitalist dependent system did not change. The government was keeping the same system, but to keep the system running the regime had to suppress the elements raising these demands.

At that point in time though, the government had not been stabilised because of the contradictions within it between the representatives of the industrial bourgeoisie and the commercial bourgeoisie, so no systematic repression could be carried out.

But by mid-1981, with the ousting of the industrial-bourgeois element, the government was in a position to change over to large scale repression. On 20 June that year a major demonstration was met by military attack, and since then the repression has escalated to the present level with more than 30,000 political prisoners and between ten and fifteen thousand people already having been executed.

Scale

This is now the scale of repression in Iran, and abroad as well, where students are paid to identify the progressive elements amongst Iranians studying abroad, who then face execution or life imprisonment when they return to

Iran. SAVAK (the Shah's secret police) has been re-built as SAVAMA and operates on a much worse level.

The Pasdaran (Revolutionary Guards) have now been given such powers that that any two of them can call themselves a court and carry out an on the spot execution after a 'trial'. People are arrested at four o'clock, at five they are in Evin prison, and at six they are executed.

People can escape execution if they confess and recant, but they also have to execute someone, like their best friend if he/she is arrested with them, to prove their sincerity in recanting.

Strike

In the factories strikes have been banned, and workers who have gone on strike, for demanding a change of manager for example, have been shot. The regime's supporters have set up cells in the factories and the factory committees, which identify the leading militants, who are then executed. This is much greater repression than during the time of the Shah. In the factories the main agents of the regime are the Islamic Societies, which are subsidised by the government and are used to spy on leftists and militants in general.

But it has not proved to be enough to cope with the level of opposition. So Khomeini has announced that people have a duty to inform on their relatives, even children, and neighbours if they are anti-regime. Parents have turned in their own sons and daughters who are then shot.

Women in particular are now a lot worse off than even under the Shah. The few reforms passed by the Shah, to benefit the system, not women, have all been scrapped. Women have been reduced to an instrument for cleaning and sexual reproduction. A man can have four wives, but that is no concern of any of the women.

Any female over nine years of age can be married off for a day, three days, a week, a month or whatever, provided that the man pays the appropriate amount to the priest and to the girl's parents.

Under the 'Law of Retribution' the woman is placed completely under the control of her husband, with no rights whatsoever, unless she is very rich. If a woman commits adultery or prostitution she can be stoned to death.

If a man kills a woman, then the woman's family must pay half the man's blood money, which can be as much as two bars of gold, before he can be executed. But if a woman kills a man, then the man's family don't need to do this.

What is the attitude to the war against Iraq, especially since the fighting spread to Iraqi territory?

There is a lot of dissatisfaction. People were asked to make sacrifices to support this reactionary war — they were asked to accept lower living standards, workers had



Early after the fall of the Shah — a captured Savak agent. Now the secret police has been rebuilt

to work longer, despite three million unemployed, for the same pay, and people who protested were executed.

Though a lot of people supported the war at first, more and more people are now wanting an end to the war, especially since it spread to Iraq, so that the internal problems can be sorted out. Opposition within the army to the war is building up, and those who are sent to the front don't want to go, but they are shot if they resist.

Mosques

The war has been used as an excuse to increase repression. The mosques have now become centres for regulating people's activities. They carry out surveys of how many people are in each household etc., and then decide on the food rations to be allocated. But those opposed to the regime and to the war have their food rations cut and their electricity and water cut off completely. In this way the war has been used to control the people.

Given such a level of repression, to what extent is oppositional work still possible?

In the period immediately after the Revolution we were free to organise meetings, print papers, distribute

leaflets and so on. In the initial period of repression, when the regime had not yet become stabilised, people selling papers or distributing leaflets faced the threat of being beaten up. But as the repression escalated we were all forced underground, though it was still possible to publish material illegally.

People would sell it on the streets for a couple of minutes and then disappear before the Pasdaran arrived.

After 20 June this became virtually impossible. The publishing houses were discovered and burnt down, and the editorial boards of the papers arrested and shot.

At the moment the only paper still published is KAR, the Fedaiis' paper, but it is smaller than before and distribution is extremely dangerous — if your house is raided and a Marxist book or any leftist newspapers are discovered then you are immediately arrested and taken away for execution.

At one time the main arena of political activity was the universities, but these were closed by Bani Sadr. He called their closure the start of a Cultural Revolution, but they were closed to stop the penetration of left wing ideas to the people: the universities were used by all the people, not just the students, and all the left-wing organisations had student sections.

The different universities

organised different labour forces: the Industrial University organised the workers in the West of Tehran, Tehran University organised the slum-dwellers in the South of Tehran, and the National University was responsible for workers in the North East of Tehran. The same thing was happening outside of Tehran as well. Left ideas were being taken to the people from the universities and a progressive force was being built up within the labour force, which is why the government had to shut down the universities.

What are the main organisations in the opposition to the regime?

Opposition was organised around three organisations basically: the Mojahedin, the Fedaii, and Peykar. There were other, smaller organisations, which had a much weaker relation to the people.

Peykar has now vanished from the surface as a functioning organisation. It still has supporters, but they are not organised. Only the Fedaii is still active in the labour force and peasantry; the Mojahedin collect support from the bourgeois liberals and middle sections of the petty bourgeoisie. Support for the Shah is restricted to a minority of rich people living abroad.

In Kurdistan things are a

bit different. There you have Kumaleh, the Peykar, Peshmerga [Ready to Die], (although I don't know if they still operate), the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) and now the Mojahedin Peshmerga as well. Their support varies according to their ideology. The KDP receive support from the petty bourgeoisie and work with the Mojahedin in the NCR, whilst Kumaleh is Marxist-Leninist and has been fighting the regime for 2½ years.

The Mojahedin are basically from our point of view, a petty bourgeois organisation with a religious ideology. Their support comes from the middle petty bourgeoisie, and their demands for democratic rights are a reflection of this: they want a democratic revolution but at the same time they want to maintain the capitalist system.

Break up

They think that a national bourgeoisie can develop within Iran, but it is impossible to maintain a capitalist system anywhere in the world without it being dependent on world imperialism.

For us, the main contradiction — and the Mojahedin don't see this — is between capital and labour. You need to change the whole system, by breaking up the machinery of government, setting up committees of workers and peasants, breaking up the army and replacing it with a people's army, which is formed in embryo by arming the workers and peasants committees.

How does the Mojahedin's politics tie up with their support for the National Council of Resistance?

Historically the NCR developed from when one side of the contradiction in the government, the commercial bourgeoisie, ousted the other side, the industrial bourgeoisie. When Bani Sadr, the spokesperson for this section of the bourgeoisie was ousted, the Mojahedin were under the illusion that he was very popular but they failed to see that any support given to him was due to the support he received from Khomeini.

Rajavi (leader of the Mojahedin) and Bani Sadr fled from Iran and set up the NCR as a coalition between

supporters of the middle petty bourgeoisie and the liberal bourgeoisie; their aim was to replace the present government, but not the present system. The Mojahedin claimed lots of support for the NCR in the army and the people, and talked of change within a matter of months. But the change never came — this shows that the support was not there. In fact, the NCR is better known and has more support outside of Iran than inside Iran. It has now reached the point that the people's own demands surpass those of the NCR.

What is the goal of the International Solidarity Front and how does it differ from Iran Solidarity, the other Iranian solidarity campaign?

Our basic objective is to show that the problems faced by Iranian and British workers are not different, but, because of imperialism, are all chained together. We need to get the labour force in Britain to appreciate the scale of the problems in Iran and to recognise that their own exploitation is related to the three or four fold exploitation carried out in the Third World.

The ISF has two roles to play: bringing information about the situation in Iran to workers outside of Iran and raising their political awareness; and achieving immediate help for the struggle in Iran, for example by getting the sending of goods and arms to Iran stopped.

If we can get the support of dockers for blacking, then weapons like the Chieftain tanks can no longer be used against Iranian workers.

The ISF now exists in Italy, France, America, Germany, India, the Philippines and Britain and campaigns for support for the struggle for democratic rights in Iran and the defence of Iranian students studying abroad who face repression and deportation.

Iran Solidarity, although on paper fighting for similar demands, is run by one organisation, whereas the ISF is a sort of committee in which any point of view is welcome. The IS, involving only the Mojahedin indirectly implements the Mojahedin's attitude and has indirectly collected support for the NCR. And once that support is gained then the life of that campaign is at an end.

Labour Committee on Palestine founding conference

Conference open to Labour Committee on Palestine members, delegates from affiliated organisations, and non-voting observers. Details from the secretary, 28 Carlton Mansions, Holmleigh Rd, London N16.

Saturday November 20, 1pm to 5pm at Brixton Town Hall, Acre Lane, London SW2.

International News International News International News

SINN FEIN NAILS THE OLD LIES

The Assembly election results have nailed the lie that the trouble in N. Ireland is isolated 'IRA terrorists'. They have also shown the impossibility of a 'solution' in the N. Ireland framework. John O'Mahony reports.

FOR a dozen years British governments — Tory and Labour alike — have justified their policies of repression in Northern Ireland with the lie that the IRA is a mere terrorist apparatus, without real support in the Catholic community. The SDLP was said to 'really' represent the overwhelming majority of the Catholics. The Republicans' refusal to participate in elections helped give credibility to that lie, of course.

Now the lie is well and truly nailed. 12 Provisional Sinn Fein candidates in the election for the Six County assembly got 10% of the votes cast, 35% of the Catholic nationalist votes cast, and won 5 seats.

The Sinn Fein vote seems to have come from previous non-voters and youth rather than from the SDLP. Nevertheless, no-one will now be able to pretend that the IRA is unrepresentative of the Catholic population, or represents only an insignificant section of it.

Terrorist

It was always a stupid lie. For no mere terrorist apparatus could sustain a war for 12 years against military forces vastly superior in men and equipment.

The IRA could not have existed unless it had wide support. In fact, as Socialist Organiser has always insisted, the IRA is the militia of the Catholic community. The latent or passive support it can count on is probably much greater than its share of the Catholic vote.

The lie that the IRA was a terrorist gang, to be dealt with by police methods and repression, led to the criminalisation policy introduced by De Lorean fan Roy Mason when he was Labour secretary of state



For 60 years the Republican movement has abstained from elections, arguing that to participate is to accept the denial of the Irish people's vote in 1918 for a united and independent state. Its switch from this dogma has produced dramatic results.

for Northern Ireland. Concessions to the real status of captured IRA soldiers — that they were prisoners of war — granted by the Tories in 1972 were taken away, and for five years all the might of the British state was brought to bear to crush the spirits and the bodies of the Republicans.

The blanket protest followed, culminating after years of heroic resistance within the prison camps in the hunger strike last year

— when ten men were allowed to die.

And the hunger strike, and the campaign to organise the widest support possible to force the government to concede the hunger strikers' demands, led to the political wing of the Republican movement standing in elections. The policy of electoral abstention was dramatically reversed. Sinn Fein decided that though it would boycott the assembly

it would contest the election.

The Assembly was foredoomed from the word go, more of a political gimmick than a serious attempt to break the logjam in Northern Ireland. It was a feeble third attempt along lines that had already failed twice, in 1974 and 1975.

Sinn Fein's success, however, means that now not even a feeble hope remains to Prior that the Assembly will 'take off'.

30% of the voters backed candidates — SDLP and Sinn Fein — pledged to boycott the assembly. The Sinn Fein vote probably makes it politically impossible for the SDLP to renege on that commitment, even if it wanted to. The result will be a Protestant assembly, and a small group of non-sectarian Unionists from the Alliance Party.

Its role will be to act as a platform for the Paisleyites and the Official Unionists to harry the direct rule authorities. The Paisleyites will agitate for the Assembly to be given back the powers of the old Protestant Ascendancy Stormont parliament. Prior and the British government have committed themselves very firmly against this, and Prior has said he will prevent the assembly setting up any 'unauthorised' structures — that is, structures that do not have the agreement of, or command the allegiance of, the Catholics.

On the Protestant side of the communal divide the

Paisleyites lost ground to the Official Unionists, who favour integration of Northern Ireland with Britain rather than restoration of the pre-1972 Stormont system. This seems to represent a certain loosening of the tight polarisation to the extremes in both communities that accompanied the hunger strike and the vast mobilisation of Catholic support for the hunger strikers.

Sinn Fein's dramatic breakthrough, though, suggests parallels with the election of 1974.

In 1974 the power-sharing executive was set up, amidst bitter hostility from the Protestant population. The Faulkner Unionists broke their election pledges to take part in power-sharing and the then Council of Ireland. Yet the power-sharing executive was in being, and the Paisleyites were reduced to impotence within the Assembly. The executive had prospects of using its vast powers of patronage and so on to build a base for itself and win over a big section of the Protestants.

Power-sharing

But then the British class struggle intervened. The miners' strike pushed the Tory government into calling the election of February 1974. The Orange genie, so recently corked up in the bottle and raging fiercely, was allowed to escape.

11 of the 12 Northern Ireland Westminster seats were won by opponents of power-sharing. That massively undermined the executive and legitimised the Orange general strike of May 1974 which led to the power-sharing executive's collapse.

Sinn Fein's unexpected electoral strength has disrupted the schemes and plans of the Tory government, and rendered even a charade such as Prior planned unviable.

But nothing like the events of 1974 are possible for the minority Catholic community. 35% of the population, they have much less industrial weight than that because of job discrimination.

What is likely is a new military offensive by the IRA. The Republicans have used the election as a means of building support for their military campaign, not as any sort of alternative: their slogan is that they will wage the struggle with an armalite rifle in one hand and a ballot paper in the other.

In an editorial last Sunday the Observer said that the election revealed a state of latent civil war. It went on to say:

"The election of prominent IRA men — let us forget the 'Sinn Fein' figleaf — shows that the Catholic community, to a great extent, consciously supports the campaign of political violence that has been going on now for more than 11 years...

"The state of civil war in Northern Ireland is kept at a level of latency — that is, several politico-sectarian murders every month — by Northern Ireland's continuance in the United Kingdom, and by the presence of British troops. There can be no doubt now, if ever there was any doubt, that British withdrawal would be followed by a full-scale Lebanese-style civil war in Ireland, with incalculable further consequences."

It is certainly true that there is latent communal civil war in Northern Ireland. The Paisleyites' small loss of votes to the Official Unionists may mean a slackening off of last year's polarisation, but the sectarian assassination of two Catholics shows just how tense things are.

In a limited sense the Observer is even right that the British Army keeps the communities apart.

But the general picture painted is fundamentally untrue. The British Army keeps the communities apart within a strategic British framework of maintaining the artificial sectarian state which keeps the Catholic/Protestant, Nationalist/Unionist antagonism at boiling point. Fundamentally the British Army maintains the framework for the chronic communal antagonism.

It keeps the communities

apart by beating down the rebellious Catholics. The fact of mass Catholic support for the IRA has meant, on the ground in Northern Ireland, that throughout most of the '70s the British Army has terrorised and brutalised the entire Catholic community in its war against the IRA.

The election proves yet again that nothing is being solved by the British policy of 'holding the ring'. In the last decade, the sectarian tensions have been murderously intensified. It is probable that the effect in the Protestant community of the electoral support for the Republicans will be a new increase of indiscriminate sectarian assassinations.

The Provisionals have pointed out that though the kidnapping of a sergeant in the British Army part-time force, the UDR, may have triggered the kidnapping and beating to death of a man in Belfast, and the shooting of another in Armagh, the sergeant was in the Army and the two victims were picked at random because they were Catholics.

Tinkering

That is true and significant. Yet the sectarian antics of the Irish National Liberation Army during the election cannot but encourage the Protestant sectarians to behave likewise. The scene seems set for sectarian assassinations on both sides.

The Observer relies on the police power of the British state to freeze the latent civil war indefinitely.

But British policy of holding the ring, tinkering occasionally with the political structures and beating down the Catholics as a staple activity, is stoking the fires of latent civil war. It is creating the conditions that could well lead to a Lebanon situation developing in Northern Ireland, with mass communal slaughter and bloody repartition at the end of it. The demonstration of solid support for the Republicans by 10% of the electorate, and the probable counter-polarisation on the Protestant side, probably does bring sectarian civil war nearer.

The only way out of this situation is to recast the entire framework. The sectarian Northern Ireland state must be replaced by a broader framework within which the Catholic and Protestant communities can learn to live together.

The Labour Party should commit itself to abolish the Six County sectarian state and to work for a federal united Ireland that will offer the fullest rights, guarantees and autonomy to the Protestant population that are compatible with the rights of the majority of the Irish people.



Sinn Fein candidate Gerry Adams out campaigning

Jenny Fisher reports on the sexism and racism built into immigration law

Women

demand equal rights as citizens



'IMMIGRATION laws are racist and sexist. Nationality laws are racist and sexist.'

These words opened the London Conference on 'Women, Immigration and Nationality' on Sunday 24th. For the rest of the day, over 200 women discussed the effects of the complex legislation and official forms of harassment of them: and shared their own, often harrowing, experiences of this racial and sexual discrimination.

The basis for today's racist and sexist Immigration and Nationality Acts was laid at a Commonwealth conference in 1947. The 'citizenship of the United Kingdom and Colonies' (CUKC) was created for inhabitants of the UK and of Commonwealth countries not yet independent. (Inhabitants of independent Commonwealth countries would become citizens of that country, although they would still be British subjects, thus retaining the right of free entry to live and work in Britain.)

Everyone born in the UK and colonies after January 1, 1948, was a CUKC by right of birth. But only fathers could pass on this citizenship to children born outside the UK and colonies, and only if they were married to the child's mother.

The other ways of acquiring UK citizenship were registration and naturalisation. A woman of any nationality married to a UK&C citizen man had an absolute right to register as a UK&C citizen. But a man married to a UK&C citizen woman could not.

The citizenship rights of a woman were defined by those of her husband. Women who were UK&C



citizens had no right to bring an 'alien' husband into the UK, nor (later) the right to bring a husband

who was himself at UK&C citizen to Britain. The first stage, definition of a woman's nationality through her husband, then led to an official policy of expecting a woman's place of residence to be defined through her husband's.

This was introduced in the new immigration rules of 1969 - by then Home Secretary, James Callaghan. All women, including those born in the UK, were excluded from settling in Britain with a Commonwealth husband, unless she would suffer 'exceptional hardship' (almost impossible to prove) if she moved to her husband's country.

This was defended by Home Office Minister, Merlyn Rees; 'immigrants should live in the man's country, not the woman's.'

Divide

The 1971 Immigration Act furthered the racist and sexist divide. It created the category of patrials, who were free from immigration control or restrictions on employment. These rights are usually

gained from nationality or citizenship. Yet the main qualification for being counted a patial were: being born, adopted or naturalised in the UK, or having a parent or grandparent who had become a UK citizen by one of those means.

With patriality being so closely linked to descent, patrials are generally white, non-patrials black.

Canada

So white people, born and brought up in Canada, for example, are not UK&C citizens (they are Canadian) but if one of their grandparents was a UK&C citizen they would be patrials, and could freely enter Britain.

However, a black East African, with UK&C citizenship, would be a non-patrial, and have no rights to come to Britain.

Furthermore, a woman Commonwealth citizen married to a patial man gains patriality herself: a man cannot gain patial status through marrying a patial woman.

Since the 1971 Act,

most changes in Immigration law have been by changes to the rules; an easy, quick process.

The changes have again restricted the rights of non-British men to live in Britain with British wives, including a 12 month 'trial period' to prove a marriage genuine. This was defended by William Whitelaw (now Home Secretary): 'the abode of the husband... should naturally be viewed as the natural place of residence of the family.'

A husband can also be refused entry if the immigration authorities 'have reason to believe' (in practice, no 'reason') the couple have not met: a clear attack on Asians who practise the arranged marriage system.

Restrictions have increased on the entry of dependents, including the infamous 'virginity tests' of 1979, and delays growing to nearly five years in the 'special voucher system' (allowing a fixed number of immigrants each year).

Separation of wives and husbands has also caused women great problems in bringing children into Britain.

While on the one hand treating the woman consistently as th dependent in the marriage, the laws also operate against families being together in Britain. But however hard it is to unite families and heterosexual couples, there is no recourse in law at all for gay couples.

As if all this legislation were not enough, we're now faced with the 1981 Nationality Act, coming into force on January 1, 1983.

This Act attempts to 'remove some of the possible future sources of immigration' (William Whitelaw, 1978) by using

new laws on nationality.

Whereas before, the immigration to Britain of UK&C citizens has been controlled, it will now be made impossible by creating new categories of citizenship in place of UK&C citizenship with no entry rights at all.

The Act has been hailed as 'non-sexist'; but this is only true in reverse. Instead of allowing wives to pass citizenship to their husbands, the Act removes the right of husbands to pass citizenship (and thus settlement and employment rights) to their wives.

Women married to UK citizens, who have had a right to become UK citizens themselves through registration, will have five years to register. This right will stop on January 1 1983, and in this 5 year transition phase will not apply to divorced women or widows.

This is only a brief outline of how the racism and sexism of immigration and nationality law affects black women. There are many, many people who have suffered under it, some of whom have campaigned against the controls, and a few of whom have won their cases.

Even for those who live in this country already, racist checks in schools, dole offices, hospitals are creating a society little elevated from apartheid South Africa.

The Women, Immigration and Nationality Conference has sent a telemessage to William Whitelaw, opposing the tightening of immigration and nationality controls.

The women left the conference determined to fight to defend our sisters from any racist attacks, and to campaign to sweep the Statute Books free from all racist and sexist laws.

Local groups key to paper

by Jenny Fisher

SO there is somebody out there!

Forty women came to the Women's Fightback AGM in London on Saturday 23rd, from as far away as Edinburgh. Their ideas and suggestions showed that the bulletins, newsletters and newspapers we've been sending out for the past year have been read and acted on.

So what about next year? Sisters agreed with a resolution from Manchester Women's Fightback that the paper should appear monthly: local groups need it to sell in shopping centres and on estates (as well as at work) to reach the mass of working class women.

We agreed on a drive to collect standing orders and elected a new Editorial team, so we should have the money to publish monthly, and a group of people to nag if we don't.

Ideas and suggestions flowed on how to strengthen the campaign and paper in its various areas of work. Women's Fightback has been in the forefront of the Labour Party Women's Sections, and a proposal to set up a Labour Women's working group was carried.

This should help to circulate the Labour Women's newsletter more regularly (and spread the donkey-work of producing it) and will take further ideas to the newly elected Steering Committee. A Women's Fightback Labour women's conference is already scheduled for November 27.

Suggestions were also made to improve coverage of women's activity in the trade unions, and of women's struggles in other countries: possibly more working groups, reserving pages in the paper, or allocating areas of responsibility to the Editorial Board.

Above all, women who read Fightback must be encouraged to write and send in articles. And we need to crystallise more active local groups out of the very widespread but often passive support for Women's Fightback.

One activity which will draw all these strands together is the build up for the Women's March for Jobs planned for next summer. We hope the March will arrive in towns to meet up with local activity and the AGM agreed that local campaigns must be built up now.

The obvious current focus is the campaign against UB671.

The women at the meeting showed a feeling which is far more widespread. In the Labour Party, in the Unions, and at the dole queue, women are fighting back!

Forced to face violence

MARIA Cuenca Luna from North West London has been threatened with deportation to Bolivia.

The reason is that she has left a violent man. The Home Office allows her no right to stay in the country independent of the man she was with.

Maria's young child, Fenena, who was born in London, will also be forced to leave the country.

Maria Cuenca Luna was even accused at her appeal of having tolerated Peter Lancaster's violence just in order to stay in the country.

The same threat of deportation for leaving violent men faces Najat Chafee (also North West London) and Halimat Babamba from

Leeds.

The Home Office message to black women is clear. 'We'll only let you in if you want to live with a man. If he beats you, then you must accept it.'

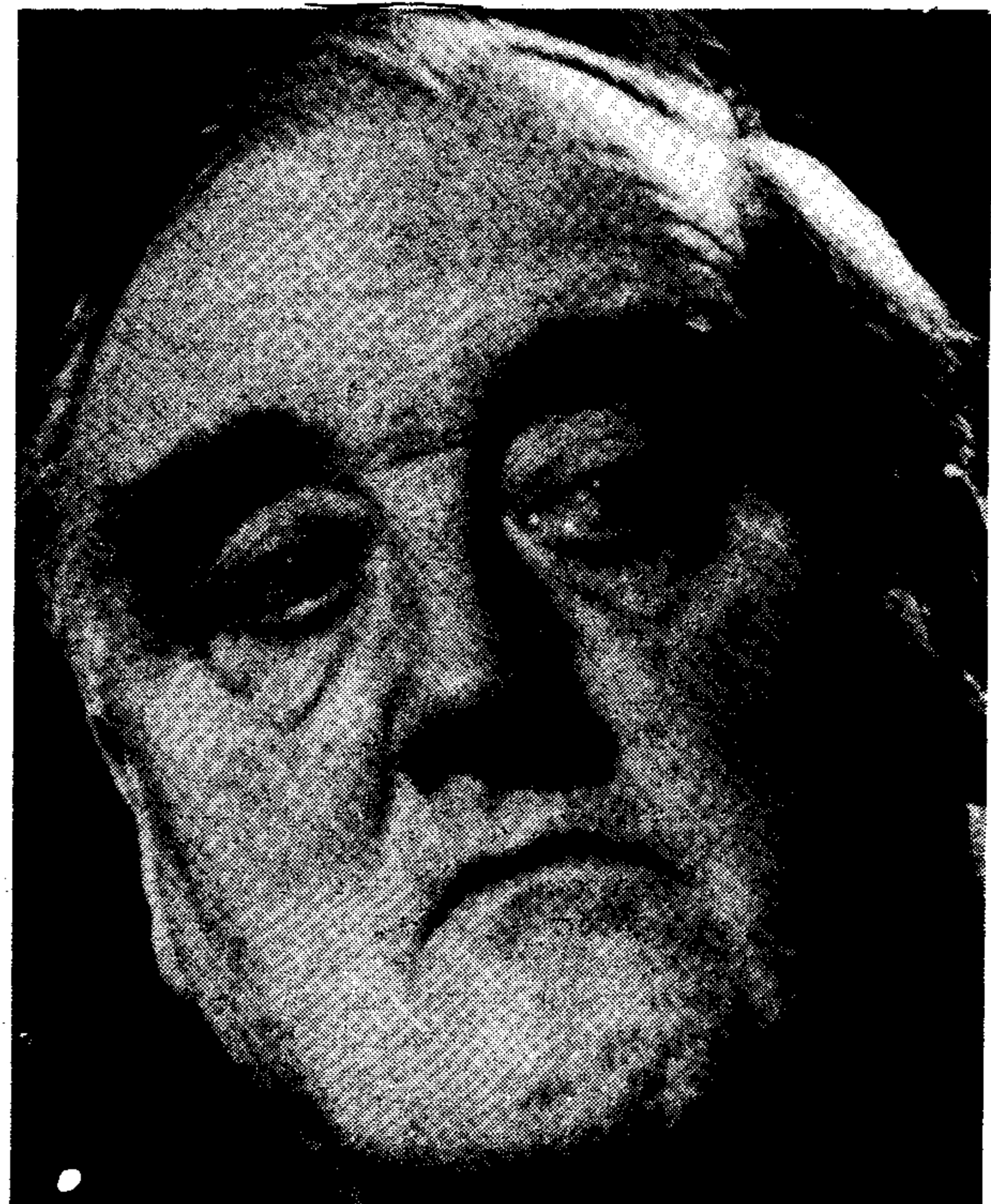
'If you leave him then it was only a marriage of convenience, and then we will deport you and your child.'

The link between the oppression of black people and women could not be more clear.

•Friends of Maria and Fenena, c/o 146, Kentish Town Rd., London NW1.

•Friends of Najat Chafee, c/o 138, Miner Ave., London NW10.

•Friends of Halimat Babamba, Box HB, 59, Cookbridge St., Leeds LS2 3AW.



Whitelaw... administers a white man's law

De Lorean fiasco

THE GULL- WINGED AND

THE GULLIBLE

"I say, I say, I say, my boss has no nasal membranes left, after sniffing cocaine!"

"How does he smell?"
"Terrible!"

All along there has been a fishy smell about John De Lorean and his crazy plan for a car plant in the Catholic ghettos of Belfast turning out \$27,000 sports cars for a dwindling market on America's West Coast.

De Lorean's financial and personal history made 'Dallas' seem like 'The Archers' in comparison.

Having clambered his way up the management ladder in the US car industry he was drawn in to the Hollywood jet-setting social scene, and was swiftly linked with leaks of confidential information from General Motors, where he reached the position of vice-president at \$700,000 a year.

De Lorean stalled off company investigations into his activities by agreeing to leave with a \$1 million dealership in Florida.

Between 1974 and his 1978 arrival at the door of Roy Mason's Northern Ireland Office, De Lorean was involved in a succession of dubious deals and legal scrapes, including a business bankruptcy, lawsuits against him alleging fraud, and a conflict over patent rights of a new radiator De Lorean was to market.

Crooks

De Lorean's business partners included known crooks, and his high-flying lifestyle was already locked in to the cocaine and caviare set.

None of this troubled Labour minister Roy "Butcher" Mason as he listened enraptured to De Lorean's scheme to produce the car that costs a king's ransom in the jobless wastelands of Belfast.

Having never subscribed to anything approaching a socialist answer to unemployment — which requires the mobilisation of working class action to expropriate the major industries and banks, to lay the basis for a planned programme of useful public works — Mason opted for about the most ludicrous capitalist answer on offer.

Huge sums of government money were to be handed to a private firm to produce something not only socially useless but in many respects actually useless and unsaleable.

Almost as if invigorated by a sniff of cocaine himself, Mason embarked on a frenzied process of bulldozing and corner-cutting which concluded 45 days later with a colossal £63



Mason — was he led by the nose?

million package of subsidies to stake De Lorean's dream of building the new car — of which no workable plans yet existed.

The deal finally signed and sealed by the British Labour government gave De Lorean three times more than he had been offered in previous attempts to secure Irish government support, and far more generous and open-ended than a previous proposal from the government of Puerto Rico.

Indeed by the time De Lorean signed up in Belfast the Irish government, querying his costings for the car and the likely escalation of capital costs had withdrawn its offer.

De Lorean invested no money of his own. He still retains all rights to the car. Yet by the time his Belfast adventure finally collapsed in disgrace last week he had succeeded in raising no less than \$217 million in loans and credits — of which the British government had stumped up no less than \$167 million.

In addition De Lorean's separate American company, which has the exclusive dealership of the car on the US market, owes the British taxpayer a further £26 million, including £4 million loaned from the British firm and £12 million for 800 unsold cars shipped to the USA.

COCAINE, known in high society as the 'champagne drug' in reality spans the huge gulf between the world's most oppressed and exploited workers on the one hand and the most plutocratic and parasitic exploiters on the other.

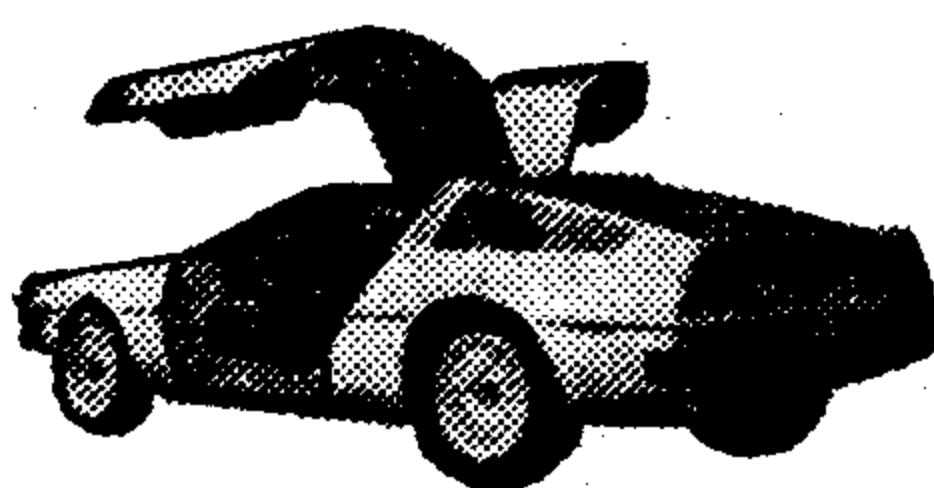
It is manufactured from the coca leaf — traditionally chewed by Bolivian tin miners to stave off acute hunger and fatigue as they toil in appalling conditions for starvation wages.

The leaves also numb the mouth — which drew the drug to the attention of the medical profession. It was used for a while as a local anaesthetic, until its addictive qualities led to it being replaced.

But its stimulating, euphoric effects on the central nervous system, and ease of use — which requires none of the lugubrious paraphernalia of needles and syringes linked with heroin — have made it traditionally popular as a 'sociable' drug. And Bolivia's military establishment has not been slow to develop the world-wide traffic in the drug, which is a major component of the nation's economy.

Spoonful

The price of a 'loving spoonful' on the British market is now £60, which will give around 20 doses.



If he had not been nabbed on the cocaine bust, De Lorean would soon have faced stiff questioning from Inland Revenue officials in Britain and the USA over his links with the Swiss-based Grand Prix Drivers Co.

And it turns out that much of the money provided by the British government was funnelled into new cranky projects of his US company — such as vehicles for ski slopes, a new bus and an experimental engine.

So, with the benefit of hindsight, does Roy Mason regret his headlong rush to back De Lorean's project? Far from it! Last Wednesday he was resoundingly defending his original decision — and castigating the Tories for allowing the firm to fail.

To create jobs in Northern Ireland, he insisted, it is necessary to ignore 'old fashioned, orthodox criteria'. De Lorean certainly did that!

Mason went on: "For a mere financial pittance of £20 million this car company could have been financially restructured. One year's unemployment benefits and tax revenues alone could

have saved this beleaguered district. Instead, the lethargy, haplessness of political deadbeats in the Northern Ireland Office let the area once more sink back into despair."

(Thursday October 21)

The same view has been echoed by Mason's successor as Shadow spokesperson on Northern Ireland, Don Concannon, who now claims that if anything:

"Not enough money was spent on what is now the multi-million pound business of launching a new car. We were trying to do it on the cheap."

But the fact is that the original scheme was a sure-fire loser from the outset. The car never had the qualities to produce anything like the target sale of 20,000 to 30,000 a year to an exclusive market described by De Lorean as:

"The well-paid, randy, West Coast bachelor rapidly approaching 30".

The stainless steel body work collected handprints which were as difficult to remove as the stars' footprints in the famous Hollywood concrete. Its rear engine design left the car tail-heavy and difficult to handle. The "gull-wing" doors were dangerous — leaving no escape if the car turned over — and were prone to jam.

The electrics were dodgy, the whole production run was recalled last November because of cracks found in some suspension bolts, and the throttle cable froze solid in icy conditions.

GM bosses eased out John De Lorean, hard-headed capitalist governments in Puerto Rico and Dublin looked askance at his schemes, yet Labour minister Roy Mason couldn't wait to hand over the millions. Harry Sloan reports.

Sales of cocaine in Britain, mainly to high society — the Chelsea set, but also in show business, advertising and increasingly the 'respectable' rich from boardroom to Cabinet level — are now estimated at £150 million per year.

But this is dwarfed by the US cocaine trade, where an estimated 15 million people have used the drug and annual sales are thought to gross £20 billion — equivalent to seventh in the US league table of big businesses!

The cocaine deal offered to De Lorean by FBI spies was nothing to turn your nose up at — a profit of \$60 million in exchange for a cash stake of only \$1.8

million, exploiting the "street" price in California of \$3,000 per ounce.

As Thatcher and Reagan cling to policies which are demolishing whole sections of basic industry it is little surprise that sharp operators like De Lorean — (and others far sharper than him) — having milked the British government for everything he could get should look towards one of the few sectors where profits are quick and expanding, and market certain.

Not many people were prepared to buy even a sports car off this man, but they would have gone for his 'coke' — it's the real thing!

To top it all, the flashy car for the jet set was underpowered. Its sales were disastrous. Out of 8,000 built between January and December 1981 only 3,000 were sold. Sales slumped further still last winter and in February only 283 were sold, as the sports car market as a whole went into decline.

A Wall Street analyst gave this candid advice to anyone planning to invest in sports car production:

"I have frankly come to the conclusion that potential investors would be a great deal better off if they put their money into booze and broads because the return would be the same and they'd have more fun."

For Mason to suggest that a £20 million "restructuring" of the firm's finances would have enabled it to escape these harsh realities is symptomatic of the inability of Labour right — or often left — wingers in opposition to come to grips with the realities of the capitalist crisis.

When in government, of course, and under direct pressure from bankers and employers, the story is generally very different and thousands of workers know to their cost the loyalty of the last Labour government to the capitalist principle of "viability".

The exceptional handling of the De Lorean episode indeed runs in sharp contrast to the Labour government's brutal disregard for the rights and living conditions of the Catholic minority in

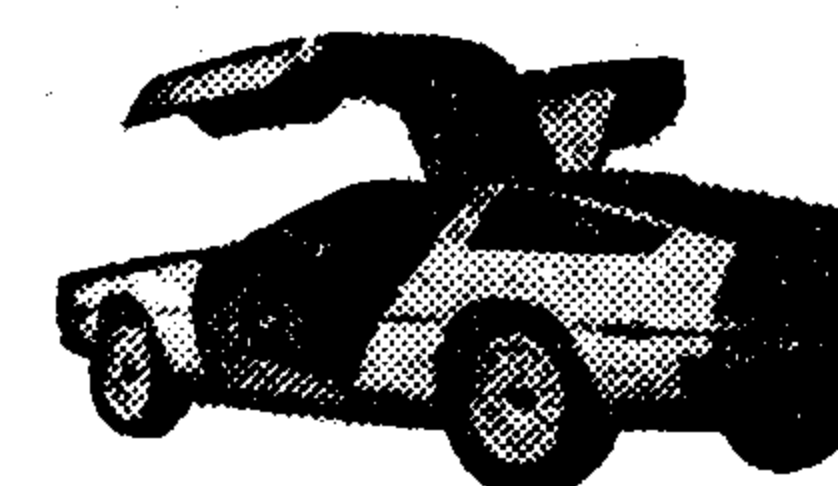
Northern Ireland, with Mason as the key figure in taking a hard military line against all forms of resistance.

Of course it is true that now the Belfast operation has collapsed there will be a knock-on effect on suppliers elsewhere in Britain axe thousands of jobs.

Ten supplies firms have reportedly already gone under, with another ten in dire danger as bankers — who had held off pending De Lorean's salvage attempts — close in for the kill.

But the answer is not to hand over yet another £20 million to De Lorean and his ilk to squander on Concorde travel, real estate and adding to the immense personal fortunes.

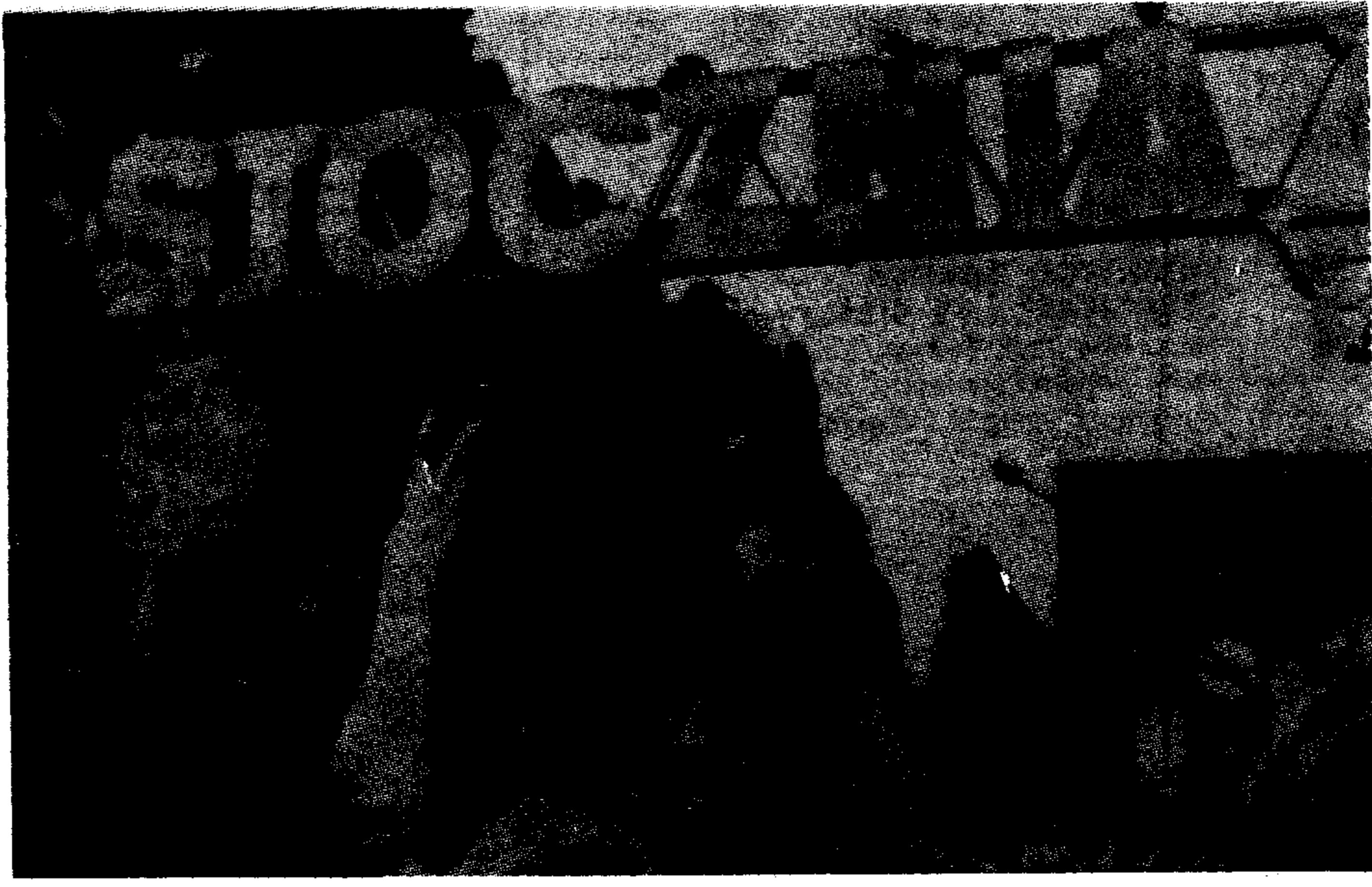
It is to fight tooth and nail on every front for the defeat and removal of the Tory government, for the withdrawal of British imperialism from the counties, and for a programme of socialist policies in Britain and Ireland that can seriously offer the hope of creating millions of new jobs for those thrown onto the scrap heap of capitalism.



"I DIDN'T RECOGNISE"

MY COUNTRY"

MARIA KOWALSKA
just back from a visit to Poland nearly a year after the 'war' began describes the feelings of Polish workers — the anger and class militancy behind the recent strikes.



Gdansk: 'a gut reaction to the announcement that Solidarity was outlawed'



I CAN compare the situation in Poland now with what it was a year ago. Last September when I went back, there was a fantastic feeling of freedom — there was hope and enthusiasm. Of course there were shortages of basic things, food and so on, but people were fighting — they were optimistic.

Now, a year later the situation is terrible. Though coupons were introduced last August (1981), they were only for some things. Now there are coupons for everything. All the basic necessities are rationed, so there are long queues at the shops you have to go to to get your meagre rations. It affects every aspect of life, even weddings. If you want to get married, you can get a coupon for one wedding dress, two rings and an amount of alcohol! And of course there is a flourishing black market and corruption is rife.

The other major aspect is the extremely visible Militia and Zomo (Army) presence on the streets. When you go out you are stopped and searched. In Warsaw, simply going from A to B I was stopped at best five times and at worst, on one occasion, 11 times. They don't just ask where you are going, they give you a complete body search in the middle of the street.

You are always very scared as they patrol in groups, usually of 9, and

carry machine guns and long truncheons.

Most of the Zomo are criminals who have been offered an exchange of their prison sentence for a job in the Zomo.

I suspect they are fed on amphetamines or something, too, as sometimes they just go mad. I was in Gdansk when the shipyard workers went on strike and I was in the street just behind the Militia and Zomo buses and vans.

I had taken a picture as they began to throw tear gas and attack a group of people they had trapped in the street beyond. I fell to the ground and watched as they set to work.

Screams

One was hitting a lamp-post with his long truncheon — another was hitting a fellow Zomo man who was shouting 'It hurts me as well!' — it was terrible, you could hear the shouts and screams of the people they had trapped in the streets beyond as they were beating them, those people could not get out and no one could

get in as they cleared every-one away.

They also recruit from boys up to the age of 18; the ones who aren't going to university.

They force them to go into the Zomo. There have been suicides of young boys who don't want to go. They won't act like animals.

When people are beaten, usually they can't get to hospital. The Military won't allow it. I had a friend who was walking with his father. He happened to be a doctor.

My friend was taken to the police station and beaten — beaten blue, he could hardly walk. They took him back to his father like this and told him to look after him.

I have a very close friend who was beaten, raped and had her flat destroyed. Her mother complained and they interned her.

When they throw tear gas, they don't let you out. I know of a four-year old child who has terrible asthma because of the gas — they just live near the centre of Warsaw, yet they cannot get to hospital, the military won't let them out. They have total power over your life and aim to terrify.

I was totally intimidated when I was back. I've never been so scared in my life. There is no appeal against the military.

Some of the things the authorities do would be laughable if they weren't so tragic. For example, the Minister of the Interior came onto television on the official government news to talk about the economy, the future, food and so on.

So the curfew was brought forward to 7.00pm and the people all put their television sets up to the windows. So the streets were empty, but the news was ringing round.

There is the underground radio which comes on, and there was the tremendous occasion when Solidarity put

All telephone calls are listened to. Every time you pick up a phone to make a local call (all connections with other towns are cut) a voice says 'conversation controlled'.

I had this absurd experience. I was calling a friend I'd not seen for a long time and we were talking about our kids, a pretty boring conversation to listen to, and suddenly this voice cut in saying 'You're boring me, I have to write everything you say down and you're talking and talking'.

Polish TV is dead. There has been a boycott by Polish actors since last December, so all the programmes are Russian, Bulgarian, from the GDR or repeats.

The news is non-existent. For example they reported the recent shipyard workers' strike in Gdansk by showing a picture of the crowds outside the shipyard gates and saying there were only a few trouble-makers. The rest, as you could see, were just people coming along to have a look!

But there have been some nice episodes of protest. In a town called Swiebodzin, the people organised themselves to go for a walk at 7.30 when the news came on the TV. Curfew was at nine, so the military could do nothing, the entire town was on the streets.

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There is the underground radio which comes on, and there was the tremendous occasion when Solidarity put

out leaflets asking people in Warsaw to flash their lights on and off so many times if they could hear. That night all of Warsaw had lights flashing on and off.

There is also a play showing in Warsaw. How it's allowed by the authorities I don't know. It's a thinly disguised historical play; translated roughly 'Liberation', and it's about previous occupying forces in Poland.

It's clearly a comment on the Jaruzelski regime. It gives an indication of what has happened to people — the audiences are packed and they go wild, clapping, standing up and cheering when Helena Mikoajska, a member of KOR, appears. This is just recently as she was interned.

Every night people cry and the actors end up on the stage with tears pouring down their faces.

A prominent doctor derided that the Red Cross be allowed to do a medical check on Walesa. Of course they were refused. But the suspicion is that they're using psychotropic drugs on him.

There was a picture released, the one where he has a beard, and he was incredibly fat and lethargic looking. I think they are trying to make a madman out of him so they can release him and get him to say 'Solidarity? What is that?'

They have intimidated other Solidarity leaders in terrible ways too. A member of Kuron's family 'died' when he was interned and Michnik's father 'died' then too. Marian Jurczyk's son and daughter-in-law (who was eight months pregnant) 'jumped' from a sixth floor window.

People are tired and exhausted, as martial law has destroyed them. Every day they are faced with the 'decisions' martial law imposes — they have to lie and say they're nothing to do with Solidarity or face the consequences of losing their job, losing their food coupons or being shot.

That's what martial law means — if you don't come to work you are a deserter

and you can be shot on sight. That's how they forced the Gdansk shipyard workers back . . . at gunpoint.

That's how they'll force the new 'unions' in. This is part of the same legislation as that outlawing Solidarity. It means that the new 'unions' will only cover one particular workplace, there can be no contact with other workers outside your factory. They'll claim success as everyone will join. They'll have to, or they won't get food coupons.

workers killed in 1970. The military clear them away every two hours, yet there are always flowers there.

In Warsaw, the authorities dug up Victory Square where huge crosses of flowers were laid. People now gather in another square in Warsaw, at St. Anna.

There crowds gather, somehow people know when to come, with flowers under their coats. They lay a huge cross in the time it takes for the Militia and Zomo to appear.

It's very dangerous, as it is close to a motorway and that's the only direction to escape if the militia come in.

Scattered in amongst the flowers are appeals for the release of Walesa and other internees. The flowers are always cleared away immediately, yet people keep on coming back and laying more. Just because they dug up Victory Square, they've not been able to stop the most regular, consistent protest.

The Church has become a

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Courage

The courage of those who do resist is tremendous. The strike in Gdansk was spontaneous, a gut reaction to the announcement that Solidarity was outlawed. The response of the militia and the Zomo was terrible, trapping people, beating them and forcing them back to work on pain of death.

For the other workers to come out in other areas of Poland was incredible after that.

The authorities must be scared stiff. They'll never lift martial law, as it is the only way they can stay in control. They're terrified of what will happen on November 10. Perhaps an indication of just how scared they are is this. Walmy, a government official, quite high up, was watching Jaruzelski on the television one night, with his daughter and son-in-law. They expressed disagreement with the broadcast, and he turned round and shot them.

Polish people talk about the situation now as 'war'. Before December 13 last year is 'before the war' — that's how people think.

Even children at school resist, in perhaps childish ways. They go to school wearing all black, they answer teachers by putting their hands up with two fingers in the Solidarity symbol and they wear resistors from radios as they can't wear badges.

But perhaps the most courageous are those people who everyday, at tremendous risk to themselves lay flowers. In Gdansk they put them under the huge cross erected in memory of the

workers killed in 1970. The military clear them away every two hours, yet there are always flowers there.

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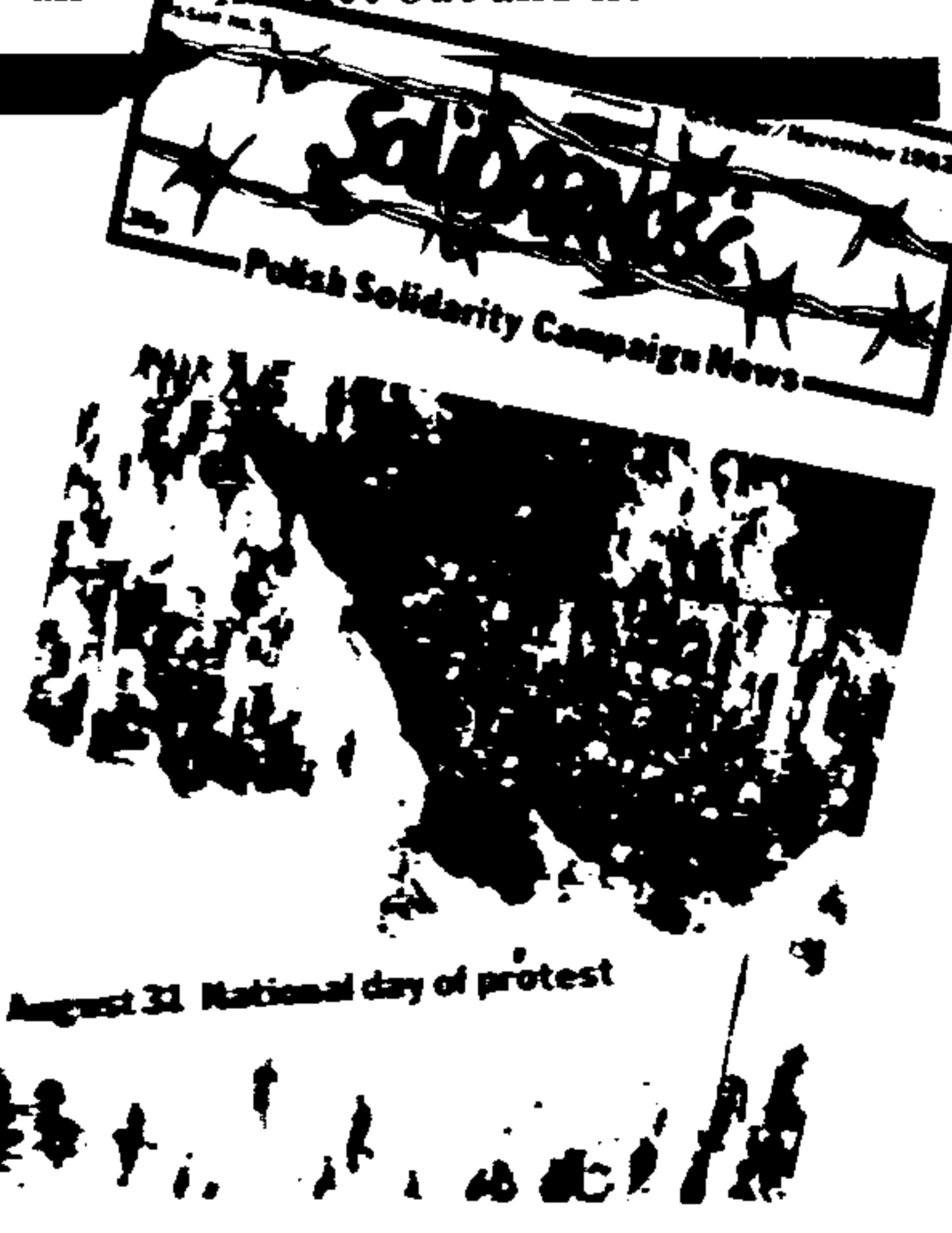
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Latest issue of Polish Solidarity Campaign News — articles on resistance in Poland and solidarity in Britain and abroad.



August 31 National day of protest

Available from SO, c/o 28 Middle Lane, London N8 8PL. 30p plus 20p p&p.

PSC News



NISE



... The extremely visible Army presence in the streets...



Walesa

... for opposition. It was, but especially as Solidarity is underground. It's the only institution that symbolises dissent. It doesn't mean what the Catholic Church means here in Britain or even Ireland. It's difficult to explain - it's something to do with being Polish and having a tradition of opposition to the government. Young people who normally wouldn't show their faces in a church go - they just go for a bit of life. People are very suspicious of leaflets now as there have been so many cases of provocation. Provocateurs in a crowd, government agents sent out 'let's go on the streets', then the Zomo are waiting and ready. There is a group which declared itself pro-Solidarity but was very nationalistic (that made me suspicious of it) - called the Confederation of Independent Poland. Its leader got seven years, and he was on television complaining about the sentence.

A sentence like that is nothing compared to what young kids get for throwing stones. He was obviously a government put-up job.

So there is tremendous suspicion of leaflets, new groups and so on, so people go to what they know as the traditional opposition - the church.

No-one in Poland believes that Russia has not had a strong controlling interest in all this. Last year's coup was planned carefully before the 13th. There were people they claimed to have arrested then who weren't even in the country. There are many indications of heavy Russian involvement.

At the moment the First Secretary of the PUWP, Kupa, is in Moscow. Old pro-Russian hard-liners are coming to the fore again. Russia has an economic stranglehold on Poland - the obvious result of Reagan's boycott has been that now we get everything from Russia.

If the Polish government didn't do what the Russians wanted, Poland would starve. The Russians don't need to invade - they can do better, they train their people, brainwash them, send them back to Poland and can cut supplies of anything off.

Still, I think there are Russians here - my friend was stopped not long after the war started by the military and there were two men

in Polish uniform who could not speak a word of Polish.

It's a matter of money and power. There are people in Poland who live in palaces furnished from the national museums. There are the dollar shops where there are no shortages. If you have hard currency you can get everything.

At the same time there are children with no shoes and starving people. That has got nothing to do with socialism. In the West you have to have at least some business sense to get rich, in Poland all you have to be is a pig.

I didn't recognise my country - the Warsaw you remember has gone - it is dead. It's like a third world country, worse than a provincial town in Russia - and that is poverty.

Yet Poles are utterly disillusioned with the West. They see how they've been used as a clever propaganda weapon. They hate the Reagans and Thatchers who have used Solidarity for their own reasons, reasons which have nothing to do with caring about what happens to Poland.

They know Reagan's propaganda about the Soviet pipe-line is nothing more than a cynical gesture.

Many Poles here in Britain have capitalist ideas, but I am 100% socialist and not religious. Poland is not socialist.

Underground call to action

UNDERGROUND Solidarnosc leaders have called on Polish workers to prepare for a general strike next Spring.

They have also stepped up their plans for November 10 from a four hour strike to 8 hours, and called for mass demonstrations on November 11 the anniversary of Polish independence in 1918) and on December 13-17 (one year after martial law).

Additional weight has been given to the Solidarnosc call by a message from Lech Walesa. After visiting him in internment, his wife

announced that Walesa supported the protests against the banning of Solidarnosc, and had refused an offer by the regime to release him and give him a job in the new state-sponsored 'unions'.

Archbishop Glemp, head of the Catholic Church in Poland, is now making his postponed visit to the Vatican. The trip was put off for fear of trouble when Solidarnosc was banned, but, the revolt past, Glemp has now gone to Rome. The Church's line is to call vaguely for reconciliation and 'normalisation'.

I was for the Party!
I was for Solidarity!
Now, I am for the Junta!

PSC News



End of Danish sliding scale?

DENMARK'S new conservative government has pushed its austerity package through Parliament.

The system of automatic cost-of-living wage increases has been suspended, wages have been frozen until next March and restricted after that, and public spending will be cut by 6%.

The minority Social Democratic government of Anker Jorgensen resigned seven weeks ago when it was not able to push through a milder austerity package. The new government of Poul Schluter is also a minority government, formed by four of Denmark's many bourgeois parties.

But it has started swinging the economic axe with vigour. The linkage between public sector and private sector wages will be broken, and public sector wage rises limited to 4% over the next two years. (Inflation is running at 10%). The 4% ceiling will

also apply to most welfare benefits, and unemployment benefit will be frozen for two years.

Additional proposals which Schluter is now trying to push through Parliament would sharply increase nursery charges, trebling them in some areas. Low paid women workers with children would be forced to abandon their jobs and return to the home.

Response

The measures are a response to economic crisis. Prosperous Denmark now has a net foreign debt of \$2,800 per head (more than Mexico) and a central government budget deficit running at \$1,500 per head. Unemployment is about 9 1/2%.

Workers have responded with demonstrations and protest strikes, and there was a strong feeling for a general strike. But union leaders have ducked out of

a political confrontation with the government, instead focussing on the forthcoming general wage negotiations.

Jette Kromann of the Danish Trotskyist group TAF spoke to us this Monday:

"There was a demonstration today called by the Copenhagen Trades Council, which is led by the Social Democracy. It was about 40,000 strong, but it was very tame compared to the other protest demonstrations over recent weeks.

The demands were simply for free bargaining in the forthcoming wage round, and 'no to bourgeois dictatorship'.

The rank and file of the Social Democracy have demanded that the leadership commit itself to restoring the sliding scale [automatic cost-of-living wage increases], but the leadership has refused.

The trade union leaders won't fight on the sliding

scale, either. Some of them are proposing that workers should go for one year rather than two year agreements, or negotiations on pay rises every six months within the two-yearly overall agreements.

Foiled

We in TAF say: don't be fooled by these proposals. Pay negotiations every six months are not a substitute for the sliding scale. We propose that the unions should fight for the restoration of the sliding scale in agreements with individual employers, and also by a future government of the workers' parties.

Some trade unionists are being prosecuted for the protest strikes against the new government measures, and we are arguing for the whole labour movement to take a stand on refusing to pay the fines. We are also arguing for parents to organise to refuse to pay the increased nursery charges."

insist we cannot be held responsible for the tragic consequences of protests or demonstrations!



Spanish poll danger Talks in Salvador

"WE KNOW that a crime is being prepared", declared a recent lead article in the Spanish daily El Pais. "We almost know who the main personalities are. But what is being done?"

The edgy condition of Spain before this week's general election is indicated by the fact that the military high command cancelled its latest meeting "so as not to alarm the population".

The Socialist Party (PSOE) seems certain to win a big majority in the election, and speculation is rife on a military coup to topple a PSOE government or even to pre-empt the election.

PSOE leaders spare no opportunity to stress their moderation, and international bankers are reported (by the Paris daily Le Monde) to be "delighted" by the prospect of a PSOE

victory. But in the barracks portraits of Franco still have pride of place, and many officers are in no mood to distinguish between pink social democracy and the reddest revolution.



Will they negotiate a deal?

DEANE Hinton, the US ambassador in El Salvador, has confirmed that indirect contacts have been made between the El Salvador

government, the US, and the left wing FDR-FMLN opposition.

The FMLN has recently launched a new military offensive in the north of the country, and followed it up with a new appeal for talks.

A negotiated deal has been the constant demand of the FDR-FMLN, and has also been pushed by France and Mexico, while the regime and the US have refused. But the 'negotiations' formula could also mean the radical aspirations of the FMLN fighters being squashed in favour of the compromises of the bourgeois FDR leaders.

Meanwhile, over 2000 Honduran troops, accompanied by US advisers, are on their way to the frontier area for joint operations with the El Salvador army.

Telecom workers must make the right connections!

Reg Holdcroft
(Potteries POEU, in personal capacity)

Last Wednesday POEU, CPSA and SCPS telecom members struck against the privatisation of British Telecom. Our round-up includes reports from Oxford, Stoke, Scotland, and the London demonstration.

THERE WAS a strong response last week in Oxford to the one-day strike against privatisation of British Telecom. Though only 9 UCW members defied their Executive's advice and refused to cross CPSA and POEU picket lines at Oxford Exchange, over 70 signed a petition to the General Secretary denouncing the advice as mistaken and supporting the strike.

Pickets on the day spoke of their struggle to Socialist Organiser.

Why are you taking action today?

POEU picket: Against the privatisation plans, which will lose jobs and affect pensions.

In 1969, our pension fund was transferred from the old civil service pension fund with a very large debt. If we go private, any other pension company wouldn't take the liability.

Anyway, we don't know whose hands it'll end up in.

Another picket: It'll also destroy trade union rights. We'll just be pawns in the hands of stock market privateers.

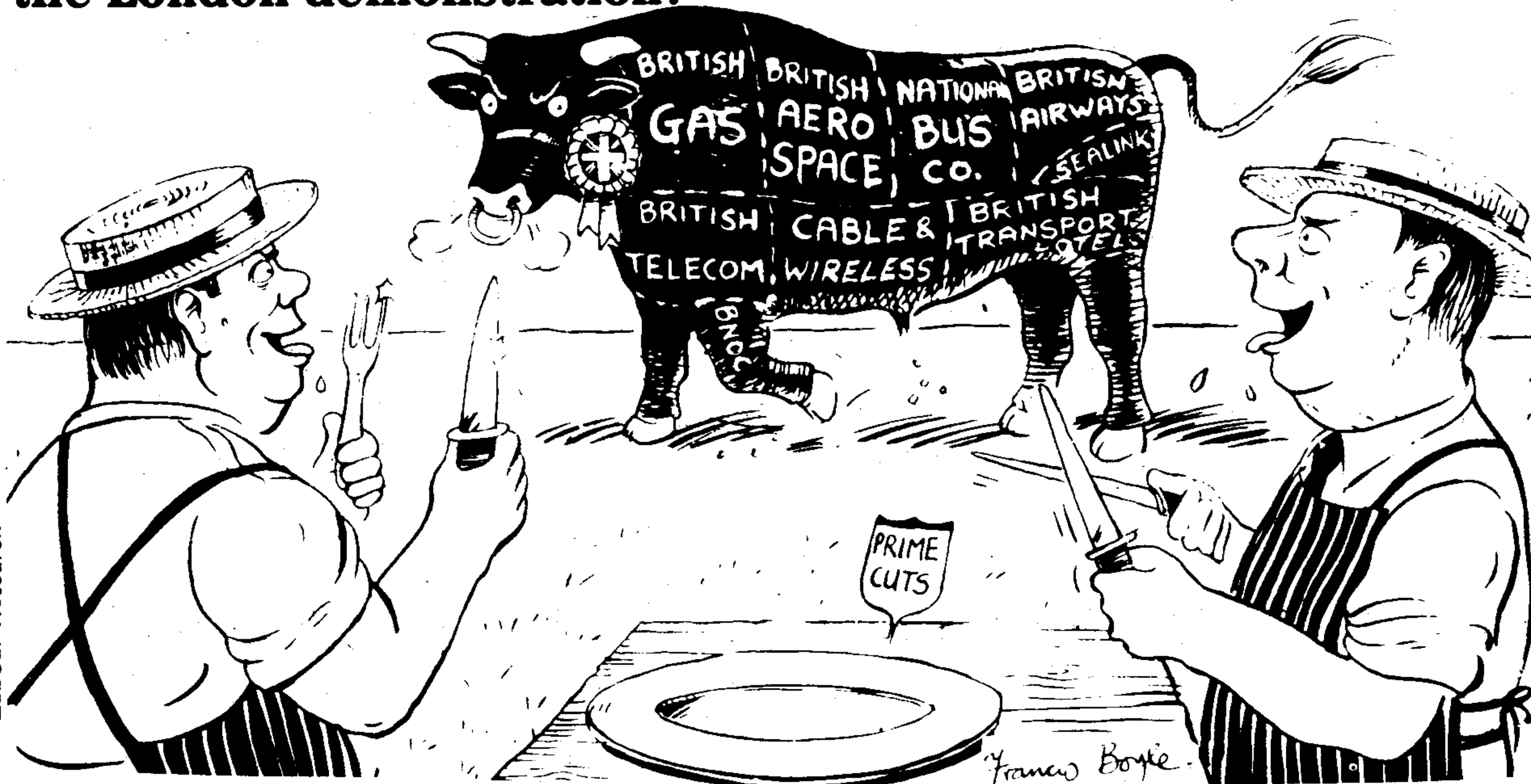
Derek Knight, branch secretary and area coordinator, POEU: When profits are the dominant feature, of course non-profitable parts have to go, for instance, subscribers in isolated places, like in the country, will have to pay the 'economic rate' for the job.

At the moment BT provide telephones where required at a standard rate, with some rural services costing thousands of pounds for just one line.

We lose £10 million a year on upkeep of kiosks, especially rural kiosks. And the 999 service is obviously loss-making.

Of course, any profit made would not be ploughed back into the business, but paid out to shareholders. That money should be used in the public interest. After all, they paid for it!

Why didn't your unions decide not to take action



alongside other sections of the public sector, like water and health workers, on strike this week?

Picket: Well, they said that the health workers had a good enough case on their own, and anyone striking with them should be doing it to support them, not on their own case.

Another picket: You've got to see we haven't taken any major action before in the

POEU, but we figured we needed to get 100% out for a day for a start, to show how solid we are.

Derek Knight: The Tories argue that the Telecom workforce don't back the union in the fight against privatisation.

What has been the membership response?

Derek Knight: Well, we don't know nationally, but in this area we've only two

in work in the POEU, out of 850.

CPSA branch officer: We got everyone out of 300.

UCW pickets: We're furious with our national exec. They said, we advise you to cross the picket line! They're actually doing the government's job for them. If we don't cross the picket line, then according to them, 'we stand on our own'.

Another UCW picket: Management has sent around a circular saying that if we're dismissed from the union for strikebreaking and crossing the picket line, our jobs will be protected despite the closed shop agreement. What a joke!

UCW picket: The management union CMA say to their members: 'work normally, but if you don't cross the picket line you'll get CMA support'. If UCW had come out, and operators struck — with emergency cover — it would have had a far more noticeable effect.

If all the unions in Telecom had taken united action, like they did in the gas industry, we'd be so much stronger.

What are you doing about the UCW?

UCW picket: Well, we'll certainly have to sort it out for any future action. We've got a petition to the General Secretary to show we support the strike and that we're disgusted we didn't get more of a lead.

POEU picket: We've said

THE demonstration, rally and lobby against privatisation of British Telecom last week looked very impressive. But on talking to what seemed a large UCW contingent (given the advice from UCW HQ) it transpired that there was a mixture. First of all, the District Organisers and Assistant District Organisers were given 'Special Leave III' to attend the lobby (their day's wages were paid by the union).

They had also stopped at hotels in London the night before!

Secondly, there was a

UCW union school in progress in Bournemouth that week, and they were bussed down to go on the demonstration.

There were also some there on day off or leave; but last and most importantly, there were those who had obeyed official picket lines.

However, in Central Hall Westminster Stan Orme and Michael Foot got out the speeches made last year over the first bill, and dusted them off.

Tony Clarke, the deputy general secretary, was heckled by UCW members

who also confronted Kim McKinlay from the UCW Telecoms Executive, shouting, "All this talk about waiting to the next election is useless — we need extra-parliamentary action!"

"I agree", she replied.

"Let's hope you'll be voting for it at the next Executive meeting, then!" Perhaps the 'extra parliamentary action' she meant is the Women's Institute, as the Executive believe it was them, and not industrial action, that actually made the Tories retreat on the gas industry privatisation.

Sharing the poverty?

The unemployed
By Chris Erswell

THE Community Enterprise Scheme, which employed a mere 30,000 out of a total of 3.4 million jobless is now to be replaced by the Community Programme (CP) which will employ 130,000 on a full or part time basis with wages of an average of £60 a week (maximum £89 a week; minimum — as low as possible?)

Operating costs for a project are to be paid to sponsors (read employers) at

a rate of £440 per filled place per year, irrespective of whether the job is full or part time.

Hence, sponsors are encouraged to employ people part time, rather than full time. This is a cynical move on the part of the government to give the appearance of more "jobs" being created, whilst at the same time slashing the old CEP rate from the standard £89 a week for all jobs.

The Manpower Services Commission argues that creating 100,000 extra CEP (full-time) jobs would have meant £280 million net additional expenditure per year, whereas CP costs are £185 million net additional expenditure.

However, the CEP net cost would be little different if the extra revenue to the government in tax and national insurance payments were taken into account.

Training

This, the MSC is prevented by the government from doing.

The training element of the CP is left to the discretion of the sponsor, who must finance this out of operating costs or wages! The sponsor can deduct up to £10 per week from wages if it wishes for training purposes.

The CP also provides for Community Programme Agents (CPAs) which will be organisations locally which administer the projects directly themselves as a sponsor, or indirectly via other sponsors.

To be approved by the MSC as a CPA an organisation will have to contract a minimum of 100 unfilled places over two or more projects or a minimum of 500 filled places over five or more projects.

The CPA's job is to make sure that as many poverty-line, part-time "jobs" are "created" as possible in line with the trendy new Tory philosophy of "job splitting" — so much a topic of debate in the media these days.

This concept can be best described as "sharing the poverty", (millionaire Tories not included!)

In response to this cynical attempt to "create"

more poverty line jobs by reducing the already inadequate wages of workers, the alternative of a crash programme of useful public works big enough to employ all the four million unemployed at the average industrial wage, must be fought and argued for.

In response to the phony "job-splitting" concept, the demand should be raised for a sliding scale of wages and hours, both within existing factories and enterprises, and within a programme of public works.

Work sharing on full pay is the only realistic basis on which to solve the problem of unemployment — something which capitalism is utterly incapable of doing.

But is there a socialist answer to the whole carnival of government "funny job" schemes? We'll discuss that next week.

POEU members used to consider their jobs secure despite the devastation facing most industries. But now they are raising questions about developing more effective forms of industrial action, such as selective stoppages. (It must be borne in mind that the POEU is historically a very moderate union — the total of stoppages in the last 25 years wouldn't add up to a 40 hour week!)

Members hitherto considered moderate are now talking in terms of action to create maximum inconvenience to places like the Stock Exchange, TV, and other large institutions. The members taking action could be supported financially by other workers who carried on supplying and maintaining telephones for other users.

The day's strike taught us that, even though some members came out reluctantly because of the limiting effect, there was still a great deal of support for the union. There was an underlying militancy beginning to surface.

Ricky Houston

Support in Scotland for the one day strike against privatisation was solid in every area except one rural area, where 8% of workers went into work.

Mass meetings during the week of the strike were well attended as were meetings held on the day of the strike.

On the following weekend some of the members of the union went out to shopping centres in their home towns handing out the 'Hands off telephones' leaflets telling people of the effect privatisation will have on the telephone service.

In Edinburgh the POEU had a banner on the 'Triple Alliance' demonstration seeing the need for a combined public sector union alliance against the government's attack on the public sector.

A QUESTION OF SOLIDARITY
Independent Trade Unions In South Africa

90p
Bob Fine
Lawrence Welch

New pamphlet from the Socialist Forum for Southern Africa Solidarity. 90p plus 20p postage. available via Socialist Organiser, 28 Middle Lane, London N8 8PL.

Not the way to fight the right!

THE new left group of MPs seems to be making a slow start.

Since it was launched at Labour Party conference — after a year's intensive thought and agonising reappraisal', as Martin Flannery put it — nothing has been heard except press speculations that the group may try to mend its bridges with the Tribune group.

The Morning Star last Friday, 22nd, reported: 'No new formal group of left Labour MPs is to be established at least for the time being ... (the

group) ruled out any move that could split the (Tribune) group or establish a rival.'

According to the well-informed Guardian (October 16), the left group also will not challenge right-wingers Michael Cocks and Jack Dormand for their posts of chief whip and PLP chairperson.

Nominations for chief whip and PLP chair close on November 4, and for the Shadow Cabinet on November 11.

Bristol South East CLP has advised Tony Benn not

to stand for the Shadow Cabinet. Last time he was in it, he got lambasted by the PLP leadership for speaking out for Labour conference policy on re-nationalisation without compensation. 'Shadow cabinet responsibility' could mean being a prisoner of the dominant right wing. More seriously it could be a preparation for cabinet responsibility in a right wing dominated Labour government.

In Tribune and in So-

cialist Organiser, and elsewhere, Reg Race, MP, a leading figure in the new left MPs group, has proposed that the group should meet jointly with delegates from trade union Broad Lefts and from left CLPs. Such a structure would mean the whole Left had a say in decisions on matters like the PLP elections.

The left MPs could play a major role in blocking the witch-hunt — and all the more effectively if

they came out openly as leaders of an organised Left outside Parliament. But conversely, if Benn and the left MPs keep their heads down, then it will be easier for the new right wing NEC to purge and intimidate the CLPs.

A spirit of conciliation towards the right wing will only get kicks in return. At the NEC this week the Right will be pressing to remove Tony Benn and Eric Heffer from key sub-committee chairs.



S.O. supporter expelled

IN THE last week two separate issues have produced a veritable flurry of activity in the normally dormant Queens Park Constituency Labour Party in Glasgow.

Firstly the selection process for finding a Labour candidate in the forthcoming by-election (caused by the death of the sitting MP Frank McElhone) has now been set in motion and has caused not a few surprises.

Less than 48 hours after his name had been put forward for nomination, Chick McCafferty withdrew from the race. McCafferty had been hoping to stand as the candidate of the left in the CLP, but the leading role he has played in expelling a Socialist Organiser supporter in the constituency destroyed any chance he had of receiving the left's backing.

Recognising this McCafferty backed out.

Much more surprising is the fact that Helen McElhone, the widow of the late MP, has gained the nomination of the Gorbals Hutchesontown Branch in a straight fight against local Regional Councillor Jimmy Wray. Her success was due to the work of her late husband.

Created

To ensure that the new constituency created by the boundary reorganisation adopted him rather than McTaggart as the prospective parliamentary candidate, McElhone had been packing new members into the Gorbals branch in order to gain more delegates to the General Management Committee of the new constituency.

The other reason for the unusual level of activity in the CLP is the expulsion of Socialist Organiser supporter Stan Crooke, accused of writing an article in issue 99 of Socialist Organiser "with the intention of bringing the Labour Party into disrepute".

The article had been critical of the moribund nature of the Gorbals Labour Party, and of local elected representatives.

The final decision was taken by the General Management Committee at a meeting on October 21. Given that the jury and the prosecution at this meeting were the same people, many of whom bear the blame for the moribund nature of the Labour Party in the Gorbals,

it was hardly surprising that the vote to expel Stan Crooke was passed by 31 votes to 11, though four members of the Executive Committee resigned in order to be free to vote against the expulsion.

No evidence was even offered to suggest that the Socialist Organiser supporter had the intention of bringing the Labour Party into disrepute by the article. The purpose of the meeting was to expel the SO supporter rather than give him a fair hearing, so such niceties as the provision of evidence to justify the expulsion could safely be ignored.

The right wing did however explain, at least to their own satisfaction, how the CLP could expel the SO supporter from the Labour Party: the CLP, they argued, is part of the Labour Party because it is recognised as such by the NEC; the minor problem that it is £2,000 behind in its affiliation fees does not mean that it is not affiliated, it means only that the CLP cannot send a delegate or motions to the national conference, and is therefore irrelevant when it comes to expelling someone.

The real cause of the expulsion, as one member of the CLP pointed out, was that there is a witch-hunt by the right against the left.

The right wing are at pains to deny this, claiming that the expulsion took place only on the basis of the article.

Full support must be given to the fight for Stan Crooke's reinstatement.

Build workplace branches!

HANDS OFF THE YS!



AN important but little-noticed decision of this year's Labour Party conference was to approve model rules for Labour Party workplace branches.

These branches can be established with a minimum of ten members in any workplace. The definition of 'workplace' is left open: but the rules seem to permit separate branches to be established in different sections of a large factory or office complex, or different schools within a borough.

The rules add: "In any dispute over the precise definition of area to be covered the National Executive Committee will have the final decision."

And: "20% of the membership or eight members, whichever is the larger shall be present for a meeting to be quorate."

The status of the workplace branch, roughly speaking, is similar to that of a Young Socialists branch or women's section, rather than a ward branch.

Membership applications have to be processed through wards, rather than directly through the workplace branch. (Normally, however, this should be only a formality: the workplace branch officers can collect application forms and send them on to the relevant ward).

Likewise, workplace branch members pay their Labour Party membership dues through the relevant ward branch. The workplace branch does not get a cut out of these dues.

"The funds of the workplace branch shall consist of donations, collections and

receipts from activities undertaken by the workplace branch, and other means as might be agreed locally and approved by the National Executive Committee."

The system for delegates to Constituency Labour Parties is as follows:

"The Branch shall be entitled to one delegate to any Constituency Labour Party provided it has a minimum of ten individual members of that Constituency Labour Party within the Branch. A Branch with fewer than ten members from any one constituency shall be entitled to one delegate to the Constituency Labour Party with the largest membership in the Branch. The delegation is a nominal one for the Branch and is not proportional to membership."

Aims are defined like this:

- i) to provide a firm base for recruitment to the Party and to encourage participation;
- ii) to extend the influence of the Party to the widest audience and generate more interest in political matters amongst trade unionists;
- iii) to provide opportunities for political education and propaganda for the Party;
- iv) to propagate the principles and policies of the Party;
- v) to reflect the strong links between the Party and the trade unions at national, regional and local levels in the co-ordination of campaigns and activities;
- vi) to work with the

Constituency Parties covered by the membership of the Branch."

And: "The business of the Workplace branch shall preclude any industrial matters that are properly the responsibility of the appropriate trade union organisation."

Obviously this restrictive point — like the corresponding clauses in trade union rules forbidding 'political' discussion in union meetings — leaves a lot of room for interpretation. Narrowly interpreted, it could stymie any attempt by workplace branches to relate to day-to-day issues in the workplace. Active workplace branches are likely to press for a liberal interpretation.

Another necessity for lively workplace branches is that they should be able to meet at the workplace, during dinner breaks or at worst straight after work, and thus involve people unwilling or unable to attend evening meetings. This will be especially important for women workers burdened with childcare responsibilities.

A possible problem is created by point 9 of the model rules:

"The meeting place should not be such as to preclude an official of the Party attending."

Labour Party workplace branches, in liaison with the trade unions, will have to win guarantees from management that canteen, social club, common room (etc) facilities can be used for meetings and that access will be given to outside Labour Party officials.



Workplace branches can help turn passive working class support for the Labour Party into active participation

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To: Socialist Organiser, 28 Middle Lane, London N8 8PL.

FRANK Field — a member of the Tribune group, but a leading witch-hunter — has proposed that the Labour Party Young Socialists be shut down.

In a letter to the new NEC, he couples suggestions about which Militant supporters should be purged with a demand for the 'temporary suspension' of the LPYS, 'now totally a Militant organisation.'

A shower of resolutions from CLPs to the NEC is needed to forestall this proposal.



25p plus 15½p postage from SO, 28 Middle Lane, London N8.

Next Socialist Organiser delegate meeting: Saturday December 4, 11am to 5pm, in Sheffield.

Writeback SWP view of Iran



We invite readers to send us their letters, up to a usual maximum length of 400 words. Send to 'Writeback', Socialist Organiser, c/o 28, Middle Lane, London N8.

WHILE on holiday in the USA last month I went to a public meeting in Boston organised by the Socialist Workers Party (sister organisation of the British International Marxist Group) about the Iranian revolution. The SWP claims to be Trotskyist, but there was little that they said in the meeting that would indicate that. The speaker, an Iranian member of the SWP, spoke of the anti-imperialist revolution that had toppled the Shah and brought Khomeini to power. He recognised that the present Iranian government was capitalist, but felt it should be defended against the "great Satan", US-led imperialism. He thought it "unfortunate" that the conditions of the anti-imperialist struggle forced the government to suppress the working class, to cease land reform in favour of the poor peasants and to deny rights to women and to the Kurds and other national minorities in Iran. He pointed to the Shoras (the now largely sham "workers' councils") as evidence of the health of the revolution, and argued for support for the present Iranian invasion of Iraq on the grounds that it was defending the Iranian revolution against imperialism.

A supporter of the Fedayeen minority, a group which claims to be Marxist, but which is still influenced by Stalinist ideas, was given time to speak from the floor. He pointed out some of the obvious flaws in the speaker's arguments from the point of view of Marxism.

The speaker saw imperialism in essentially the same way that Khomeini does, as a force external to Iran bent on crushing the Iranian revolution, rather than as an international system which includes Iran with its capitalist government. Fighting imperialism means fighting now for rights for the working class, the poor peasants, women and the national minorities rather than putting these off in favour of fighting the "anti-imperialist" struggle in alliance with the Islamic government. The Fedayeen minority supporter also argued that Khomeini's anti-imperialism was largely sham - populist anti-US measures coupled with verbal support for struggles in places such as Ireland and Palestine with little practical support. He

also described the nature of the Shoras and the way the Mullahs exercised control over them.

The SWP's positions on Iran seem to be a return to Stalin's theory of "two camps" where the world is divided between "them" and "us" (the boundaries of both groups never being accurately defined) and any capitalist government carrying out actions broadly "anti-imperialist" or "progressive" becomes one of "us". Unfortunately this theory often leads, as in Iran, to putting off the struggle for social reform under such a "progressive" government. What does the working class in Iran gain from speeches by Khomeini denouncing US imperialism? Materially, very little.

I raised these criticisms with an SWP member after the meeting. I was told that I didn't understand the great class polarisation going on in Iran. I asked which side of the polarisation Khomeini was on, but got no reply. The SWP suggested I read Castro to learn about anti-imperialism.

With teachers like that, who needs Trotsky? WILL ADAMS Tower Hamlets

External

The speaker saw imperialism in essentially the same way that Khomeini does, as a force external to Iran bent on crushing the Iranian revolution, rather than as an international system which includes Iran with its capitalist government.

Fighting imperialism means fighting now for rights for the working class, the poor peasants, women and the national minorities rather than putting these off in favour of fighting the "anti-imperialist" struggle in alliance with the Islamic government.

The Fedayeen minority supporter also argued that Khomeini's anti-imperialism was largely sham - populist anti-US measures coupled with verbal support for struggles in places such as Ireland and Palestine with little practical support. He

This is not liberation

I WAS pleased to see Chris Beer's piece on gay rights, but it worried me a bit to see the Bill outlawing the Paedophile Information Exchange dismissed as a simple attack on the rights of young people to determine their own sexuality.

I should like to point out that what the PIE considers progressive and liberating frequently amounts to nothing more than the abuse of young women by older men, and it would be very naive to imagine that incest, prostitution and chicken porn have anything to do with anyone's liberation, let alone that of young people.

Ironically, when feminists make this kind of point they are often accused by the Left of puritanism and of supporting state repression like age of consent laws

and censorship. This is not an accurate picture of what feminists really want. But what are we to do when the Left continually equates sexual freedom with the freedom of men to oppress women?

Instead of fighting 'repressive' legislation in a defensive and piecemeal way, the Left should be committing itself to an all-out struggle against patriarchy and a total transformation of all sexual relations. This means, among other things, that no-one writing for SO on any subject whatever ought to forget the power relation between men and women, a crucial factor in all struggle.

Yours in sisterhood, D. CAMERON Oxford



JOHN HARRIS

Albert Spanswick - leader of the opposition to all-out strike

Model article

I FELT I must write to let you know how much I appreciated two items in last week's Socialist Organiser.

Andrea Campbell's "NHS: The case for an all-out strike" was excellent. Her thoughtful survey of the arguments against and why they are wrong was just the sort of contribution we need at this stage of the dispute. All SO supporters should use it as a model when we are writing for our paper.

The Graffiti report on Grunwick's trade names was also welcome although disturbing for me personally as I have actually used a couple of those listed.

Imagine my horror when I read that the heroes of the "freedom of choice" brigade were trading under names which prevented millions of trade union members exercising their freedom of choice to withhold business from one of the most

hated employers in Britain.

Surely this is a good case for the "Freedom" Association to take up. If they can spend thousands of pounds supporting the "right" of scabs to refuse to join a trade union, can't they afford a similar amount of money to launch a campaign to force Grunwicks to trade under their own name.

JULIA REDMAN Coventry



Torture rules OK?

THE West German constitution is studded with references to individual rights. The experience of Nazism led its authors to confirm - in writing at least - the 'dignity of man'.

When Hasan Aksoy fled from Turkey to Germany, hoping to be granted political asylum there, he probably had little faith in bourgeois constitutions, but he had little choice.

Aksoy, a left-wing Kurdish bookseller, was arrested in Antep in south-eastern Turkey by military police. He was arrested for selling the revolutionary paper 'Kawa', but managed to escape to Germany.

Last year he applied for political asylum. The basic case was clear: if he returned to Turkey he would be killed - probably after being tortured. Back came the verdict: no political asylum.

Aksoy's lawyers appealed, pointing out that the ruling contravened the spirit of the constitution's references to 'the right to life' and 'the dignity of man'. The court replied with fastidious legal observations.

Torture and other forms of physical abuse that might be occasioned in the course of carrying out a sentence are an offence against human dignity. But not every infringement of the injunction to have due regard for human dignity is relevant to political asylum. What is decisive is the motive behind the acts.

Left-wing Kurds might be tortured or otherwise abused in the course of investigations into alleged offences against state security. But this does not constitute political persecution ... because torture and

abuse happen all the time in Turkey, and politically active Kurds are not the only victims...

'Thus any tortures the appellant might have to endure in the event of his being involved in a judicial process cannot be defined as political persecution...'

So far so bad! But then the explanation went on to concede that there might be a case for political asylum if the state in whose name officials carry out torture instigate and approve it or accept it happens but do nothing.

In other words they completely accept Turkish dictator Evren's word that torturers will be punished. Obviously the judges do not see the slightest hint of cynicism behind Evren's confession last year to an interviewer from the West German magazine, 'Spiegel': 'There's always been torture in this country'.

IT IS an absolute slander to suggest that the Tory government and Norman Tebbit in particular want to take this country back to the 1930s. Their target is the 1830s! And if this seems like some routine joke or caricature, just note the words of Norman Tebbit, quoted in the Oxford Star, talking to local Conservatives a week ago.

"Mr Tebbit pointed to the way the Victorians had created jobs by making use of new technology.

"I get sick of all the television programmes which say that the 19th century was hard for workers", he said. "Britain in the 19th century was the best place in the world to be a member of the working class.

"We can do that again (!) if we take up new technology with the same enthusiasm and scale of plain hard work."

(Oxford Star, October 21)

SCIENCE Tailoring genes

by Philip Day

GENETIC engineering is the latest development in a long line of human genetic manipulation aimed at altering the genetic complement of commercially viable or useful organisms.

When man settled to an agrarian economy this process started with the 'selection' of the most suitable strains of animals and crops for interbreeding and cultivation. Wheat is the result of one such process, having six times the gross genetic complement of its ancestor Triticum monococcus, 8000 years ago.

Modern genetic engineering covers two general techniques, cloning and DNA technology. Cloning involves the removal of the whole DNA complement from the nucleus of a cell of the desired replicant (a replicant is the individual to be cloned and its offspring). This DNA is then placed by microsurgical techniques into the empty nucleus of a recipient fertilised sex cell of another organism of the same species, and the cell is then allowed to divide by binary fission to give eight daughter cells.

Cells

Each of these cells may be used to repeat the process until the desired number of replicant sex cells are implanted. Once this is done, the sex cells are allowed to undergo replication and normal pregnancy in a recipient organism of the same species.

This process results in one or more females producing up to several dozen

genetically identical offspring. It was originally perfected in the African Claw Toad (*Zenopus laevis*) as its fertilisation and incubation are external to the body, but recently it has been successfully undertaken in laboratory mice, which are mammals, as are humans.

This process has the advantage that genetically identical organisms are of great use in the laboratory for drug testing and other related work, where identical organisms give more accurate results. Otherwise, commercially, genetically identical higher organisms are of little interest except in pure research.

On the other hand, DNA technology holds much commercial promise. This involves the cloning of a simple gene and not the whole genetic complement.

The whole basis of DNA technology is that genes are composed of DNA, which holds in its structure the ability to 'code' for the manufacture of proteins in cells. This is the 'central dogma' of molecular genetics.

The central dogma relates to the principle by which the 'code' held on the DNA is copied into a mirror code, held on mRNA. The mRNA code is then translated at sites known as ribosomes, by the 'anticodons' of tRNA. The tRNA molecules carry single amino-acids (the building blocks of proteins) which are coupled together into long chains of polypeptides to give the required protein.

The aim of DNA recombinance technology is to

place a viable gene into the genetic complement of a rapidly reproducing micro-organism, usually a bacterium, in order for that gene to be expressed as protein.

The advantages of this are that bacteria are cheaper and easier to grow than many advanced animal and plant cells and that they have a higher rate of metabolism and reproduction, hence producing more protein on less substrates in a shorter time.

For instance, somatostatin is a pituitary growth hormone used in treatment of irregular human growth patterns. It was originally isolated from sheep brains at the rate of 5mg (5/1000ths of a gram) per 500,000 brains. Gene 91 from human sources produces a more effective version of the same hormone, when implanted in the bacteria *Escherichia coli*. This involved quantities of less than five litres of culture of *E. coli* to produce similar concentrations of somatostatin.

DNA technology itself is an extension of a naturally occurring phenomenon in which parts of the DNA complement of one bacteria, the 'donor', are transferred to the genetic complement of another, the 'recipient', by the action of a prophage or temperate bacterial virus.

Genes

The gene or genes carried over by this process cause the excision and loss of the complementary genes on the

recipient chromosome. So that when protein production occurs the protein produced is that of the donor not the recipient original complement.

GLOSSARY DNA - deoxyribonucleic acid. mRNA - messenger ribonucleic acid. tRNA - transfer ribonucleic acid. Polypeptide - short chain of protein. Amino acids - basic units of

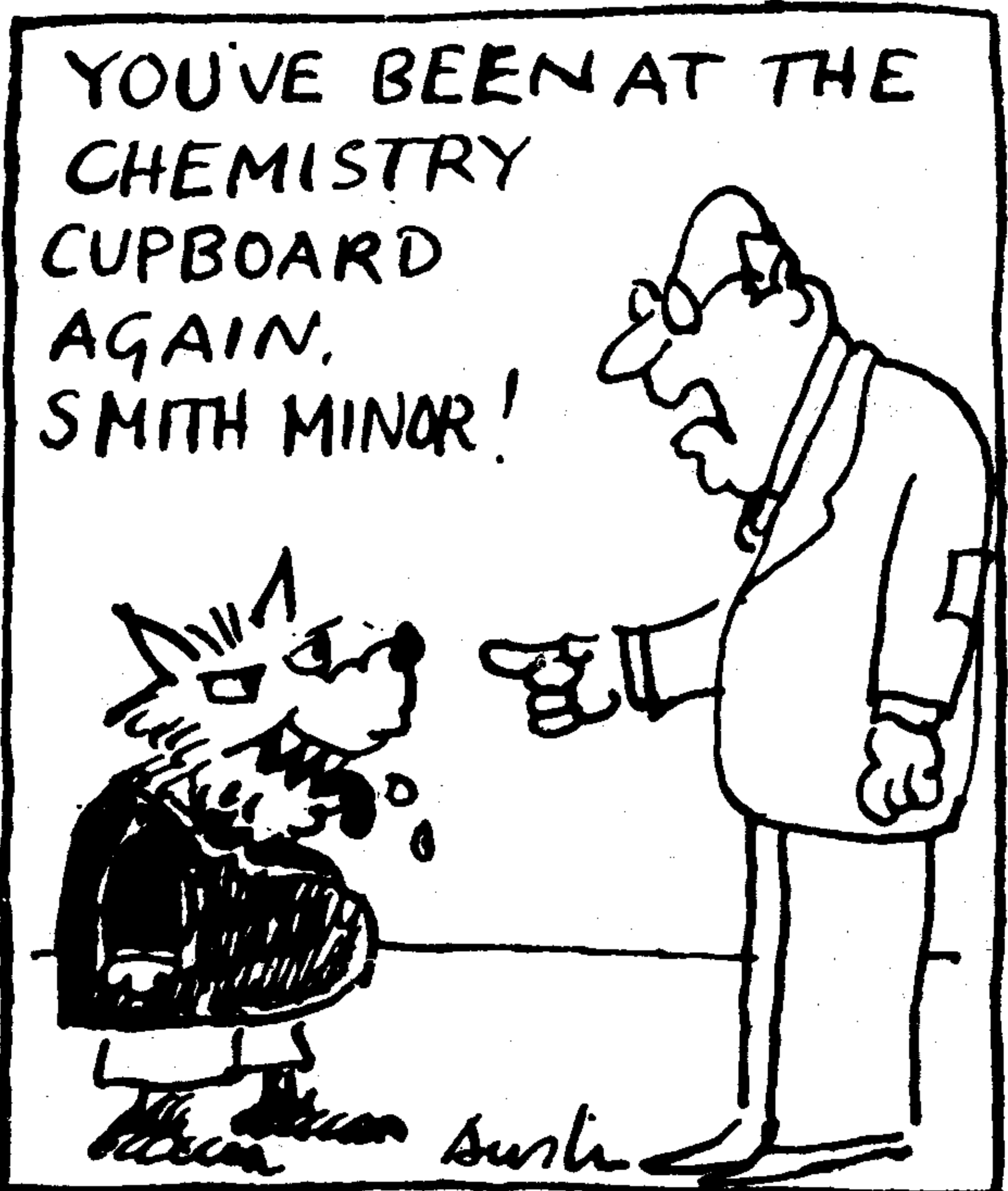
protein structure. Binary fission - a simple process of cell division.

SOURCES New Scientist, 26 August 1982.

Biologist, September 19, 1982.

Report of the Working Party on the Experimental Manipulation of the Genetic Composition of Micro-organisms, January 1975, Cmnd 5880.

Microbial and Molecular Genetics, Fincham.



Unite to fight racist laws!

Jessica Daniels reports on a conference and the plans for action

THE Campaign Against Racist Laws is an organisation built on the initiative of the Indian Workers Association three years ago. Its greatest achievement so far has been the mobilisation of 25,000 against the 1981 Nationality Act.

On October 24 it held a conference to discuss further action against the racist immigration laws, to include a mass demonstration on March 27 next year, which will call for the repeal of both the 1971

Immigration Act and the 1981 Nationality Act.

The opening speech from John Tilley, Labour MP for Lambeth Central, provoked debate. After criticising the Tory government's immigration policies, he outlined the next Labour government's alternative: nice immigration policies, not nasty ones!

Marriage to a British citizen would grant automatic British citizenship, the re-establishment of the right of a child born in Britain to British citizenship, re-establish naturalisation, lower the registration fee and restore the right of East African Indians to British citizenship.

The speech was met by much scepticism. The question begging an answer was why have immigration controls at all?

The answer from John Tilley was that immigration controls are a 'necessary part of economic planning' and are not necessarily racist and sexist. This typical reformist and nationalist answer reinforced existing fears.

Immigration controls are not necessary for 'economic planning': in any event economic planning itself is not possible in the free enterprise system of capitalism to which we are all subject.

Immigration controls by their very nature are racist and while women are a weaker sector, immigration controls will be biased against them.

Planning

The major workshop at the Conference was on deportations; the other two were on internal controls and the 'waiting list' of foreign husbands. The major debate in the main workshop was on how to build the deportation campaigns: should they be left as separate campaigns, involving the surrounding community, or should we organise a Joint Committee for the coordination of the local campaigns nationally?

The answer must be to link up the struggles against the deportations with the other struggles of the working class.

Link

This perspective was put forward by another speaker Darcus Howe of the Race Today collective.

His speech concentrated wholly on the need to link the struggles of Afro-Caribbean blacks, the NHS workers, the Irish republicans, Solidarnosc, and Kenyan masses as one international struggle.

He attacked black middle class and Bennite leaderships who saw it as a Parliamentary struggle. The struggles of the working class had to be incorporated in the campaigns against deportations for the political development of both black and white men and women.

Speakers from the floor brought up various important points such as the need for the campaign to be taken up within the trade unions, a move which had started in some unions but

an entirely formal commitment. With the government planning to place further civil defence obligations on local authorities, the council's passive position became even more erroneous.

To give the policy a cutting edge, councillor Chris Hickey placed a motion before the council calling on it to establish 'a civil defence forum composed of councillors and representatives of organisations committed to the concept of a nuclear free zone.'

The motion also proposed that the council sponsor, and invite sponsors for a Hounslow Nuclear Free Week of Action. The link between the two proposals is obvious: the 'civil defence forum' would play the pivotal role in organising the week of action, pulling together all those organisations willing to fight the bomb and turning the council out into the community.

In support of the motion SO supporters had argued both in the Labour Party and Hounslow CND for a campaign, culminating in a lobby on the council. CND and Labour Party members put in a great effort, handing out thousands of leaflets, collecting petitions, motivating different organisations and other people, contacting the press and building the lobby.

This successful campaign, the passing of the motion, with the promise of further action, is the only correct response to Tory plans aimed at compelling local authorities to increase their role in its civil defence structure.

The defeat of Hard Rock was round one, now we must mobilise for round two.

PATRICK GLYN



The conference debated whether to work for a joint committee of anti-deportation campaigns

Manchester demo October 31

On October 31, a national demonstration and rally has been called in Manchester.

It is in support of the Khan family and Manjit and Pabinder Kaur, who are threatened with deportation by the Home Office and starvation by the DHSS.

The October 31 demonstration provides us with a focus for anti-racist and anti-deportation campaigns. In September

nearly a thousand people backed the Joint Campaign against Deportations national demonstration in Bradford. The JCAD needs to be built into a mass movement with strong working class support.

We must force the unions to take a stand. The case of Shaunkaut Darr, a Leeds T&GWU member, has shown that support can be built. A circulation of union branches and a lobby

by national T&G leadership of the Home Office has been organised.

We must fight to make immigration laws and fighting deportations an issue routinely dealt with by union legal assistance departments, and we should fight for civil service unions to make laws unworkable by boycotting their operation.

Socialist Organiser supporters should be central

to building local campaigns which link the struggles against the racist checks in dole and hospitals; against the deportations; against fascist attacks and police violence; and the Nationality Act. And we should press for the labour movement to commit itself to ending all immigration controls.

Contact JCAD, c/o Bradford Law Centre, Sedgfield Terrace, Bradford 8.

No nukes in Hounslow!

ON October 12 over 50 demonstrators gathered outside Hounslow Civic Centre, demanding that the Council reaffirm its commitment to a Hounslow nuclear free zone and that it translate that principle into action.

To the lyrics of '2,4,6, 8, we don't want to radiate' councillors were chanted and lobbied into the Civic Centre. Banners and placards from Brentford and Isleworth Labour Party, Hounslow CND, Chiswick CND and Hounslow Teachers for Peace were present at the lobby. Members of Feltham and Heston Labour Party and numerous trade unions were also present.

For some time now the Labour controlled council had in theory declared Hounslow a nuclear free zone. Yet this had remained

was being bogged down by bureaucrats.

The most significant disagreement of the day was when the conference voted against even discussing a resolution on the abolition of all immigration controls.

This reflected the main disagreement over what form of approach we should have to existing trade union leaderships.

A good example of the limitations of this approach was the contribution from a Militant supporter and CPSA President Kevin Roddy who opposed direct action now to boycott race checks and put this down to his members unwillingness to fight.

We need to support the positive initiatives of CARL but this will not be done unless the present leadership of the labour and black organisations are challenged.

We need them to mobilise their own members to take strike action to boycott all racist controls.

We must build now for the national demonstration on March 27 1983. We must fight to win all labour movement bodies to the

following policies in order to defeat racist laws:

Repeal racist laws! No to any immigration controls!

No to internal passport checks!

End all deportations!

For strikes and boycotts to defeat all racist laws!

JESSICA DANIELS

October

S	1	2	3	4	5	6
M	7	8	9	10	11	12
T	13	14	15	16	17	18
W	19	20	21	22	23	24
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F	31					

WHAT'S ON

Paid ads 5p per word, £4 per column inch. Send to Socialist Organiser (What's On), 28 Middle Lane, London N8.

SOCIALIST ORGANISER North of England day school on 'The International Class Struggle'. Sunday October 31, 10am to 5.30pm at Manchester University Students' Union, Oxford Road, Manchester. Lots of workshops, speakers, discussions, etc. Registration £1.50 waged, 75p claimants, from 78 High St, Atherton, Lancs. Cheap lunch available, creche provided.

NOTTINGHAM Socialist Organiser meets every Friday 7.30pm at the International Community Centre, 61B Mansfield Rd.

NORTH-WEST London Socialist Organiser group discussion meetings. every other Sunday, 8pm (for venue, see SO sellers).

Southwark and Lambeth Socialist Organiser Group. Open Forum - Women's Fightback and the fight against women's oppression. Speaker: Jo Thwaites, Women's Fightback editorial board. Thursday 11 November at 8.30pm, Lansbury House, 41 Camberwell Grove, London SE5.

SOUTH EAST London Socialist Organiser forums. every other Thursday, 8pm at the Queen Victoria, Artillery Place, Woolwich.

OUT NOW - 'The Degenerated Revolution - the origins and nature of the Stalinist states'. A new book from Workers' Power and the Irish Workers' Group. £2 plus 40p postage from Workers' Power, BCM Box 7750, London WC1N 3XX.

Oxford Claimants' Defence Committee. Tuesday 2 November at 7.30pm. Northgate Hall, St Michael's Street. "Sign on today, jail tomorrow." Speakers from CHAR, NCCL and others.

Demonstration against the deportations of the Khan and Kaur families. Sunday October 31 at 1.30, corner of Moss Lane East and Princess Street, Moss Side, Manchester.

Anti-Apartheid Movement Trade Unionists National Delegate Conference, 27 November. Details from 89 Charlotte St., London WC1.

NATIONAL UNION of Students (Scotland) women's conference. October 30-31, at Strathclyde University Students Union, 90 John St, Glasgow. Open to all women - not just students. Registration £2, information from Cas Stewart, NUS Scotland, 12 Dublin St, Edinburgh EH1 3PP (031-556 6598).

SOCIALIST STUDENTS in NOLS conference. Sunday November 14, County Hall, London (not November 27 as previously advertised). Details: Jane Ashworth, 41 Ellington St, London N7.

GAYS in Education conference: 'Homosexuality in the curriculum'. Saturday and Sunday November 13-14 1982, 11am to 5.30, Health Education Centre, 304 Westbourne Grove, London W11. £2 waged, £1 unwaged. Further info: 112 Broxholm Rd, London SE27.

GREENWICH Socialist Teachers' Group public meeting: 'Gay rights in teaching'. Speakers: Deirdre Wood, John McKay. 8pm, Thursday November 11, Royal Oak, Woolwich New Road, London SE18.

S.E.LONDON Gay Teachers' Group: first meeting, Monday November 1, 8pm, 6 Mays Court, Crooms Hill, London SE10 (858 2701).

HARINGEY Socialist Organiser: fortnightly meetings at Brabant Rd trade union centre. For details phone 802 0771 or 348 5941.

OXFORD Socialist Organiser meetings, Thursdays at 8pm, 44b Princes Street. 4 November: The BL Pa Claim.

18 November: Polish workers fight for Solidarnosc.

WAGELESS WOMEN If you are a woman without an independent income then you are welcome on Wageless Women's Day, 10am-10pm, 12 November, Co-op Hall, Seven Sisters Road. Films, Music, Kids' thing, Theatre, Food, Drink, Discussion.

New Socialist

TONY BENN debates GIORGIO NAPOLITANO (Parliamentary leader of the Italian CP) on 'Which road to socialism in West Europe?' Contributions from the floor

Friday October 29, 7.30pm, Friends House, Euston Road, London NW1 (Euston tube). Creche available.

Tickets £1 (75p unwaged) at the door, or in advance from: Tickets, New Socialist, 150 Walworth Rd, London SE17. Co-sponsored by New Socialist and Marxism Today.

Advertisement

Workers' Socialist Review no. 2 includes: debate on the Falklands/Malvinas; Bob Sutcliffe on Argentina in the world economy; articles on Lebanon, Central America, Poland, South Africa, France. 80p with supplement, plus 20p p&p, from WSL, PO Box 135, London N1 0DD.

Boycott bites on Air India

THE action by British Airways workers in support of the Air India strike at Heathrow Airport and New Bond Street is having an effect on Air India's business. The refusal of BA engineers to let Air India have spare parts for their planes led to the delaying of a flight — but the airline did eventually get a part from one airline at the airport.

The refusal of BA workers to link Air India into Travicom, the computerised reservation system, has caused further problems for the airline management. Some flights have been overbooked or underbooked, sometimes by 60 or more. This has led to a loss of revenue, and also fights amongst disgruntled passengers.

Luthansa workers are also offering support. Two cases of guns for the Indian High Commission came from Frankfurt on Air India papers. Luthansa workers have refused to let them out of the warehouse they are in. Now all goods arriving at Frankfurt on Air India papers are immediately sent back.

British Telecoms workers are also respecting the picket line and not fixing phones.

The case of Alroy De Silva, sacked shop steward, comes up at a tribunal soon. The workers have been advised by their lawyers that they have a better chance of winning the case if they argue that management set up the sacking rather than arguing on a technicality. This will,

however, take longer — perhaps until next March.

The workers want to use the tribunal as an arena for their complaints about the running of Air India. Fighting De Silva's case on the basis of management's behaviour will also be of use in the cases of the other 91 sacked workers.

Moss Evans, general secretary of TGWU, the sacked workers' union, will be meeting members of the strike committee this week.

The strikers are still running picket lines at Heathrow Airport and New Bond Street and help would be welcome.

Messages/money to: TGWU Air India Branch 1/1305, 7-9 South Road, Southall, Middlesex.



200 Asian workers, mainly women, are on strike for union recognition at a quilt factory in Smethwick. They have been out for two weeks, and are getting official backing from the Transport and General Workers' Union.

The strike began when some of the workers complained about their rates of pay. Some of the women at the factory are earning as little as £17 per week, whilst one of the male workers took home £28 for a 50 hour week (this includes compulsory overtime!)

Conditions at the factory are appalling. The women have only half an hour lunch break and 15 minutes tea break, and were told by the management that they could only go to the loo

at these times!

These conditions are typical of many factories employing Asian women in the Smethwick and Handsworth areas. It is already seen as a test case as to whether the unions can gain a foothold among these super-exploited workers.

The owner has only managed to get 30 people to continue working in the factory. Morale on the picket line is very good, especially among the women. The women are not as yet receiving any strike pay, so money is desperately needed.

Messages/money: Randi's strike committee, c/o D.Higgs, 9 Victoria St, West Bromwich, West Midlands.

NALGO stewards meet

EARLIER this month 35 delegates from 16 NALGO branches from as far afield as Gateshead, Liverpool, Coventry and London met in County Hall to discuss the way forward for the development of a shop stewards organisation in the union.

At present not even one branch in three is organised on a stewards basis. The central point of the campaign at this stage is the formulation of a model resolution to annual

conference in 1983, ensuring that a large amount of support is built up in as many branches as possible between now and next June.

The conference drew up a list of principles to be included in the motion and decided to publish a stewards' bulletin in November with the motion and supporting articles.

A further conference will be held next March to study the preliminary agenda for annual conference and

discuss possible amendments to motions which have implications for stewards.

Branches which don't as yet organise on a shop stewards basis are being urged to do so, and examples of appropriate rule changes and branch structures are available.

For copies of the model resolution and more information contact Bill Hamilton, c/o Newham NALGO, 7 Chapel Street, London E15. Tel: 01-472 1430 x 332.

MAP SHOP CHAOS

THE strikers at Stanfords Map Shop in Long Acre, Covent Garden, London are gaining support from delivery drivers and shop customers. The strikers have been out since 29 September in support of their shop steward, Paul Hobbs.

Over 60% of the staff have joined ACTSS, the clerical and technical subsidiary of the TGWU. Ten union members have been sacked. With only five staff and four recent recruits left working, the shop is reportedly in a chaotic state.

ACAS have recommended that, since a clear majority of the staff support the union, management should reinstate the sacked workers and recognise the union. Management have said they will reinstate everyone except Paul Hobbs. This is unacceptable to the sacked workers.

The shop is being picketed daily from 9am to 6.30pm. Help with picketing would be welcome, especially at lunchtime. Also, help in cutting Stanfords' business from colleges and libraries would aid the strike.

Send messages/money to: Stanford Strike Account, c/o TGWU, 173 Clapham Road, London SW9 0QF. Tel: 01-274 3251/3698.

Social workers walk out

by Godfrey Webster

ALL of Birmingham's non-residential social workers are out on strike in support of three colleagues. The three were sacked for refusing to go along with the council's privatisation plans.

Birmingham Tories took over the City Council last May and promised to privatise as much of the Council's activity as possible.

They brought in consultants Price Waterhouse to identify potentially profitable services to hand over to their friends in private industry.

Refuse collection, maintaining parks and gardens, school meals and other services were earmarked for privatisation.

Birmingham's 9,000-strong NALGO branch decided to refuse to cooperate with moves towards privatisation; unfortunately other unions,

especially the TGWU, cooperated even to the extent of putting in tenders for their own jobs in the refuse department!

Price Waterhouse "consultants" arrived at area 12 social services office in Northfield. Senior social worker Margaret Wooley refused to cooperate, as did Lynne Davies and Andrew Porter, two of her colleagues.

Senior management arrived and threatened the three with the sack. The three refused and were sacked at mid-day on Thursday October 21.

By 3pm, after a short mass rally in Birmingham town centre, 9,500 NALGO members were out on strike.

However local NALGO full-timers moved quickly towards an all-out strike. At a meeting at Digbeth Hall the following morning, the

officials announced a programme of selective strike action, leaving the workers in social services effectively isolated, and fighting on their own.

Voted

NUPE, representing 3,000 workers in social services, met on Friday afternoon, and, less influenced by full timers, voted for strike action.

The Tories' plans to demolish local services have finally met serious opposition. Local government workers in Birmingham have little history of militancy, but their willingness to stand and fight cannot now be in doubt. But if they are to defeat the Tories' proposals to vandalise local services it is clear that control of the dispute will have to be wrested from the hands of the full-time officials.

Setback for schools strike

THE action by Liverpool school caretakers suffered a setback on Friday 15 October when a mass meeting accepted the recommendation by Stan Kelly, a GMWU local official, to return to normal working pending negotiations.

This decision was taken despite the fact that the Liberal City Council had not made any offer about the restoration of the weekend boiler duties. The arbitrary ending of this duty by the council at the beginning of the month had resulted in a £10 to £15 wage cut for the caretakers as well as causing an unnecessary safety risk.

The caretakers will be due to attend a reconvened meeting on October 29 to consider any deal which might have been cobbled together between the full-time officials and the Council.

(Informed sources suggest that the Council is now ready to back down and reinstate the duties under a different guise).

If they are to avoid a very real wage cut, it is clear that the caretakers should reject any offer which does not restore the weekend boiler duties.

The alternative to behind the scenes wheeling and dealing has to be a return to the original action of refusing to operate boilers on which the necessary safety checks have not been carried out.

The Council's threat of suspensions must be met with a total walk-out if a single suspension notice is actually issued.

Kevin Feintuck

Hostel strike wins support

CAMDEN council housing committee have offered support to the 56 TGWU members at Arlington House Hostel who have been sacked.

The workers were sacked after starting a strike over the refusal of Rowton Hotels, their employers, to open negotiations on pay.

Camden Council housing committee met with members of the strike committee and made a proposal that Arlington House, a hostel housing 1066 men, should be taken into some form of social ownership, either as a housing association or in some other form. This proposal will go to the

full council next week and should be agreed.

Kevin Rainer, the strikers' shop steward, told us he thought the proposal from the housing committee was the best solution for the hostel workers and residents.

Meanwhile the strikers are keeping up the pressure on Rowton Hotels. They have a mass picket planned for this Saturday (30 October) from 10am at the Mount - Pleasant Hotel, King's Cross, London.

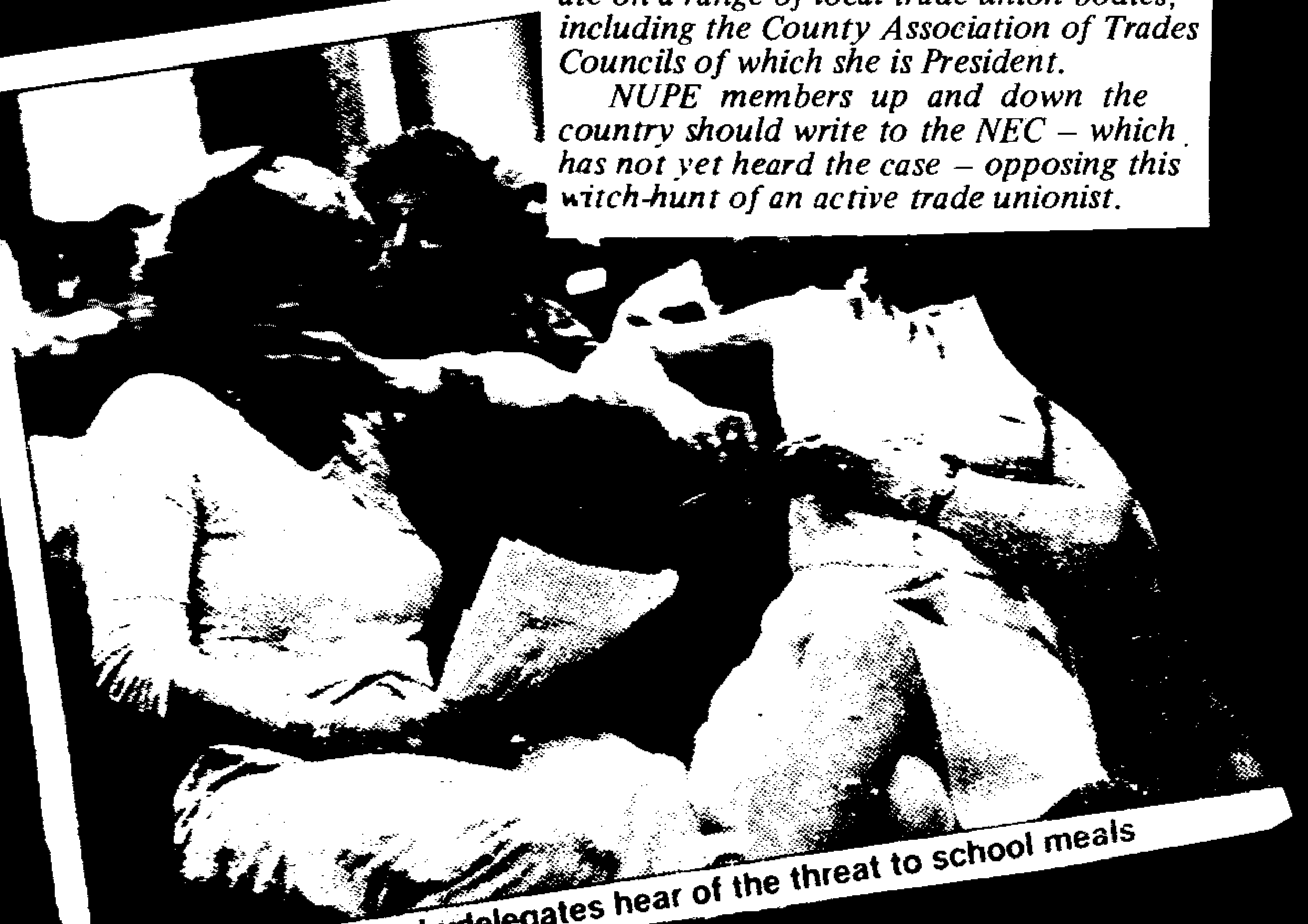
Donations to: Arlington House Strike Fund, c/o Camden Labour Centre, 8 Camden Road, London NW1 (tel: 485-1100).

Where the axe is falling

Strangely prophetic — only the arrow is pointing the wrong way! This cutting from NUPE News shows Oxford delegate Anne Marie Sweeney at the union's annual conference. Since then witch-hunting local official Alf Collier and other officials have pushed a vote through the Oxford County branch to suspend her from membership, pending expulsion from the union. Her 'crime'? Asking questions about branch ballot procedures!

As a result of the suspension, Anne Marie is unable to function as NUPE delegate on a range of local trade union bodies, including the County Association of Trades Councils of which she is President.

NUPE members up and down the country should write to the NEC — which has not yet heard the case — opposing this witch-hunt of an active trade unionist.



Conference flashback: delegates hear of the threat to school meals

Socialist Organiser Alliance

Get Organised!

Socialist Organiser is not just a paper. We fight to organise workers in the struggle for a new leadership in the labour movement.

If you agree with what we have to say, you can help. Become a supporter of the Socialist Organiser Alliance — groups are established in most large towns.

To 'Get Organised' in the fight, or for more information, write at once to us at 28 Middle Lane, London NB.

Name

Address



Vauxhall strike: Nov 8

VAUXHALL unions have called for a one-day strike on November 8.

This call follows negotiations last week in which Vauxhall refused to improve their 8 per cent offer or to concede to union demands to have the 'S' car built in Britain rather than imported.

AUEW shop stewards at Ellesmere Port have voted to reject the union recommendation, arguing that the wage offer should be accepted, the better to concentrate on the imports issue.

Support for the November 8 stoppage is likely to be solid elsewhere. More of a problem, however, is that the unions have absolutely no plans for all-out strike action of the sort necessary to win a seriously improved wage offer or a guarantee of job security.

Instead there are plans for a demonstration at the International Motor Show in Birmingham on the nationalist theme of how much better it is to make cars in Britain than abroad.

Steel: policies needed

STEELWORKERS at Shelton Bar in Stoke, which was decimated by closures itself a few years ago, were 100% solid on the one-day national strike against further closures, one of the pickets told us.

Gordon Roberts, ISTC Divisional Organiser, explained how he saw the dispute.

The strike was just the beginning of a campaign, he said, to highlight the plight of the industry and the effect of imports. The deal over American imports would mean excess steel in other European countries which could find its way here.

There are two possible alternatives open to McGregor - closing plants or sacking workers in a number of plants.

Gordon Roberts explained that because BSC want to reduce capacity, the most likely alternative will be the first. This would have a spin-off effect on other plants like Shelton which had been reduced to just a rolling mill.

If this goes ahead, he said, it will be up to the members to take action. And they would be asking for maximum support.

Unfortunately much of the campaign has focussed on imports as the cause of the problem and import controls as the solution.

The restrictions imposed by America ought to be sufficient for British workers to realise how import controls simply export unemployment and divide the workers internationally.

Shelton Bar itself lost because of the divided nature of the resistance to steel closures. Steel workers must fight for work sharing without loss of pay, and for cooperation between steel workers and a workers' government that will institute a programme of public works to reduce unemployment and increase demand for steel.



Mass meetings rejected a 2 year deal - then the delegates accepted it

BL: final decision

ON WEDNESDAY a delegate conference representing the 38,000 workers in BL Austin Rover division is to take a final decision on whether to recommend BL's latest two year wage offer for acceptance, or reject it and recommend action.

The recent track record of the delegate conference, however, gives little confidence that they are prepared to lead any kind of fight.

Last week they managed to completely reverse the decision reached by a 10 to 1 majority at a series of mass meetings throughout the plants.

The delegate conference itself had called the mass meetings in order to urge rejection of the principle of a two year contract, and on this they received massive support. Then, after one round of negotiations with

management at which the company used the obvious tactic of offering slightly more money on a two year deal than on a one-year deal (although both offers are derisory, the two year deal being about 5% per year), they capitulated completely and reversed their opposition to the two year principle.

At that meeting there were three resolutions. One from Cowley Assembly

said reject both offers and strike from November 1. One from Longbridge said reject both offers and call a token strike on November 1 followed by an overtime ban; and one called for negotiations to get the best two year deal possible.

The third resolution was carried with a majority of 73 to 59, and the policy reversed, with no reference to the membership who had taken the decision.

Negotiations on the two year deal took place on Monday of this week around what appears to be a new claim, drawn up by the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC), of which BL workers have no knowledge. These negotiations resulted in an additional 50p per week on the second year of the deal.

Terry Duffy's man Ken Cure moved for acceptance of this offer, but this was rejected 20 to 12, and the resolution to be put by the JNC to the delegate conference:

"Due to the fact that the company's offer is far from satisfactory on all negotiations, be it the one year or the two year offer, this JNC recommends to a full delegate conference that the offer should be rejected. We should then debate what action should be taken".

National talks on DHSS strikes

NEGOTIATIONS on the Birmingham and Oxford DHSS strikes about staffing levels have now gone national.

In the regional negotiations concerning the Oxford office, management conceded all the points made by CPSSA and SCPS reps, but arrogantly declared that the problems were caused by a bad office management rather than shortage of staff! This provocation has re-doubled the resolve of the Marston Road strikers, now in their fourth week on strike.

The effect of the DHSS combining negotiations has been to give the Birmingham and Oxford strikes national prominence. Clearly any decision to grant more staff will be made at Cabinet level: equally clearly, it will need national action in the DHSS to force the Government's hand.

The strikes have not been used by the leadership of the unions to build and launch a national campaign on staffing cuts. There is no political will to do so.

Problems over 'enough money in the kitty' to fund a national strike are being used to blackmail members in other CPSSA offices not to come out too. Instead there is the call for 'disciplined action', with a clear instruction to focus on Birmingham alone.

What is required immediately is for those on strike in Birmingham and Oxford to forge links to share the

knowledge gained and problems experienced so far in their dispute. Unity is vital when taking on this government.

Meanwhile in Oxford the post is being delivered about 6.30 and the picket is too small to stop it. Help is needed on the picket line.

Mass pickets have been called for every Monday, 7 to 9.30, and Oxford Trades Council has called on all its affiliates to support.

On November 2 the Claimants' Defence Committee in Oxford is holding a campaign meeting, 'Sign On Today, Jail Tomorrow'. This is to build the campaigning work on homelessness and unemployment which they have begun in response to Operation Major.

A representative from the DHSS strike committee will be among the platform speakers.

Unemployed groups and DHSS unions should be inviting speakers from the strike committee and the CDC to their future meetings.

Messages/donations: M. Robertson, 24 Beechcroft Road.

ALAN STEPHENS LAST MINUTE: At the Oxford DHSS mass meeting on Wednesday, SCPS and CPSSA members unanimously threw out the deal accepted by the CPSSA national executive and recommended to them by national president Kevin Roddy in person.

S&K go back on picket duty

by Aly Mir

WORKERS at the Sandhar and Kang cash and carry warehouse decided to return to the picket line four and a half weeks after stopping them under the threat of a court injunction introduced by the bosses.

Over the past few weeks, solidarity pickets have been held with the intention of getting local trade unionists, especially those from the T&GWU, to give support and raise the issue throughout all levels of the local T&G.

Despite considerable efforts to get the local T&G ac-

tive, the response has been weak. Therefore there has been only limited pressure on the local T&G officials, who still refuse to back the strike.

Attitude

Disillusioned at the attitude of the local T&G, the strikers have decided to re-start daily pickets by the strikers, despite the fact that the strikers are named in the court injunction.

Although they have received legal advice which

may allow them to get round the legal restrictions on picketing, this decision runs the serious risk of prosecution and imprisonment.

What is important is that the pressure on the T&G to make the strike official is stepped up and not relaxed.

The solidarity pickets will continue as before on Saturdays, with strikers themselves picketing during the week.

Messages and money to: The S&K Strike Committee, c/o 88, King George's Avenue, Coventry.

Problems - and Policies

The heavy price of deflation

by Martin Thomas

PAUL VOLCKER, the USA's chief banker, thinks that we have reached the end of inflation. Geoffrey Howe reckons that regular yearly wage rises should be a thing of the past, now that prices are stable.

Not even the capitalists believe them. The Financial Times will venture no more than: "Inflation... is expected to remain under 7% for a substantial part of next year before creeping up again".

Retail prices fell marginally between September and October, and the year-on-year inflation rate now stands at 7.3%. In the advanced capitalist countries overall, average inflation has dropped from 12% two years ago to about seven or eight per cent now. But that's hardly very low.

So much for Volcker and Howe. But what is the cause of inflation? Why has it decreased? Why won't it

continue to decrease?

The causes of inflation in modern capitalist economies are a complex matter, an issue of much controversy among Marxists.

My own view is that there is a lot of truth to the 'monetarist' view that inflation is generated by rapid growth of the stock of money put into circulation by the government and the banks. However, the 'monetarist' conclusion that inflation is a product of feckless or spineless bankers, and that a firm hand on the cashbox will cure it, does not follow!

Excess

The 'excess' supply of money is itself a symptom - produced by the modern capitalist state's efforts to manage crises. The wild inflation of the '70s and '80s was started off by the US government pumping millions of dollars into the world economy as it paid for the Vietnam war, but it is not at all clear that it is reversible.

There is no contesting that a government determined to 'deflate' can even-

tually reduce inflation. The question is - by how much, before the accompanying slump and business bankruptcies force a pause? And how long will it last?

In the current slump the major capitalist states have resolved to 'sweat it out' rather than 'reflating' as they did in the 1974-5 slump. The policy of Thatcher and Howe is only typical. And its results are typical, too: inflation edges down, and unemployment has bounded upwards everywhere.

There is another side to it. Especially in a country like Britain where a quarter of all goods are imports, inflation depends a lot on world prices. Oil prices have stagnated recently, and basic raw material prices have dropped sharply - by an average of 8.3% (in the £) over the last year.

This drop in prices - caused by the slump in demand - hits hard at the Third World countries which rely on raw materials for much of their exports. Result: foreign debt crisis, inability to import what they need, slump, misery

for hundreds of millions.

With any economic upturn, these prices will start rising again. And the carnival will repeat itself.

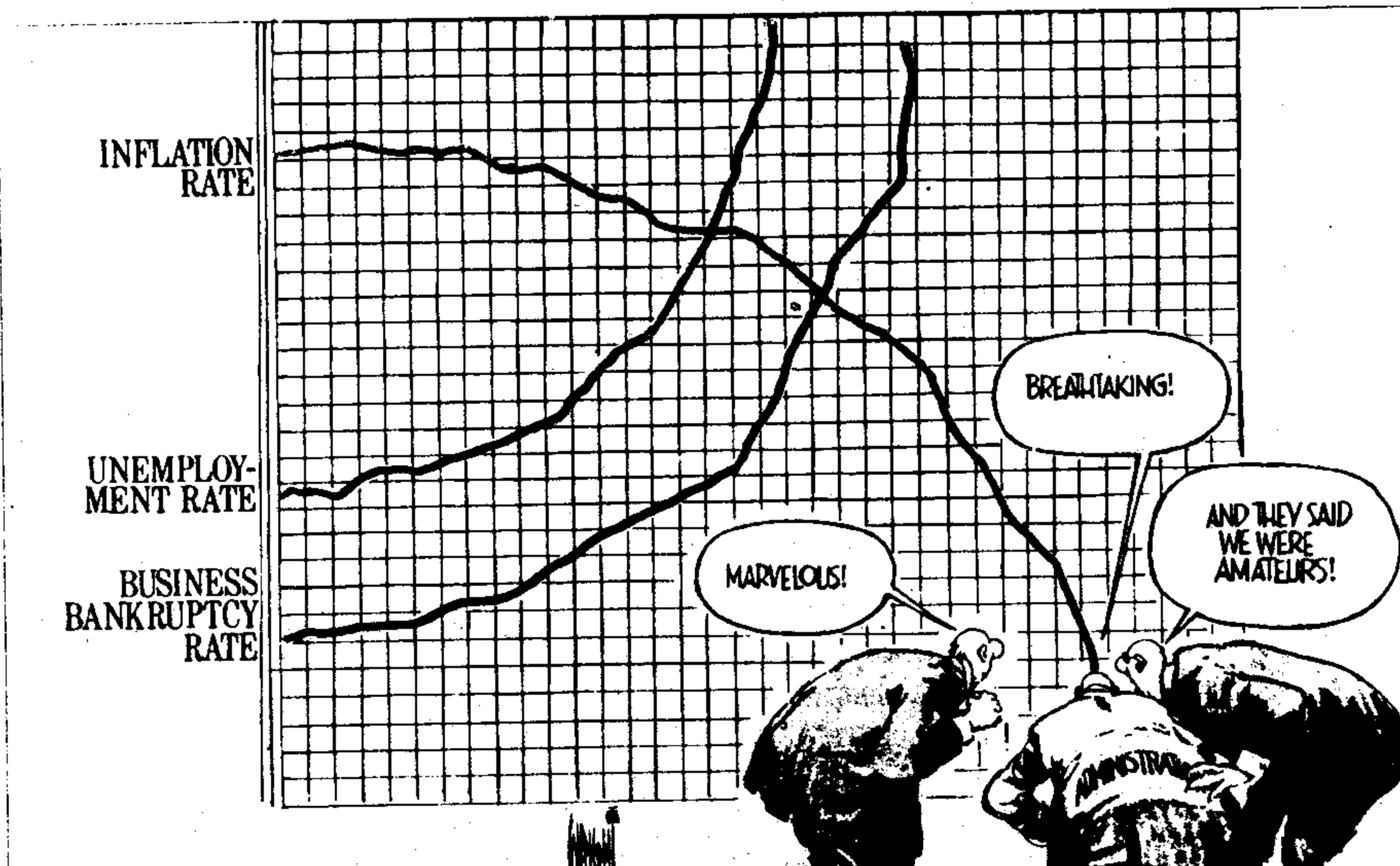
The world poverty, unemployment and inflation are all effects of capitalist crisis - which can be shuffled and shifted a little, but not cured without changing the system.

Price controls, favoured by many in the labour

movement as an answer to inflation, are an attempt to regulate the riotous progress of capitalist crisis by government decree, and can only be a sham.

Instead, we need a way of organising the working class now to fight the effects of inflation - and deflation! - and prepare to deal with their causes in the system of production for profit.

Automatic cost-of-living wage-rise agreements (with a working-class price index) and work-sharing under workers' control with no loss of pay provide such a perspective. While organising the labour movement to resist the effects of crisis (and not get caught in futile attempts to manage it better), they point towards workers' control and workers' planning.



£6000 fund



THIS week we thank supporters in Manchester (£20), East London (£5), Hyndburn (£30 — at the second attempt!). Thanks also to Nik Barstow and Ken Loach for sending in sponsorship money for the Merseyside Marathon runners.

So this week we've had £78.40. that makes £164.60 for October — the lowest monthly amount since we started the special fund.

The fund was originally launched to raise £6,000 by the end of July — we now have £3,984.12, less than two thirds, three months later.

The day of reckoning has come — we are at the very end of our credit limits.

We ask Socialist Organiser supporters to approach readers of the paper for donations, to ring us and let us know how much money they can send.

Without such support, we won't be able to publish the paper next week.

Socialist Organiser



JOHN HARRIS

Evans: "The executive might kick my backside"

EVANS PLANS 3-YEAR STRETCH!

FIGHT BACK AGAINST THE PURGE!

Jeremy Corbyn (prospective Labour candidate, Islington N.) calls for resolute resistance to the witch-hunt

IN the next few weeks the NEC will start their attempt to expel socialists from the Party.

Let us be clear that whilst the right have picked on Militant as the first to go it is part of a grand strategy of purging socialists from the Party, and what is at stake is our socialist party and our determination that the next Labour Government should not be like the last, or the one before that.

We want a Labour Government that will challenge the forces that control the economy and not allow itself to become the tool of them. In 1974 we won on a policy of redistribution of wealth and power; Labour went out of office with NATO intact, more nuclear weapons than ever, troops in Ireland and a virulent



JOHN HARRIS

Corbyn: "Those who appease climb on an ice slope... they only get off at the bottom"

wages Policy that had been used against the lowest paid manual workers.

All this happened not just because our leaders lacked any socialist vision but because they were not

prepared to mobilise the Labour Movement against the International Monetary Fund in 1976.

So what should the left be doing now in the Party and how should we be fighting the right wing inspired purge and NEC?

The first task must be to demand that the left in Parliament support the 22 MPs who published the statement at Conference which envisages a united and active left between them, the Constituency Parties and the Trade Union Broad Lefts. The time is to organise and fight back and to lead this into the Trade Unions so that the mass of members actually understand that their demands can only be met by political action.

The second, and immediate task, is not to see some negotiated and fiddled way out of the impasse by registering and holding back, but by absolutely refusing to make the expulsions demanded. Once any CLP has started the road by expelling, the Daily Mirror and Guardian will not say to Michael Foot that it is clear he has 'purged' the Party; like all those who appease they climb on an ice slope that they can only get off, at the bottom.

AS BL bosses push for a two year deal, support for such deals has come from TGWU general secretary Moss Evans.

The Morning Star last Friday (22nd) reported on a speech by Evans at at TGWU conference in Falkirk.

"He was asked about a three-year pay agreement just signed with Scottish and Newcastle Breweries involving more than 6,000 members. It was a comprehensive deal, as compared with a two-year one proposed by British Leyland covering only wages. Long-term agreements were possible where they contained guarantees about security of employment, improvements in holidays, and greater pension entitlements, Mr Evans added."

This chimes in with Geoffrey Howe's speech at a City of London dinner last Friday:

"In the not too distant future the idea of an automatic annual pay increase must become exceptional".

Evans' conditions are nonsense. It is no more trouble for employers to negotiate over holidays or pensions or jobs on a two-year basis than it currently is on a one-year pattern. The key advantage to them of a two-year agreement is that it keeps down wages by allowing a longer span during which they are eroded by inflation without any trade union redress.

Where multi-year deals have become the norm in other countries, like the USA, employers have had to concede sliding-scale (automatic cost-of-living increase) clauses as part of the package. Whatever the limits of these clauses, they have been a major protection for living standards — which is why they have been under attack in so many European countries in recent years.

Geoffrey Howe — with the apparent assent of Evans — wants multi-year deals even without sliding scale clauses. The excuse is that inflation is dwindling to nothing. He will find it difficult to convince anyone of that. The bosses and the bankers certainly don't believe it.

The push for multi-year deals is also connected with the Tories' anti-union drive. In countries where multi-year deals are the norm, they are usually policed by laws forbidding or restricting strikes except at settlement dates. Without such laws multi-year deals obviously do not have the same advantages for the bosses, for the unions can rip them up when inflation cuts deep into wages.

The introduction of such strike bans into Britain will surely be the Tories' next step if they are able to get away with Prior's and Tebbit's anti-union laws.

At the Falkirk conference Evans also said he might favour a 'progressive' incomes policy (it's something like a generous wage cut!), but the TGWU executive 'might kick his backside for saying it'.

The TGWU executive certainly should kick Evans' backside, and the TGWU membership should insist that it does. In every union the leaders should be called to account with the demand for a clear commitment to reject multi-year deals.

**See inside:
Page 15: BL pay talks
Page 9: Sliding scale scrapped in Denmark
Page 15: Economics of inflation.**