Arthur Scargill: ‘Extra-parliamentary action, not talks with the Tories’

ARTHUR SCARGILL, in his presidential address to the miners’ union conference, rejected Len Murray’s line of ‘constructive’ talks with the Tories, in favour of extra-parliamentary action to stop the Tory attacks.

Len Murray last Thursday signalled yet another lurch to the right by suggesting that now was the time for conciliation with the Thatcher government.

Just at the time when Tebbit is introducing a third round of anti-union attacks, Murray wants to lie down and play dead.

Tebbit’s proposals aim to break the financial links between the unions and the Labour Party, attack the closed shop and outlaw occupations.

Scargill responded by saying that talking to the Tories would be like ‘talking to the Nazi during the Second World War’. In his speech Scargill said: ‘We have re-elected a government which is intent on heightening international tensions and in-

But it’s not worrying them!

Maggie Thatcher: dole snatcher

THE REAL meaning of the Tories’ election victory is becoming clearer every day. Now the Tories are talking about cutting the unemployment and supplementary benefit — which is only a meagre £25 plus rent for a single person.

Chancellor Nigel Lawson has indicated that the present level of dole payments will be discussed along with a series of other expenditure cuts this autumn.

Already, the real value of social security benefits has fallen by 25 per cent since the Tories came to power. Now they want further cuts at a time when both inflation and unemployment are set to rise.

THE question of whether families on social security benefit could feed themselves, Thatcher said ‘they should eat cheaper food’.

Sick

This is a sick joke. Already, nutritional standards are declining, and the consumption of protein-containing foods is well down.

The most outrageous measure proposed by the Tories’ proposal is that of cutting the real value of unemployment benefit by 25 per cent. There is no incentive to work, if there is not much difference in the amount of the dole and low paid jobs.

Lawson, Thatcher and the TUC are also determined to protect the dignity of the skilled man who has been severely penalised in terms of his wages.

But Lawson, Thatcher and the TUC are determined that the ratio of unemployment to vacancies is about 20 to 1.

Their new poor-law proposals are frightening: if you haven’t got a job you’re lazy and don’t want to work; if you have got a job you’re lucky — accept any wages on offer; no training is too high anyway, so a minimum dole pension will help to keep them down.

The reason we don’t have the same kind of poverty in Britain today as in the 1930s is because of the social security benefits...
Benn and Scargill speak at CND rally

SEVEN HUNDRED people crossed into East Ham Town Hall on Wednesday 29 June to hear Tony Benn and Arthur Scargill speak at a rally organised by the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament.

By Chris Morris

Tony Benn announced "I shall carry news of this rally to Hiroshima where I hope to speak on 6 August, the anniversary of the first use of an atomic weapon, to say that the bomb is a cause of shame."

Arthur Scargill said "It is no longer a question of war or peace, but of war or absolute annihilation."

Here are the links that were read out at the rally.

- Benn and Scargill speak at CND rally

What the Americans and Thatcher fear are not Russian troops but the American and British people says Tony Benn

WE SHOULD look at the next step in CND's campaign. There is something too narrow in the way we think about the threat of war. It is a question of politics and it is a question of political analysis that lies behind the thinking of President Reagan and Mrs Thatcher.

But it is not a war. This is an example of how the figures are put together. Every army musts old equipment. We must build new equipment. We must build new weapons. We must build new prude missiles. It only opposes Trident on strictly financial grounds.

The demand for a 'nuclear freeze' is a fake and a fraud from beginning to end. It counterposes pressure on the Geneva negotiators to the mass movement for unilateral disarmament which has been built.

Development

After the defeat of unilateralism at the 1981 Labour Party conference, the CND has been developing in the document 'Stepping Towards a Nuclear Freeze'. The CND leadership suggested a new campaigning basis which larded unilateralism and multilateral disarmament.

The Test Ban Treaty of 1963 defused the nuclear threat because there was no real threat to the United States and the Soviet Union. It was a turning point in multilateral talks was effectively counterposed to the unilateralist threat to the United States.

To build a freeze movement in Britain would be to aid the manoeuvres of the SDLP/Liberal Alliance in their plan to gain prestige as the 'guineas multilateralists'.

Once sections of the peace movement start to accept the cold war myths about the Soviet Union, as the SDLP/Liberal want us to, then the arguments for unilateral disarmament and opposition to NATO are undercut.

The only way to overcome that danger is to fight to expose no warming down of CND's demands, and to force the leaders of the labour movement into a lovers' action, including striking, mass demonstrations and 'warning' strikes against the missiles.

Editors: ALAN FREEMAN

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 Defence

In 1978 when the announcement that a US base was to be brought to the UK was made, there were no protests. Few of us weren't asking why the US weapons were being included in the base. We were told that this was because they aren't members of the military wing of NATO. As if there was some doubt whether their weapons would be fired at Washington or at law. All the fundamental rights that we have won outside Parliament, not inside Parliament.

Article

The British army is using Northern Ireland as a training ground. In Time magazine on 11 September 1972 a British army captain quoted as saying: 'the six counties became a testing ground for new weaponry and new tactics, which included using police batons to beat strikers and such things as rubber bullets and blocking off the centre of towns.'

Brigadier-General Kitson, the British army commander, was quoted as saying: 'The six counties became a testing ground for new weaponry and new tactics, such as rubber bullets and blocking off the centre of towns.'

Our greatest obstacle in Britain is not Mrs Thatcher, who wouldn't last five minutes if it wasn't for Fleet Street and the BBC, who are our greatest obstacles. We have in our hands to change the course of history. We are living in an era of revolutionary change and constructive period for those who believe in the future.
By the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy

Why we say ‘Vote Heffer’

CLPD supports Eric Heffer as the leader because he alone of the four declared candidates is identified with most of our aims.

He believes that collective decisions should be in principle binding on all party members, including Labour members of parliament, that democratic reforms should be agreed by conference should be pursued by the PLP in the way laid down in the constitution; and that the constitution itself should be amended to regularise the relationship between the PLP and the party in the country.

Eric Heffer stands firm on the party’s commitment to Clause IV section IV of the constitution. He is in favour of a significant extension of public ownership, the nationalisation of the economy and believes that he would be a commitment to this in the next Labour party programme and manifesto.

Eric Heffer wants the Labour Party to remain a broadly-based party in which there is room for socialists of all shades of opinion, that the right of members to campaign as a group for their particular point of view. This is opposed to any disciplined action being taken against such groups of members of any recognised group so long as their behaviour conforms to existing party rules.

He has supported and helped to steer through conference the two recently gained democratic reforms — mandatory resolution and the electoral college — and is determined to defend them. He will work with us to ensure that these reforms are put to the use for which they were intended: namely to secure accountability to party membership of Labour’s elected representatives.

He agrees with CLPD that this will only happen if the operation of the new procedure is kept strictly within the normal party channels.

CLPD is concerned at the coming away conference primarily with the composition of the National Executive, for it is this which determines how conference decisions are interpreted and what new policies are adopted in the absence of firm conference guidance. CLPD supports the election of the leader and deputy leader in this light.

Eric Heffer’s record speaks for itself. Unlike the other candidates he invariably supported conference policies and the major democratic reforms, and opposed the witch-hunt against the Militant tendency.

His extensive experience of the trade union movement and the long service to the party at all its levels has given him an understanding which will enable him to work in good faith in the task of healing the party’s present divisions and its healing.

Both are vital conditions which must be met if Labour is to win the next general election.

Kangaroo court suspends Manchester Labour Party

By Cllr. Alf Holme

THE Wythenshawe Labour Party, in Manchester, will continue meeting despite the Labour Party NEC’s decision to suspend it and its officers at a kangaroo court inquiry on Friday 1 July.

Russel Tuck, John Goldie and David Hughes — the NEC’s three members of Wythenshawe officer’s request that the charges against them, and he is given time to prepare a defence and to be represented by their solicitor. The same ‘inquiry’ refused similar demands from the City Labour Party, also under investigation.

The attempt to split us is part of a NEC’s campaign against the City Labour Party for trying to ensure that Manchester council Labour group carries on the City Labour Party policy. 27 councillors have already had the whip withdrawn on NEC instructions for voting against cuts.

Wythenshawe is concerned not only because of the challenges to the decision, but also because of the unresolved question of how to select Frank Booth, North West Bakers’ union president and a supporter of City Labour Party, as its successful candidate in the May elections.

We do not yet know the result of this iniquitous refusal of the NEC to conduct the election fairly, and some members are already withdrawing from the NEC instructions for voting against cuts.

Wythenshawe is determined not to be used to further the NEC’s campaign against the City Labour Party for carrying on the City Labour Party policy.

Tories call in the army at Greenham

A MASSIVE operation was mounted against the peace women’s blockade of Greenham Common last Monday — including hundreds of police, military police and soldiers from the Queens Own Royal Highlanders.

Over 600 women turned up for the blockade, including delegations from the USA, Canada and New Zealand, as well as several European countries. Two MPs from the German Green Party also came.

Hundreds of police equipped military vehicles, some carrying equipment for the cruise missiles site, while soldiers on observation towers kept a watch on the whole of the perimeter.

The soldiers were apparently stationed at the camp on a semi-permanent basis to prevent intrusions while the finishing touches are put to the missile silos.

Permanent residents suggest that missile launching equipment has already been installed. It seems clear that the cruise missiles will be brought in by air from the United States, without the embarrassment of having to bring them through crowds of blockers.

At last Monday’s blockade Lady Olga Maitland of Women and (Tory) Families for Peace turned up to read the blockaders a letter thanking the Americans for their nuclear umbrella.

On the same day as the start of the Greenham blockade the Labour Committe for Transnatioinal Understanding held a press conference featuring Terry Duffy and Frank Chapple as star speakers. Duffy called not only for the overturning of unilateralism, but also for the removal of leaders who tolerate such a policy.

As the date for the arrival of the missiles comes closer, the peace movement must start to take action against the missiles. Every transport union is now unilateralist. We need a campaign to boycott all work on and supplies to the missile sites.

(see editorial page)

Youth CND meets in conference

It was agreed that YCND needs to do more to attract black youth. And the organisation maintained its existing position of positive discrimination towards women and called on activities to support the Greenwich blockade this week.

Some of the liveliest debate centred on the international resolutions. Among those passed were a reaffirming YCND’s commitment to the demand that Britain should get out of Nato and calling on YCND groups to mobilise for the 11 September demonstration commemorating the coup in Chile ten years ago.
National Briefing set up

Behind Sinn Fein's council victory

IN A COUNCIL by-election held in West Belfast's Andrewstown last week, Sinn Fein scored a convincing win, getting Alex Mackersie elected on second count with over 8,000 votes — 49 per cent.

The by-election was called after the resignation of Gerry Kelly, one of the four anti-imperialist candidates elected at the time of the H-block campaign. Kelly, denounced by the present demagogue of the Irish Republican Socialist Party, resigned his seat some time after resigning from the party.

In the North of Ireland, it is customary in this situation for the party concerned to nominate an alternative candidate who then gets co-opted on to the council.

When the IRSP failed to do this, the Social Democratic and Labour Party with typical concern for the electorate tried to sneak in one of their own members. Councillor Fergus O'Hare objected to this move, however, and the council rejected the proposal.

The full results were:

* * *

The full results were:

Alliance… 1172 40%
McIntyre (SDFP) … 463 33.4%
McManus (Workers Party) … 1094 10.0%
McGuinness (Alliance) … 486 5.3%
Jim Brown (Anti-imperialist) … 132 2%

Peoples Democratic councillor John McAuley described the result as a 'victory in the north'. Although it was historic in the sense that it was the first time Sinn Fein had been elected onto Belfast city council, much bitterness had been caused by the actions of Sinn Fein on Jim Brown of the IRSP.

The full results were:

Alan parker … 1463 49%
Mcintyre (SDFP) … 685 33.4%
McManus (Workers Party) … 1070 10.0%
McGuinness (Alliance) … 146 5.3%
Jim Brown (Anti-imperialist) … 40 1.3%

Peoples Democratic councillor John McAuley described the result as a 'victory in the north'. Although it was historic in the sense that it was the first time Sinn Fein had been elected onto Belfast city council, much bitterness had been caused by the actions of Sinn Fein on Jim Brown of the IRSP.

PD had called on voters to select the anti-imperialist candidate of their choice, as the pro-

Neither Judith Hart (labour) or Renee Short (right) agree with WAC's policies

French frame-up revealed

UN FRANCE a major scandal is emerging over the way in which three IRSP members were framed up as the引起的 GIGN - a special unit of Presidential guards.

The arrests took place last week when the Monaghan terrorists were discovered after the anti-seismic bombing of the Goldenberg restaurant in which six people died.

Criticism — mainly from the right wing who urged action against terrorism — was deflected by the arrests and a statement that "important" anti-

During the news blackout in the next week, speculation was rife that Carlos the "Jackal" or some rightist group had been blamed down. When it was revealed that it was three IRSP members on the "terror list" it was said that the arrests were part of a frame up.

Neither the Dublin nor London governments wanted to move extradition proceedings, now the 'evidence' against the three is gradually falling apart with crucial exhibits being mysteriously "lost in transit".

What remains is a series of unanswered questions about the links between this secret police unit and Mitterrand's office.

Women's Action Committee decides to go for NEC!

THE CAMPAIGN for Labour Party Democracy Women's Action Committee met on Saturday 25 June. The meeting was dominated by a discussion on what attitude WAC should adopt to the NEC elections in the Labour Party.

Not only did women discover that sections of the Tribune left had opposed Jo Richardson standing for deputy leader, but they also that Frances Morrell had been chosen as WAC member for critical of the CLPD leaders who stood a stage further down at their last Annual General Meeting.

The women that the CLPD had chosen for the NEC slate are Margaret Beckett, Patricia Hewitt, Joan Maynard, Judith Hart and Renee Short.

By Valerie Coulson

The Women's Action Committee decided to write to all women being asked if they would support their campaign to get a WAC member on the NEC slate.

Women's Action Committee leaders who staged a takeover of their last annual general meeting.

The committee didn't expect to see Renée Short to comply with these demands and have to ask if their own women's conference shows their opposition.

As a contingent plan therefore the committee went to see their own candidates. Women who are designated to the conference and who can get nominated by their CLPD are therefore invited to stand as part of a WAC slate.

The meeting also decided to draft a letter about an open meeting to discuss NEC membership, fees, representation on left slates and the CLPD's model resolution on positive discrimination.

A request from Anne Purcell, the WAC secretary to make sure that women and Labour left caucus prioritised the WAC resolutions led to a heated debate. Many women pointed out that the debate about policy — particularly when the NEC had backtracked on abortion — was relevant to the position of women in the party.

LAW council backs Heffer and Meacher

A PACKED meeting of Labour Against the Witch Hunt's National Council agreed on Saturday, 2 July, to back Eric Heffer and Neil Kinnock for the leadership and deputy leadership of the party.

The meeting was one of the most representative yet held; nearly sixty CLPs are now affiliated to LAW. The meeting identified this year's leadership and NEC elections as the 'witch hunt election' — the party's verdict on the monstrous record of John Golding's witch-hunting NEC.

It endorsed the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy's slate for the leadership election, 95 per cent of the CLPs are now affiliated to LAW. The meeting identified this year's leadership and NEC elections as the 'witch hunt election' — the party's verdict on the monstrous record of John Golding's witch-hunting NEC.

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**Bringing back the rope?**

**WHEN THE judge put on his black cap he intoned the words** 'to be hanged by the neck until dead' but the word 'until' had a chilling aptness. 'Until' was often anything from 15 to 18 minutes.

The hanging of Antonio Sprecage in Canada in 1919 took 71 minutes.

As a surgeon writing in the British Medical Journal in 1927 explained: 'Deliberation,' he said, 'is the ideal aim at, but out of every 100 cases, there are things that has proved an exception, where in the majority of instances the cause of death was strangulation and asphyxia.'

Sometimes even strangulation would have been a merciful end compared to what happened. On 10 January 1946 at the Oakleys Prison in Vancouver, a 47-year-old US service man, was hanged.

'The shock caused blood to spurt from his ears and they adjusted the rope again. By then he had regained consciousness.'

As usual the prisoner mounted the gallows and the rope a few inches round his neck, then the trap was opened so the body could fall into space. But the hand that had tied the rope was either unsure or lacked training for the job. As a result Peter was disembowelled when he fell and his head went through the noose.

After Patrick Harnet was hung his body came to a standstill and the blood poured down in torrents on to the floor below. When they lifted the cap from his head, his blood was hanging in the air from the body to the ground.

At the execution of John Coffey the rope broke and his body fell to the ground. Although his neck was not broken, the shock caused the blood to spurt from his ears and they adjusted the rope again. By then he had regained consciousness.

However the rope snapped a second time and once again the unfortunate man's body was lifted up and held in place. To make sure that the death was complete, someone held the rope in place for 12 minutes. Coffey died of strangulation.

But the horror and barbarism of legalised murder doesn't just affect the victim.

To order a hanging, to sanction an execution or to officiate in its grisly operation in any way is dehumanising and inhuman. Constant familiarity with execution breeds a contempt for life and degrades the human personality.

Because it is claimed that hanging must be seen as a deterrent it has to be cloaked in macabre ritual.

**By Bob Pennington**

It is that institutionalised like some religious ritual.

This is why Viscount Milner in his 1951 report: 'Executions are so much a part of British history that it is almost impossible for many of us to think of the future without it.'

From the time a person was sentenced until their death on the gallows is said to become 'good copy' for the tabloid.

First there was the drama of the trial, then the sentence, and finally the appeal to the Home Secretary, the Home Secretary's last resort. Each heart-rending detail of the trial, the agony and fragile hopes for reprieve were seated on the press.

The pain and sorrow of their relatives was a subject for a titillating story, and the response of the public a matter for reportage.

This most sensational of all sensational events - the legalised murder of another human being - could sell newspapers.

So the art of hanging seems to all society like some forgotten reality and even the press.

'Imagine talking to two dockers who had both been in jail when a man was hanged. They told me: 'Only the barbarians want to return to the rope. Only those who care nothing for humanity would want to bring back a ceremony that defies everything it touches. The pro-hangiers seek revenge which is a defense against all the problems of society. Brutality and intimidation can never bring social justice. As socialists we must do everything in our power to make sure the death penalty never comes back.'

**Science fiction?**

We've had films like *An* and *The Stepford Wives* where men have made realistic robots of the 'perfect woman'.

Now here's a report, from the Daily Mirror, about a promising experiment in this direction.

**Not normal**

'Claa' Lindner made her husband's life easier by unloading all his washing up in the dishwasher. And he's not even aware of it.

Professor Rolf Høsker told her that her entire personality had to be changed and in a conventional manner. He removed a tiny section of her brain. Now, Clara is a different woman.'

Perhaps this new innovation will cut the escalating divorce rate?

Men will be able to send their wives for a lobotomy if they annoy them in any way and get a bit of personal back in this now healthily mean by health care.

(Lenny Davenport)

**LIFE prosecution**

The charge is being brought under the Criminal Attempts Act, and Mr Hamilton is due to appear at the Central Criminal Court on 7 August.

It is no coincidence that this prosecution is taking place now that the press have chosen to ignore it.

Every time the anti-abortionists try to dismiss the bid to reverse the 1973 decision as a case of the most sensible stories of aborted babies left crying in rubbish bins magically emerge from the pens of Fleet Street hacks.

**Defend the Singh brothers**

DAVINDAR and Bikar Singh were sentenced to 20 years for the killing of 2 men in the Handsworth home on 3 April. As they arrived in the Highgate area of Birmingham, they were met by 20 racist thugs attacked.

**By Bob Smith**

Their car was kicked and stoned, they were spat on and Davinder was hit in the face with a broken bottle.

The police have since offered a deal - accept a 6-month prison sentence.

But the brothers refused and the case is now going to trial. As a result they will appear at Birmingham Crown Court on 15 August with the use of an offensive weapon claiming no further details.

The former policeconstable has been granted bail.

**Idris wins right to appeal**

MUHAMMAD Idris has won his right to appeal against a Home Office deportation order in the High Court in London.

By Bob Smith

The judgement came in the same week that the National and Local Government Officers Association decided to support his case, passing an emergency motion at their Isle of Man conference.

The motion called on NALGO to build and support a day of action if their colleague was deported. When he forgot to submit his appeal, a routine check two years ago and the Home Office had already been deciding for a long time that he was not an alien. When he was refused, he was not an alien and no appeal was made.

The Home Office has allowed his marriages to continue to be fraudulently. When he forgot to submit his appeal, a routine check two years ago and the Home Office had already been deciding for a long time that he was not an alien.

It also appears that in an earlier extension he should have been given the right to stay.

The campaign on his behalf has been led by NALGO in Birmingham. NALGO has supported and also affiliated along with more than 20 NALGO branches and over 20 Labour Party branches.

Support has also come from MPs and ex-MPs like Clare Short, Ernie Roberts, Denis Canavan, Tony Benn and Alan Lowry.

Unfortunately Roy Hattersley, candidate in the Labour leadership campaign, was not so keen as he said: 'I will not take up any cases outside my constituency. People should see their own MP. But when a Labour government is returned I will look at these cases and try to get something done.'

**Defend the Singh brothers**

DAVINDAR and Bikar Singh were sentenced to 20 years for the killing of 2 men in the Handsworth home on 3 April. As they arrived in the Highgate area of Birmingham, they were met by 20 racist thugs attacked.

**Compiled by HILARY PAVITT, based contributions to 'Male Order' by Socialist Action, 335 Upper Street, London N1 2JP to arrive not later than Thursday day a week prior to publication.**
THE TORIES have begun to unlearn their secret manifesto. It amounts to a declaration of war on the British labour movement.

The key components are:
- the introduction of new trade union legislation to render the trade unions ineffective
- the attack on the political levy to strangle the Labour Party
- the restructuring of British capital through privatisation

In the next session of Parliament the government have announced that they will sell off 75% of British Telecom and the Royal Ordnance factories.

In addition, without need for further legislation, a further 25 per cent of government holdings in British and British Gas North Sea oil exploration interests will be sold off.

Energy Secretary Peter Walker is again considering the sale of British Gas showrooms, previously called off because of the threat of industrial action.

The three aspects of government policy go together. In particular privatisation is not just a threat to workers’ jobs and living conditions but also to trade union organisation.

The fundamental drive behind privatisation is to promote the prolonged recession of British capitalism. Capital in its drive for ever more profit is forced to regain control over profitable parts of public services and a greater share of the work in supplying services and nationalised industries.

Such policies did not start with Thatcher. Under the right wing leadership of Callaghan the Labour government of 1974-79 presided over the sale of ENA, British Coal, British Petroleum, allowed TUC-controlled councils to continue selling off council houses and made savage cuts in public expenditure.

The function which privatisation will perform is that which was spelled out by the Economist at the end of last year’s rail strike by ASLEF:

"British Rail’s future is secure, but not broken. The manœuvre of the train drivers’ dispute should also rouse any government. The train drivers stepped into an even bigger manœuvre by voting to strike in the TUC or Treasury cabinet to bring ASLEF to heel. But the TUC is not a reliable ally in an industrial dispute. In its preoccupation with union power, it has tended to overlook the interests of the public sector. The TUC should be an ally in a nationalised industry. The TUC should help bring ASLEF to heel.

Hence the-..." ...the union grip is strongest in the public sector...

Unity between all those unions fighting against privatisation and the start of a generalised fightback against the Tories.

- United trade union and Labour Party solidarity is fundamental to the fight against privatisation.
- The Labour Party’s current policy is to ‘return to public ownership the public assets and rights hived off by the Tories’, with compensation of no more than that received when the assets were nationalised.

This contrasts with 1981 conference policy which called for nationalisation without compensation. Obviously the greater the potential profit paid by prospective buyers the more disincentive for those buying public property.

A future Labour government must be committed to a plan with the trade unions which ends the attack on jobs, living standards and the public sector. That means a programme of nationalisation under workers control of the commanding heights of the economy, starting with the nationalisation of the five major clearing banks.

Socialist

But the importance of joint trade union and Labour Party action doesn’t end with the fight for socialist policies, important though this is. In order to win the battle against privatisation there has to be a unity developed between workers at the point of production and consumption.

In the workplace, particularly in the public services, rank and file organisation through shop stewards committees is being strengthened as a reaction to the problems posed by the Tory government.

The Labour Party has to rebuild itself on the basis of forging links with all those who will bear the brunt of the Tories’ attacks: tenants, women’s organisations, black communities and youth.

In this context joint action between the Labour Party and the trade unions should be key to working class unity in struggle.

Only the left wing of the labour movement has the capacity to rebuild the labour movement in this way.

Broad lefts have to be reconstructed inside the unions committed to this type of politics. Two key badges are that they have extensive trade union support and that they are capable of turning the wide base and support into a body capable of rebuilding the Labour Party in its mass movement form.

In government departments a wide variety of cleaning jobs, secretarial services and catering facilities have either already been taken over or will be.

Selling state owned companies

HALF the shares of companies like British Aerospace, Cable and Wireless, Amersham International and Associated British Ports have been sold off to private shareholders.

A Bill for the privatisation of British Telecom is going through Parliament in the next session. British Shipbuilders and British Airways sales are planned.

Selling public land and property

COUNCIL house sales head the list under this category. Nearly 400,000 have been sold at a discount of £20. Entire housing estates have been sold to companies like Barratt.

In addition the NHS has been compelled to sell hospitals and nursing homes to private medicine interests and property developers.

Nearly 30,000 acres of Forestry Commission land has been sold along with land and properties owned by the Property Services Agency, itself sold off into private hands.

Exploitation of public services

IN SOME cases the government has not gone the whole way in selling off strategic industries like the transport and energy systems.

There was some debate about the wisdom of selling off British Telecom. Instead they allow companies to use the publicly provided network of routes, cables and pipelines to sell their own services.

Thatcher has already announced talk of the control of London Transport away from the GLC. Privatising parts of the system is now possible, even including the cabling-off of whole tube lines and allowing private coach operators to take over bus routes.

NHS hospitals are now allowed a
The Tory's privatisation myths

"Privatisation saves money."

It's true that nationalised industries often show a trading loss as compared with private companies. But they are subject to factors which do not impede private firms.

Nationalised industries have no shareholders, whereas private ones do. And private firms do not pay from pre-tax profits. In many cases these losses are the result of compensation that was paid when the industry was nationalised.

Secondly, services provided by nationalised industries to private business, particularly energy, are kept low on the orders of the Minister of Industry. This has particularly been the case in the electricity and gas supply industries.

Thirdly, most nationalised industries use a depreciation policy that makes allowance for inflation. Money is set aside to replace worn-out assets on the basis of their replacement cost rather than actual cost. Few private companies do this, again apparently boosting the private firm's profits as compared with those of nationalised industries.

Finally, because of mismanagement in the past, several nationalised industries have had to set aside very large sums for the adjustment of their pension funds.

So if the nationalised industries were judged by private sector standards they would be profitable. By selling them the government has handed over profits to the private business.

From the constraints under which nationalised industries have to operate, private companies can do better in record profits for their new owners. Cable and Wireless, privatised in 1981, has shown a 47 per cent increase in profits over the previous year. British Sugar Corporation produced record profits and dividends in the year following its sale.

British Aerospace immediately produced pre-tax profits 44 per cent higher in 1981, after its privatisation.

British Airways, next in the queue for privatisation, had 1982's record profits, in which losses excepted. The Financial Times as being because: 'management has written down a large chunk of the fleet with the result that future depreciation will be lower and profits in any prospectus forecast thus enhanced.' British Airways profits this year (probably the last before being privatised) are £77m.

"Privatisation increases freedom of choice."

The Tories argue that by allowing private companies to compete with state provided services, the consumers are offered a freedom of choice from which they can only benefit.

This view finds an echo among right wing Labour politicians who argue that the "mixed economy" provides the best of both worlds. But this is not how it works in practice.

Take the health service. Government policy is to encourage the use of semi-private patients such as the elderly, mentally ill and those convalescing do not usually make the best use of the short-stay surgical operation such as hernia repair, knee joint replacement, removal of tonsils, gall bladder and aphthous ulcers.

Tory strategy is to cut back on NHS services precisely to allow the greater profit to be made. One idea of freedom of choice is a myth. The state sector has to shoulder the burden of the unprofitable and the unpopular while the private sector develops its own monopoly assisted by the government.

"Privatisation is the route to a property-owning democracy."

The Tories have made great play of the opportunities for more people to benefit from and benefit from the capitalist system. They say firms sold off are being "given back to the people". But in which people?

- British Aerospace after privatisation had 158,000 shareholders of whom 40,000 had under 100 shares. Fifteen months later the number of shareholders had fallen to 27,000 and 143 large shareholders owned more than 60 per cent of non-government shares.

- Cable and Wireless had 157,000 shareholders when its shares were sold. Only 26,000 still owned shares 11 months later.

As most shares have appeared on the market their prices have rocketed. Large companies with the resources to do so then buy out small shareholders; attracted by the initial profit to be made.

Even when employees are given shares in the company this rarely amounts to more than 1 per cent per year in the case of British Airways.

So far from privatisation amounting to these companies and services being given back to the people, they end up in the pockets of the ruling rich.

"Privatisation eliminates waste."

Nationalised industries and public service are often accused of having bloated bureaucracies and being bound by endless red tape. In many cases this is true but are the privatised industries any better?

The Health Service in particular is cited as an example where the number of "non-medical" staff could be pared back by privatisation. But in the US even if the ratio of non-medical staff in their private heath sector were 5.3 per cent of the total budget, in the UK administration costs were 2.6 per cent.

Savings made by reducing the work force are lost because of the privatisation of refuse collection and street cleaning, also do not help to save money. Those made redundant have to claim much larger sums in the form of benefits, and in the loss of tax contributions.

Neither does it necessarily produce a better service. The NHS in Wandsworth, Pim- chards' first six months of street-cleaning were the subject of a special report to the council.

In one three-week period over 1000 penalty notices were served on the firm for failing to do the job they were paid to do. The figures were as follows: 34 reported for three months later - 12 per cent of the work was not done.

Finally Tory Wandsworth Council had to suspend the penalty system and introduce penalty-free zones.

Getting the Knowledge

Most of the material on these pages is taken from these two excellent sources.

The LRD pamphlet is a mine of useful facts and statistics, updating LRD's previous Public or Private. It analyses the fate of 14 major state undertakings sold since the Tory election victory in 1979.

Dexter Whitfield's book covers much of the same ground, but then goes on to discuss the experience of the fight against privatisation and suggests the elements of a socialist alternative in an informed and exciting way.

Further aids to fighting privatisation are the Anti-privatisation Newsletters, produced by SCAT Publications, 27 Clerkenwell Close, London EC1 (01-223 3627) and two videos produced by the Birmingham Trade Union Resource Centre.

The videos are designed to show members of the public and union members respectively.

They were made for NALGO's £1 million campaign against privatisation but are useful for any trade unionists. They are available on VHS and can be hired separately for £1 each or bought for £15 each or £25 for both, cash in advance.

Further details from Birmingham TURC, Victoria Works, 7 Frederick Street, Birmingham 1 (021-226 8323).


ITALIAN ELECTIONS

Christian Democrats lose out

The result of the election will be an even more complicated and fragile governing coalition. While the DC gets a clear majority, the Socialists and the Communists will be able, perhaps, to concoct a coalition with just over 50 per cent of the seats in the Chamber of Deputies. But on any particular issue the coalition could fall, precipitating another general election.

Features

One of the more remarkable features of the contest was the election of left-wing theoretician Toni Negri on the slate of the Radical Party. Negri has been accused of being the "intellectual leader" of the Red Brigades. In fact, Negri was the main theorist of the ultraleft Autonomia movement actively hostile to the workers movement, with an anarchist bent.

He has been on trial for several years in one of the most infamous frame-up trials in recent times. No serious evidence of any association with the Red Brigades was brought forward. Only his "intellectual responsibility" was on trial.

In order to protest at this outrage, the Radio-Television di Trento, made Negri one of their star candidates, putting him on TV nearly every day. As a result of his election, he now gets parliamentary immunity, effectively wreaking the frame-up.

The far left slate — Protestant Democracy supported by the Italian Trotskyist movement won 1.5 per cent of the votes and seven seats in the Chamber of Deputies, including long time leader of the far-left Massimo Gasella, elected in Milan. Eighty Trotskyists were among the 500 plus candidates who stood for DP.

The tragedy of the Italian elections, despite its few hopeless pawns, was this. The old ruling party, the Christian Democrats, suffered a reverse. But the workers parties, in particular the PCI, were not able to capitalize on it.

Today the PCI is a party of order, a party which supports capitalism. It has no serious ideas about how to resolve the crisis and the voters know it.

Stop Turkish executions!

SEVEN Turkish revolutionaries have been sentenced to death by the anti- Leninist military junta.

They are Ahmet Erhan, Sadekten Guven, Ilhan Kadioglu, Sait Ali, Tayfun Ozok, Ahmet Semin Vehdet and Ahmet Fazil. They were members of the DEV- SOL organisation, and have been accused of being involved in the assassination of former government ministers.

A wide variety of organisations, including Amnesty International, have been very critical of the trial.

Hunger strike victory

IRANIAN refugees in Pakistan ended a hunger strike, imposed on May 8th, after UNHCR had occupied the UN buildings in Karachi in protest against the agreement signed with Pakistan for the repatriation of Iranian refugees. The refugees are now back over to the Iranian authorities.

After more than two weeks of sit-in and hunger strike they were able to可行, using the UN Human Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) to negotiate over their demands.

UNHCR have now agreed to provide international protection for the Iranian refugees in Pakistan and to provide them with medical and financial support.

Honduras changes journalists story

MUCH publicity has been given to the story of the death of two US journalists on the Honduras-Nicaragua border.

First the Hondurans claimed they were killed by a rocket-thrower sympathetic to the Nicaraguan side of the border.

Now the Hondurans say they were killed by a land mine — planted by the Nicaraguans.

War between Nicaragua and Honduras is just weeks away. Honduran troops are now openly helping the counter-revolutionary "Nemotistas" in their bid to cross-border raids.

Matches have taken place between Honduras and Nicaraguan troops, as the Honduran army has carried out cross border raids.

The Nicaraguans, who at the beginning of the fighting relied on militias to defend their northern border, have now moved regular troops into the area. Heavy weapons and tanks have been brought in and a network of trenches established.

With his base in the country, answering that his policy was designed to dispossess Montoya should soon join the ever-growing clan of counter-revolutionaries in Miami.

Iran executions

59 PEOPLE between the age of 14 and 20 were executed in two days in the Kurdish town of Mahabad by Khoshnoud's regime.

Originally the 59 were sentenced to 10 years in prison, three and ten years imprisonment respectively. The authorities changed their minds and decided to execute them. The executions are part of Khoshnoud's continuing war against the Kurdish people and the Partisans of Kurdistan.

There can be little doubt that the "collapse of the 'front' has been a result of the lack of any public reaction to the killings. The military build up in Hon- duras has of course been masterminded by the United States.

General Gustavo Alvarez, the commander of the Honduran armed forces, spent three days in

WASHINGTON earlier this month. While there, he was awarded the Order of the Legion of Merit for his services to the United States.

Hundreds of US military advisors and CIA agents are now in the country. More than 50 American aircraft are airborne, including military bases miles south of the capital Tegucigalpa, and 70 US engineers are supervising the expansion of the military airport at Comayaguela.

Honduras has just taken delivery of a squadron of F-4 Phantom fighter bombers from Israel. The Honduran air force is being built up into a full scale war. The military build up in Hon- duras is of course being masterminded by the United States.

The centre of the US build up is the Puerto Cortes base in Honduras, where the first batch of 100 US Salvador army personnel have arrived for training. In addition the US's Howard airforce base is in the scene of constant activity as material is regularly sent to both Salvador and Hon- duras.

This vast military ef- fort should leave no doubt that the United States is intend- ing for a military solution in Central America. Together with the war preparations against Nicaragua, the US has masterminded the biggest military offensive yet in El Salvador, designed to clear the province of San Vicente of FMLN guerilla "once and for all", which is now in its third year of fighting.

On 20 June Reagan made another announcement, mongering speech denouncing "those who would allow Central America to be captured by a single ruling dictatorship". In defence of his "counter-revolutionary" policies in the region — the bloody right wing "counter-revolu- tionaries" — Reagan is spending hundreds of millions of dollars.

In the next few months, the people of Central America will face their steepest test since the 1979 overthrow. International solidarity will be a vital weapon in the struggle to defeat Reagan's efforts.
LETTERS

Where we stand on Labour's NEC slate

WHAT a lucky paper Sunday at the meeting of the Labour NEC in October have Sarah Roofe writing for it. Not only is she the clarivindant—able to report meetings yet to happen, in the past tense—but also can report on the secret meetings of the Labour Left, which is the party in the country is most interested in...

Unfortunately though, there was some inaccuracy on her crystal ball, and her account of the NEC Labour Conference Committee's attitude to the National racist council slate is quite wrong.

Traditionally, the NEC has been extremely wary of the NEC slates as it has always been unclear on what basis, and by whom, they are drawn up.

In particular we have never been sure whether we are supporting a list of people whose politics are OK, or merely people who have better than right wing fingers.

This year it seemed possible that a consensus could be reached around the latter approach and indeed it has worked for the Labour Left slate.

But the women's section presents real dilemmas, as it is clear that there is no consensus as to whether to support principled feminists or candidates who can win.

The LCC has therefore only back four candidates — Hart, Beckett, Mann and Hewitt — as their position doesn't clearly conflict on the NEC slate.

Attitudes to the 'boyscott the register' movement did not come into it, as we have backed candidates with very different attitudes to this in the other sections and, incidently Peter Hain wasn't at any of the meetings where discussions took place.

Only backing four may not be entirely satisfactory, but until some clearcut criteria is brought to the discussion of states models and compromise is bound to be the order of the day.

NIGEL STANLEY, Organising Secretary LCC.

Livingstone — politically acute

KEN LIVINGSTONE's speech on the next steps for the Labour Party has deserved its last page space, for it was a most politically acute analysis of the situation and implications of the party's pre-election articulation and analysing some of your own errors.

Trafalgar, Middlesex

In my earlier work as a London socialist cricketer, it has always been my belief that a player with a consistent technique will always outscore his opponents. This is no less true of electoral politics.

In particular we have never been sure whether we are supporting a list of people whose politics are OK, or merely people who have better than right wing fingers.

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NIGEL STANLEY, Organising Secretary LCC.

No lesser evil for leadership election

I WOULD like to make some criticisms of Socialist Action's orientation to the Labour Party leadership elections.

The issue cannot be approached from the point of view of which is the lesser of two evils, but from an appraisal of the task that the Left has to do over the coming period.

The general election defeat is not simply reducible to the sabotage of the right wing leadership. The essential fact is that the composition and character of the working class, in the heart of which all our mass struggles, has changed dramatically behind the reality of the polarisation of politics, and resulted in the fact that the only major party to increase their proportion of the vote was the Alliance.

The polarisation of politics was most clearly revealed inside the Labour Party, resulting in a profusely contradictory manifesto of left wing character being fought by a half hearted right wing leadership.

This situation persists and is not reflected in the leadership battle. Socialists should support the coming Labour Party conference from the principled defence of and action against existing left wing policies.

NEIL KINNICK at the 1976 Labour conference

The novels of B. Traven

OX-CART DRIVERS risking bandit attack on high mountains passes, cattle drovers outwitting rustlers, Indian traders facing the perils of steamship journey in the jungle... these are the rowdy heroes Ben Traven's novels are full of the components of high adventure.

All his stories, though, are also about revolution, about Mexico in struggle and hope, about an ache for freedom and desperate peasant hunger for land.

Reviewed by Tim Wright

His characters range from oxen-driven lifers on the cutthroat, unscrupulous Mexican traders providing slave labour for jungle timber camps, to impoverished Indians being ever closer to revolution by their struggle for survival.

The Cotton Pickers, Traven's first book, is about American Gerald Gates, who wanders through Mexico from job to job after the 1910-1917 revolution.

He works first as a cotton picker, then in a bakery in a busy port, and finally as a cattle drover. He ends up, the cattle safely delivered, with plenty of money and a grateful employer — a classical ending to an adventure story, and not a true life nightmare, however, is mixed, for he echoes heard rumours of Cale's past.

In his earlier jobs, Gerard Gates has been held responsible for causing his fellow American's 'bad luck'; his 'fault', he tells his cattle ranching employer, 'if men get discouraged and want something better.'

The developing confidence of workers to act against their employers is the underlying theme of this book.

In the cotton-worker's strike, the story of which is brought to the American press by the American drifter. The words were to be breathed of life to them and Cale who was to be accepted as a new Labour leader.

With the immense power and strength of the people united in a common purpose was awakened in them.

In this early tale of Traven's police side with pickets and employers are forced to compete for scraps for wages lost during strike.

He shows a sad naivety about a revolution which was hijacked from below by double-dealing, the killing of Emiliano Zapata, the betrayal of Pancho Villa.

He also shows a huge ignorance of the lives of proletarians and a gross misunderstanding in general in machismo-ridden Mexico.

The red-light district is a pleasure, a place of pleasure courtesans in work and safety and are thanked consequently by the clients. The imperfection, though, of this first book is that the narrative is lost in the maze of acrobatics and general isomorphism.

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Ingenious

Through an ingenious interweaving of the plot, and the through use of a large number of central characters, Cale and Andres, Indians who have broken with their past of subordination to the tyranny of church and state, Traven develops a real sense of the growing restlessness and revolutionary anger of the population.

The relevance of his stories, though, goes far beyond Mexico, and is about the need for revolutionary organisation on an international scale.

The price of cotton and the consequent hunger of the cotton growers is shown to be something dictated from the great stock exchanges of the world.

The desperate conditions of Indians fleeing mahogany trees deep in the fever-infested jungles of southern Mexico are not caused merely by unscrupulous Mexicans, but by a whole set of world conditions.

World revolution is Traven's answer.

Dolores Rivera's Emiliano Zapata from the front cover of March to the Monastery

The Front Line

Saturday 9 July, 7.30, Channel 4

A MAJOR event this week is the 90 minute documentary on El Salvador's civil war being prepared.

Viewers will support the struggle of the Salvadoran people against the fascist army of the United States, and also be given a rare insight into the workings of the TV industry.

The press release for this programme states: "First time... a direct不留 归入 the lives of those who are fighting underground against the military regime.

The civilian population is presented as inarticulate, with no understanding of the political issues, and the army, another 'with the guerrillas'...'

The film reflects the depth and complexity of the situation, and raises a number of important questions about the role of TV in dictatorial societies.

The film will be followed by a discussion of the documentary's role in the Salvadoran Solidarity Campaign, which has campaigned successfully to prevent El Salvador being used as a testing-ground for American aggression.

The Best of CLR James

Monday 11 July, 7.30, Channel 4

Last week's all-embracing look at Cuba was a bit disappointing.

This week he talks about cricket and its history. Mike Brearley is among the cricketing audience.

Informed

To read Traven is both to enjoy a good book and to gain an informed insight into the conflicts which take the desperate beyond despair to a desperate hope for a new future. His books have won your heart and inspired you.

Ben Traven's novels are published by Allison and Busby and are available from The Other Bookshop, 329 Upper Street, Islington.
T & G decides for Kinnock

THE TRANSPORT and General Workers Union's National Delegate Conference has committed its 1.25 million block votes to Neil Kinnock in the Labour leadership election.

But debate was touched off by a vote of confidence in the executive and its method of conducting the Labour leadership election.

The cause of all the debate was the failure of the executive to give some reasons to the members for the decision not to give a recommendation on the Labour leadership election.

The debate polarised around the question of democracy. A motion from Tynemouth General Trades Shop Steward Brian Shaw, calling for a ballot of the members over the issue of the executive, was defeated.

London Transport strike

On TUESDAY 28 June, 2,500 London Transport bus drivers and conductors walked out on strike.

The action began when London Transport management ordered drivers of Kissack garage inspectors to give the work of senior conductors.

The transport Union at Torrington brought all the drivers and conductors for support for the campaign. By last night all the bus drivers wanted to get back on the road.

The management threatened their action and agreed to normal working procedures at Torrington.

This is the kind of fighting unity we will need to defeat the plan proposed in the LT's three year plan.

This proposes a five per cent increase in the mileage, 700 less drivers, an increase of 500 conductors and new working practices for garage inside staff.

If it comes to a full scale walkout, LT have told the government the situation will only be held down if these economies are carried through.

Unit Superheaters battle on

LAST WEEK workers from Unit Superheaters sought their own union offices.

The majority of the members of the engineering Union are now at the Alliance union and are a challenge to the soon to be rail strike.

The workers originally occupied the factory, which is owned by the workers, Unit Superheaters, by the use of occupation and force on rail strike.

They claimed that the aim of BSC was to smash the workers and allowed management and occupation to continue without any strikes.

The court order was rejected by the Alliance union and the workers' action was held up by rail strike.

The workers continued with their occupation and management was forced to negotiate with them on their terms.

Twenty four pickets are kept up in support of the workers.

RSC have told local MPs that they intend to make an example of the workers and that the labour movement in the area is carrying out its support for Unit Superheaters' members.

They have also been involved in the picketing of the London Transport Works in West Hampstead.
Behind the left turn of rail conference

LAST WEEK the capitalist press screamed 'National Union of Railwaymen lurch left'.

This week a London delegate to the conference explains the reality behind the headlines.

The political climate in the union is certainly changing. The influence of CND showed when the union's previous multi-unionist political policy was overturned.

Only two delegates opposed a motion calling for affiliation to CND and support for CND policies.

Unitarist policy is not explicitly in the resolution, but it was strongly supported in the discussion and by general secretary Jimmy Knapp. The union also opposed the movement of nuclear missiles by rail.

This dramatic change of policy must now be followed up in the membership, a task made easier by a commitment to "permit and encourage branches to affiliate to local CND groups."

Register

Throughout the conference the influence of the new general secretary, Jimmy Knapp was clear. The left is still unable to carry votes against the opposition of the general secretary and there is a block of delegates who will do whatever the platform tells them.

Although Knapp said he opposed such a blocking the Labour Party, he defended the platform register for organisations inside the Labour Party.

This meant that a resolution on Labour Party unity, which backed the Greenwich Constituency Labour Party amendment to the Labour Party constitution, was defeated by 2,000 to 1,100. The amendment seeks to make legitimate the ex-communication of members within the Labour Party and the Foot discussion suggested that the resolution would be carried.

Knapp's intervention secured a loyal vote against. This position of a "left" general secretary on such a crucial political issue will not be forgotten.

Despite this position, Knapp and the conference stood out against an amendment which called for elimination of the "clout of the Militant tendency from the Labour Party."

The 14 to 6 vote which defeated this amendment showed that there is still support for the witch hunt in the union.

Another change from the era when Westcott was general secretary came with unanimous opposition to income policy. But here Knapp called for a "planned policy" between the TUC and the Labour Party.

Strength

The conference responded with a resolution opposing Serpell and outlining a programme of nationalization of the transport industry and investment for an "integrated socialist transport system."

A unanimous vote came behind the strengthening of the Triple Alliance of rail, steel and coal over a singlefait attack on the nationalised industries.

This included the call for a national transport conference of the Triple Alliance and for Knapp to consider that a twice yearly meeting of union national executives was called for.

The conference fully backed a campaign against cuts, productivity measures and privatisation on London Transport.

There was enthusiastic support for a resolution on Criminal Evidence Bill.

Kings Cross station was deserted during last year's strike.

Action like this is needed again.

Ireland and denies the national question and the unification of Ireland.

Activity

Delegates agreed that the fruits of new technology should be passed to working people, with a shorter working week and expansion of services and full employment.

The resolution called states correctly that any introduction of such technology not be at the expense of workers or jobs.

Another resolution effectively rescinded the 1983 special general meeting decision by opposing any further talks on productivity, including driver-only trains.

This lays a good base for the future, but Knapp opposed this last resolution by accepting driver-only operation on the Redford to St Pancras line, open stations and the "right wing" wing of the union.

A major campaign will be needed to make sure that the good decisions of the conference are carried out.

We can't rely on the support of the CND leadership to achieve this.

They handle the transmission of data on computer links and have been called out by the Post Office Engineering Union.

This is part of a campaign against privatisation of BT, in this case a response to management cutting the network on westside Project Mercury.

Project Mercury is a service for big business run by big business - Barclays Bank, Michael Edwardes, late of BT, British Petroleum and the newly privatised Cable and Wireless all have stakes.

They want to set up an independent communications network to compete with BT, creaming off the most profitable parts and with it resources to subsidise the public service. They expect BT engineers to set up the system for them.

When five engineers refused to do work for Project Mercury they were suspended without pay, BT management held a meeting with every individual staff group, telling them that it is "essential" to try to privatise the public service.

They have sent propoganda to every member's home urging them to disregard the union and do as they are told. Weassin on BT workers meeting on Tuesday 21 June.

The conference called for three members of higher management in"training" to be removed until the Project Mercury head is fired.

A major campaign will be needed to make sure that the good decisions of the conference are carried out.

We can't rely on the support of the CND leadership to achieve this.

The new executive has already instituted a £1 per week levy of members to build up a strike fund and is approaching other public sector unions for an alliance for a concerted fightback against Tory attacks on the nationalised industries and welfare state.

Post Office Engineers take action

LONDON telephone engineers ended their strike against privatisation this week, but said that the dispute was not over.

By Jenny Davenport and Marcella Fitzgerald, London North Central branch of the POEU

Peers

The dispute over Michael Foot's list of 27 new peers has revealed some interesting views about the House of Lords.

Margaret Thatcher believes that 27 new Peers (plus about 17 new Tories) 'would threaten the government majority in the House of Lords'. EAT at the last count the Tories had a majority in the upper hundreds. The fact that most of them just turn up to collect their expenses is neither here nor there.

But what is Michael Foot - lifelong opponent of upper class privilege doing nominating the new Peers anyway?

Everyone knows he's rewarding Labour 'right wing' 'worthies' who lost their seats at the general election.

Free gifts

LABOUR Research has agitated for pro and anti-Labour coverage of the dailies during the election.

In features and editorials they have put the anti-Labour coverage more than pro-Labour.

Labour Research has calculated a total of £1,520,505 of space in the Sun, Express, Mail, and Daily Star.

This calculation does not include the acres of space devoted to "unbiased" opinion polls.

The Tories admit to 3.3m worth of paid advertising.

The Tories admit to far, far more.

Although there are many 'right wing' "worthies" old and new in the Lords, the Labour Research has selected a fair few who look like the new Peers.
Wash-out at Cowley

AT A MASS meeting at the BL Cowley plant on Monday 4 July the workforce voted by a margin of 3-1 to accept management’s proposals which included the withdrawal of the three minutes washing-up time at the end of each shift.

In April the workers had struck for 1½ weeks over the threatened removal of washing-up time and only returned to work on the basis of continued negotiations between management and unions at a national level.

The workers reaffirmed that the three minutes were non-negotiable by an almost unanimous vote at a meeting six weeks ago. However, since then the national negotiations have broken down with the management adamant on the withdrawal of the three minutes.

The blame for the turnabout in the attitude of the workforce lies almost entirely with the leadership of the TGWU and the AUEW. Towards the end of the April strike Mass Evans and Terry Duffy were in continuous negotiation with BL management to bring an end to the dispute. They were responsible for the return to work formula which effectively curtailed the active resistance of the workers to the management attacks.

By a BL worker

The withdrawal of the three minutes is only the beginning of the management’s drive to increase productivity. Once it was clear in the negotiations that the management would not budge from its three minute position, the union leaderships ‘washed their hands’ of the issue. The body plant workers accepted the withdrawal of washing-up time last week, only when the plant union officials failed to provide leadership. This obviously had its effects on the assembly plant.

Despite the lack of national support the shop stewards committee in the assembly plant consistently showed a lead by recommending strike action as the only way of defending the washing-up time and protecting working conditions.

In spite of this set-back the Cowley workforce has demonstrated a willingness to stand up to management’s attack. Many members have been overflowed by the unwavering leadership from the three minute position. The task remains to continue the fight for union leaderships which will defend the interests of their members.

IN A BLAZE of publicity Kenneth Newman, head of the Metropolitan Police and ex-RUC chief, has hit out at what he called a ‘campaign of dedicated denigration and intimidation’ by people attacking police for their role in enforcing the law.

Lashing out at what he called ‘activists’ groups’ on the far left, Newman went on to attack the police climate in the capital which he saw as imitable to progress in policing and in particular the growing demand for police accountability and people campaigning for it.

While it is tempting to dismiss this gibberish as a manic outburst we will be doing so at a cost to what existing civil liberties we have at present.

By Unnich Desai (Newham 8 Campaign)

Newman and his strategy for policing London (and this applies to other parts of the country as well) deserves much more serious consideration if we are to develop new forms of resistance to the increasingly acute authoritarianism.

In particular one of the points of Newman’s first annual reports — where activists are termed a destabilising influence and ‘a threat to public order’ — merits particular attention as well as the new style of community policing now being developed.

The sort of thinking prevalent in this type of policing sounds quite impressive with talk of a ‘multi-agency approach’, ‘corporate management’, and other high sounding phrases.

But as an insight into their real meaning was given by Newman himself when in a foreword to an unpublished conference at the National Police Staff College at Bramshill in July 1983 he wrote of the need to seek “new strategies for dealing with inner city problems not only by the police but by all agencies of social control.”

This form of policing sets out to penetrate the community in a number of ways and consists of much more than the return of a double-edged tool to penetrate the community — through professional agencies, police and gathering intelligence.

What is particularly interesting is that people question who this type of policing is deemed to be either ‘mimicked’ or ‘disguised’ stirring up hatred against the police.

It is in this light that Newman’s outburst should be seen — preparing the ground for delegitimising protests to these new schemes and labelling anyone fighting for police accountability as ’an activist who is a threat to public order’.

As the economic crisis intensifies leading to increasingly acute authoritarianism it is more important than ever before that socialists and labour movement activists take the ‘law and order’ issue — seen as the domain of the Tory Party — seriously and politicise it.

The systematic removal of civil liberties is to be seen as a necessary part of the Tories’ strategy for controlling the unemployed and jobless youth.

It is in the light of this strategy that acts like the Criminal Justice Act and the Police Bill have to be seen.

One way of fighting against these attacks on the immedeate and practical level is by campaigning in the widest possible way against the Police Bill due to be introduced into Parliament in 1983 and making campaigning like the Newham 8 and Colin Roach a central focus of such a campaign.

The Newham 8 trial is expected to start in October. Plans are being made for a national march against racism, police and a conference. The campaign can be contacted at: PO Box 275, Forest Gate, London E7 8N.

ROACH FAMILY SUPPORT COMMITTEE

PUBLIC MEETING

WHY THERE MUST BE AN INDEPENDENT PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO THE DEATH OF COLIN ROACH

FRIDAY 7 JULY 7.30PM

RICHMOND TOWN HALL

MARSH STREET

LONDON SW19

Speakers: Roach Family 

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