

A ^{SOCIALIST} ACTION

What
it
means

THIS WEEK THE TUC decided to circulate a new 28-page document called *Strategy for the Future*. Written to provide the theme for the preparation at the next TUC Congress in the autumn the document is another step towards 'business' unionism.

Although written by the 'bright' researchers on the staff the document bears the unmistakable imprint of Len Murray. It is aimed at getting through at the level of policies the organisational gains made by the right wing at last year's Congress.

● The document calls for 'workable compromises' between the claims of trade unionists and those of other groups. It explains 'the essence of accommodating industrial change through collective bargaining is the need for compromises reflecting both union objectives and those of the employers.'

This and other sections of the document, are a barely disguised plea for an incomes policy.

● Tipping its hat to past services from Labour governments the TUC document says: 'While the role of Labour governments has been a major factor in the achievement of trade union economic and social objectives, the basis of the current TUC involvement in government owes much to Churchill's war-time and subsequent Conservative governments.' This opens the way to collaboration with the Tories on pay and redundancies.

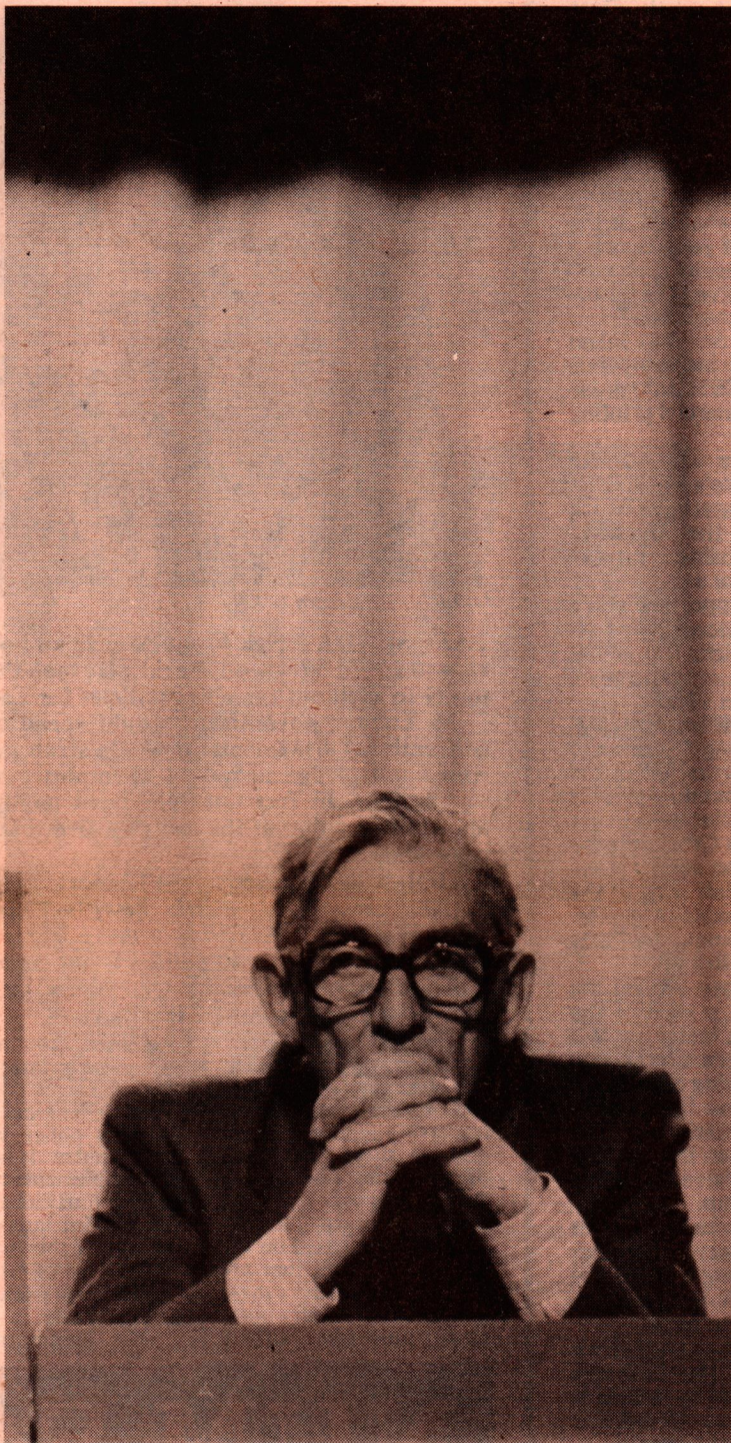
● It then hastens to add that most trade unionists 'have never been on strike' — well that certainly applies to Len Murray — but says 'when strikes do occur they not only hurt business and the community, they hurt the workers involved.' These are words that will gladden the heart of any Tory Minister of Labour.

● *Strategy for the future* wants the unions to influence governments to advance welfare and employment rights rather than use so-called bargaining muscle to promote pay deals for their own members. This gives any government the right to insist that the welfare state is paid for out of future pay rises.

● The document talks about unions proving 'their fitness to play a continuing role in the future' but accepts that this can only be done in collaboration with the Tories and the employers.



Photo: JOHN HARRIS



TUC PLAN FOR SURRENDER

IF THE TUC adopt *Strategy for the Future* when the General Council meet this week it will deliver a big blow to the labour movement.

It is a document snuggling up closer to the Tories and distancing the trade unions from the Labour Party. When it talks about strikes causing damage to 'the community' it strengthens the demand of the Tories for no-strike agreements in the public sector.

The document's moralising about the unions doing more on welfare and employment rights rather than using their muscle for pay rises is a bit sick. The TUC's cowardice in 1982 failed the health workers and

weakened the defence of one of the most important sections of the welfare state.

And considering that it has not given serious backing to any workers striking against sackings and redundancies, the TUC's talk about employment rights rings absolutely hollow.

The latest retreat by the TUC rams home the process begun at last year's Congress when the right wing headed by Chapple made their turn to 'realism'. The movement away from the Labour Party is also echoed by Roy Hattersley, who has decided 'that the trade unions are going to be a diminishing force in British political and industrial life' —

as he announced at a Fabian conference a fortnight ago.

Intimidated by the Tories and worried about their dwindling membership, TUC bureaucrats share Hattersley's pessimism about their future and have become ever more desperate about the threat to the cosy relation the trade unions have maintained with post-war governments.

At a more personal level bureaucratic jobs are threatened, expenses are less generous, union cars will have to last longer, and the 'personal' relations with local businessmen will no longer be so 'friendly'.

Faced with this threat the

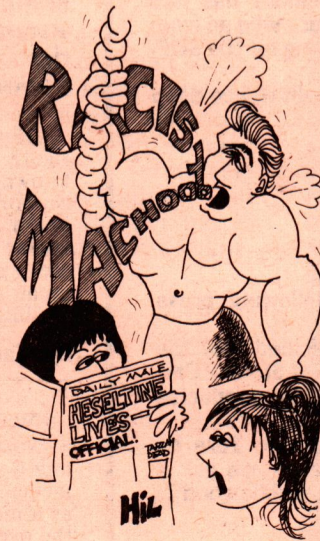
TUC is entertaining the absurd delusion that it can strike up a new partnership with the Tory government. The reality is the complete opposite. The TUC's proposed document is only going to encourage Thatcher to go further. What is worse is that working people will pay for this policy by more job losses, less welfare, less democratic rights and by the erosion of their real wages.

At the end of the process the assault on the unions will be even worse than before.

The left wing in the unions has to have a clear goal. This infamous document has to be rejected. The left wing on the central council has to go back among their membership and explain why *Strategy for the Future* has to be thrown out.

The most urgent task during the summer union conference is to throw out this TUC 'strategy'. The unions have to win the ballots on the closed shop and the Labour Party affiliation — those are the real tasks for the unions.

MODERN
TIMES



One down, one to go!

Socialist ACTION

Crisis in the Morning Star

THE CRISIS of the Communist Party took a major new lurch forward last week. First the Communist Party Executive Committee voted that *Morning Star* editor Tony Chater, and his deputy David Whitfield, 'ought not to continue to hold' their jobs. They should be replaced by supporters of the present line of the Executive.

Then on Thursday the *Morning Star* replied publically stating that, 'The shareholders at the annual general meeting held last year in seven centres across the country expressed their confidence in the editor with a massive vote for his re-election to the management committee.'

Simultaneously the *Morning Star* has taken steps to increase its financial independence from the CPGB by buying a new £650,000 press with which it can carry out commercial printing work.

Unless the CPGB Executive can outvote Chater and Whitfield in the People's Press Printing Society — the reader's co-operative which legally owns the *Morning Star* — then the Communist party is on the verge of losing control of its most important public political asset.

Given that Chater and his supporters won a similar struggle last year the chances of the Party Executive do not seem very bright. The CPGB is today closer to a split than at any time since the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956.

What makes a tremendous difference compared to that situation twenty eight years ago however is the quality of the forces left in the Communist Party. In 1956 the Communist Party had 40,000 members. It controlled two major national trade unions. When the CP splintered under the impact of the Hungarian events many of those who left went into the left wing of the Labour Party. A few joined Trotskyist organisations. Out of the splits in the Communist Party was born the whole 'new left' in Britain.

Today ninety per cent of those leaving the Communist Party are going to go over to the right — some very far to the right indeed. In fact the one thing that unites the different factions is their common view that the working class is not the force which is going to resolve the political crisis either in Britain or internationally. The divisions are over who, other than the working class, are going to strike the decisive blows and give the crucial political leadership.

For old style Stalinists of course the answer is obvious. The Soviet bureaucracy — whether crushing workers in Poland, taking a tough line against Reagan, encouraging or holding back industrial militancy — is the force to back.

For the Eurocommunists of *Marxism Today* it is the European imperialists of the EEC who have the answer. Hence the need to remain in the Common Market, back a nuclear freeze, and form an alliance with the SDP and Liberals.

Chater seems to favour a rather eclectic mixture of the Soviet bureaucracy and patriotic sections of British capitalism with a bit of trade union militancy mixed in for good measure.

One thing is certain however. The removal of the CPGB as a political force is an outcome to be wished for. The workers movement has had quite enough of Marxist professors who go from apologising for Stalin to apologising for the SDP-Liberal Alliance.

We trust the *Morning Star's* split will be deep and rapid.

Without comment

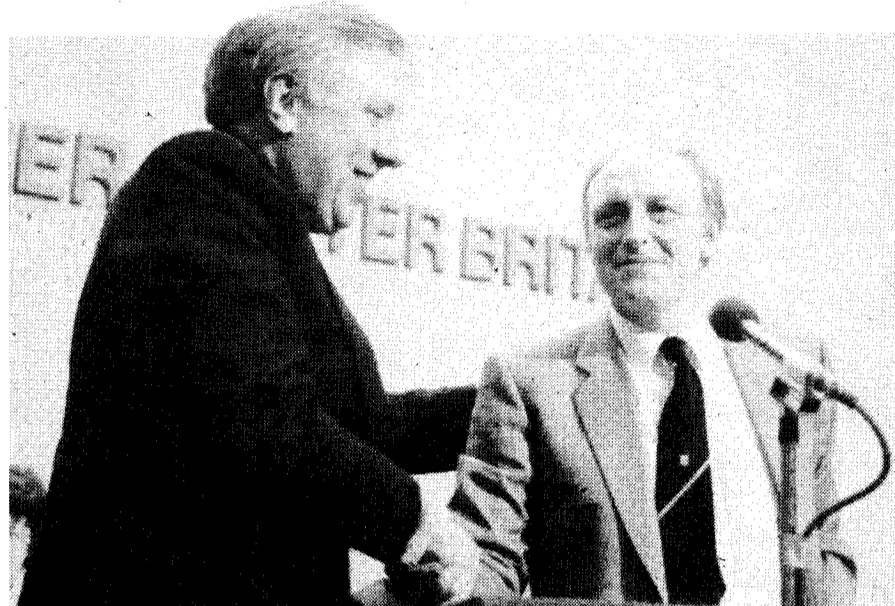
The Home Office issued the following press release on Sunday.

'The Home Secretary has decided that the presence in the United Kingdom of Stokely Carmichael (Kwame Ture) would not be conducive to the public good.'

In addition to demanding Kwame Ture be allowed in the country immediately we ask if Leon Brittan is conducive to the 'public good'?

Editor: ALAN FREEMAN
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Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent Socialist Action's views. These are expressed in editorials.

Kinnock's Euro-Socialism



Launching a dream ticket

LAST SUNDAY Neil Kinnock gave an hour interview to ITV's 'Weekend World'. He took the opportunity to spell out three key policies for Labour.

A Labour government would spend more on conventional armaments. It would scrap Polaris. It would not pledge to reduce unemployment below one million. In fact unemployment might still be above two million at the end of a five year Labour government.

JOHN ROSS assesses Neil Kinnock's interview. Neil Kinnock accurately described himself on Brian Walden's *Weekend World* as a 'big issues man (sic)'. That is to say that politics is not made up of a hundred minor questions which can be stitched together to make a coherent policy.

Politics always revolves around two or three central questions at any time. The task of a political leadership is to get a firm grip on these issues and organise the rest of the Party's work around them. Political activity must then be based on the key social forces that are driving towards these goals. All secondary questions must be strictly

organised around achieving these primary objectives.

Neil Kinnock carried out this policy very well with Walden. It is also being implemented in the Labour Party itself. In fact the Walden interview was the most coherent expression so far of where Neil Kinnock is taking the Labour Party.

No commitment to

full employment. Less emphasis on nuclear weapons. More expenditure on conventional armaments. This programme, down to the small details, is the policy of the European imperialist powers — the major West European capitalist states that make up the EEC.

It is necessary to specify that what is involved is the *European* imperialist powers. For Neil Kinnock's policy is not at all the programme of the United States. Indeed it is out of these differences of policy with the US that Neil Kinnock is hoping to generate popular support for Labour.

Directly

The US administration today is directly stepping up its military preparations for war in areas such

as Central America and the Middle East. To back up these policies a major section of the US ruling class wants to be in a position to make a credible threat of, or even win, a nuclear war with the Soviet Union.

This is why the United States is developing 'first strike' weapons such as the MX missile and the new 'Star Wars' anti-missile technology.

But West German, French or Italian capitalism want no such nonsense. They are prepared to give open support — or if that fails a 'nod and a wink' — to United States involvement in the Middle East, Central America, and Grenada.

But the West European powers today do not want a risk of war with the USSR. The 'first strike' weapons which the United States is developing are not considered necessary. Ideas of a nuclear 'freeze' enjoy wide popularity even among European capitalists.

Obvious

The reasons for that are obvious. Reagan may talk of a 'limited nuclear war' in Europe. That is fine for United States capitalism. But it is hopeless for West Germany or France.

The West European powers are therefore moving to a military strategy which relies much more heavily on conventional armaments and less on nuclear weapons. Hence Neil Kinnock's 'non-nuclear defence policy'.

On the field of economic competition, however, the West European capitalist countries are engaged in a ruthless struggle with the United States. High US interest rates, the colossal US Federal Budget deficit, United States tariffs on special steels, a bitter farm war. All these US moves have hit the West European states tremendous blows. The rate of growth of the United States economy is now far above that of the EEC countries.

Conflict

In these circumstances Western Europe has no time for talk of 'full employment'. It is austerity policies, wage cuts, and attacks on the welfare state which are on the order of the day. A Labour government pledged to full employment has no chance whatever of making alliances with 'progressive' West European capitalists.

Follow Neil Kinnock's speeches carefully in the weeks to come. He will attack violently the United States. There will be no such attacks on Western Europe or demands to withdraw from the EEC. Not only the campaigning style but also the content of Labour's policies are being moved towards the 'Eurosocijalist' parties of France, Spain, Portugal, and Italy.

The two million who Neil Kinnock now announces will be left without jobs under a Labour government will just be the first victims of that policy.

NUM Setback

LAST FRIDAY'S miners ballot to replace general secretary Lawrence Daly, retiring early through ill-health, was a close-run result. Peter Heathfield, secretary of the Derbyshire miners, was ahead of the right's strongest candidate, John Walsh from North Yorkshire, by only a few thousand votes.

Heathfield, a national figure in the NUM, is a known left winger and supporter of the current overtime ban. Walsh, little known outside his own area, openly campaigned on an anti-Scargill ticket.

By Carol Turner

Walsh's vote is seen as a vote against present union policies. The Tory media heralded the result as a moral victory against the overtime ban.

The ballot will give heart to employment minister Tom King. But a breakdown of the result by areas leaves room to doubt King's joy.

Heathfield polled well in the traditionally militant coalfields — Scotland, South Wales and Kent — but also had unexpectedly strong support from the 'moderate' areas, in the Midlands, Durham and Leicestershire. He did badly in his own area, and in Yorkshire.

Far from reflecting any widespread antagonism to the overtime ban, the results are more an indication of miners' concern over the future of their industry and their jobs. In areas most affected by pits closures, Heathfield's result was good; it was poor in areas relatively untouched at present.



Peter Heathfield supporting health service workers

The ballot shows a union divided on how to fight for its future. The question now fac-

ing Arthur Scargill and the union's militants is how to regain the initiative after the so-called moderates'

fillip? The ballot result shows the fight for unity against pit closures has yet to be won.

Photo: VOICE OF THE UNIONS

Labour and Eric Hobsbawm

LAST WEEK TONY BENN gave an interview to BEATRIX CAMPBELL — author of *Sweet Freedom* and a journalist on the London weekly *City Limits*. It dealt with major questions of strategy for the Labour Party, the women's movement, and the unions.

Socialist Action is reprinting the first part of the interview as we think it deserves a circulation well outside London.

Beatrix Campbell: You've said on several occasions that you're aware of why movements emerged outside Labourism like disarmament and feminism. You've argued that now is the time for them to return to their natural home, Labour.

Tony Benn: No, I've never said that. Absolutely never said that. What I said was these movements ought to be able to affiliate to us, like the miners or transport workers. The idea of an alliance of the labour movement is a theme I've been on for 15 years. I've never said anybody should close down an organisation and join the Labour Party.

BC: I didn't suggest that — the reason I ask is because people in the Labour Party see it as the centre of alliances.

TB: The labour movement is.

BC: But the labour movement and the Labour Party represent corporate interests...

TB: What do you mean?

BC: The Labour Party is the creation of organised workers.

TB: Yes.

BC: Its function was to represent them at the political level. But who was in those organisations? — It's only a particular stratum of the working class. That's changed radically not least...

TB: This is the Eric Hobsbawm argument. I personally think all this analysis of a fundamental change which means that everything is different, is designed to demoralise and defeat. This idea that a statistical examination of the change in the makeup of the working class, including the entry of women into working class organisations, has somehow changed the ball game, is wrong.

BC: It's interesting you put it down to Hobsbawm. Feminism is a force on the left, it's formidable but it's had to fight for its life in the labour movement. Hobsbawm may clock what it's on about, as it happens he's not a notorious supporter...

TB: He's a bitter critic of the Labour left...

BC: Hang on a sec...

TB: The truth is he's a member of a party (the Communist Party) that puts up candidates against the Labour Party. He's covering a shift from the left to the right.

Then he says maybe what we've got to do is join with bitterly anti-socialist people, the SDP, in the guise of an anti-Thatcher alliance. And then this whole idea of Thatcherism in *Marxism To-*



Labour women campaign for democracy

day is a complete mistake. What's wrong with Britain is *capitalism* and oppression.

BC: But isn't Thatcherism a particular ideological form?

TB: No, of course it isn't.

BC: But she's different from Heath.

TB: Well of course she is, but Heath was a member of the SDP — they've governed Britain since 1940.

BC: But it's a different kind of Toryism.

TB: It's capitalism.

BC: But what does that tell you?

TB: That for the first time in many years we now have a party in power that's bitterly anti-working class, that's discovered how to use the media to beat them. Instead of sending the Army all over the place, send the *Sun* all over the place...

BC: But the workers buy the *Sun*. People may do the wrong things but they do them voluntarily.

TB: Actually, the entire British press is financed by the Treasury...

BC: Does that explain why Joe Bloggs buys it?

TB: But take the *Daily Herald*, it had a circulation as big as the *Guardian* and the *Telegraph*, *Times* rolled into one and the advertisers wouldn't advertise so they killed it...

BC: But why do people buy the *Sun*?

TB: They can buy what they like, but the fact is the *Sun* is financed by the Treasury.

BC: I don't know how many times I've asked you now why workers buy it — if we don't know why then there's a terrifying distance between us and them.

TB: But what you haven't turned your mind to is that the *Sun* is a subsidised newspaper, and if it had its proper cover price they wouldn't.

BC: A generation of women, born after the 1944 Education Act, have experiences qualitatively different from that of any generation of women who've been alive.

All that does violence to a long tradition fought for by our own working class movement for men's rights...

TB: It didn't fight for it, that was the inherited tradition...

BC: That assumes they were only victims of their own past. Can I finish my point?

TB: Do.

BC: That being the case, we have a problem. That affects the policies it produces. If you believe a women's place is to bring up babies, then you don't believe in providing nurseries.

TB: But who believes that in the labour movement?

BC: I don't know why you haven't met them, maybe because you never talk to them about those issues.

TB: Of course I've met them. But if you accept that the conflict between women's interests and interests of the old male trade union movement is so fundamental you are splitting the only force that could beat the major system and simultaneously take on these other questions.

BC: We're already split.

TB: Then we're finished.

BC: So how do we change it?

TB: By supporting the women's movement in and outside the party. That's what we've done.

BC: We have no party which has policies that, in terms of social policy, our social security system and our wage system, adequately reflects changes in the working class. There are formidable power-holding institutions, but another problem the left has is that the working class is a subordinate class...

TB: But that very question motivated the Labour Party in the four years '79 to '83. We decided we were not prepared to have leaders of the Labour Party elected by a secret ballot of the male-dominated Parliamentary Labour Party. We were going to let everybody — the unions and the constituencies — vote. These very things which go to the heart of the matter — these were the things Hobsbawm says lost us support.

BC: And how does this bear on the problem of how we create politics within the working class

that transforms it from a subordinate class to a ruling class.

TB: Of course it does. Women had no control over who their leader was.

BC: They still don't.

TB: Oh they have far more.

BC: The trade union block vote was still rolled out like a B-52 to smash the women's demands.

TB: You've got to ask yourself the question: is the problem with the block vote that the trade unions shouldn't have such influence, or that the balance with the constituencies is wrong, or that the trade unions have a less sensitive democratic mechanism?

BC: What do you think?

TB: Isn't the process that went on in the Labour Party something we now need to encourage in the trade unions? That's beginning to happen.

We're in the blackest period in my lifetime. But you have to keep your spirits up, if you don't have hope they won't try and if they don't try we're finished and the ultimate victory of the right would be if they could persuade people that the labour movement was so racist and sexist that it wasn't worth bothering.

BC: I find that view, coming from you, very sad.

TB: Well you have to keep hope alive.

BC: We're having a sort-out in the movement and it's a sort-out we have to have, we've got to clean up the movement. Democratization of the Labour Party was part of that.

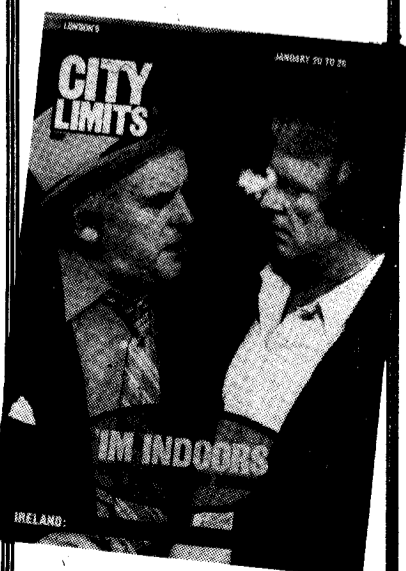
TB: If you're saying there's an inescapable gulf that can't be bridged...

BC: Why use the word inescapable? People might be saying there is a gulf and it can be breached.

TB: Well I never said there isn't a gulf.

BC: Let's change tack.

**City Limits —
The Art and
Soul of London**



Every Thursday 60p

IRELAND UNFREE

Irish Militant witch hunted

I HAVE heard it said that if somebody farts in a Belfast pub some joker will try to pin the blame on Dominic McGlinchey — military maverick and 'Irelands' most wanted man'. However the most unlikely place for McGlinchey to hide is in the Dublin headquarters of the Irish Militant — a vehemently anti-republican outfit if ever there was one.

Yet it was in search of McGlinchey that the Southern Police justified the raid on the Militant's offices last week. Stranger still they restricted their search to rifling through documents and filing cabinets. Cynics have suggested that a more likely explanation lies in the political Special Branch trying to help find documentary evidence useful for the Labour leaderships' attempt to purge Militant from its ranks.

The attempted purge comes just one week before Labour leaders line up in the *Dail* to give full support to another anti-working class budget proposed by their coalition partners — Fine Gael. As a Militant spokesperson pointed out — 'the task that faces the Labour movement in Ireland is not how to expel socialists from its own ranks; but how to break from the monetarist-Thatcherite policies of Dr Garret Fitzgerald.'

Motions

Motions currently before the Administrative Council of the Labour Party are staggering for their directness. 'Membership of the organisation known as the 'Militant', otherwise the 'Militant tendency', otherwise the 'Militant Reader Group', or association with such group, or support of, or propagation of, or assistance in the publication of, 'Irish Militant Monthly', 'Militant Monthly', or any related publication is inconsistent with the principles or objects of the Labour Party and for the purpose of this article, such membership, association, support or propagation shall be deemed as injurious to the Labour Party.'

Council

This proposal is linked with the existing powers of the Administrative Council which can 'refuse to admit or at any time cancel the membership of any existing member if they consider his or her activities are injurious to the party or inconsistent with its principles or objects.'

Labour leaders are particularly tetchy about Militant's activities right at present as discontent with Labour's policies grows. Major union conferences this season are discussing whether to withdraw their affiliation fees from the Labour Party and invest them in a more productive enterprise.

Expel

With the so-called Workers' Party hankering after the anti-republican working class ticket, a decision to expel Militant might well prove damaging to the cause of the Labour Party bureaucrats, after all, the Militant is one of few remaining sources of faith for the theory that the 26 county Labour Party can be transformed into anything useful.

Militant at present is the leading current in Labour's Youth organisation and is strong in the Dublin area. Members are scattered around Ireland, and have some support in Loyalist areas in the North where they want to join the British Labour Party.

Whatever the policies of the Irish Militant with their frenzied hatred of the anti-imperialist movement, the witch hunt, if successful, would be a backward step for the workers' movement of Ireland, it is a direct attack on democracy in the workers' movement. The obvious collaboration between the repressive forces of the state and the Labour Bureaucracy in this case, must be exposed and resisted.

• Latest: In embarrassment over the Gardai raid, Labour leader Dick Spring has temporarily withdrawn the action against Militant saying it will be represented before conference.

'Silicon Glen'?

THE THREATENED CLOSURE of Scott Lithgow has again focused attention on the industrial devastation of Scotland. Yet as recently as the general election Thatcher was claiming a Scottish 'economic miracle'.

The Scottish economy was supposed to be rebuilt out of the new 'sunrise' industries of electronics and computing. BRIAN HERON looks at the reality behind the Tory rhetoric.

'At long last Scotland is a recovering part of the economy and is about to lead this country out of the recession', said Scottish Secretary George Younger in last autumn's House of Commons debate on Scotland economy.

Thatcher boasted during last year's general election campaign that Scotland 'has turned its back on the past' and that with its new industries it is 'showing the country as a whole the image of its future'. She made news with the claim that the 'sunrise' industries in Scotland 'are now employing more than shipbuilding, coal mining and

steel put together.'

The same claim is being put forward by business leaders and in the press. CBI President Sir Cambell Frazer closed the CBI annual conference held in Glasgow last November by holding Scotland and Glasgow as 'glowing examples of the way forward for Britain.' He urged his fellow directors, 'Remember, as you return to your companies, the sparking example that the people of the city have set you.'

The *Glasgow Herald*, a paper in which it is often difficult to work out which are articles and which are advertisements, positively

glows nowadays about 'silicon glen'. Maurice Baggot on its business page said Scotland is 'one of the leading computer manufacturing centres of the world'.

Has Scotland, the area of the Tories greatest unpopularity at the last election, paradoxically become Thatcher's economic success story?

The reality tells a very different story to the myths of Thatcher and Younger. At the end of November Labour MP George Foulkes asked the Tory Secretary of State about charges in the electronics industry in Scotland. The answer revealed a 22 per cent drop in jobs in this 'sunrise' industry between 1970 and 1981.

The 1981 census statistics revealed a total of 74,000 workers employed in Scotland in all aspects of mining, shipbuilding and steel. Some 37,000 are employed in electronics.

During the last ten years the traditional industries shed 9,000 workers. Electronics lost nearly 11,000 from a considerably smaller total.

The unambiguous reality of these figures indicates that all Scottish industry is in decline. And the rate of decline of jobs in electronics — averaged out over ten years — is considerably faster than for traditional industries.

The only area of serious expansion of employment in Scotland over the last ten years is the relatively small production force employed on North Sea Oil — and the far larger service and commercial sector required to prime the oil industry.

Four fifths of all Scottish 'exports' are now accounted for by North Sea oil. There has been a 40 per cent absolute decline in manufacturing in Scotland over the last twenty years. The latest recession simply accelerated the trend.

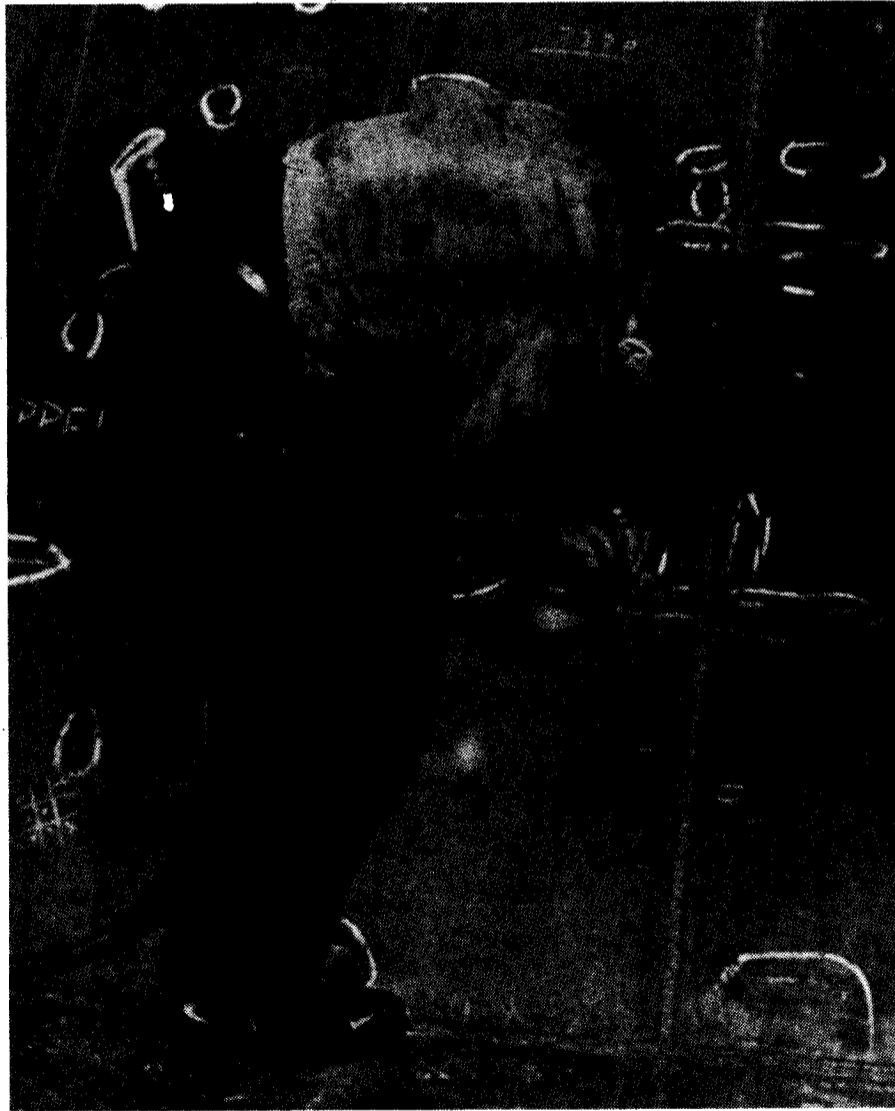
The Scottish economy

is now completely lopsided in its development and virtually totally dependent on the single commodity of North Sea oil. This is the only major industrial sector which today has an organic natural base in the Scottish economy.

The sole reason for minimal investment in new industries outside North Sea Oil in Scotland is massive state funded regional grants. These pay up to 40 per cent of start up costs for new industries. On average the government pays international companies roughly £11,000 per job created in Scotland.

The figures on job losses show that many companies have taken the money and passed on. Current Tory thinking on massive cuts in regional aid will make Scotland a wasteland.

Scott Lithgow is another turn in the vicious spiral of industrial decline in Scotland.



Wythenshawe suspension ends

THE SUSPENSION of Wythenshawe constituency Labour Party ended on 15 January 1984. National Agent David Hughes and local right wingers finally held a meeting they could win.

By Chris Jones

By 60 votes to 40, a clear right majority was elected to the Executive Committee and officer posts.

November's attempt to reconvene the local party failed when the right's manoeuvring was exposed, and delegations proved

irregular. One delegate to that meeting admitted he wasn't even a party member.

This time Hughes had done his homework. But February will be the 1984 annual general meeting.

Former chairperson, Alf Home, is optimistic the situation can be reversed. Already, several union delegations have moved left.

Despite the right majority the Euro-constituency delegation remained left, due to the 12 month eligibility rule. With Wythenshawe likely to hold the balance, left winger Eddie Newman could well be selected.

Labour Against the Witchhunt

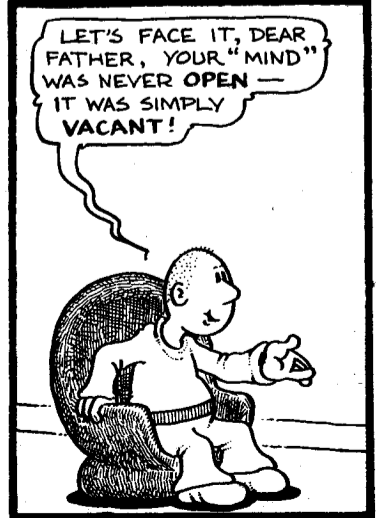
National Council Meeting
Saturday 11 February
registration: 11.30am business starts: 12

creche available

Further details Keith Lichman (Sec)
11 Wilderton Road, London N16
(01-802 1709)

A PIECE OF THE ACTION

BY GORMAG



Defend the cities!



THE WHOLE labour movement must fight the Tories' plans to destroy local government. Under the guise of defending the rate-payer and streamlining local administration, the government is planning a huge attack on jobs and services, and a crippling blow to the Labour Party.

First they must attack local democracy. Not, of course, all local democracy. But certainly where it leads to the return of Labour administrations.

The Greater London Council and the six metropolitan counties are a major stronghold for Labour. And they have been consistent opponents of the government's policies.

By Patrick Hickey

The Tories have little prospect of winning these councils. This is why they are to be abolished.

Removing them will weaken Labour nationally. It will open the door to the Alliance, and so help replace Labour as the 'natural' alternative to the Tories.

The so-called streamlining of the GLC and metropolitan counties will lead to the creation of over 120 new, non-elected bodies — a rag-bag of quangos which will certainly increase costs. Savings can be made only by cutting services, by privatisation and by increasing user costs.

real fight against Tory cuts.

Raising rates to defend jobs and services amounts to a tax on working people. It means Labour authorities taking the blame for Tory policies. If the new attacks are to be defeated, Labour must fight.

Unfortunately, many labour leaders have failed to grasp this point. *Labour Weekly's* line is hopeless: the Tory revolt on the Rate Capping Bill 'is much more significant than the 100 vote majority he (Patrick Jenkin) gained for his rate-capping bill'.

It's even more off-beam when it says that 'Labour must hope that as these cuts begin to bite, the blame for them is placed firmly where it belongs — on the Tory Government and not on Labour councillors...' We need more than hope!

We need action. The January 24 day of action was a big step in the right direction.

Much more needs to be done. The party leadership, local authorities, and local Labour parties must join with local government unions to build a campaign of industrial and political action to defeat this attack.

The tables given in this article are taken from NALGO's Local Government Briefing pack.

OPERATIONAL STAFF

Most staff employed by the metropolitan counties and the GLC are operational.

- Administrative and managerial staff amount to only 7½% of total GLC staff and account for only 2% of the total GLC wage bill.
- Over half of the GLC's staff are firefighters or public health and safety workers.
- Full-time staffing in the GLC (excluding the transfer of housing staff to the boroughs) fell by 14% between 1978 and March 1983.

COUNCILS UNDER THREAT

	Population	Rateable Value	Debt
Greater London	6,608,600	1,921m	2,095m
Greater Manchester	2,575,400	331m	139m
Merseyside	1,503,000	195m	144m
South Yorkshire	1,292,000	138m	59m
Tyne and Wear	1,135,500	128m	184m
West Midlands	2,575,400	411m	126m
West Yorkshire	2,021,700	216m	100m
		3,340m	2,847m

Claim

The Tories claim local authority spending is 'out of control'. Soaring rents and rates have lent credibility to this.

Between April 1978 and April 1983, rates rose by 128%; the Retail Price Index by only 71%. At the same time there was a cut in the government's Rate Support Grant of almost 60%. In other words, soaring rates are due to the Tory cuts in central government aid to local authorities.

Far from being out of control, local government spending has declined from 15.8% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 1975, to 12% in 1982. This reality has been masked by the failure of most Labour councils to wage a

WHERE THE MONEY GOES

Spending per head of population by the metropolitan counties:

	£
police	44
roads	27
buses & trains	24
fire brigade	10
waste disposal	5
planning	2
other services & admin (& airports)	24
	£136

During the parliamentary recess, an incident happened at Leith which exposes the nature of the Thatcher government. A number of police files were found on a local rubbish dump.

They contained the names of individuals who frequented a particular centre in Edinburgh. Not criminals — ordinary citizens, some of whom were political activists. It appears the information was collected for Special Branch.

This incident should not surprise anyone. The law-and-order brigade in the Tory Party, particularly Margaret Thatcher, have emphasised that more money is being spent on the police force.

There is increasing surveillance of political activists, who are thought to be potentially 'dangerous'. The police are active trying to keep the lid on the capitalist system.

Gavin Strang (a fellow MP) and I have asked for a meeting with the Lothian and Borders police, to find out what's been going on. Whether we'll get it is another matter. We're witnessing a build-up of the police state, and this incident highlights what's going on.

In fact, it's only the tip of the iceberg. The party has to take this up, among the many things for Labour to do this year.

The Tories are becoming more arrogant and more vindictive. We saw it with the NGA



Labour's challenge in 1984

By Ron Brown, MP for Leith, Scotland

dispute, and we see it again with the Rates Bill now going through parliament.

This is a very important issue. It's the death knell of local democracy. People's basic rights are under attack from the Bill.

It's all very well that Ted Heath and others are

protesting from the Tory benches, but it's really a question of Labour being involved *outside* parliament. What's lacking is a positive lead on the issue.

This is a real challenge for Labour. And that brings me to Tony Benn's selection for Chesterfield —

another challenge for Labour.

For the media, Benn personifies the socialist element in the party. They'll go for the jugular. They'll use all sorts of dirty tricks, as they did with Peter Tatchell in Bermondsey.

The capitalist class and their newspapers are concerned that Benn's campaign will rally the working class. But we shouldn't see Tony Benn as some sort of superstar — he wouldn't want that, anyway.

It's a question of taking our policies and principles into the working class. It's in the interest of the *whole* of the Labour Party to support Benn. He will get a tremendous response from the rank and file.

Everyone must go to Chesterfield, go out on the doorsteps. It's not a Tony Benn campaign, it's a Labour Party campaign. It's a campaign about the working class: their future, their jobs, their living standards — it's about all the basic issues.

There are no guarantees, but we can win — and win handsomely despite the media. We shouldn't apologise for explaining what the Labour Party is really about. Labour is not a consensus party, it's a socialist party — and if it's not, it isn't a party in the interest of the working class.

From this week, Socialist Action will be carrying a regular parliamentary column.



Photo: GM COOKSON

REA STA

THE STOCKHOLM conference last week US Secretary of State George Shultz announced that the United States was working for world peace. Ronald Reagan has toned down his 'Empire of Evil' attacks on the USSR for Presidential election year.

But, as usual, actions speak louder than words. Behind the

new militaristic rhetoric the United States is reorganising its military forces and actively planning how to fight and win a nuclear war. **BOB PENNINGTON** looks at the background to Reagan's 'Star Wars' nuclear strategy and at US intervention in El Salvador. **JOHN ROSS** outlines the strengthening of the US military bases in the 'third world'.

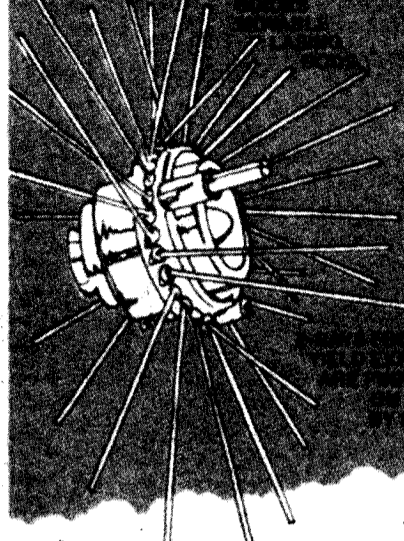
THE X-RAY BATTLE STATION

A SMALL NUCLEAR-POWERED LASER DEVICE

ULTRAVIOLET INFRARED TELESCOPE LOCATOR AND TRACKER

1 Battle station tracks multiple individual targets and identifies them as they approach.

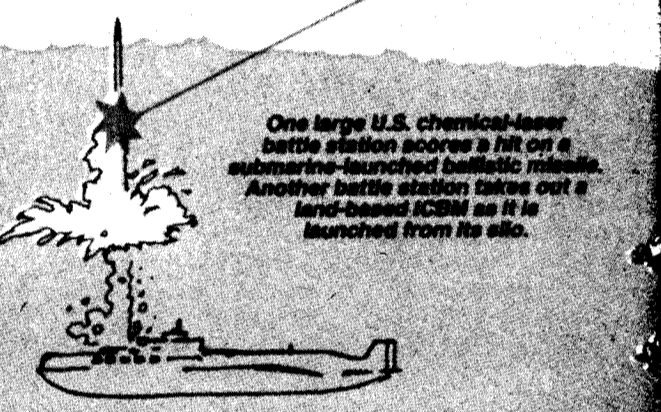
2 X-rays from nuclear power plant are used to power the station.



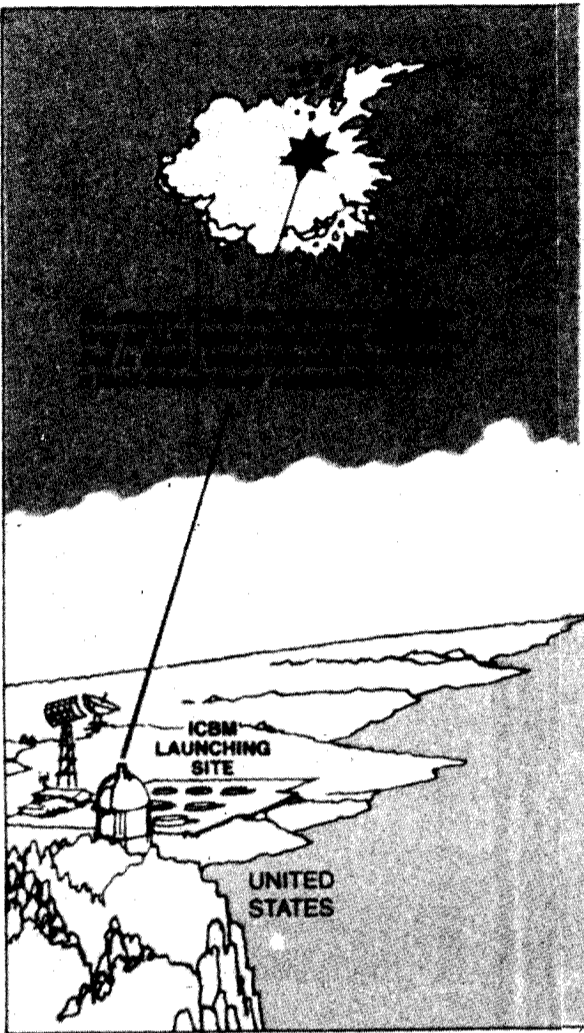
A massive attack of enemy ICBM's is intercepted and destroyed by U.S. X-ray-laser battle stations.

A 21ST-CENTURY SPACE ARSENAL

Futuristic laser-beam weapons offer the possibility of making ballistic warfare obsolete, but the technology is costly and complex—and it does not yet exist.



One large U.S. chemical-laser battle station scores a hit on a submarine-launched ballistic missile. Another battle station takes out a land-based ICBM as it is launched from its silo.



BACK IN 1977 Maxwell W Hunter an aviation engineer then on the pay roll of the Douglas Aircraft Corporation wrote a paper called *Strategic Dynamics and Space Laser Weaponry*. No longer were space wars to be restricted to sci-fi, Mr Hunter proved the game could be played for real.

Hunter's paper recommended that the US government should equip earth-orbit satellites with laser weapons which he reckoned would wipe out Soviet spacecraft, created a minor sensation and got an immediate enthusiastic reception from a number of American politicians.

The Republican senator Malcom Wallop pointed out that combat laser stations were not some fantasy. Wallop insisted the elements of the system already existed and all that was needed to put it together was money and will. Well there was some will around and the capitalists always have money for war. So a number of experts — all employed by big aerospace corporations — volunteered to help out.

Despite the initial support however, prophets don't always get heeded in their own land. The Pentagon snubbed Wallop — saying that the Department of Defence was quite capable of deciding what was best for the future of the US armed forces.

Then in 1981 the Department of Defence published its own study which was more or less the same as Hunter's paper proposed. The Pentagon claimed that the balance of forces could be completely transformed if the US won the space laser arms race. To do this, according to the Pentagon, 100 combat laser stations must be put into space and then not only would America's defences be secure but it would take a decisive lead over the USSR in offensive warfare.

Following the Pentagon report the Heritage Foundation — a right-wing backed research organisation — published *High Frontier — A New National Strategy*. This document made even the Pentagon's proposals look rather pacifist. The Heritage Foundation proposed making outer space into a US fortress. Not only did they want laser combat stations in orbit but they were enthusiastic supporters of launching devices which would generate microwave electromagnetic pulses, for attacking ballistic missiles. Heritage proposed to send up 432 satellites which could carry microwave, laser and other defensive weapons. To top up this armada they proposed the extensive use of manned spaceships and orbiting stations.

This escalation of military terror proposed initially by Hunter and then supported by the Pentagon and the Heritage Foundation found an enthusiastic fan in Ronald Reagan who in March and July 1983 rhapsodised in famous speeches about America's 'presence in space' saying the US should '... capitalise on the tremendous potential offered by the ultimate frontier of space.' As Reagan's former advisor William Clarke pointed out Reagan has been keen on laser weapons for a

long time. Mind you that is understandable for a one-time Governor of California. That state is the centre of the US military-industrial complex and those giant firms hadn't put their money into Reagan's election campaign chest because they liked his old movies.

The top military brass were also delighted with their new 'toys'. As Colonel G Rye from the National Security Council said: 'The President has recognised that we are entering a new era in space.' Kahn one of the USA's leading strategists talked about Reagan making a 'revolution' in strategic thinking. Anxious not to waste any time Secretary of Defence Caspar Weinburg immediately set up an ad hoc committee for elaborating Reagan's ideas on space wars.

As of the beginning of 1984 the laser guns aren't quite ready technologically. But the anti-missiles and anti-satellite systems are being built and will soon be ready for action.

One such system is nearly finished. This combines the Sram-Altair two-stage rocket and the F-15 fighter which it will launch to hit space targets. Squadrons of these planes will be stationed in Virginia and Washington.

Just to make sure that civilians don't start meddling in things they shouldn't, these planes will be controlled by the Space Defence Operations and this body will take the space shuttle out of the control of NASA the civil air space administration.

Given the opportunities which these weapons open up the aerospace corporations have inundated the Pentagon with a diversity of air borne destructive systems. The idea behind all this is for the setting up of a new military wing of

the US services — a US space force — and to help this patriotic cause, the big corporations are only too willing to sell the US government the necessary hardware.

Needless to say some people, even in the US are a bit dubious about the so-called defensive intentions of these weapons. Harold Brown, a former US Secretary of Defence thinks the space programme might turn out to be 'a nightmare'. Simon Ramo an American physicist asks will 'this technique be used only to knock out missiles in the sky? If its such a good technique, why not use it to knock out things on the ground?' Ramo is right. The real function of these weapons is offensive.

Washington's claim that they are meant to repulse a nuclear 'first strike' by the USSR is nonsense. Most US experts reckon that the present level of technology does not allow for the building of any anti-Ballistic Missile defence system that can guarantee absolute protection of a country against a first nuclear strike.

The orbiting laser guns however may not be able to stop the first strike but they are not being built at

colossal expense for nothing. If they have their deficiencies as defensive weapons they have their enormous advantages as offensive weapons.

The US military wants these star war weapons for the purpose of the so called pre-emptive strike. While the laser and space systems could not knock out a Soviet attack they could deal with the much weaker response after an American first strike. Orbiting laser guns are another dreadful step by American imperialism along the path towards a third world war.

But they should also remind us of one thing. The United States is the greatest economic and technological power in the world. It is also the only country in the world ever to have used atomic weapons in war. If the United States ever obtained the technological and military superiority over the Soviet Union to unleash a nuclear war without itself suffering retribution then the US ruling class would launch that war without hesitation.

If anyone doubts that, they should just study present US military thinking.

US- World

Parallel with its nuclear arms build up the United States has been rapidly expanding its conventional armed forces. In particular the US has been expanding the number and quality forces ready for fighting foreign wars.

By 1982 the US had 543,400 troops stationed abroad. A further 440,000 are stationed in the United States but attached to the Rapid Deployment Force — a highly mobile armed force for 'international emergencies'.

By the beginning of 1983 the United States had 1500 foreign military bases in 32 foreign countries.

Since the late 1970s however United States forces have been undergoing a systematic reorganisation. This was originally based on Carter's creation of a Rapid Deployment Force for immediate intervention overseas. Under Reagan US military strategy has become based on Secretary of Defence Caspar Weinberger's doctrine of 'geographical or horizontal escalation'.

Under this policy the United States must prepare to rapidly expand any military confrontation with the Soviet Union into any area where it may be able to gain advantage. Simultaneously US forces must be made more mobile for

REAGAN'S FORWARD WARS



Key United States bases abroad



US 'peace' plans in El Salvador

IN 1981 the United States carried through a major reorganisation of its forces in Central America and the Caribbean. It established a new regional command to establish new bases in the area and coordinate existing United States forces in Panama, Puerto Rico, Bermuda and the Guantanamo base in Cuba.

The background to this was not simply the revolutions in Nicaragua and Grenada but also the rising civil war in El Salvador.

In El Salvador itself 35,000 people have been slaughtered in the last five years. The US has been supplying continuously the regime of gangsters and murderers such as Major Roberto d'Aubuisson.

Now the United States has announced a major stepping up of the right wing dictatorship's war against the Salvadorean guerillas of the FMLN. The stated aim of the United States is now to establish 10 to one superiority of government forces in the field against the FMLN. This will use up nearly all the £400 million of additional aid which the Reagan administration is proposing to send to El Salvador in 1984/85.

The Reagan administration now relatively openly acknowledges that the Salvadorean regime can hold on only by military means. As one Reagan source put it, 'The Salvadoreans still have enough troops and still have enough guns to prevent a collapse and maintain the stalemate'. This 'stalemate' at present requires 37,000 troops. 'Victory' — that's that elusive thing the Americans us-

ed to keep promising in Vietnam — needs an army in El Salvador of at least 80,000 according to US sources. There is no way that the Salvadorean military could train and adequately staff such a large army.

So as the Salvadorean army increases so will the number of US 'advisors', once again evoking shades of Vietnam. Kissinger in his recent report, thinks the Salvadoreans will need more advisors than foreseen at present but, just as he lied for Nixon over Vietnam and Cambodia, so Kissinger cheerfully lies for Reagan over El Salvador. Kissinger declared victory would 'only entail a slight increase in the number of advisors.' In reality the Americans intend to ship even more sophisticated weapons into El Salvador so also will the need for direct US intervention grow.

Then comes the real crunch. US planners are scared that their proposed expansion of the Salvadorean army might not materialise and even worse some are dubious that it will not turn the tide in any case. So what happens then? Does the US get out of the country or do they increase their own involvement? It does not take much imagination to decide which road a Reagan or Kissinger will take.

The road the US military trod in Vietnam is also beginning to open up in the same ominous way in El Salvador.

the approximately 7000 US nuclear weapons in Western Europe.

US Military Command Europe is in turn backed up by the United States Second Fleet in the Atlantic and the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean.

In order to extend its forces southwards and eastwards from Europe the United States, since the late 1970s, has begun to drastically expand its permanent deployment of forces and bases in the Middle East and East Africa.

The memorandum *On Strategic Cooperation* signed by the United States and Israel in November 1981 gives US armed forces unlimited rights to the use of Israeli military bases. Under the Camp David Accords the United States has at its disposal the Etzion and Eitam air bases in the Sinai Peninsula and the Sharm-El-Sheikh naval base to its south. The United States also has bases in Egypt at Cairo, Ras Benas and other areas. There are in addition 800 US troops in Sinai and 1200 in Lebanon.

Facilities

In Africa and the Middle East the United States in 1980 signed military agreements with Bahrain, Oman, Somalia, and Kenya. These will all provide facilities for the Rapid Deployment Force.

To the south of the USSR the United States has put particular resources into propping up the dictatorship of Zia in Pakistan. US aid of \$3.2 billion has been designated to Pakistan of which four fifths is allocated for armaments and military expenditure.

Finally, completing the US 'forward' base system, are the United States military forces in the Pacific. There are 42,000 US troops in South Korea including

major land naval and air bases at Osan, Kounsang, Koo, Seoul and Pusan. Approximately 700 US nuclear weapons are also stationed in South Korea.

There are a further 50,000 US troops in Japan. Recently both the Japanese and South Korean US forces have been reinforced with advanced F-16 fighter-bombers. These can be used both for conventional weapons delivery and for nuclear attacks. The F16s are among the most advanced war planes in the world and are the same type of aircraft as used by Israel for its precision attack on the nuclear reactor in Iraq.

Deployment

Supporting the forward US forces in South Korea and Japan are the B-52 strategic bomber base in Guam and the American Seventh Fleet — whose areas of deployment is the entire Pacific Ocean.

The American military system forms a perfect arc around the Soviet Union. It is also suitably poised to intervene in the Middle East, Asia and Africa. The US base system is the most powerful advanced military structure in the world.

If it is remembered that in 1962 the United States threatened world war because of the presence of Soviet missiles in just one country — Cuba, then the real role of these US forces is obvious.

The United States today maintains a strategic military presence throughout the entire world. It declares any other country that seeks to get the same capacity is engaged in 'aggression'. No other purpose than preparation for wars can be served by this system of bases. The greatest single threat to peace in the world today is simply the United States.

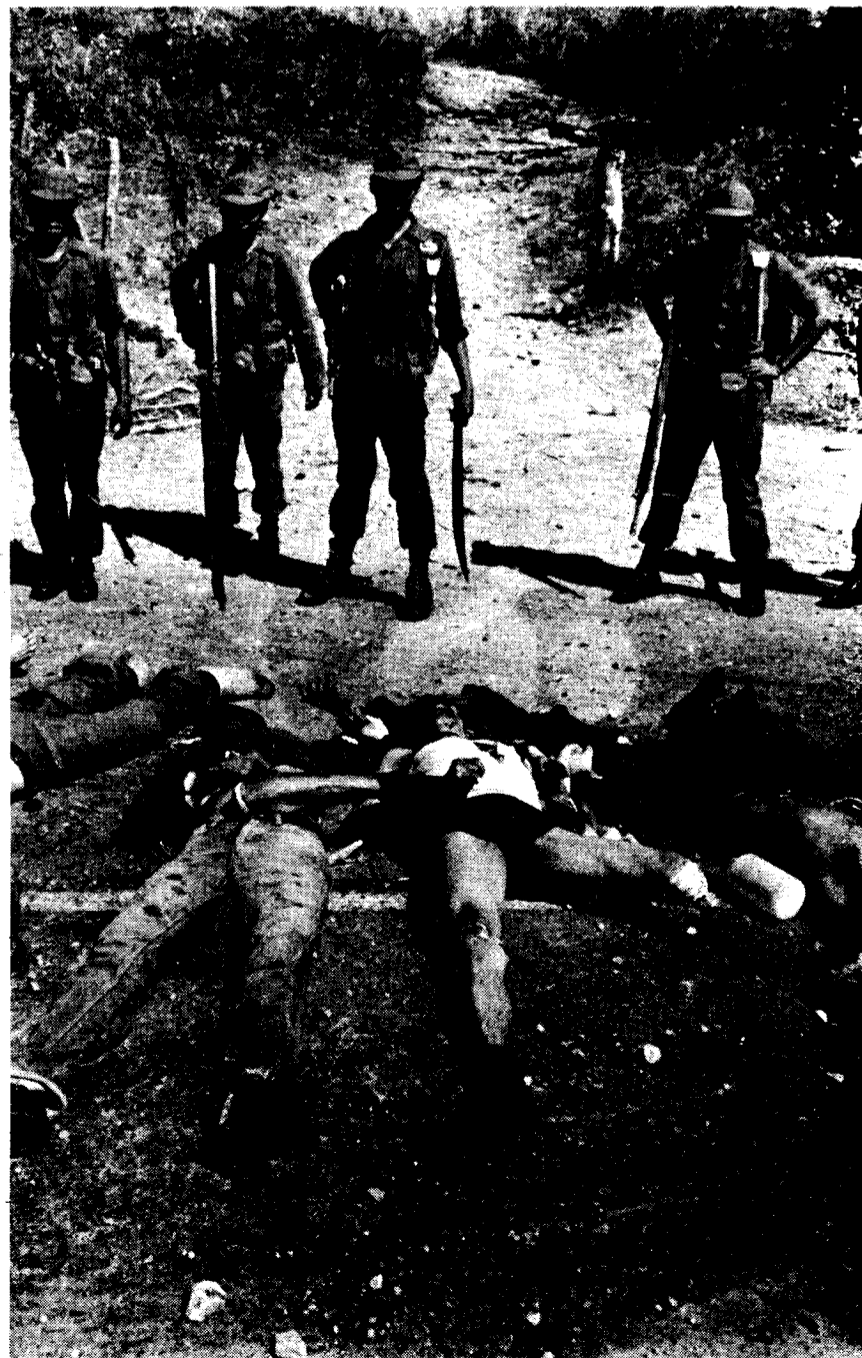
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rapid intervention into 'flashpoint' developments such as Central America or the Lebanon.

In order to carry through this policy it is not simply US forces in the United States itself that are being made more flexible. In particular United States forces in Western Europe have been made more mobile and available for use in other areas.

Under a US-West German agreement of March 1982 90,000 members of the West German armed forces are to be permanently employed on duties permitting quick deployment of US military forces. As of 1 January 1983 Israel, Lebanon, and Syria were officially placed within the area of operations of US Military Command Europe. Among its other resources this Command has at its disposal



New goals for Socialist Action fund drive

IN DECEMBER we set some pretty ambitious targets for Socialist Action. The idea was to put an end to our accumulating debts in the New Year and start to get the paper on a sound financial footing.

We campaigned among supporters up and down the country to raise their commitment to the fund drive and at the same time started drastically slashing our weekly expenditure.

So far we have promises from regular contributors to step up fund drive payments by £350 a week. We calculate that when everyone has made up their minds, we can expect an extra £500 above the weekly totals in 1983.

Reducing the size of the paper to 12 pages, regrettable though it was, has saved us

another £330.

Other savings on expenses paid and running costs have put us within £130 of achieving our targets. In the next week we will look at our expenditure again, cutting out everything which is not absolutely essential.

That done, we can tackle the problem of our enormous liabilities — both to individual supporters and to big companies. We reckon that with the right wing on the rampage in the labour movement and the Tories on the offensive, no serious paper dare leave anything to chance on the financial front.

We have no major advertising and all things taken for granted in the past have to be looked at again. How many meetings or activities of Socialist Action supporters have there been where journalists have not got their travel expenses paid by the area?

From now on we

must ask that all speakers get paid, even in London where paying a fixed rate means that supporters in towns like Aberdeen do not have to pay the full cost themselves.

This is just one example of our tightening up. Little things, big things — nothing is exempt from the economy drive. We are looking for new tenants to take over the lease on our

Upper St premises. As soon as this happens we will move into a new building.

It's very nice having premises in Islington, but we cannot afford a threatened doubling of rent.

Of course, the full costs of moving will be enormous, but it is not just in the next year that savings have to be made. If we want to move back to our 16

page paper — which we do — then we have to think about balancing that budget in the years ahead.

Just as soon as the current books are balanced we will be asking our readers to help us with funds to move. Of course, money you give now won't be wasted. We are opening a special fund for the move which will be kept for just that purpose.

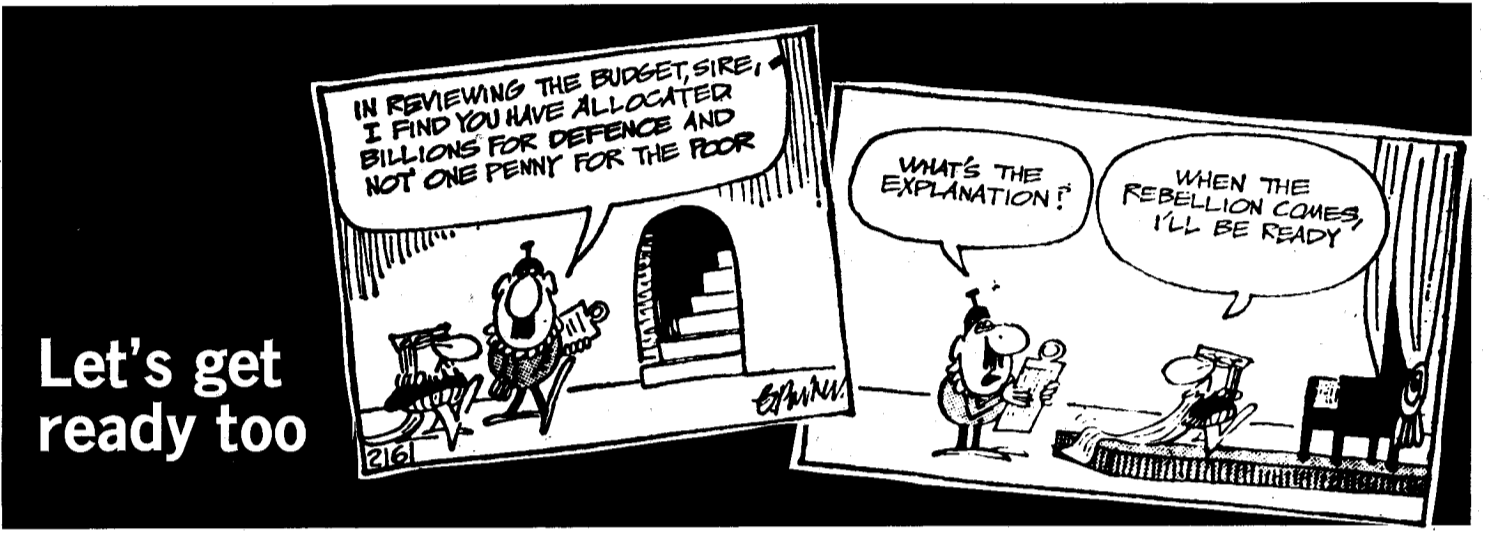
We are asking our readers two things:

- If you do not make a regular payment to the paper — take out a standing order by filling in the form on the back page. If you regularly give money to the paper — have you raised your contribution since December?

- Do you have a larger sum you might consider using to help

us move, or know of anyone else who does? Don't hesitate to phone and discuss what's possible.

Remember that however bad your finances, the Tories will make them worse, and worse and worse. It is only through building up the strength of the left that the rot can be stopped. We think Socialist Action is vital to that struggle.



Let's get ready too

DIARY

(These listings are free for all major labour movement and campaign activities — up to maximum of 50 words. Semi-display advertisements cost 5p per word and must be paid in advance. Send to: Diary, Socialist Action, 328 Upper Street, London N1 2XP to arrive not later than Thursday, one week prior to publication).

International

- **The Politics of Health in Zimbabwe** Hour long video available for meetings or functions. £10 (payable in advance). Send to Books for South Africa Fund, PO Box 50, London N1.
- **Sri Lankan Research & Information Group** will provide speakers on the current situation there for meetings. Write to 9 Grays Inn Buildings, London EC1.
- **No Intervention in Central America (NICA)** is a broad based coalition of solidarity groups, human rights orgs, aid agencies and political parties. More details from NICA 20/21 Compton Terrace, London N1 01-226 6747.
- **From War in the Third World to the Third World War** — new pamphlet published by El Salvador Solidarity Campaign, 59p. Order from ELSSOC, 29

Islington Park St, London N1 01-359 3976. ELSSOC have also produced a 1984 calendar showing scenes from life in the liberated zones, £3 from same address.

- **Central America and the Caribbean** A series of open educational videos and speakers at Peckham Labour Club, Lansbury House, 41 Camberwell Grove, London SE5: 31 Jan Grenada; 7 Feb Evening of Central American culture. Admission £1/UB40 free. Organised by Sth London Central American Group, contact Edwin 01-733 7706 for details.

- **Guatemala benefit** with new film about Guatemala and an eye-witness report from Nicaragua by Stanley Clinton-Davis. Rio Cinema, Dalston. Thur 26 January, 7pm.

- **Salvadoran trade unionist** Rose Rivas speaks. Mount Stuart Primary School, Adelaide St, Bute Town, Cardiff. Wed 1 Feb 8pm. Other speakers, Gaynor Legall Labour councillor, Tommy Hanley National Union of Seamen. Organised by Solidarity with Central America.

- **Nicaragua benefit and cabaret** Sat 28 Jan, 8pm St Matthews Mtg Place, Brixton Hill, London SW2, Brixton tube. £2 on door. Organised by NSC.

- **Concert for Chile** with Jazira. Sat 28 Jan, University of London Union, Malet St, WC1, 7.30, bar, food. Tickets £3.

- **Palestine Solidarity Campaign** annual conference 28 January, County Hall,

NATIONAL BOOK SALE

14 January - 4 February
at
The Other Bookshop
328 Upper Street
London N1

Open: Mon Tue Sat — 10-6
Wed — 12-7
Thurs Fri — 11-7

London, Waterloo tube, 10am-6pm.

25 Years of the Cuban Revolution

- **Britain-Cuba Resource Centre** Information about activities, subs to Granma weekly review and newsletters from 29 Islington Park St, London N1.
- **Womens study tour of Cuba** 4-20 April, information from BCRC, 29 Islington Park St, London N1.

Ireland

- **Day school on Ireland** Sat 28 January, 11am, Chetwynd Room, Kings College, Cambridge. Organised by Cambridge and Norwich Troops Out

Movement. Creche available.

- **Day School on Ireland** County Hall, London 28 Jan. Organised by Labour Committee on Ireland. Agenda: Republicanism and socialism; Republicanism and feminism; Irish and British trade union movements; British Labour Party. Open to LP and LCI members, 10.30am-5pm. Tickets at £1 from LCI, Box 42, 136 Kingsland High Road, London E8.
- **Labour and Ireland** day school for budding writers, workshops with trained journalists. London, Feb or March, £1. Write to Labour and Ireland, BM Box 5355, London WC1N 3XX.
- **The Cause of Ireland** film showing at Rio Cinema, 107 Kingsland High St, Hackney E8, £2 and £1 (UB40 and OAP), Thur 2 Feb, 7.30.

Lesbian & Gay Liberation

- **Nottingham Labour Campaign for Gay Rights** meets monthly. Next meeting 15 Feb, 8pm, Salutation Inn, Maid Marion Way. Details: Chris Richardson, 21 Devonshire Promenade, Lenton 0602 780124.
- **London Labour Campaign for Gay Rights** new office at 39 Chippenham Rd, W9 2AH 01-286 9692, open Tues-Thur 11am-7pm. (Westbourne Grove tube. Bad access, help available).
- **Labour Movement Lesbians** is a new

organisation of lesbians in the labour movement to support each other and organise initiatives on issues that affect lesbians. Next meeting 28 Jan, A Woman's Place, Hungerford House, Victoria Embankment, London WC2, 2pm. Further information from Sarah c/o Feminist Library, Hungerford House, Victoria Embk, London WC2.

Miscellaneous

- **GLC workshops** Employment and training for the future. 26 Jan Greater London Training Board; 9 Feb Greater London Enterprise Board; 23 Feb Cooperatives. Black Women's Centre Brixton, 41A Stockwell Green, London, SW9, 7-9.30 pm.
- **Theatre workshops** at the

Drill Hall, 16 Chenies St, London WC1, led by actress Effie Arestides. Start Fri 20 Jan, 6.30-8.30pm. Every Friday until September 1984. Booking tel: 01-387 9639.

Anti-cuts campaigns

- **London Health Service Campaign.** 34 Dalston Lane, London E8 3AZ 01-249 8086.
- **Hayes Cottage Hospital Occupation Cttee,** Grange Rd, Hayes, Middx 01-573 5593.

Civil Rights

- **Campaign against racism** in Bradford schools, public meeting, Thur 26 Jan, Queens Hall, Morely St, Bradford, 7.30. Info about the campaign at CARBS c/o Starry Plough, 6 Edmund St, Bradford 5.

For a Reagan-free Caribbean

Reagan Free Caribbean badges in yellow, black and red. 25p each (plus postage); bulk orders 20p each. Money with orders to PO Box 36, 136 Kingsland High St, London E8. Cheques/POs payable to Hackney Book Club.

New pamphlet: Politics in the 1980's — The British Crisis.

Articles reprinted from Socialist Action and *International* — John Ross, British politics in the 1980's; Alan Freeman, How Labour Can Win; Steve Marks, the 1983 Election; John Ross, Facing 1984; Alan Freeman, Rebuilding the Labour Party.

Available from The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper St, London N1, price 35p.

November-December 1983 Volume 8 Nos 5 75p

International

INTERNATIONAL
November-December issue out now
Price 75p

In this issue:
Andrew Gamble on the 'special relationship' between Britain and the States
Ken Livingstone, on a strategy for the Labour left
John Ross, on why the left must reject unity with European imperialism against America
Chris Palmer on Grenada
Jude Woodward on sectarianism towards women plus reviews

Order from The Other Bookshops, 329 Upper St, London N1 or 137 Digbeth, Birmingham.

Socialist ACTION

Join the fight for socialism

If you want more information about Socialist Action or to be put in touch with local supporters send this form to Socialist Action, 328 Upper Street, London N1.

Name

Address

..... Tel

Age Union/CLP (if any)

Can Labour win the votes of women?

THE BRITISH Labour Party has an historic opportunity in the coming EEC elections. A 'gender reversal' has taken place in voting patterns. Traditionally, women have been more likely than men to vote Conservative. Today, women are more likely to vote against the Tories. In the 1983 general election, 56 per cent of women, compared to only 54 per cent of men, cast votes against the Tory Party, according to Gallup Poll.

VALERIE COULTAS looks at women's voting patterns in Britain and America, and how the effects of the recession and women's changing position in society account for their shifts in attitude. In a future issue, we will look at how the fight to transform the Party of Labour men into a Party of Labour women and men should be conducted.

Amidst the doom and gloom that followed Labour's 1983 election defeat, there has been stony silence on the positive feature of women's voting patterns. Between 1945 and 1974, men favoured Labour in nine out of 10 elections, while women favoured the Conservatives in seven out of 10. In 1945, 1966 and 1974 — when Labour won — more women voted Labour than Conservative.

The pattern was clear. Women won the vote under a Tory government. In general women have favoured the Conservatives ever since. In 1979 something changed.

Even with the first woman prime minister, the number of women and men voting Tory was the same. In June '83 this trend was confirmed. This time less women than men voted for a Thatcher government. Fifty-four per cent of men and 56 per cent of women voted against her. The anti-Tory majority reveals just how undemocratic the first-past-the-post system is, because it puts a minority government in power.

The reason for Labour's silence on women's voting pattern is, of course, that there's bad news as well as good in these figures. Many women decided against Thatcher but didn't vote Labour. There was a 21 per cent swing to the SDP/Liberal Alliance, 12.8 per cent from Labour. The *Guardian* figures showed women's votes split equally between the Alliance and Labour.

The 'newscaster feminism' of the Alliance appealed to women. They fielded 64 women candidates, compared to the Labour Party's 70 and the Tories' 30 — a high proportion relative to their size. This indicates an awareness of positive discrimination, something Labour still resists.

Ironically no Alliance women were returned to parliament. But there are ten Labour and 13 Conservative women MPs. Out of a grand total of 650 members, 23 are women and one Tory MP is black. So much for representing the people!

Across the Atlantic, American voting patterns reveal a similar gender differentiation. Women under 45 are more likely than men to go out and vote. American women express greater hostility to Reagan than American men. Between February '81 and '82, Reagan's popularity dropped 15 per cent among women, but only eight per cent among men.



Photo: CIS REPORT

Women are consigned to part-time and low paid jobs



Photo: JOHN STURROCK

Women are turning to their trade unions for answers to the problems of low pay, declining employment and cuts in welfare benefit.



Photo: SHEILA GRAY, FORMAT

British and American women oppose the war-mongering policies of the Thatcher and Reagan administrations.

This simply can't be dismissed as anti-Reaganism. It is anti-Republicanism. In 1978 a majority (53 per cent) of women were voting Democrat, compared to men (49 per cent). In the 1982 congressional elections, 58 per cent of women's votes were Democrat, compared with 52 per cent of men's.

Republican fears prompted Reagan to give two women, Elizabeth Dole and Margaret Heckler, cabinet posts in January '83. He also appointed his feminist daughter to advise on how to 'create a dialogue' between women and the Republican administration.

An analysis of women's position in society provides the explanation for the changes in traditional voting patterns. Both in Britain and America, there has been a dramatic rise in women's employment over the last thirty years.

In Britain, under the impact of the recession, women's unemployment has been rising more rapidly than men's since the mid-70s; and their pay has been declining since 1977. But single and married women have clung to their paid work as far as possible, preferring low pay, worse conditions and cuts in hours to no job outside the home.

Although female unemployment declined by two per cent overall bet-

ween 1978 and 1981, part-time female employment actually increased by two per cent. The tendency to hold onto any sort of job is explained by several factors.

One in three marriages today are expected to break down. In addition, the late age at which some women are starting to have children 'illegitimately', implies a conscious

majority of women are critical of the political priorities of the Thatcher and Reagan administrations. Women's opposition to cruise missiles is well documented. In America, over the Korean war, the Vietnamese war, and now the war in El Salvador, women are more critical of American militarism. In March '82, 65 per cent of women, compared with 61 per cent of men, opposed American intervention in El Salvador.

Consigned to low-paid jobs, and bearing the brunt of welfare cuts, women can see that war-mongering is paid for by cuts in community and social services. British and American women have turned to their trade unions for answers to these problems.

In Britain, the Labour Party — based on the trade unions — has a unique opportunity to offer women a political focus for their demands. To do this, old attitudes and hostilities to women must go.

If Labour's new leaders set their teeth against positive discrimination they will lose this opportunity. If they repeat Labour's mistake on women's suffrage, they will lose the allegiance of an entire new generation of women.

Coming soon: *The Forward March of Labour Women.*

Employment and Union Membership (Thousands), 1948 and 1979

	1948		1979	
	Emp	TU	Emp	TU
Textiles	862	476	474	283
Coal	800	691	307	298
Railways	535	475	209	204
Metal & Engineering	3514	1914	3809	3034
Construction	1326	611	1415	520
Local Govt & Education	1241	861	2880	2232
Health	522	221	1318	971
Banking & Insurance	352	137	721	395
Distribution	2089	326	2872	428
Misc Services	2001	106	3576	262
Public Sector	4637	3278	6297	5190
Manufacturing	7290	3720	8286	4138
Private Services	4578	665	7284	1215
Manual	14027	7056	12035	7577
White-Collar	6243	2062	11652	5125
Male	13485	7468	13979	8866
Female	6785	1650	9708	3837
Total	20270	9118	23687	12702

Source: George Sayers Bain and Robert Price, 'Union growth: dimensions, determinants and destiny' in Bain, ed., *Industrial Relations in Britain*, Blackwell 1983.

Percentages of more (+), or less (-), women than men voting for the Tory Party. (Gallup Poll)

1945	+8	1970	0
1950	+8	1974 (Feb)	+2
1951	+6/4	1974 (Oct)	+4
1955	+8	1979	0
1964	+5	1983	-3
1966	+7		

Voting by sex in 1979 and 1983. (The Guardian)

	Men		Women	
	1979	1983	1979	1983
Conservative	47	46	46	43
Labour	39	30	39	28
Liberal/SDP	13	24	14	28

An increasing number of women — 500,000 — are the sole source of household income, because 'typical male jobs' have been disappearing rapidly. Only 18 per cent of all men in the labour force now provide sole financial support for their family.

choice of single motherhood. In 1979, 12 per cent of all dependent children were from single parent families. The reality of women's lives explains their changing attitudes and voting behaviour.

In Britain and America, the ma-

Ford strike for jobs

CONVENORS and officials representing every Ford plant in Britain — from manual and staff unions — are calling for all out strike action from Monday 13 February to stop the closure of the Dagenham foundry.

This decision, taken on Wednesday 18 January, was promptly endorsed by an overwhelming vote of the 200 foundry workers.

Just 24 hours later the correctness of the strike call was underlined from an unlikely direction.

The Engineer, the weekly magazine for engineering management, ran a lead story confirming that the Dagenham engine plant would not get the replacement for the OHC — overhead camshaft — car engine.

Instead Ford will spend £100 million in Germany on its new 'world' engine. This will replace existing OHC petrol engines in Sierra cars and Transit vans.

The effect on the engine plant, which presently produces OHC engines, would be catastrophic. Half the 3500 workforce would go on top of the 2000 jobs threatened in the foundry.

Taken together these measures spell the end of the Dagenham estate as a comprehensive manufacturing unit. It would be reduced to a car kit assembly and diesel engine operation employing barely 10,000 shopfloor workers compared to 25,000 in 1979 and 17,000 today.

As many as 7000 jobs would be lost and union strength reduced both through loss of numbers and the strategic power that the workers have as part of a complete car manufacturing operation. This is no accident.

Recent Ford of Europe investment decisions show that company policy is to avoid duplication of operations. The exception is Britain, where Ford is trying to gain the whip hand by dual sourcing those products and operations where the unions are strong.

In the campaign to stop the foundry closure, the unions show how the plant has been starved of investment while £961

million has been loaned from Ford UK to the American parent company.

By Mick Drake, Ford Dagenham

In the campaign to stop the foundry closure, the unions show how the plant has been starved of investment while £961 million has been loaned from Ford UK to the American parent company. But new investment in itself will not save jobs. Ford has ploughed money into a new diesel engine line, automated car body stamping lines, body welding and paint spraying robots. But in every instance the aim of this investment is to eliminate jobs.

Even in the least affected of the Dagenham plants — the assembly plant — the combination of new technology and constant job-cutting in the name of efficiency have slashed the workforce to 4039 from over 6000 a few years ago.

This is why militant shop stewards are fighting for as policy of no more job loss — whether through redundancies or 'efficiencies'. This is the best way to rally the whole workforce behind the fight to save the foundry and to stop Ford using new investment to cut jobs.

Mass meetings in every Ford plant will be voting on the strike recommendation this week. Far more than the future of the foundry hangs on the outcome. Ford has cut its national hourly paid workforce from 59,000 to 43,000 in the last four years.

A successful strike could reverse this trend.



Foundry workers demonstrate outside Ford HQ

And Ford workers have the power to win — the money made from them by the company, its share of the UK vehicle market and the intense competition are the workers' strengths.

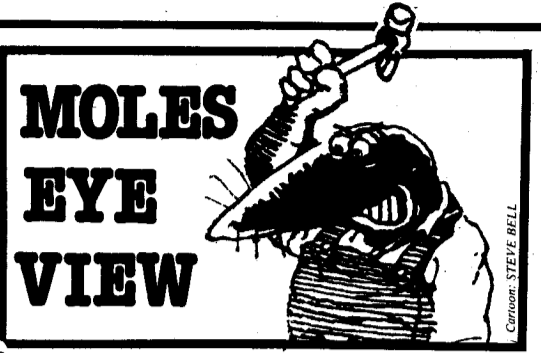
If all goes well at the mass meetings, it is vital for Ford workers to prepare the strike. We should launch a fighting

fund, draw up picket rotas and activate international links to make sure that the company cannot cover losses here by increased production abroad.

At the same time, we must turn outwards to other unions and workplaces, the Labour Party and anyone else prepared to lend a hand.

If we strike it won't be only for the foundry or 17,000 Dagenham jobs — or even 43,000 jobs in Ford nationally. Ford workers will be fighting for all those in the components industry threatened by the rundown of car manufacturing and for all who don't want a future on the dole.

Photo: CARLOS AUGUSTO GUARITA



Toby McQueen?

TORY MP Toby Jessell has been watching too many of those Steve McQueen car-chase films. After leaving a dinner he found his Rover 3500 hemmed in. Now that might have daunted lesser mortals.

But Toby is an intrepid lad, so without hesitation he drove his car over a kerbstone barrier into Hyde Park. Mr Goldberg prosecuting Jessell at Bow St said 'then took place what I can only describe as a chase which went on at times up to 55mph.'

In Bird Cage Walk

the police tried to stop him by using a police van as a block but with a quick turn of the wheel Toby slipped round. Finally it took 12 police cars to block the MP's way as he battled to get to the House of Commons.

OK it might have terrified you if you had been crossing the street in Mr Jessell's vicinity that night. However you must realise he was going to the House to vote to keep the Prevention of Terrorism Act and you can't have road laws getting in the way of that!

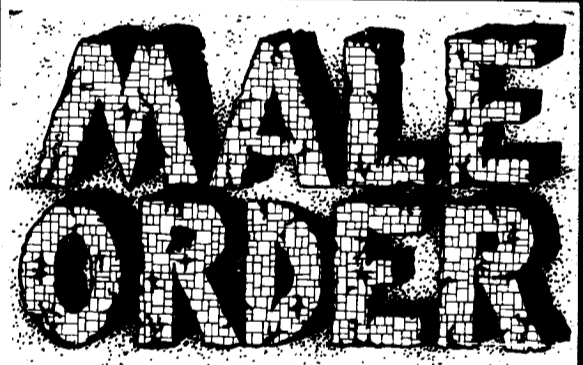
The US can stop worrying — official

THE US top brass are a bunch of pragmatists who rather naively believe the evidence of their own eyes. They have seen what the Sandinistas did to Somoza and his state.

They can also see what the FMLN are doing to the state and the capitalists in El Salvador. So acting on this purely empirical evidence they have poured billions of dollars into wars against these

movements. But if only they would read Martin Thomas in Socialist Organiser they would realise all that expenditure of money and life was unnecessary.

Martin employing a method far superior to observing reality writes: 'In Central America at present bourgeois revolutions are in progress'. So now you know Mr Kissinger, just imagine that it's all been for nothing!



Good for who?

GUINNESS have produced a highly offensive calendar this year depicting images of women in highly stylised and stereotyped drawings.

Bad enough, but the words depict a 'Guinness' man as not being clever (or 'man' enough)

to take the woman who is available for the asking.

Please send letters of complaint to Arthur Guinness, Son & Co., Park Royal, London NW10. And how about a boycott of the product? Putting your politics where your mouth is, eh? (Sally Edwards)

Eleventh bore

WHAT A DRAG the new Channel 4 series on women's sexuality is. The first of the six programmes in the Eleventh Hour slot on Monday 23 January, called 'Who do you love?', was a real disappointment.

A lot of the language used would have gone down OK in a class of final-year social science students. Families became 'units', and trying to follow the thread of any point that was being made was nearly impossible.

Only one consolation, it can't get worse! But what a terrible waste

of opportunity and resources.

Another programme on C4 this coming Friday (27 Jan) that does look worth watching is '...Mixed Feelings'. Starting at 10.45pm, it looks at the experiences and feelings of women about abortion, with women who've experienced abortion speaking out for themselves.

Compiled by HILARY DRIVER. Please send contributions to Male Order, Socialist Action, 328 Upper St, London N1 2XP to arrive one week before publication.

Photo: SOCIALIST WORKER



Police at Messenger picket line

NGA forced to retreat

LAST WEEK the National Graphical Association National Council agreed to call off the campaign against Eddie Shah's Stockport Messenger Group in Warrington.

JUDE WOODWARD spoke to ARTHUR MERRY, a member of the NGA National Council from Manchester.

The National Council's recommendation was based on the view that to continue the dispute would cost the union of funds — we stand to lose £30 million in present.

There was pressure from the branches, especially smaller ones, who are in dire financial straits. However, this recommendation was only narrowly passed and altered. However, this recommendation was only narrowly passed and altered. However, this recommendation was only narrowly passed and altered.

But in reality the TUC has with the TUC not taking its responsibilities and for backing on Resolution 5

from the Wembley conference. It made it very difficult for the NGA to continue the campaign without backing from the TUC.

'The Labour movement now faces a very dark time. The employers will undoubtedly take strength from what happened to the NGA. And if the new Tory attacks on the closed shop and the political levy go through, it will leave the Labour movement with completely no defence, politically or trade union wise.

'It is a dark tunnel from now to September when we have to change the policy of the TUC. The

NGA is circulating a resolution to other executives and this has to go out through all the branches.

By next September it has to be clear to the TUC that the labour movement wants to fight the legislation with industrial action.

'On the positive side, the NGA's fight has raised consciousness among rank and file trade unionists about just how pernicious this legislation is — and what kind of lead is needed from the TUC.

'We have to see the law in the way that the Tolpuddle martyrs saw it and be prepared to fight back industrially.

'The Stockport Six accept the decision, although they are remaining on the picket line. The North West TUC have yet to decide whether they are going ahead with their march on 28 January.

BLOC must campaign

THE TRADE UNION conference called by the Broad Left Organising Committee for 24 March in Sheffield can provide a major opportunity for the left in the unions to combat the right-wing course of the Labour leadership.

The need for the left to organise at the base of the unions and the Labour Party is clear. While the Tories deepen their attacks on the labour movement — through the anti-union laws and the threat to political funds — the Murray leadership of the TUC is conceding without a fight.

The latest move from the right-wing dominated Finance and General Purpose Committee is contained in a document *Strategy For The Future*. This document argues for 'workable compromises' with the government. The NGA dispute shows what 'workable compromises' mean.

By Pat Hickey

The NGA dispute also shows that there is a strong active minority which can be organised to fight this course of the TUC. BLOC must direct itself towards this minority if it is to meet the challenge from the right.

So far, BLOC has failed to measure up to this task. Little has been done since its last conference. The *Militant* organisers have seen linking up of the lefts in the unions in mainly organisational terms — an annual meeting, a steering committee, occasional circulars, along with pro-

posals for rule changes. This is not going to meet the challenge.

The conference of BLOC needs to set itself a central political task around which the left in the unions can campaign. Such a campaign should take on the right on the major planks of its new policy.

There are two issues which we could start on immediately. One is to support the NGA motion to criticise the General Council's failure to fight the Tebbit Laws and to restore the decisions of the Wembley Conference.

Support

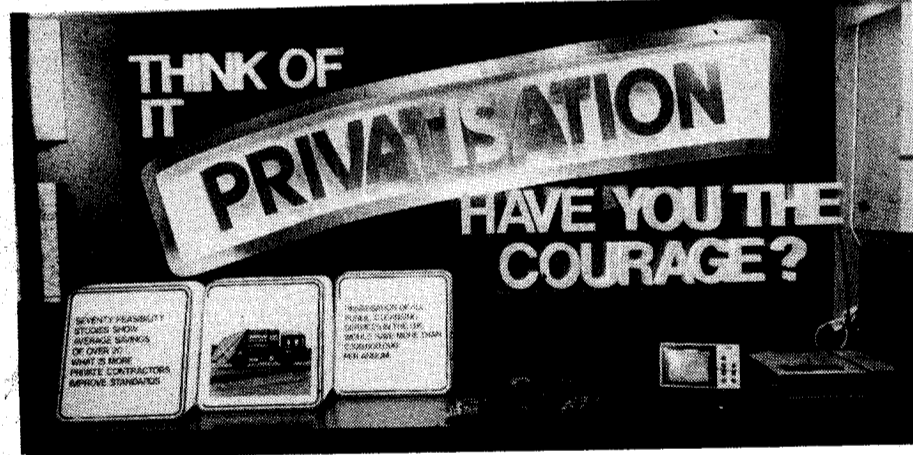
The other is to link up with the left in the LP to defend the political levy and the political funds.

We urge all Socialist Action supporters to support the conference. Send resolutions to the organisers calling for BLOC to campaign on



Left must challenge the conspirators of the right

these issues. Delegation — up to five per body — is from Broad Lefts, shop stewards committees, and trade union branches.



Conference against privatisation

ON 14 JANUARY the London region of the Telecom union, the POEU, held a conference against privatisation.

This was open to other public sector workers. MARTIN EADY a member of the National Union of Railworkers was delegated from Ealing-Southall Labour Party. He explains what happened.

The conference was a valuable opportunity to share experiences of the fightback against privatisation. Greater London Council leader Ken Livingstone was the guest speaker and papers were presented from a wide range of unions from rail, health, gas, civil air transport and British Telecom.

A statement was put for a vote by the platform. This got a majority but delegates criticised its vague platitudes and said that it offered no concrete way forward.

They also criticised the reliance on the TUC and its working within the law. These contributions got

prolonged applause. But boos greeted the comments of two platform speakers that failures lay with the rank and file and not with the leadership.

The only platform speaker to be positive about strike action was Mike Jackson from the Public Employees Union who mentioned the successful hospital catering strike against private contracts in Barnet.

But he said that unions should participate in the tendering process, so that

wages, conditions and union negotiating rights form part of any private contract.

Delegates explained the dangers of this approach. Dave Benlow from Wandsworth NUPE said that they had learned from experience not to get involved with private tenders.

Action must start at the time tenders are asked for. A vital ingredient to resist privatisation is nationally coordinated industrial action he explained.

The general approach of the platform was 'all fight together and wait for the TUC'. But the delegates were for firm action now. This shows that in the ranks at least there is a will to take on the Tories.

Socialist Action apologises to readers for the headline 'Mugger's charter' appearing on the Police Bill article on page 3 of last week's issue, which was inappropriate.

YTS: The hatchet job

SIMON KILLARNEY is 17. He started a 'Development in Contemporary Skills' Youth Training Scheme in Birmingham last September. In January, he was sacked, and a month's money withheld.

Now he faces the possibility of his dole being cut as a result. He told *Socialist Action* about the dubious practices of the DCS managing agency.

I'm really into computer operating or programming, and the 'Development in Contemporary Skills' YTS managing agency promised to 'place you in a job you were interested in'. It seemed an ideal opportunity to gain experience.

But since I've been on the scheme I haven't found a suitable placement. DCS did not keep their promise.

I've just learned that managing agencies for YTS are supposed to have job placements already waiting for trainees. I expect the majority of trainees don't know this.

Amazingly, the DCS system was to look through Yellow Pages and ring firms to see if they would take on trainees. A considerable number of trainees haven't found suitable placements.

Many a time I found myself in that office 'letting my fingers do the walking'! — looking for alternatives. For a few months I continually phoned to see if I had an interview.

I did get a few, but I soon discovered that they weren't genuine computer jobs, more like office-boy



Youth protest at YTS swindle

jobs, with a computer located somewhere in the building. One said: 'You may get to go on the computer in your lunchtime.' I got more and more discontented with the scheme. After a long period of no progress, I told my supervisor I feared they would never find me a suitable placement, and said I wanted to leave the scheme.

He made an agreement that, if they hadn't found me 'a genuine placement' by January, I would leave the scheme. I had another interview, just like the others. But I was still interested, and continually phoned DCS for a week, to see if I had been accepted.

They kept telling me to ring back later, they didn't know. Finally I asked them to contact me. But

they didn't.

I felt really frustrated and unhappy over Christmas and new year. Then I got a letter asking me to phone, which I did. But the conversation got heated when my supervisor began accusing me of being scruffy.

A few days later, I received news from a friend on the scheme that I had been sacked and my months money withheld. I was told I'd been sacked for not phoning in.

That's what I call a hatchet job. There was a clearly-stated procedure to be followed before disciplinary action could be taken, including proper warnings and the facility for me to put my side with a witness present. DCS threw the procedure out the window.

They simply axed my

place on the scheme, and my money. DCS pay £25 a week, monthly. I've discovered this is illegal, according to MSC documents.

It means we work a month in hand, so they were able to stop me getting the money I should have been paid before I was sacked — about £100.

Birmingham Trade Union Resource Centre are hoping to defend me in a test case. But I'm in an awkward position as I haven't been officially informed of my sacking. The only contact I've had with DCS is through a friend, still on the scheme.

Even if I lose, it's important to publicise my experience and warn people about YTS. Being on YTS is bad enough without cowboys like DCS making things harder.

A SOCIALIST ACTION

What economic recovery?

NEW FIGURES published this week by the *Financial Times* have revealed the full effects of the decline of British manufacturing industry under the Thatcher government.

It was already known that in 1983 the British economy suffered its first balance of payments deficit on manufactured goods since the industrial revolution. But it had been popularly presented that this trade deficit was concentrated in specific areas such as cars and video-recorders.

The new figures published by the *Financial Times* on 28 January however show the full range of the industrial collapse.

British trade in manufactured goods moved from a surplus of £2,600 million in 1981, to a surplus of only £233 million in 1982 and finally to a massive deficit of £4,900 million in the first 11 months of 1983.

As the *Financial Times* put it, 'The decline in exports raises a basic question about the future of the British economy. How do we pay our way when the oil trade surplus disappears in the late 1980s.'

The areas in which catastrophic declines in competitiveness have taken place over the last year range across virtually every category of manufactured goods. They include passenger cars, commercial vehicles, chemicals, construction equipment, aero engines, and scientific instruments. The balance of trade in these sectors worsened by £2,600 million in the first 11 months of 1983 alone.

Nigel Lawson and Margaret Thatcher have claimed since the General Election that economic recovery is taking place. These new studies by Bri-

tain's most authoritative business newspaper however show the exact opposite. In the last year the decline of British manufacturing industry has been speeding up dramatically.

These new figures deserve to be given the widest publicity in the labour movement to counter the rhetoric of Thatcher.

● 'Hard truths on Britain's industrial decline' appeared in the *Financial Times* 28 January.

Sectors in decline

Products in which the trade balance has deteriorated significantly in the past year include:

PRODUCT	£m*
Passenger cars	536
Commercial vehicles and parts	519
Chemicals	276
Construction equipment	226
Textiles	213
Aero engines and gas turbines	206
Piston engines	181
Scientific apparatus and photographic equipment	121
Electronic components	107
Agricultural equipment	100
Pumps and compressors	97
Total	2582

* Decline in trade balance in first 11 months of 1983 compared with whole of 1982
Source: Overseas Trade Statistics of the UK, Department of Trade.



More than 3,000 people demonstrated in London on Saturday against the Police Bill.

Photo: NEWSLINE

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Newham 8 victory

LAST FRIDAY, the four Newham 8 defendants found guilty of affray were sentenced to 50 hours' community service. The concession on how they would carry out their sentence — in the service of the Asian community — was made by the judge at the defendant's insistence.

This is a victory for the campaign, and vindicates its strategy. The defence demand, for an absolute discharge, was unlikely in Britain's

racist law courts.

Affray is a charge which carries heavy penalties. The compromise verdict publicly discredits the police.

By Ilona Aronovsky,
Newham NUT

The defending solicitor said: 'if the police had been in the dock, they would have been convicted. The results of the trial uphold the rights of the black community to de-

fend itself against racial violence.'

The campaign was correct to make this the nub of the defence. A defendant who admitted hitting a policeman was one of those acquitted.

Firmly based on local Asian community support and the network of black defence and anti-racist groups, the campaign has scored its success by the national publicity and labour movement support it fought for and

won. Newham Council is committed to an enquiry. The campaign is now in a position to demand the enquiry be made publicly accountable, and that the Labour Party in Newham takes a firm stand against racist policing.

The next step is the development of concrete policies to fight racism in Newham's schools, and in all areas of local council provision.