

A Socialist ACTION

BUILDING AN ALLIANCE FOR SOCIALISM

BRITISH WITHDRAWAL FROM IRELAND

PEACE THROUGH SELF DETERMINATION

ASSEMBLE

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LAST WEEK lifted just one corner of the truth of the capitalist society we live in. But it did give enough of a glance to work out the rest.

No serious person who thinks about it believes the account which Thatcher gave on Monday of the Westland affair. Even the first opinion poll showed a three to one majority believing Thatcher had not told the whole truth on the events leading to Brittan's resignation.

It is completely inconceivable that two senior civil servants — the prime minister's personal secretary and press secretary — could have authorised the leaking of a letter from a government law officer, the solicitor general, without Thatcher indicating her agreement.

But another pillar of Thatcherism, Rupert Murdoch, was also shown concealing and cheating last week. He set up his printing plant at Wapping declaring it was to produce a new evening newspaper, *The Post*. The print unions knew that in fact Murdoch intended to move his main newspapers there. Murdoch was simply lying — a characteristic he shares with his political friends.

Last weekend Murdoch confirmed his real intention by unilaterally, and by dictat, moving the *Sun*, *The Times*, the *Sunday Times*, and the *News of the World* at Wapping. He then sacked 5000 print workers.

These people, the Thatchers and Murdochs, are liars and hypocrites. They condemn, hound, imprison, and sack those who expose their actions whether it be on the Belgrano, cruise missiles, or miners who fight for their jobs. The Thatchers and Murdochs collude, conceal, and conspire themselves.

Still worse they do it in the pursuit of policies that condemn millions to unemployment, to poverty and to fear.

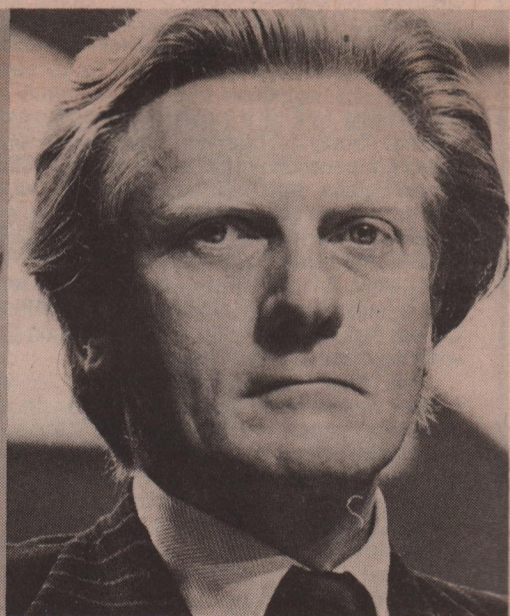
During the last week Kinnock completely failed to give the lead which was needed against Thatcher. But the labour movement must. Kinnock failed to support the print workers, the labour movement must.

- ★ Thatcher must go!
- ★ The Tories must go!
- ★ All out to support the print workers!

● See pages 2 and 3 for the background to Thatcher's crisis.

THICK

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THIEVES

Socialist ACTION

The left after Westland

WESTLAND IS one of those events which throws into the sharpest light not only the situation within the ruling class but also the tasks which face the left. The chief developments are clear.

First the Westland crisis has confirmed that the Thatcher government is vulnerable. Within two weeks two of her most senior ministers had to resign. Thatcher was brought to the point of humiliation. Serious conflicts which had built up within the ruling class exploded. No matter what the problems this government can be fought against. It is not invulnerable strong.

That is the first characteristic of the left which must be built today. It is first and foremost not an 'anti-Kinnock' but an anti-Thatcher, anti-capitalist left. What the working class requires is defence of its interests against the assaults of the Thatcher government. That is the first task which must be undertaken.

Secondly this left must be an anti-coalitionist left. The Westland crisis shows that there are serious alternative forces, tactics, and strategies, within the ruling class to straight support for Thatcher — subordinate ones in ruling class terms but nevertheless powerful.

The SDP-Liberal Alliance has been further reinforced by the crisis. With Thatcher weakened more ruling class resources will certainly go into support for Owen. The left, and the labour movement, must be totally free from any co-operation with the SDP-Liberal Alliance.

In fact the line for Labour in the crisis should have been simple. Labour should have put down a vote of 'no confidence' in the government. They should have demanded an immediate general election. This should have been coupled with a declaration that Labour would enter into coalition with no party — let Owen form a coalition with the discredited Tory rump if he so wished.

This was not done but the left must keep hammering away at the danger of coalitionism — and not simply coalitionism in its simple form of direct cooperation with the SDP-Liberal Alliance by politicians, but the deep and powerful support for future coalition with the Alliance which is building up in the leadership of the EETPU, AUEW, and other right wing unions.

Thirdly, if it is to have an alternative way to win a majority to coalition with the Alliance, Labour has to totally reorient its relation to the working class and oppressed.

The most catastrophic decline in votes Labour has suffered among any group since the 1960s is among manual workers. Labour has drastically failed to build up its vote among women. The black community remains widely alienated from activity in the party by the policies of successive Labour governments and politicians.

If there is going to be an alternative way forward against Thatcher and the threat of coalition, the Labour Party has got to transform both its relation to the working class and its own internal party organisation.

The fight to support all sections of the working class in struggle, to build on the success in the political levy campaign in strengthening political activity of the unions, to create democratic accountable women's organisation in the party, to build black sections, to create a mass campaigning youth organisation, is not simply an 'internal' party task but a decisive part of creating a majority for Labour against the Tories and Alliance.

Fourthly if this is to be carried through the party has to be united against Thatcher by ending the witch hunt. This again is no purely 'internal' matter. It is going to be completely diversionary and damaging when the Liverpool enquiry comes through after the Westland affair.

Fifthly, within the party and in struggle, the fight has to go on for the type of policies that are an alternative both to Thatcher and the Alliance. That argument has started with the publication of *A Million Jobs A Year*, with the document produced on 'Aims and Objectives' by the Chesterfield Labour Party, with the Justice for the Mineworkers Bill and other questions.

What is clear is that Kinnock is incapable, unable, to lead the fight against Thatcher. That is the fight which has to be led by the left. If Kinnock gets in the way of that fight that is his choice. Because Westland has shown he cannot lead the fight against Thatcher. Only the class struggle left wing of the labour movement can.

Behind the Tory crisis



The 1979 Thatcher cabinet: where have they all gone now?

HOW COULD a government elected in 1983 with one of the largest majorities in parliament in British history be brought within three years to the point of debacle seen over the Westland affair? Furthermore why were the resignations of Heseltine and Brittan, and the discrediting of Thatcher, only the culmination of a series of internal political disasters which have affected this government since it was elected? What was the base of the genuinely authoritarian and anti-democratic — even by capitalist standards — character of this government which came out so dramatically in the Westland affair?

The internal disasters have come thick and fast. First, immediately following the election, was the Parkinson resignation. Then there was the debacle surrounding the bill to abolish the GLC and metropolitan councils — which cost Patrick Jenkin his job. This was followed

by the banning of the 'Real Lives' TV broadcast on Ireland. Then the fiasco over student grants. More seriously still the endless leaks, retreats and advances, over the welfare state review.

All these preceded the tremendous open split over the Westland affair.

Only at one time, during the miners' strike, has the second Thatcher government given an impression of total unity and coherence.

The press even invented a special word for these disasters — the 'banana skin factor'. Supposedly, for unaccountable reasons, the Thatcher government had become prone to irrational and self-imposed mistakes.

For the more sophisticated press the greek word 'hubris' — excessive pride preceding disaster — was dragged in.

But in reality the disasters, scandals, and divisions which have accompanied this government were entirely predictable — and were predicted. Because Thatcher's 'landslide' in June 1983 was a fake. It was not a product of an authentic landslide of support for the Tory party, but was produced by a completely undemocratic electoral system and by the rise of the SDP.

In fact Thatcher's vote fell by almost 700,000 between 1979 and 1983. Thatcher's 42 per cent of the vote in 1983 was the lowest proportion of the vote received by a government with a safe majority in British history.

Thatcher's vote was part of a long term decline of support for the Tory party — as we show on this page. The significance of the vote for the Tories in 1983 was precisely that it meant that Thatcher had not won mass support for her policies.

She had not won support for demolition of the health service, she had not won mass support for mass unemployment, she had not won support for her attacks on democratic rights.

The government was disaster prone in many instances directly because it was not genuinely popular. Thatcher proposed to abolish the GLC because the Tories could

not win an election against Livingstone. Police powers had to be drastically increased, and attacks on democratic liberties intensified, because there was no genuine popular support for what Thatcher was doing, and repression was the only solution.

There is nothing mysterious in why the second Thatcher government was accident prone. It was because in politics you cannot cheat the real relation of forces. If Thatcher had gained a real popular mandate she could have put through her policies without serious opposition. But instead at every stage she met popular opposition to what she proposed — and was forced to compromise. This is why there is the continual complaint in the serious press that the Thatcher government has 'lost its way'.

Only on those issues which were absolutely vital and central to the ruling class, above all defeating the miners and weakening the unions, could the Thatcher government appear coherent and united. For the rest division, reflecting different interests within the ruling class and different views on how to confront the working class, prevailed within the government.

Thatcher herself necessarily had to keep these forces together increasingly by manipulation and autocracy — precisely the grubby dealings and suppression whose details came out around the resignations of Heseltine and Brittan. They were a product of a government without a real popular mandate.

Any why has Thatcher, nevertheless, looked so powerful? For two reasons. Firstly because of the support given to her on every crucial issue by the Alliance — most openly by David Owen. Secondly, and most importantly, because of the total failure of the Labour leadership under Neil Kinnock, and

of the TUC, to take the offensive against her.

Above all around the miners' strike — but also around the fight in local government — Labour had the possibility to

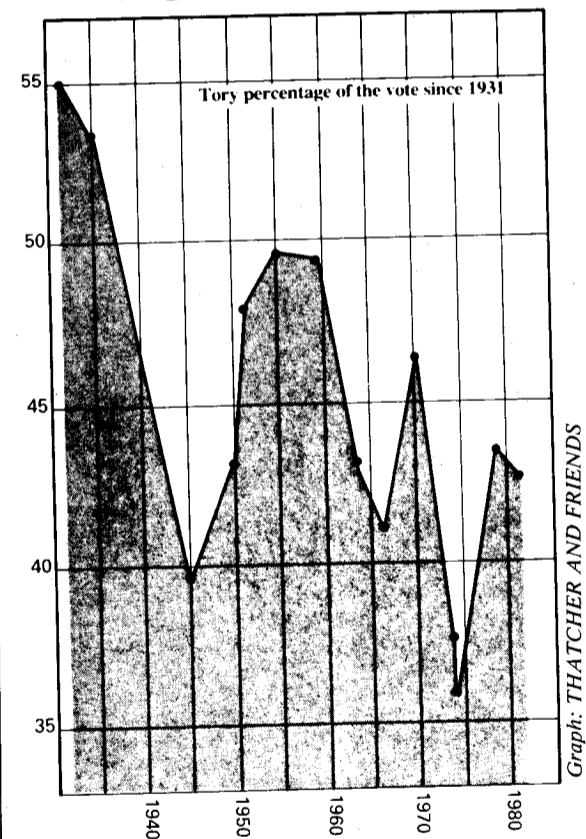


deliver devastating blows against Thatcher. But in both cases Neil Kinnock's leadership directly aided her. It is Kinnock and the TUC, together with the Alliance, that have given the Thatcher government its impression of support and power.

The disasters which have progressively befallen the Thatcher government are not mysterious or due to 'banana skins'. The disasters were written into the second Thatcher government's lack of authentic mass support revealed in 1983.

After a period of gradual grinding down around individual issues, and an enforced and genuine unity when confronted with the miners, the real situation of the Thatcher government has exploded. That is what lies behind the violence of the crisis within the Tory party provoked by Westland.

The decline of the Tory party



Graph: THATCHER AND FRIENDS

The 1983 election was presented in the press as a popular triumph for the Tory Party. But the reality was the exact opposite. Thatcher's vote in 1983 was part of a long term decline in Tory party support — as can be seen in the graph on this page.

The Tory votes naturally swing from victory to defeat. But the overall trend is clear. The Tory victories are won on a progressively lower percentage of the vote. Each Tory defeat sees its support fall to new depths.

It is this long term decline of the Conser-

vative party that forces the ruling class to create new capitalist parties such as the SDP and creates the basis for explosions such as the Westland crisis.

Tory victories:	
Year	Tory % of the vote
1931	55.0
1935	53.3
1951	48.0
1955	49.7
1959	49.4
1970	46.0
1979	43.9
1983	42.4
Tory defeats:	
1945	39.6
1950	43.4
1964	43.4
1966	41.9
1974 (Feb)	39.6
1974 (Oct)	35.8



The facts behind the Tory crisis

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The ruling class rallies to Thatcher



Photo: JOHN CHAPMAN

Thatcher

LAST Monday's emergency debate saw the three key developments: a ruling class rallying to Thatcher, increased support going to the SDP and David Owen, and total humiliation for Neil Kinnock. JOHN ROSS looks at these events.

THE UNFOLDING of the Westland crisis continues to show with shattering clarity the fundamental forces at work in British politics.

First and foremost, shown clearly over the weekend and in Monday's debate in parliament, was the rallying around Thatcher by the ruling class. It was symbolised by Heseltine's grovelling performance in the House of Commons debate when he pledged his loyalty to the government.

Heseltine's approach was backed up by every major ruling class paper on Tuesday.

Not one single capitalist mouthpiece, not even the 'anti-Tory' *Guardian*, proposed Thatcher



Photo: G.M. COOKSON

Owen

should go. On the contrary the *Guardian* wrote a long editorial stating that the entire affair had now been revealed as a long 'bungle.'

This is despite the fact that, as Tony Benn pointed out in the House of Commons, not one single serious person can believe Thatcher's account of the affair of the leaking of the letter from the Solicitor General. It is a principle of British government, known to every civil servant, that not only may the content of advice from the government law officers not be made public but even the mere fact that they have given such advice cannot be revealed.

The idea that this basic rule could be broken by two civil servants — Thatcher's press secretary and principal private secretary — without the prime minister's agreement is absurd. If they had been guilty of such a thing without Thatcher's agreement they would have been sacked instantly. The fact that they weren't sacked is Thatcher's own admission of guilt.

With that admission out in public if the ruling class, or any serious section of it, had wanted to get rid of Thatcher they could have done so by a campaign launched on Tuesday morning. Instead every section of the press, and every Tory spokesperson rallied to Thatcher.

This is not simply a matter that the removal of a Tory prime minister would have provoked a profound crisis which would have weakened the entire ruling class. It is a question that the Thatcher wing of the ruling class is by far the strongest within British capital.

British capital did want some reorganisation of policies and methods compared to the last months. Thatcher's extreme pro-American policy, autocratic methods, and lack of sufficient mass base to confront the working class in a completely effective way, meant that important sections of British capital

evidently wanted an adjustment within the overall framework pursued by Thatcher. This they will almost certainly get — that is what all the talk in the papers about 'more collective cabinet functioning' is all about.

But the ruling class only wanted Thatcher cut down to size, to remove the more individual and idiosyncratic of her policies. British capital did not want either her removal or, even less, that of her government.

But if Margaret Thatcher's premiership was the main gainer from Monday's debate in the House of Commons the second key winner was the SDP and David Owen.

The *Daily Express* gave Owen an ecstatic write up declaring under a photo of Dr Death himself: 'David Owen: He lashed no. 10 in tough, effective attack.' It

editorialised: 'Dr Owen drew blood with his shrewd and powerful observations.'

The *Guardian*, contrasting Owen favourably to Kinnock, noted: 'Owen ... at least produced the rapier rather than the blunted broadsword.'

The scab *Times* carried as its second editorial 'Alliance Chance'.

With the Tories in long term decline, and Thatcher in immediate crisis, the ruling class needs to build up an 'anti-Tory' alternative to Labour. The SDP, with its firm support for attacks on the labour movement and its pro-EEC line, fits the bill perfectly.

The Tories remain the chief ruling class party. But they are becoming too weak to govern by themselves. They require a new junior partner. That is the role of the SDP.



Heseltine

Why Kinnock was humiliated

BY TUESDAY evening the concerted onslaught of the ruling class to protect Thatcher, even while bringing her under tighter control, had almost succeeded in reversing roles in politics. It was Kinnock who was put on trial for total inadequacy.

In fact this was largely merited. Kinnock's speech in the House of Commons on Monday was a catastrophe. The insult 'windbag' was never more justly earned — and this despite a concerted bourgeois campaign against him.

But it is a complete misunderstanding to think that Kinnock's total failure was due to an individual bad speech. Kinnock had absolutely no content to his speech because he had absolutely

Profumo affair without once demanding that the government should be removed.

The result is inevitable. With Labour giving no lead almost the entire credit from Thatcher's crisis goes to the SDP and the Alliance.

But Kinnock's speech was really little worse than that of most of the front bench.

Merlyn Rees, interviewed on radio, said he welcomed the resignation of Heseltine and Brittan but couldn't even give an answer when he was asked whether he thought Thatcher should resign or not! John Smith, summing up for Labour, merely said that in due course the electorate would reject Thatcher.

Only two members of the Labour Party put in serious attacks on Thatcher. The first was Tam Dalyell when he named

Westland crisis. We were told that Kinnock was being so clever by adopting a 'softly, softly' approach. This would allow the Tory contradictions to come out.

Well on Monday the Tories closed ranks and savaged Kinnock. It was Owen who walked off with what honours were going for opposing Thatcher. Kinnock was humiliated — and Labour damaged with him.

Kinnock is a prisoner of forces vastly stronger than himself — the forces of the British ruling class. They have already assigned him his political role.

Thatcher's Tories are to be the strongest party — and while she may be brought into line occasionally, as over Westland, she is not to be challenged on her central policies. Owen and the SDP are to be the recognised 'respectable' opposition. Kin-



no political line. Labour has had no policy toward Thatcher in the Westland crisis whatever.

This was a crisis in which the Tory prime minister had been caught concealing and involved in leaking classified documents. She had lost two cabinet ministers in as many weeks. The first opinion poll showed 61 per cent did not believe Thatcher.

Government

But what on earth was Labour demanding? A Labour leadership which wanted to fight Thatcher would have put down an immediate vote of no confidence in the government. It would have demanded an immediate election.

Kinnock proposed precisely nothing. At least Owen demanded either that Thatcher go or her top civil servants go. Kinnock had precisely nothing to propose as the way out of the situation.

It is almost incredible, but true, that the Labour leadership could go through the greatest internal Tory crisis since the

Colette Bowe as the department of trade official responsible for leaking the Solicitor General's letter — and thereby speeded up the crisis which led to Brittan's resignation.

The second was Tony Benn who bluntly stated in Monday's debate that Thatcher's explanation was unbelievable. For the rest Labour's performance has been a disaster.

The reasons are not hard to find. Kinnock is acting on a plan drawn up by his right wing advisers at the time he won the party leadership.

Right

Labour is to spend five years 'recovering' — that is moving further and further to the right and distancing itself from struggle. The miners were to be betrayed. The local councils were to be abandoned. But somehow, by a sufficiently clever right wing line, office would drop into Labour's hands.

Kinnock's aides openly boasted of his strategy at the beginning of the

nock may pick up more votes than Owen but his is to be a subordinate role — because Kinnock, whatever his policies, rests on a labour movement that is a common enemy of Thatcher and Owen.

Alliance

The only way out of this subordination was for Labour to take the offensive: to demand that Thatcher goes; to put down a vote of no confidence in the Tory government; to demand an election; to mobilise the working class for this; to support those going into struggle — as at Wapping; to declare that under no circumstances would Labour enter into any coalition with the Alliance.

But if Neil Kinnock did that he would really be fighting the Tories. And as the miners, Liverpool, and Lambeth have shown Kinnock has no policies for doing that at all.

Kinnock thoroughly deserved the humiliation he got last Monday. But it is up to the left to ensure the labour movement does not suffer in consequence.



Cruise Missile goes missing

Canadian anti-nuclear protestors received an unexpected and perhaps unwelcome bonus during recent cruise missile tests in the Cold Lake area which, the US government says, is an ideal site for simulating Russian conditions because it is covered in snow. The community of Wandering Valley, Alberta, were startled to see a missile going by at 1000 feet which should have passed five miles away. When the missile reached the weapons testing ground it went down in almost inaccessible territory and it was three hours before the US Strategic Air Command could find it. This is the fifteenth missile to suffer a mishap during testing.

South Africa — the world's leading terrorist

As Reagan steps up his war of nerves against Libya under the pretext that it is the world's terror centre, recently released documents establish that South Africa's attacks on neighbouring states have cost them more than \$10 billion in the last five years. This is more than the total foreign aid these states got in the same period. The documents were circulated at the Southern African Development Coordination Conference in Harare.

Reagan backs the anti-abortion movement

For the second year running President Reagan has addressed the March for Life rally, a mass gathering of anti-abortionists, and pledged himself to overturn the 1973 Supreme Court decision legalising abortion. 'Together we will ensure the resources of government are not used to promote or perform abortions,' he said in a radio link up which brought his disembodied voice direct to the rally.

In a telegram to Reagan Kate Michelman, executive director of the National Abortion Rights Action League, said 'Your inflammatory rhetoric, as well as the activity of other anti-choice leaders, has created a climate leading to 65 incidents of domestic terrorism since you took office in 1980.' The incidents concerned physical assaults, in which bomb attacks have been prominent, on abortion centres by the 'defenders of the right to life.'

Grenadian Trade Unionist freed

Chester Humphrey, president of the Grenadian Technical and Allied Workers Union, has won his appeal to the Grenadian Supreme Court against extradition to the United States. He is a leading member of the New Jewel Movement. The FBI were trying to extradite him on the alleged charge of illegal activities in the USA during his exile there before the Grenadian revolution.

Chester was arrested on 16 November 1983 immediately after the US invasion under the spurious claim that his life was in danger. While he was being held the CIA organised to remove him from his union post. However when he was released in May 1984 it rapidly became apparent that he retained his popularity in the union and he was again jailed, this time to face extradition charges, even though there is no extradition treaty between Grenada and the USA.



Chester Humphrey

The Washington-based Council on Hemispheric Affairs noted in its 1985 report that 'human rights conditions in Grenada are fast becoming the worst in the English-speaking Caribbean. It made special mention of Chester's case.

Thatcher gains time in Ireland

LOYALIST LEADERS in the Six Counties will this week be under heavy pressure from the ranks to provide new direction for the campaign against the Anglo-Irish agreement following the results of the 'mini general election' held on 23 January. Held under a slogan of 'Ulster Says No', the election followed the resignation of 15 Democratic Unionist Party and Official Unionist Party MPs and was meant to indicate massive rejection of the Hillsborough Castle Accords which they say undermine British sovereignty, allowing the government of the Irish Republic to interfere in the North.



Paisley

But when the votes were counted, it was obvious the campaign had backfired. Despite their electoral pact, unionist parties failed to mobilise extra votes required to demonstrate rising hostility to the British government and in the process a Unionist seat — Newry and Armagh — was lost to the social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP).

The total Unionist vote of 418,230 fell quite a long way short of the half million target and will mean a deepening of divisions in the Unionist ranks. Whereas the membership of the Ulster Defence Association, the legal paramilitary loyalist organisation, has swelled to an estimated 15,000 (about a 3,000 increase since the Accord) and more than 30 per cent of loyalists are reported to believe that strike action would be a justifiable tactic to influence the British government; the leadership of the Official Unionist Party is already distancing itself from the militant and often violent protests of



Enoch Powell, unionist MP who stood for reselection.

the hardliners.

Whether they are prepared to come to a compromise with the British government remains to be seen. If they were to offer a deal to the SDLP for involvement in devolved government, the powers of the new Intergovernmental Conference, and Dublin's involvement, would be reduced. They would only do this if they calculated loyalist reaction against the deal was on the decrease and the DUP would not make massive gains. Having been pushed into the election campaign at the insistence of the DUP, they are not going to be rushed into opting out of the British parliament — a tactic advocated by many in the DUP. The kind of 'grand gesture' echoing the arming of the Ulster volunteers in 1913 to frustrate Home Rule, or the Ulster workers' council strike of 1974, which would not seem viable while the major political parties of loyalism were divided.

Britain's response is likely to be one of the exacerbating tensions, allowing unionists to froth at the mouth in the Six County Assembly and reassuring the 'integrationist' wing that they have nothing to fear from the Anglo Irish agreement because even the minimal concessions proposed can be stopped. In all probability the Dublin government is more than willing to go

along with this idea. They have gone up in the opinion polls in the South, despite the fact they have failed to demonstrate their 'new found influence' over the British.

But the British government cannot afford to relax. The only unionist party to support the accords — the Alliance — suffered a 17 per cent decline at the polls and the expected swing away from Sinn Fein to the SDLP was only of marginal significance.

In the run up to the

election, the SDLP rejected a pact with Sinn Fein and denied that the election would be a referendum on the Accord. It was relatively low key campaign.

To make sure there was no focus for the nationalist discontent over the deal, an intergovernmental conference was held in London to quietly work out a behind-the-scenes deal to get the IRSP-led hunger-strike, in protest against the sentences given to 25 prisoners convicted on the uncorroborated evidence of 'supergrass' Harry Kirkpatrick, called off.

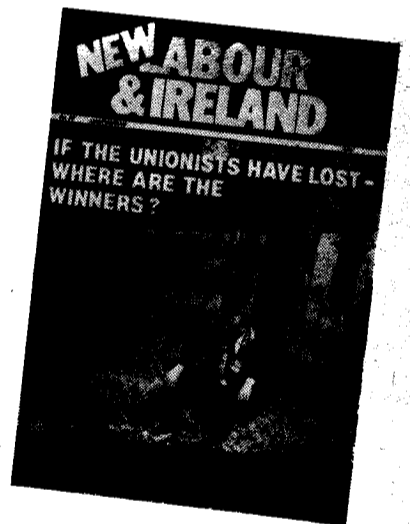
Selective harassment of Sinn Fein by the army and the RUC was stepped up in a bid to disrupt their election campaign. Identity checks were made on all voters.

This was a measure supposedly introduced to prevent large scale personation (said to account for 50 per cent of the Sinn Fein vote). These measures discriminate against Sinn Fein whose support comes largely from young unemployed working class voters.

In the whole Six County area only in Newry and Armagh, where the SDLP's deputy leader Seamus Mallon took the seat, was the turn out higher than in the 1983 elections. Elsewhere nationalists stayed away in large numbers. It was not seen as an election in which they had any stake.



Signing the Accord



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Philippines' terror elections

ON 7 FEBRUARY the Philippines goes to the polls in what promises to be an object lesson in fraud, ballot-rigging and government-inspired terror. Since martial law was declared in 1972 100,000 of president Marcos' opponents have been killed and 60,000 jailed.

This includes the principal leader of the liberal opposition, Benigno Aquino, who was shot at the airport on his return from exile over three years ago.

Aquino's widow, Corazon Aquino, is the only candidate standing against Marcos. Virtually all the other opposition organisations are boycotting the elections including the New Democratic Front, whose armed wing the New People's Army has an estimated million followers and has opened

guerilla fronts in 59 of the Philippines 73 provinces. Unemployment in the Philippines is now 30 per cent and 40 per cent of the people of Manila, the capital, are squatters. 30 per cent of the population suffers malnutrition.

Aquino's assassin, General Ver, has just been acquitted of the murder by a military tribunal. Marcos caused a bit of a stir last Sunday by announcing at a business lunch that he would be taking Ver, who used to be his chauffeur, back on as chief of staff.



'Many people do not understand,' he explained 'that you do not just relieve a chief of staff whose leave of absence has caused some difficulty in reorganising the armed forces.'

The 'reorganisation' Marcos seeks is indicated by a recent ruling that no foreign observer will be allowed within 50 yards of

a polling booth during the election. Marcos was forced to hold the snap election because the USA has demanded he 'clean up his act' and present a democratic front. Ballot-rigging is his preferred method of ensuring nothing goes wrong.

Marcos' terror machine is also hard at

work. A fortnight ago Ms Aquino's godson Jeremias de Jesus and his driver died in a hail of automatic rifle fire while campaigning near Capas, in Tarlac, Ms Aquino's home province. Two survivors identified the attackers as bodyguards of the Mayor of Capas.

Meanwhile the New York Times has published extensive documents disproving Marcos' claim, on which a great deal of his popular base rests, to have been a heroic guerrilla leader during the war. 'Most of his unit,' says the report, 'spent more time committing atrocities against civilians than fighting the Japanese.' Preparing, no doubt, to win the peace.

Thatcher threatens deportation

GARNETT KORLER is a black South African who fled to Britain in 1983. He faces deportation following a court recommendation last November. Garnett has applied for political asylum to remain in this country.

His defence campaign — now backed by Manchester Council — won a significant victory last Friday when the Home Office was forced to release him from Strangeways prison, where he was being held on remand.

Garnett was active in the South African Students Organisation in Port Elizabeth at the time of the youth uprisings there in 1976. He was tracked down in 1979 and forced to move to Johannesburg.

There he met and fell in love with a white woman,

Sharron, who is a UK citizen. For this 'crime' the couple were persistently harassed and abused. Garnett himself was beaten severely by the police for daring to oppose the so-called 'immorality laws'.

Sharron was eventually deported to Britain with their child and Garnett followed a month later. The couple were married, believing they had at last escaped the horrors of apartheid. But the marriage broke down and Garnett's twelve-month visa was never renewed.

If Garnett is deported he will undoubtedly face renewed repression and torture at the hands of the most barbaric and racist regime in the world.

However, as he himself says: 'My spirits are really high. I now know that nothing else but victory will be ours. I also hope for victory in Azania in the near future. I think that if the people there knew about the support they are getting from anti-apartheid movements here and abroad, it would easily boost their morale, and might bring the regime more quickly to its knees.'

'I also think we have to work harder to get the government to realise that sanctions can't hurt our brothers and sisters but

can only cripple the regime and will also stop a lot of bloodshed.'

But he is still under a restriction order and the threat of deportation hangs over his head. His hearing with immigration officials is now fixed for 14 February at Manchester International Airport.

'Political refugees from South Africa, whether black or white, should be allowed political asylum in this country,' said Patrick Pirshoo, secretary of Manchester Anti-Apartheid. 'Apartheid has been declared a crime against humanity by the United Nations and if we send people back there we are participating in this crime.'

Action

● *Join the vigil at 6.30pm, 13 February, to 9.30am, 14 February, Peter Street, Manchester. A protest at the airport is also being organised.*

● *Individuals and organisations are asked to write to the Home Office to demand political asylum for Garnett (please send a copy of the letters to the campaign) and also to affiliate to the Garnett Korler Defence Campaign (organisation £5, individuals £1 waged, 20p unwaged). The campaign can be contacted c/o Manchester Law Centre, 593 Stockport Road, Longsight, Manchester 12. Telephone 061 225 5111.*

North West labour movement conference on Southern Africa

by Roy Wilkes

A LABOUR movement conference on Southern Africa has been called for Saturday 19 April in Manchester Town Hall.

It is sponsored by North West TUC, Manchester City Council, the Lancashire Association of Trades Councils and Manchester Ethnic Minorities Representation Council.

Speakers include Diane Abbot, Peter Heathfield,

and Bob Litherland, MP. Representatives from COSATU and the Dunnes Store strike have also been invited.

★ *For more information about the conference and for delegation forms write to NW labour movement conference on Southern Africa, c/o 8a Progress Buildings, 491 Cheetham Hill Road, Manchester M8 7HY or phone 061 795 4691.*

Nottingham fights apartheid

ON 28 JANUARY, 1500 people trooped through the streets of Nottingham to demonstrate their opposition to white rule in South Africa.

Nottingham Against Apartheid, organised by a broad-based committee including representatives from black community groups, trade unions, students and Nottingham AAM groups aimed to make a new level in the struggle in South Africa and in the solidarity movement here.

This it did. It was the biggest demonstration in Nottingham in many years, predominantly black and vocal. Marchers called for victory for the ANC, sanctions now, and out with Botha, Reagan and Thatcher.

The rally boasted an impressive platform, with speakers from St Paul's Apartheid Free Zone Campaign, Notts Women Against Pit Closures and all sections of the local Asian and Afro-Caribbean communities, as well as the ANC and SWAPO.

Paul Josen, ANC, brought greetings from youth in South Africa. 1986, he said, 'will be one hell of a year. This is not

Sharpeville. This is not Soweto. This is it!'

Gwen McLeod from Notts Women Against Pit Closures pledged her support to the liberation struggle. She said that although the year-long miners' strike had seemed to those involved to be a massive battle, it was nothing compared to the struggle in South Africa. 'It is our duty as workers and socialists to give what we can to the South African freedom fighters.'

A candle-lit vigil addressed by ANC representative Tambo Zume commemorated those killed in recent years in South Africa.

The day was rounded off with a benefit concert at which two representatives from Broadwater Farm Defence Campaign spoke and collected over £70 for their campaign.

Overall the day succeeded not only in raising a substantial amount of money for the ANC, SWAPO and COSATU, but more importantly is beginning to draw together the black community, the trade union movement and student bodies, showing the way forward for the solidarity movement. As Tumbe Balougum from St Pauls said, 'Remember this — this is just the beginning.'



South Africa's police in action. Immigration authorities want to send Korler back to this.

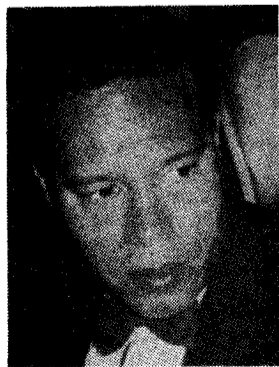
Black section condemns Farrakhan ban

A STORM of protest has greeted Home Secretary Douglas Hurd's decision to ban the planned London visit of the black American preacher Louis Farrakhan. The decision followed intensive lobbying by Grenville Jenner, Labour MP for Leicester West, and Tory MP Michael Latham, both acting on behalf of the British-Israel group and citing Farrakhan's anti-semitism as pretext.

The Labour Party black section has issued a statement on the ban which we reprint below.

THE Labour Party black section campaign is appalled by the decision of home secretary Douglas Hurd to

ban from Britain the American black leader Louis Farrakhan.



Farrakhan

We believe this is yet another example of the Tory government caving in to the news media-inspired hysteria against black people. The reason given for barring Farrakhan was that his presence 'would not be conducive to the public good'. This was the

same trumped up claim made by the Tories when they excluded Kwame Turay.

Farrakhan is reported to have made anti-semitic statements. If such is the case, we make it absolutely clear we do not support them.

But we condemn the home secretary's decision to bar him on this pretext as hypocritical. His government has previously played host to Nazis like PW Botha, President of racist South Africa, and Klu Klux Klan leader Bill Wilkinson despite widespread opposition from the black community.

The black sections campaign is fully committed to free speech in a democratic society. We believe the government's decision to ban Farrakhan

will only further fuel the huge distrust of Black people in this government and the mainstream political process generally.

We as black people have a right to be heard and a right to dissent. Any tampering by government with these inalienable rights makes a mockery of claims about democracy and will surely serve to store up an eventual eruption of Black protest, the intensity of which has never before been seen in this country.

We therefore call on the home secretary to immediately withdraw his ban on Louis Farrakhan. The ban on Kwame Turay must also be lifted. Labour leaders should campaign inside and outside parliament to achieve these objectives if they are to have credibility with the black community.

El Salvador: new wave of repression feared

A LABOUR movement delegation just returned from El Salvador reports that a new wave of violent repression is very much on the cards.

The scorched earth policy of Christian Democrat President Napoleon Duarte in the war against the FMLN is now being carried over into the struggle in the Cities.

Duarte, who started his Presidential career with a significant popular base amongst the urban masses, has now all but lost it. The cost of the war takes 70% of the GNP, despite US military aid running at a rate of 500 million dollars a year (more than any other country in the world bar Israel and Egypt).

Recent economic

measures have led to drastic increases in the cost of living against a backdrop of combativity from the Unions that combines economic demands with political demands for the release of prisoners and for peace talks with the FMLN. 80 Trade Union leaders have been assassinated in the last year. A union leader disappeared last Thursday. The labour movement delegation which included members of the T&GWU and the NUM and Jeremy Corbyn MP met Trade Union activists in San Salvador and showed their solidarity by taking part in a Trade Union march under a banner in English and Spanish reading 'British Trade Unionists — workers of



Salvadorian union leader Ignacio de la Fuente.

'the world unite.' They will produce a full report of the visit and take part in a London Rally on 17 March.

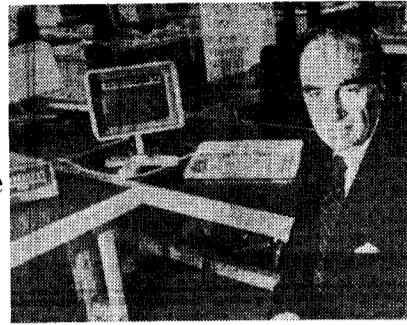
★ *For further information on the delegation and to order the report contact Labour Movement Delegation to El Salvador, c/o SOGAT 82, 13-16 Borough Road, London SE1 0AL.*

WAPPING: WHAT

CONSTRUCTION OF the Wapping plant began six years ago, in 1980. Between 1981 and the end of '84 there followed intermittent negotiations with the print unions about the new site. During that period Murdoch came nowhere near any agreement about new technology with the unions. That round of negotiations ended and did not begin again until September 1985, only to break down by Xmas.

By now Murdoch's real plans for his Wapping site had emerged. Far from using the Wapping plant to print the new *Post*, projected to start publication in March this year, and only to provide extra facilities there for his other papers, it became clear that the new plant was tooled up for full production of all Murdoch's titles — and it was ready to run without the print unions, on scab labour. The events of the last few

days have provided the proof positive. With the collusion of the EETPU leadership, Rupert Murdoch has precipitated what will be the biggest print industry dispute in decades. On its outcome depends the future of the print unions, and indeed the labour movement as a whole. CAROL TURNER looks at what's going on over Wapping.



EETPU LEADER Eric Hammond, by his own admission, has no objection 'in principle' to signing a legally binding no-strike deal with Rupert Murdoch. And a nod has proved as good as a wink to the Australian print boss who brought out issues of all his newspapers at the new Wapping plant last weekend — using scab labour, most of whom are members of the electricians union.

There is no doubt that Murdoch himself deliberately precipitated the dispute. After the results last week of the NGA and SOGAT ballots on industrial action, he told the unions: 'I say now that all negotiations between SOGAT, the NGA and ourselves on Wapping are ended.'

The nod from Hammond and the

HAMMOND EXPOS

completion of facilities at the Wapping plant was all Murdoch was waiting to bring things to a head. Now that's got both, that is just what Murdoch done. And electricians' leader Hammond has been instrumental in massive redundancies now facing print industry. He has given a green light to Fleet Street's bosses to go and sack tens of thousands of workers.

In December the EETPU publicly indicated its willingness to sign an agreement on the terms outlined by Murdoch. This brought down on its head the combined wrath of the TUC and other unions — but to no avail. Ignoring the effect on other unions of signing an agreement, Hammond rejected the TUC 'interference' in the form of Willis letter.

During January meetings of EETPU were reported to be 'considering whether to enter talks with the company (News International) over a recognition deal at Wapping.' Meanwhile, preliminary talks between

A BATTLE TO THE DEATH

WHEN PRINT workers struck last Friday they did so because they were in a battle to the death for their own jobs and those of every other print worker up and down the country. If Murdoch gets his way, literally tens of thousands of jobs will be lost.

He has already tried to sack the 5500-odd workers on his own four titles, *The Times*, *Sunday Times*, *News of the World*, and the *Sun*, who are now on strike. Anticipating a favourable climate created by Murdoch's hard-line over Wapping, in the last week alone: United Newspapers, the new owners of the *Express* group, has announced plans for major cuts in its 6000-strong workforce; the *Telegraph* group has announced its intention to begin talks on reducing its London production staff by half; and the *Financial Times* is about to make public its proposals for moving to a new plant on the outskirts of London, with new staffing levels and a commensurate number of redundancies as a result.

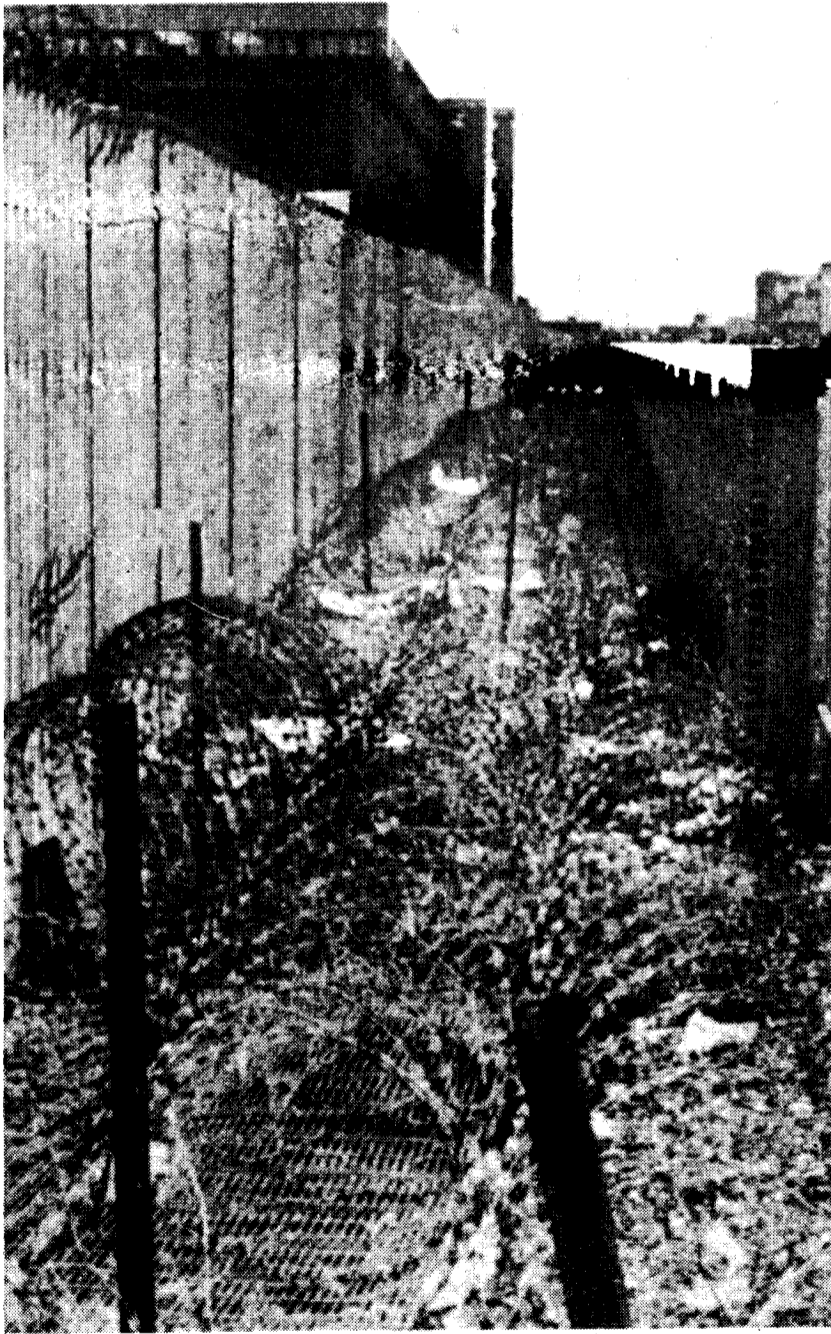
Unlikely

When the Murdoch presses rolled at Wapping last weekend it was a red rag to the bulls of the press corporations — and every single print worker knows it. That is why NGA and SOGAT members recently voted by huge majorities to take action, and why there is an anticipated 5:1 majority for industrial action among AUEW members.

Murdoch's plans aren't about trimming the fat from a corpulent print industry, they aren't about the prospect of a few well-paid Fleet Street workers having their earnings cut — but they are about the complete restructuring of the whole print industry, and about leading the way for a wholesale shake-up of all union-management relations in this country, leaving other workers' jobs equally vulnerable.

It is for those reasons that Murdoch's print workers have no option but all-out strike. And for the same reasons that the rest of the trade union movement must offer their wholehearted backing. That means:

- mass picketing — which to be effective would have to be on a scale that dwarfs Warrington and Orgreave;
- a complete boycott of distribution for Murdoch's scab papers, with appropriate industrial solidarity action by other workers;
- in short, the sort of mass industrial solidarity action by every major trade union in this country that will make Murdoch's plans and the Tory anti-



union laws unworkable.

Such solidarity of course won't come automatically. It will have to be fought for, and hard. The decision by the NGA and SOGAT, supported by the TUC who are calling on all trade unionists not to cross picket lines, comes late and so far is much too little to stop News International in its tracks. More of a lead is needed.

Already Murdoch has proved he can print an adequate quantity of all four newspapers at his Wapping plant, and distribute them throughout most of the

country. The print unions with the full collaboration of the TUC, must fight for the total solidarity that's needed from the labour movement — starting with stepping up their own action at Wapping and elsewhere.

All along the road, print union leaders have conceded more and more ground to Murdoch in an attempt to appease him and delay his scheme. The events of the last week have conclusively proved the abject inadequacy of such a strategy. Murdoch himself commented last weekend: 'So long as Bren-



da Dean is in charge, I think things will be fairly peaceful. I just hope we don't see scenes like we saw in Warrington'.

After talks broke down last Xmas Murdoch gave the Fleet Street unions (with the exception of the NUJ) six-months notice that he intended to terminate his current agreement with them. The NGA responded with what the *Financial Times* described as 'the ultimate sacrifice': it offered to accept new technology for News International's new title, the *London Post*, planned to hit the streets this March. Murdoch rejected the offer.

Refusal

A week before the strike was called, the TUC stepped in. On behalf of all print unions except the EETPU, Norman Willis met a News International team on Sunday 19 January to offer an agreement on union recognition at Wapping. The condition for getting the meeting was no disruption to the production at Wapping of the new 24-page

supplement of the *Sunday Times* which hit the streets on the day the strike took place.

The TUC proposals went further than any previously made. They included:

- a 'continuity of production' undertaking by the unions, recognising the 'requirement of an agreement must be the need to avoid action which disrupts production';
- an undertaking to conduct a secret ballot of members before calling for official action;
- provision for ACAS conciliation which could be triggered unilaterally and would ultimately be binding;
- recognition that 'in Wapping new technology and working methods being used would necessitate flexible working'.

Yet again Murdoch's reply was a refusal. He announced that talks at Wapping were 'at an end'. He would discuss only working at News International's other two Fleet Street plants.

WHAT'S AT STAKE?

HAMMOND'S SCABBING REVEALED

print unions and the EETPU called by the TUC last week failed. Hammond claimed to be 'ill and unable to attend the meeting', but the electricians would meet Murdoch for discussions this week he announced.

Last Thursday, only 24 hours before the print strike was called, the truth emerged: Hammond had been complicit in Murdoch's dirty dealings all along. Thursday's *Financial Times* leaked the content of a confidential document presented to the TUC meeting the day before.

On 30 September at a meeting between the print unions, Tom Rice, the EETPU national officer responsible for Fleet Street, denied accusations that members of the electricians union were being recruited to work at Wapping. The evidence of this was offered to last week's meeting: two fake job applications — one from an NGA member posing as a Southampton electrician, the other from an AUEW member posing as a Glasgow electrician.

The NGA member received an ap-

plication form, compliments of the Southampton EETPU secretary; the AUEW member was referred to the home address of the EETPU secretary for his area. At an interview conducted in the presence of O'Hanlon, the EETPU secretary, the AUEW member was told he would be required to undertake plate-making (traditionally an NGA job) and to leave the AUEW and join the electricians union.

The TUC confidential document concludes that an 'arrangement does exist' between the EETPU and Murdoch. The leaked TUC document gives clear evidence indeed that the EETPU's public pronouncements — damning though they are — bear no relation whatsoever to the real situation which exists between the electricians and Murdoch.

There is more behind this than simply the future of the print unions, their members' jobs and conditions. Together with Rupert Murdoch, Eric Hammond is pioneering an entirely different form of trade unionism in Bri-

tain in the future. What that will amount to is more than just pulling the teeth of a few powerful print unions.

Previous issues of *Socialist Action* have highlighted the reality for the unions which lies behind the introduction of legally binding agreements: the decimation of trade union strength, as witnessed in countries like the United States and West Germany; and, along with that, the absolute reduction in the power of the trade union movement to defend its members' jobs and interests.

Make no mistake, that is the real significance of the Wapping deal and the EETPU's complicity. The actions of Hammond are a short fuse on the future of the whole trade union movement in this country, as the SOGAT

summary of the Murdoch offer reprinted on these pages graphically shows.

Murdoch

Rupert Murdoch's ability to get what he wants is still in doubt. The EETPU is already out on a limb within the trade union movement for going as far as it has. Its traditional 'new realist' partner, the AUEW, has expressed itself critical of the deal which Hammond is angling for. But the actions of the EETPU and, to a lesser extent, last week's TUC offer to Murdoch (which he rejected), take all unions further down a road that can only end with the installation of bosses unions in every single industry.

An article in last Saturday's *Financial Times* speaks worlds of the events which have led to the present print strike. 'Mr Murdoch has won so far,' it says, 'because he had prepared with a precision and efficiency absent from most Fleet Street managements in the past. He has done so coldly and cynically, secretly and deviously, anticipating successfully the moves of the other actors in the drama. This weekend, Fleet Street changed — not by attrition, not by marginal shifts, certainly not by negotiation — by fiat.'

dirty

The article goes on to outline the history of Wapping. It was *Sunday Times* editor Andrew Neil who proposed to Murdoch that he should designate Wapping a green-field site and hence open it up to new agreements with any unions Murdoch chose. And it was the same Mr Neil who was 'among a number of advisers who steered Mr Shah in the direction of the electricians union ... to get a no-strike deal for his new plants. Mr Shah, approached by the EETPU through Mr John Grant, its communications director, and Lord Harris (associated with the Docklands development scheme), like Mr Grant a prominent member of the SDP, began talks and ultimately reached agreement in the middle of last year.'

deal

'It is a matter of judgement,' concludes the *Financial Times*, 'how far the negotiations over the past weeks genuinely failed, or were assumed by Mr Murdoch to be bound to fail so that his audacious strategy of moving to Wapping with all four titles could be tested.'

Hammond is implicated up to his neck in Murdoch's plans to smash the print unions. And this fact poses the trade union movement in Britain with a double task. First it must ensure that Murdoch's union-bashing scheme is scotched — by organising the massive industrial solidarity necessary to ensure that the News International workers' strike succeeds. Second, and no less important, the scabbing actions of Hammond must be stopped once and for all.

It must be made crystal clear to the electricians' leaders that their underhanded, anti-union behaviour will no longer be tolerated by any other union. Disciplinary action must be taken. That means forcing them to break their links not only with Murdoch and his ilk, but also with the scabs in the movement's own ranks such as the UDM and its ilk.



Grays Inn Road and Bouverie Street. It was in that light that the NGA and SOGAT finally found themselves last Friday with no option but to call their members out on strike.

Security

While the idea that concessions by the unions could avert Murdoch's axe is entirely wrong, the attempt by those unions so to do has brought out into the open once and for all the state of affairs at Wapping. At every step of the way Rupert Murdoch has shown he has no intention whatsoever of backing down.

Murdoch has shown that his real plan for Wapping is to produce all his titles there, with the aid of scab electricians, and so take a qualitative step towards smashing forever the power of the print unions. Today it cannot fail to be clear to every trade unionist who has followed the affairs of News International that they too have but one option: to stand up and be counted alongside the print workers now on strike.



MURDOCH'S DIRTY DEAL

WHAT EXACTLY was Rupert Murdoch offering the print unions in the negotiations which took place before Xmas last year? What would a no-strike deal — legally binding on not — really mean? We reprint below a summary of the Murdoch contract given in the special issue of the SOGAT journal, January 1986:

THE draft agreement presented by management on 21 November (1986), which we were asked to sign, included the following points:

- No recognition of chapels or branches, and no negotiations with them.
- No strikes 'or other industrial action for any reason whatever'. The union must promptly repudiate any

industrial action taken by members

- Anyone taking part in a strike or industrial action will be subject to immediate dismissal with no right of appeal.
- Union officials 'have a special duty to enforce this section' of the agreement!
- No closed shop. Employees who are a member of the union can leave it at any time.
- Union representatives in the company will be elected by the members but can be immediately removed from office by management if they are given a written warning for any disciplinary offence
- No union recognition at all for supervisors and management grades.

- Complete flexibility of working with no demarcation lines.
- New technology may be adopted at any time followed by job cuts.
- No minimum staffing levels either by agreement or understanding. The employer will decide the number of people required for any job, and fix their starting and finishing times.
- The employer has 'exclusive right to manage'. Management will select people for jobs, 'classify and reclassify' people, 'hire, promote, demote and transfer employees as required'. They will also 'suspend, discipline, dismiss, lay off employees from work' as they see fit.
- All this will be legally binding on the union and the members.

Ken Livingstone

WITH THE Tories in open crisis, Neil Kinnock's witch hunt is still scoring own goals for Labour.

Tribune reached grotesque heights in its last issue when it devoted more than three pages to witch hunting Militant and other socialists and half a page to dealing with the Tory crisis!

But the witch hunters aren't having everything their own way. Witch Hunt News has been widely circulated. And opposition to the witch hunt comes from those who are not known opponents of Kinnock within the party.

On Tuesday 21 January a public meeting in London brought together those fighting against the witch hunt. Socialists expelled from the party, or threatened with expulsion — Amir Khan, Kevin Scally, and supporters of Devon Labour Briefing — with Joan Maynard, Diane Abbott and Ken Livingstone.

We print what KEN LIVINGSTONE and JOAN MAYNARD said

I HAD NO trouble deciding to come on this platform because I have a record of opposition to all expulsions. It dates back to the GLC Labour group in 1976 when the leadership of the Labour group wanted to expel two members because they were too right wing even for the leadership of the GLC Labour group.

At that stage the position that the left took on the GLC Labour group was that we were opposed to all expulsions, whether of the right or the left. The Labour Party should be basically a broad parliament of the left, and anyone who feels they've got a contribution to make should be acceptable within it.

I don't take the view that individual left wingers bring disrepute on the party. My problem on the GLC is not that individual groups of left wingers bring disrepute on the party, but that we actually have a consistent bloc of four or five Labour members voting with the Tories, who don't just bring disrepute on the party, they actually allow the Tories to win votes. Now the Labour group here has taken a very clear position that those comrades are answerable to their GMCs, not to some internal structure of discipline within the GLC Labour group.

"I have to say very clearly for anybody who may be in doubt, I am ready to do everything to oppose expulsions, to make it difficult for any comrade in the Labour Party whether it's the leader of the Labour Party or a local GMC, to carry these expulsions out."

If they can carry their GMC, they've got a right to put the position that they do to council. If they can't carry their GMC, their political career basically is finished. The discipline that we should be arguing for, is the discipline of the rank and file over their elected representatives.

There are several things that we can do to actually make it more difficult for the leadership of the party to push through any expulsions or purges.

The first and most easy example is in the case of the comrade on general committee who has been expelled because he is associated by some members of his local party with *Militant*. There are several things which Sheffield district party and his local ward can do.

The witch-hunt will work if no one makes it difficult for the leadership to carry it out. If it becomes difficult for the leadership to carry it out — if it means they have to close down whole



Neil Kinnock

parties, if they have to intervene into the workings of labour councils — it will become a nightmare for them.

Three years ago when the first expulsions of *Militant* took place, half a dozen of us on the Labour group discussed the possibility that three or four of us might join *Militant* quite prominently, and thus present the NEC with the prospect that if they expelled us they would actually reduce the Labour majority on the GLC to the point where they no longer had Labour control. But that issue disappeared when the mood wasn't there to widen the expulsions.

But what's quite clear now is that individual right wing constituencies, the 20 per cent that voted for Denis Healey in 1981, are being allowed to carry out their own expulsions. Not something imposed from the centre, but waiting for some local reactionary party to actually expel the people that are alleged to have brought the party into disrepute.

I can't give you a better way of describing that, or answering that, than the way in which Eric Heffer answered it at a recent meeting of the local government committee of the NEC. There was a discussion going on about how *Militant* in Liverpool had brought the Labour Party into

disrepute, and there needed to be an investigation.

Eric Heffer said that he recalled the time when leading Labour councillors brought the Labour Party into disrepute because they had corruptly embezzled hundreds of thousands of pounds of ratepayers money into their own pockets. At that time the Labour Party never felt the need to have an enquiry.

The truth is that up and down the length of this country, individual Labour MPs and Labour councillors bring the Labour Party into the most squalid disrepute. You just need to walk about two miles to the east of this building to Tower Hamlets council, where some Labour councillors get up, when they are discussing the question of housing Bengalis, and say 'we shouldn't be housing Bengalis, we should be housing our own people first'.

Purges

I have one or two exceptions to my opposition to expulsions. I'm prepared to expel someone who stands against an officially-endorsed Labour candidate. I'm also prepared to expel people who are openly racist, because they have no place in the Labour Party.

The Labour Party has never tackled the issue of Tower Hamlets. It's a nest of racist bigotry. The London Labour Party hasn't tackled it because we've left it to the local party. They've tackled it by deselecting those councillors, and so basically 8 May will bring to an end an appalling period in the Tower Hamlets Labour Party. But the national party never intervened. They've been prepared to ignore racism and corruption by Labour Party members, and yet they suddenly turn on a few *Militant* supporters.

I'm not in *Militant*! I have major points of difference about the issue of positive action to end discrimination against women and black people, and on the issue of our role in Ireland. But we didn't resolve that in the London Labour Party by expelling *Militant*. We resolved those issues by debating them at the regional executive, by voting on them at the regional annual conference. We resolved those issues

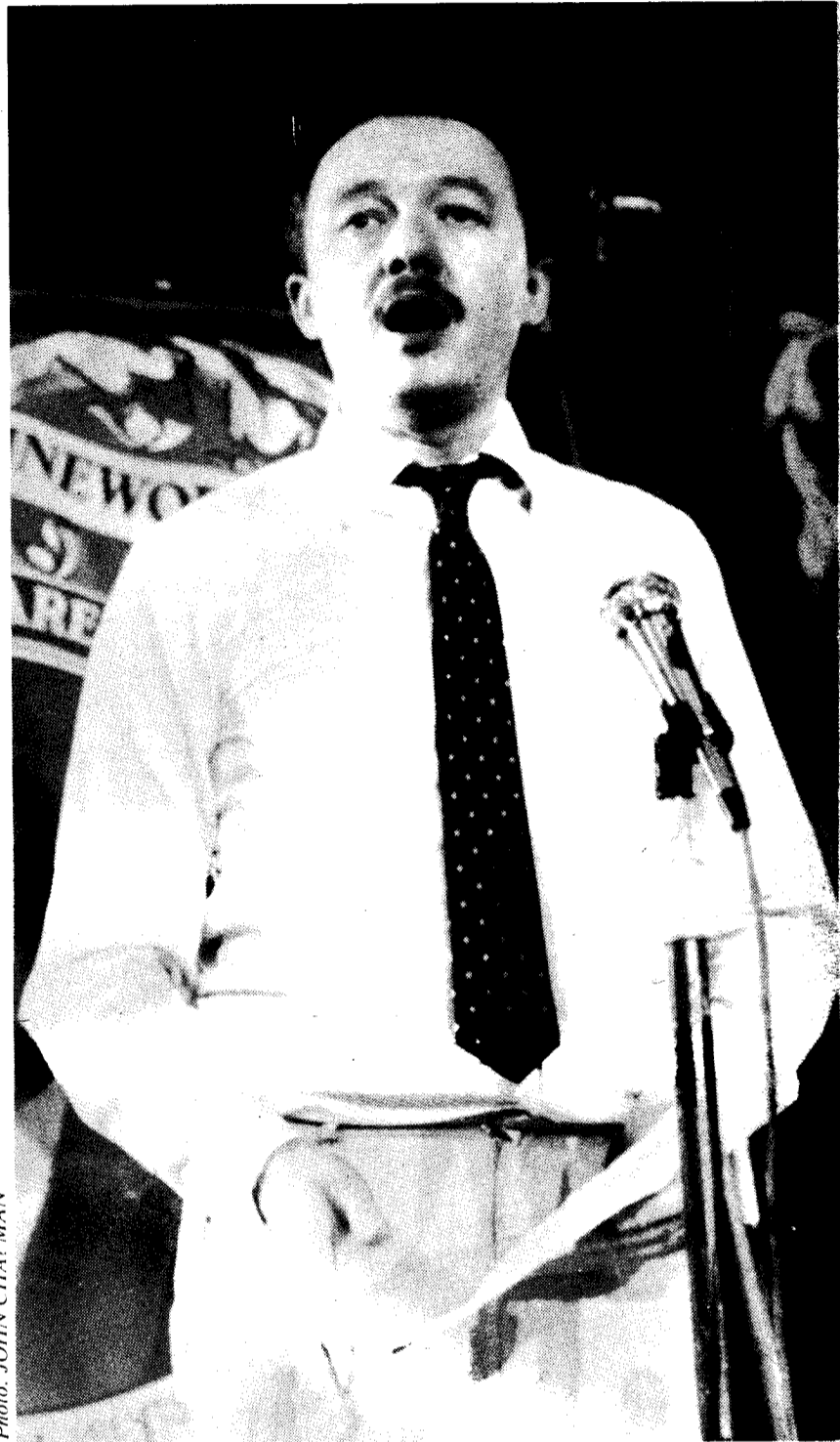


Photo: JOHN CHAPMAN

in a political way and that is the way we tackle these problems.

If the leadership of the party go down the route of looking for purges and expulsions, they will reunite a left that has been torn apart during this last year, and in reuniting that left they will open the way to their own defeat. I don't believe that the expulsions will actually deliver what the leadership want.

"My disagreements with the Militant pale into insignificance compared with my disagreements with the principle of expulsions."

If you expel every *Militant* from the London Labour Party, the net result will be a shift to the left, in terms of London Labour Party politics. I'm sure there are points of difference between those comrades who support *Militant* and those of us on the regional executive who take a different position on the other issues I've referred to. The leadership might be rather disappointed to wake up and find that having expelled every member of *Militant*, their problems were actually accentuated on the regional executive of the London Labour Party.

We've also got to look at what else is happening. Having started the expulsions of the *Militant*, it is now spreading further. A comrade has been expelled from the Labour Party because he believes in the reunification of Ireland, and the withdrawal of British troops. Now how can you ex-

pel him and not expel Ken Livingstone? How can you expel him for arguing for troops out of Ireland, and not expel Ken Livingstone who brought representatives of Sinn Fein into this building so that they could involve themselves in dialogue with Londoners? It seems that expulsion depend very much what position you hold. If you're an MP, whether you subscribe to *Militant* or not, you're

not expelled. But you are if you're an ordinary rank and file party member. How can you expel a comrade who supports Troops Out?

We also need to look at what can be done in those areas where comrades have already been expelled. How can we defend their democratic rights?

The Sheffield councillor who has been expelled is still a councillor, but the NEC has decided to uphold his expulsion. What response can Sheffield party make? It's not good enough just to have David Blunkett voting in a minority of 13 to 14 on the NEC. There are things that can be organised in Sheffield. His constituency and district parties can vote not to put a candidate up at the election in May, and leave the way open for that comrade to stand as an independent Labour candidate with the support of the local party and the local council

attacks witch hunt

leadership. If they do that I shall go and speak on his election platforms and canvass for him.

This sort of action will make it impossible for the party leadership to carry out expulsions.

Then we have the problems in Exeter. That people should be expelled because they draw attention to the fact that there are racist and sexist posters in their local Labour club is outrageous. But what is happening in Exeter is not really about sexism in the Labour club. The problem in Exeter is that the Labour minority on the county council are supporting, in an unofficial coalition, a Liberal administration to run Devon county council. The real issue inside the Devon Labour Party is not the question of sexist posters in the Labour club. It's the fact that the leadership of the Labour group on the county council are prepared to support the Alliance in power.

Democratic

Exactly the same problem will arise if we see a hung parliament in terms of the next general election. The issue will come up: are we going to be answerable to our local Labour Parties, who will instruct us to vote against any coalition arrangements, or are we going to sit quietly by as the last Parliamentary Labour Party did in the House of Commons when we had a Lib-Lab pact in the dying days of the Callaghan government.

If there wasn't a hung council in Devon, if the Labour councillors weren't supporting a Liberal administration, you wouldn't have expulsions. They need to purge the Labour Party of those people who are opposed to coalition politics.

Equally, when you look behind what's happening in Birmingham, it's not that councillors have brought the council into disrepute by going on television and attacking the Labour Party. On that basis half the shadow cabinet would have been expelled from the Labour Party during the period between the election of Mrs Thatcher in 1979 and our general election defeat of 1983. Shadow cabinet minister after shadow cabinet minister went on TV slagging off the NEC, constituency parties, the labour and trade union movement. What is at stake in Birmingham is the fear of the party leadership that black sections could actually break up their power base: that if black people are in a position where they can organise openly within the party, perhaps Roy Hattersley may not get reselected next time.



Amir Khan

That's the issue behind all of these expulsions. Once you strip away the fact someone's been selling *Militant*, or 'brought the party into disrepute', behind each of these expulsions are key political issues: coalition politics, Ireland, black sections. The purge, if it gathers steam, will actually open the way to a major shift to the right in policy.

And I have to say, very clearly, for anybody who may be in any doubt, I am ready to do everything to oppose



expulsions, to make it difficult for any comrade in the Labour Party, whether it's the leader of the Labour Party or a local GMC, to carry those expulsions out.

At the end of the day, my disagreements with the *Militant* pale



Derek Hatton

into insignificance compared with my disagreements with the principle of expulsions. If this purge is successful, the next stage will be to 'clean up' — as the right wing see it — Manchester Labour Party, and the London Labour Party, and turn us into a party as we used to be in London 15 or 20 years ago: a party that threatened no one, challenged no one, offended no one, and when it was in control of council, did nothing.

I see members in this audience who suffered through that London Labour Party, when nothing was achieved, when Labour administrations were elected which made massive and savage cuts in housing and education. That will be the end result of not standing up and challenging these expulsions. Whatever is required to defeat expulsions, it must be supported. And I know that in defending that position, I will take part in that campaign with the support of my local constituency.

Oppose Exeter expulsions!

A PETITION is being circulated opposing the expulsions from Exeter Labour Party.

It reads: 'We, the undersigned, believe that the proposed expulsions from Exeter Constituency Labour Party would discourage inner Party discussion and would be damaging to the Labour Party. We therefore call for expulsions to be dropped and for the Party to explore means for encouraging democratic debate.'

Copies can be obtained from Paul Giblin, 79 Pinhoe Road, Exeter, Devon to whom copies of the petition, resolutions, etc., should also be sent before 7 February.

Witch Hunt News

WITCH HUNT NEWS, now out, has the full facts on the witch hunt. Published by the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy, the Labour Left Coordination and the Campaign Group of MPs.

Order yours now: 20p per issue, £1 for 10. From Witch Hunt News, c/o 36 Melbourne Road, London E17. Send any reports or news to the same address. Get your Labour Party to take an order!

Witch Hunt News

Published by the Labour Left Coordination and the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy in co-operation with the Campaign Group of Labour MPs as a service to the Labour movement.

THIS NEWSLETTER is made necessary by the fact that there is a developing witch hunt taking place in the Labour Party and the majority of members of the Party have little knowledge of it because the facts are not being reported.

When the 1983 Labour Party conference reported, the party general secretary announced that there would be no witch hunt. Since then there has been a steady stream of disciplinary actions including many expulsions which appear to be directed exclusively against the left, in the last year 17 has been expelled and questioned. Some of the more serious examples of this gathering witch hunt, no doubt more could be added.

The CLC, CLDP and the Campaign Group of MPs are gathering information about the witch hunt for publication. A subgroup of the CLC has been established for this purpose. If you have any facts or news please send it to: Kevin O'Reilly, 36 Melbourne Road, London E17, or Gary Jones, 57 Lofting Road, London N1 2EL.

The gathering witch hunt and how to fight it

By Kevin O'Reilly, CLDP

Joan Maynard: "You can never contain witch hunts"

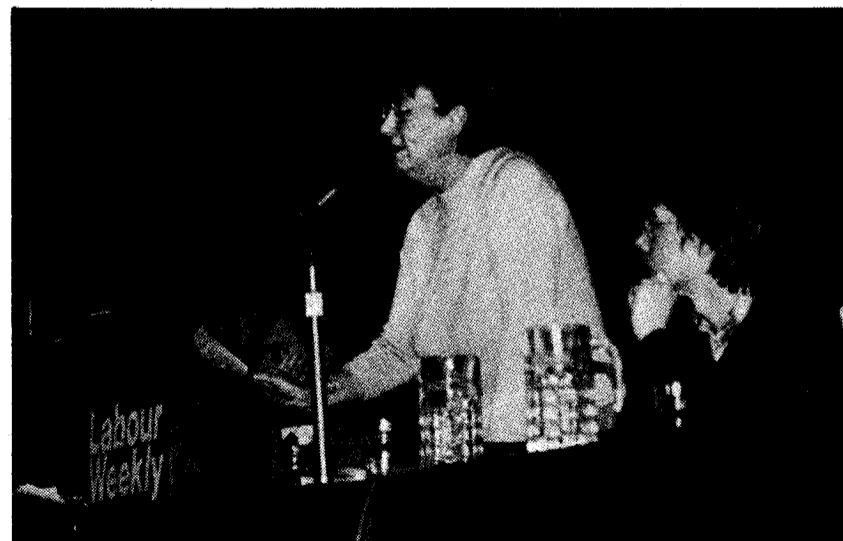
I WANT to congratulate those who have produced 'Witch-hunt news'. It should go to every constituency party in the country. It proves that there are a tremendous amount of expulsions going on in the labour movement that a lot of people don't know anything about.

It has never been possible to contain witch-hunts. When we were struggling to try and stop them expelling members of the *Militant* editorial board, we were assured by the then general secretary that there would be no further expulsions. Now we know how wrong that was.

It was a tragedy that only five NEC members voted against the suspension and enquiry into Liverpool. Some of the others now realise that you can't confine it to Liverpool. It has now reached Sheffield. You can't do that kind of thing to one group of comrades without it spreading to others.

How different the attitude is where the right wing have been involved in corruption! I started my political life in the North East, and I was there when the Cunningham-Poulson affair blew up. My constituency sent a resolution to the regional conference that the Labour Party should do its own enquiry into the North East. I moved that resolution at regional conference. It was carried, and it arrived at the NEC, of which I was also a member. I tell you, comrades, they were absolutely determined not to do any enquiry into the North East. Were they closing ranks behind their friends and supporters?

In Dudley constituency, where they are trying to save a right wing MP from reselection, they ruled that



Joan Maynard

we couldn't disagree with the EET-PU's delegates to that GMC. They are sending teachers, bank employees, and god knows who. Certainly not people working in the electricity supply industry. We were told that we could not disagree with these delegations. But in the two St Helen's constituencies and the District Labour Party there, who have also been suspended, all the trade union representatives to those GMC's have been gone through with a fine tooth comb.

One law operates in one area, and a different one if they want to protect the right wing.

Anyway, what is Liverpool's crime? That they were trying to carry out Labour Party policy and to de-

fend our people. We never get anywhere by attacking our own people. Who does it serve?

Comrades, there are only two sides in society: there's the bosses' side and the workers' side, and you have to decide which side you're on. There isn't any middle ground.

What swayed me to join the Labour Party was that I could never bear injustice. The injustice going on in the Labour Party has been graphically described tonight. Comrades, I've often said this in relation to Ireland and I'll say it now. You can't keep justice or freedom for yourself if you are part of denying it to other people. We all know that the proper way to deal with people we don't agree with is to try and defeat

them in argument, and not throw them out.

All we are really doing is scoring own goals. If, on the miners and Liverpool, we had had a united labour movement which went out to the country and said 'We stand with the miners and Liverpool and Lambeth, today and every day until victory is won', then what a different situation we would have had!

We need to mobilise people for continued struggle and identify with that struggle. I want to see the Labour party a campaigning party. I want to see it identified with every struggle that is going on. I don't mean a witch-hunt campaign. I mean a campaign in support of working people and not attacking them. I believe that is the way to win the next Labour government. Making sure that people know where we stand on issues. Not only where we stand, but what we propose to do as well as attacking the Tories.

The witch-hunt won't end with the *Militant* tendency. Its purpose is to get rid of as many socialists as possible, in order if need be, out of the next election, to have that coalition with the SDP and the Liberals.

Tony Benn said that at the last NEC. And I can tell you the leader, Neil Kinnock, shot three feet in the air. Now you can always tell when you've hit the nail on the head. People wriggle, don't they?

The message I'll leave you with is this: despite all the difficulties, we've got to keep up the struggle, because you and I and many more thousands of people, millions of people really, intend one day to help win socialism throughout the country.

Reviews

Femoles tackle Margarella

MARGARELLA, the Moles and the Moneytree, Frank and Alan Brammah's brilliant children's book about the miners strike, has now been turned into a pantomime. Among those taking part is PAT THOMAS of the Sherburn Miners Wives Support Group. She writes about the fun they have had.

How strange it is that it is still as busy and interesting after the strike as it was during it, and how unpredictable. Never could I have dreamt that I could be touring parts of Yorkshire in a pantomime of all things, yet here I am doing my 'Pauline Femoles' bit in *Margarella, the Moles and the Moneytree*.

THEATRE



How did I, and Anne Richards, our 'Margaret Femoles', get involved? Simple, we were just asked.

Through our contribution to the North Yorkshire Women's Strike '84-85 book, things just snowballed so that lately we have been working for Yorkshire Arts Circus.

Rachel, the producer of the Panto, decided we were talented enough to be in it but gosh, the hard work and time it involves. Had we known — oh no, I mustn't say things like that or it would be back to the kitchen sink — sod that!

The fun we've had during the rehearsals has more than compensated. I mean, how can you not laugh uncontrollably dur-

ing a very serious scene (like I did) at someone who says 'Aye, our Ohs have been eyepened now,' instead of 'Aye, our eyes have been opened now' or at the chief guinea pig (police inspector) who muddles the words of his one and only song and the tune as well.

Still, he promised to type out the correct words for the following rehearsal, so some bright spark shouted 'And while you're at it, type out the right bloody tune too!'

Why don't you come along and see us when we're in your area? You'll find it's delightful and full

Reviewed by Pat Thomas Sherburn Miners Wives support group

of humour, a look at our struggle in a satirical, fairytale way. The songs are sheer comic genius, the costumes simple but hilarious, the whole tragic, amazing year condensed into fifty entertaining minutes.

Oh the strike, it has a lot to answer for. It was wonderful to discover there was life after marriage during the strike, but it's been even more wonderful to discover there's life after the strike as well.

You can see *Margarella, the Moles and Moneytree* at: **Chesterfield** (phone 0246 37215 for details 5-6pm), 1 Feb, 8pm; **Mansfield International Community Centre**, 14 Feb, 8pm; **Sheffield Library Theatre**, 19 & 20 Feb, 8pm.

Coalfield Woman

The review of *Femoles tackle Margarella* which appears on this page is reproduced from the latest issue of *Coalfield Woman*, the newsletter of Women Against Pit Closures. Number three (January 1986) is out now and available — price 20p plus 12p p&p, and as big a donation as you can spare! — from Coalfield Woman, c/o NUM, St James House, Vicar Lane, Sheffield. All proceeds will boost the funds of the women's support groups. Number three contains news round-ups from the different areas, as well as reviews and more poems from mining women.

Other Books

Copies of the book *Femoles tackle Margarella* are available from *Other Books*, price £4.50 plus 25p p&p. A large selection of books on and by women are also available. To order your copy of *Femoles*, or for more information on *Other Books* book service, contact: *Other Books*, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP. Payment should be sent with orders; cheques and postal orders should be made out to 'IMRS'.

London LPYS conference: no road for black youth

ON Sunday afternoon of the London LPYS conference a rally of about 150 youth launched a mis-named anti-racist campaign. This shows that the increased militancy of the black youth is beginning to have an impact on the LPYS.

By Chris Goff, Brent East LPYS

But, yet again, the rally was a lesson for young socialists on how *not* to reach the very youth that have, and will continue, to go into action against their repression.

A campaign is needed around the slogan of 'self defence is no offence', and which builds on the links black youth have made between their oppression and that of their sisters and brothers in South Africa. Instead the London LPYS conference had already agreed to a resolution which rejected the acts of self-defence by the black communities in Brixton and Tottenham.

The London LPYS had already turned its back on those youth that are saying no more — who are fighting back and looking for support from

within the labour movement.

Such support has already come wholeheartedly from the black section of the Labour Party, which is increasing its links with the defence campaign. That is an example the YS should take in how to build support for socialist policies among black youth.

Instead, speakers used the launch of the anti-racist campaign to make a bitter attack on black sections. The speaker from SALEP, using the example of South Africa, said that the black people who organised separately within the Labour Party were racist.

Speaker after speaker continued in this vein. Where have we heard that before?

The launch of the LPYS anti-racist campaign saw an open attack on the very section of black youth that the YS should turn towards.

Self defence is no offence! Support and build the Labour Party black sections! Build the AAM!

THE LONDON region Labour Party Young Socialists conference last weekend was a small affair. Less than 50 delegates were present, about 20 LPYS branches represented.

As usual the conference was dominated by *Militant* — who carried votes:

- against supporting Kingsley Abrams, the black section candidate, for the LPYS London regional committee;
- against a united left campaign to fight the witch-hunt of socialists in the party;
- condemning the 'riots

and looting' in Brixton and Tottenham at the end of last year;

By Polly Vittorini, Hackney South LPYS

- and against joint work with the Anti Apartheid Movement on the theme 'sanctions now', posing instead 'direct links' with South African workers

through the South African Labour Education Project (SALEP).

Resolutions which were passed on the witch-hunt did not even have any perspective of a fight against the proposed cuts in the LPYS budget.

This is a situation which must be turned around. Unless the YS builds among youth in struggle, and particularly among black youth, it will find itself increasingly isolated from the left in the labour movement.

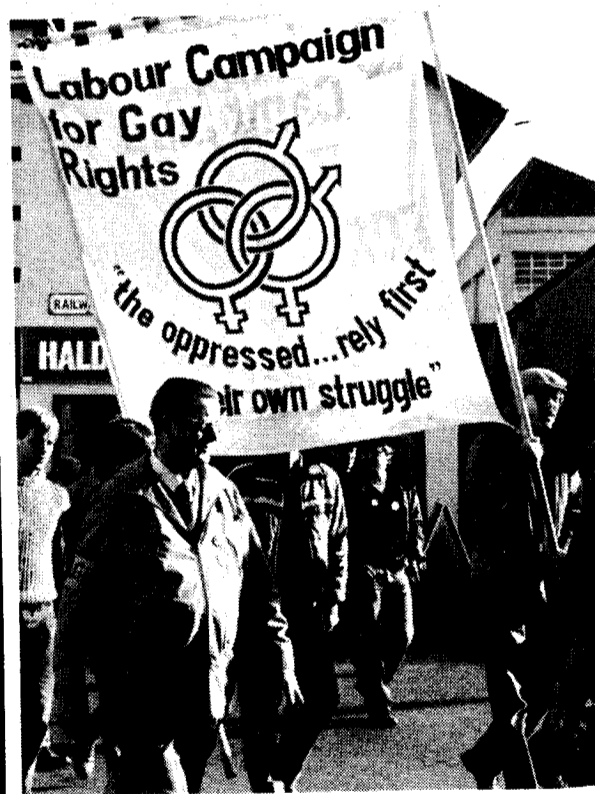
YOUTH ACTION
SUPPORT KINGSLEY ABRAMS

- Fight the Tories
- Justice for sacked miners
- No Euthanasia
- Support Black Swindon
- Defend Black Youth
- Repeal Act of 1976
- Justice for Apartheid

BLACK SECTIONS FOR NEC

YOUTH ACTION, the LPYS campaigning paper, latest edition just out. Kingsley Abrams, candidate for LPYS NEC member; Sparkhill LPYS against the witch hunt; Student anti-apartheid actions; Broadwater Farm and much more. 10p per copy from Maria Welsh, 27 Landos Court, Butler Street, Miles Platting, Manchester.

Going for gold: LCLGR plans for '86



A TWO-THIRDS majority for lesbian and gay rights: that was one of the goals the Labour Campaign for Lesbian and Gay Rights (LCLGR) set itself at its quarterly general meeting in Bristol on 11/12 January.

By Peter Purton, LCLGR Treasurer (personal capacity)

Buoyed up by the historic first-ever debates and votes for lesbian and gay rights at both the TUC and Labour Party conferences last year, LCLGR is determined to build on those successes by driving forward its campaign throughout the labour movement and by pressing for the implementation of the policies agreed at the conferences.

This campaign will also involve deepening the col-

laboration already developed between LCLGR and the black section, the Labour Womens' Action Committee, and other organisations which supported us at party conference, Labour Left Co-ordination and the Labour Coordinating Committee.

In the Labour Party, there will be a major drive to win the necessary number of resolutions and amendments to secure another debate on conference floor. LCLGR also plans to hold fringe meetings and have stalls at several of the forthcoming regional conferences over the next couple of months.

In the trades unions, a new working party will be coordinating work to press the TUC into implementing the non-discrimination policies adopted last year. There will also be a drive for affiliations from the major national unions.

Over the next few months LCLGR will also be

putting together a draft lesbian and gay rights bill to be used as a campaigning weapon inside the Labour movement. It is hoped that sponsorship can be won for the bill from the Campaign group and other Labour MPs.

LCLGR is embarking also on a major recruitment and affiliation drive. All lesbians and gay men active in the labour movement should join LCLGR to strengthen the campaign. Socialists everywhere should get their Labour Parties to affiliate.

● **Join LCLGR!**
Membership: £1.50 unwaged; £4 under £7000pa; £8 over £7000pa; CLP affiliations £10; branch affiliations £5. Send to: Membership Secretary, 17 Osborne Rd, Southville, Bristol BS3. Get your copy of Lesbian & Gay Socialist, 50p plus 17p p&p, from: Tobie, 119 Riversdale Rd, London N5.

A PIECE of the ACTION

Morning has broken...
Heigh-ho...

A quick wash and shave and then it's off to enjoy a concert in the Royal Albert Hall!

It's said to be an exciting new work composed, arranged, and conducted by someone who is anonymous!

By god, what an anticlimax! No wonder she didn't want to claim credit for that piece of shlock! Very effective alienation technique though...

© Corniac



Teachers' Pay — stop the sellout

THE AGREEMENT signed at the Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service by the employers and some of the teacher organisations on Friday, 24 January represents a major setback on both pay and conditions for all teachers. The responsibility for this sellout lies with the leadership of the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers (NAS/UWT).

The executive of the largest teachers union, the National Union of Teachers, rejected the deal and refused to participate in the ACAS talks.

The deal has to be formally ratified inside the

By Bernard Regan

Burnham Committee, the negotiating body for teachers pay. The NAS/UWT have said that they will ballot their members on the deal before ratifying it inside Burnham.

During the 3-4 weeks this will take it is vital that the NUT keeps up the pay campaign and maintains all forms of action. That is the only way that NAS/UWT members will be persuaded to vote against the sellout and join in a united fight against the government and the local employers. The deal means 6.9 per cent for all teachers over the year — for the vast majority it will be an increase of about £8.50 per cent. For 54,000 teachers on the lower scales, however, this settlement will actually be less than the employers offered back in October. Only a tiny handful of headteachers of very large schools will achieve pay increases in excess of the £1200 which the majority of teachers were fighting for. However, the deal is not a sellout simply because it does not restore

the massive 34 per cent teachers have lost over the last 10 years.

The right wing NAS/UWT have lined up with scab organisations like the Professional Association of Teachers and the headteacher organisations who have not only refused to take action throughout this campaign but have actively undermined the campaign. The deal represents a major concession on teachers conditions of service. It proposes further negotiations that will put a powerful weapon to discipline teachers into the hands of employers and management. It threatens to introduce a clear definition of the contractual duties and responsibility of teachers...

Up to now teachers pay and conditions have been negotiated separately. The NUT has opposed any attempt to bring the two together. The new Secretary of the teachers panel, David Hart of the National Association of Headteachers, has described the settlement as signalling the 'death knell of the Burnham Committee and CLEA/ST' (the Conditions of Service negotiating body). His organisation is eager to see the introduction of measures that will tie teachers hand and foot. Over the last year the NUT has prevented the claim

being taken out of the hands of teachers and given over to arbitration.

One of the features of the proposed settlement however is that 'an independent and impartial panel shall be appointed by ACAS'. The agreement goes on 'this panel shall control the programme and procedure of negotiations'.

The independent panel will consist of 3 people and any reports arising out of its deliberations 'shall be private' to those who participate. Since the NUT has refused to accept this capitulation, the NAS/UWT is deliberately colluding in establishing a procedure which forfeits all trade union negotiating rights and is deliberately excluding the NUT from any negotiations.

Not all members of the NAS/UWT accept this sellout. There are signs that some of their members in Birmingham, for example, are opposed to this agreement.

When the Government is under pressure following the Brittan-Heseltine-Thatcher fiasco and a real parents movement, the All London Parents Action Group, is emerging it is impossible to imagine the stupidity of the NAS/UWT leadership. But it is not just a betrayal of teachers. As the CPSA are about to ballot their members and the printworkers face a massive attack, this is a betrayal of all trade unionists.

Militants of the Socialist Teachers Alliance inside the NUT will be arguing for the union to keep up all forms of action in opposition to the Executive's proposals to scale things down.

Leicestershire rejects the UDM

THE NUM gained a tremendous boost last Friday when miners in the Leicestershire area voted by ballot to remain in the national union. This though all but 30 out of the 2,200 strong workforce had worked throughout the last strike. The 885 to 490 vote was a body blow to the attempts of the scab 'Union of Democratic Mineworkers' to extend their influence beyond their base in Nottinghamshire.

Following the defeat of the UDM supporter Terry Hughes in his bid for the area presidency, this vote shows that despite the result of the national



dispute, miners are far from defeated even in an area like Leicestershire.

In the course of the campaign to keep Leicestershire national, more evidence came to light about collusion between the UDM and the coal board. At Ellistown colliery, for example, the NCB chairman offered miners there an immediate wage rise, back-dated to the time of the Notts pay increase, if only they would vote to leave the NUM.

Area general secretary Jack Jones who campaigned for the area to remain in the NUM despite his opposition to the national strike, claimed that 'This result is not quite a vote of confidence in Arthur Scargill and the executive.' But overall developments in the pits paint a different picture, as the real choice becomes clearer — a fighting union led by Arthur Scargill, or a scab union, the UDM. The vote, therefore, is a vindication of the 30 miners, the 'Dirty Thirty', who stayed loyal to the union during the national strike. More and more Leicestershire miners are beginning to see what those 30 fought so hard to explain — that only by united action is it possible to halt the NCB's pit closure programme.

Justice for miners!

THE FIRST national meeting of the renamed Justice for Mineworkers Campaign was held in Sheffield on January 25. The meeting was attended by over 900 people from every coalfield in Britain including branch delegates and national officials of the NUM, the majority of the national committee of WAPC, representatives of the Campaign Group of Labour MPs and many sacked miners. Originally formed at a fringe meeting at LP conference as a Miners Amnesty Campaign, the campaign has been renamed Justice for Mineworkers after proposals from the Campaign Group of Labour MPs. After the winning of the NUM resolutions at the LP and TUC conferences, the main focus has become popularising and campaigning on these positions.

The Campaign Group have rewritten their Amnesty Bill and Tony Benn will be submitting it

Dick Withecombe
Chairperson of
Northwest Area
Miners Defense
Campaign.

as a Justice for Mineworkers Bill during the Prime Minister's question time on February 27. This will coincide with a lobby of parliament by sacked miners, and the presentation of a 20,000-signature petition by Dennis Skinner.

The Justice for Mineworkers Campaign will be launching a pamphlet prepared by the Campaign Group and NUM during the activities. The January 25 meeting took a report from the national WAPC which has agreed to sponsor the campaign, and was informed of a favourable reception by the NUM Executive. The meeting agreed to establish Justice for Mineworkers groups within each region, and to organise a week of actions in the regions leading up to the national Justice for Mineworkers demonstration and rally on

March 2. This will be followed by the evening 'Heroes' concert at the Albert Hall.

The meeting unanimously overturned model resolutions to the Labour Party and TUC conferences proposed by Trade Union Briefing which sought to make up for supposed inadequacies of the resolutions passed at the 1985 conferences. Rather it was agreed to circulate the Labour Party and TUC decisions through-out the labour movement, and to support the NUM's campaign to this year's conferences.

The Justice for Mineworkers Campaign's next meeting will be based on a structure agreed by the NUM: 10 nominees from the NUM (one per region); 10 from regional Justice for Mineworkers Campaigns; 10 from WAPC; and 3 members of the Campaign Group and 2 from the Miners Support Group Coordinating Committee. The 25 January meeting also elected Roger Windsor (NUM Policy Director), Nell Myers (NUM Press Officer), Mike Elliot (Socialist comedian — to coordinate fundraising), and the two national officials of WAPC onto the committee.

Support Phil Holt for NCU secretary

FROM 3 February for two weeks, members of the National Communications Union will be balloting to elect

By Ian Grant, NCU

their general secretary for the next five years. There are three serious contenders.

First to declare was Phil Holt, *Militant* supporter and the broad left's choice. Holt was elected to the union executive as part of the broad left slate when it gained control of the NCU in 1983.

He was one of the executive minority who voted to defy the courts when they were brought in to break the union's campaign of industrial action against British Telecom privatisation.

The right's candidate is the NCU-sponsored MP, John Golding. Golding was the 'witch-hunter general' of the Labour Party NEC until the broad left NCU executive withdrew his nomination to the Labour Party seat. Golding is drawing support from the union's 'Mainstream' organisation. In his election address he proudly refers to his history of fighting *Militant*.

The third leading candidate is NCU treasurer David Norman, a career official and hopeful of gaining the 'middle



ground'. His supporters claim that he alone can overcome the right-left divide and unite the union.

Under TUC rules the NCU general secretary will automatically be seated on the TUC general council.

Coming at a time when the labour movement is facing the threat of a split perpetrated by the EETPU and the UDM, the NCU elections pose British Telecom's 160,000 engineering and clerical workers with the question 'which side will the NCU line up on?' Uniting the NCU and the labour movement as a whole, cannot be done by compromising with the pro-boss splitters, nor by witch-hunting the left.

The advice for NCU members is straight-forward: only by a hard fight against government and management attacks and against their collaborators in the labour movement can unity be defended. Advocates of such a fight will be voting for Phil Holt.

Civil Servants go for new pay claim

THE CIVIL and Public Servants' Association, the country's largest civil service union

By Robert Johnson,
CPSA South Glamorgan DE branch
(personal capacity)

which represents mainly clerical and typing grades, held a special day conference on 25 January.

It was decided against the platform's advice to reject the government's proposals for a long-term civil service pay system. This would have institutionalised low pay for thousands of members of the

union and prevented free collective bargaining over future wage demands. The majority against the NEC was over two-thirds.

Supporters of the system were hard put to defend it: even Alistair Graham, the right wing general secretary, found fault in that there was no automatic right to arbitration!

There is even an acknowledgement that the government could break the agreement in the interests of 'public policy and the public purse'; that is, cash limits come first.

The 1986 pay claim will include a flat rate increase of £15 per week, 30 days holiday per year and a 35-hour week. The conference instructed the NEC to prepare for all-out

industrial action at the end of April and to ballot the membership for this during April.

In 1981 selective action by civil servants cost the government over £600 million. This is what the government is willing to pay to hold down the wages of its lowest paid workers.

The resolve of the members remains high. Last year saw numerous disputes, mostly over staffing in both DHSS and the Department of Employment. We must use this resolve to put pressure on the NEC and full time leadership to ensure that the claim is carried forward. Branches must keep the pressure on while preparing locally for all-out action.

FUND DRIVE

IF YOU had any doubts about Socialist Action's indispensable role, just compare our response to the Tory crisis with the rest of the press.

In the week when Brittan was forced to resign and as the pressure on Thatcher built up, *Tribune* devoted half a page to it, and three pages — including the front — to witch-hunting attacks on socialists in the Labour Party. On the day Brittan resigned the *Morning Star* headline read 'For Britain's sake go'.

We have been able to provide analysis and explanation of what really lies behind this crisis. We have been charting a serious working class alternative to all those who present the only choice as between the European capitalist alternative or the US capitalist one.

This is why we have no hesitation in appealing to you, our readers, to give to our fighting fund. In order to maintain our weekly schedule, we have to raise £15,000 by Easter. This averages £400 per week needed.

Many supporters have pledged a weeks wages, others are involved in fund raising schemes. Please do

what you can to help keep our voice heard. Send cheques to Socialist Action, Box 50, London N1 2XP.

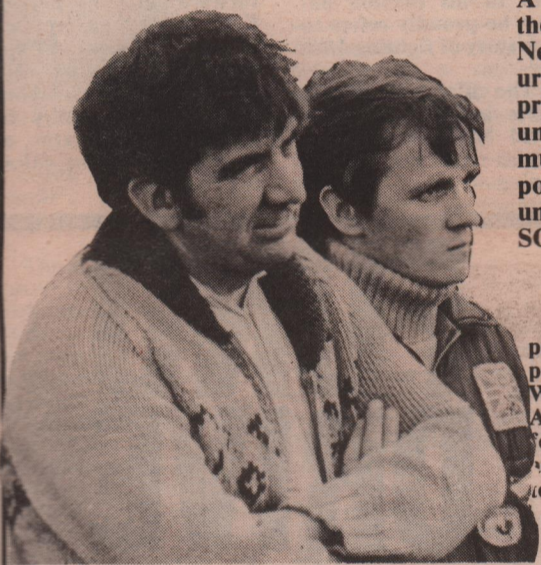
Our thanks this week to the £60 from our Bristol supporters, £35 from our supporters in South East London, and £10 from East London.

Money received	£
Individuals	4,100.00
Aberdeen	50.00
Birmingham	100.00
Bristol	180.00
Cardiff	150.00
Coventry	0
Edinburgh	0
Glasgow	0
Huddersfield	50.00
Leeds	37.50
Leicester	18.00
Leamington	0
Liverpool	0
Manchester	376.25
Newport	82.00
Nottingham	175.00
Oldham	70.00
Preston	0
S Yorks	545.00
Swansea	0
Swindon	0
E London	1,277.00
N London	661.30
NW London	434.50
OW London	25.00
SE London	70.00
SW London	136.00
TOTAL	8,477.55

SOCIALIST ACTION

Only all-out action can win

Support the print workers!



A PROLONGED STRIKE in the print is now underway. Never before has there been so urgent a need to rally round the print workers. Every trade unionist worthy of the name must campaign flat out in support of the TUC's call to all unions to respect NGA and SOGAT picket lines.

Murdoch wants to force company unionism down the throats of print workers. If he gets his way at Wapping, other sites will follow. And it will make it that much easier for bosses in every other industry to adopt a 'take it or leave it' approach to union agreements.

Single union deals, no-strike

clauses, an end to the closed shop, and all the other measures to cripple and undermine the unions will get an enormous shot in the arm if Murdoch wins. He will use everything he can to defeat the print workers.

Murdoch is determined to exploit the Tory anti-union laws to the full. SOGAT has already been served with an injunction against so-called secondary picketing to try to prevent workers at the wholesalers showing their solidarity. The same action is being contemplated to prevent picketing at Wapping.

To win the dispute, these laws will have to be confronted head-on — and the lessons of the miners strike drawn. The miners were absolutely right to insist these bosses laws should be broken.

Picketing of Orgreave propor-

tions — this time backed by the power of the whole trade union movement — will be needed to close Wapping. The TUC's call to respect official pickets will only be enforced through the sort of campaign needed to build such mass actions of solidarity.

This approach has to be applied first to the print industry. Murdoch's actions will not be broken by other newspaper proprietors taking his sales, as is claimed. Any advance for News International will be used as a stepping stone by the rest of the press barons. Rather than boosting print runs, other print workers must be called out in solidarity by the NGA and SOGAT.

Railworkers also have a direct stake. Murdoch's attempt to distribute his papers by road

threatens over 1000 rail jobs.

The role of the electricians union cannot be ignored. They are running roughshod over Bridlington in the print and other industries.

They are promoting UDM-style relations with the bosses which throw every shred of trade unionism out the window. Yet they are claiming the protection of the self-same Bridlington rules to stop other unions recruiting their members or moving into those sectors of industry staffed by electricians.

Only all-out action can win the most decisive dispute facing print workers in decades. The NGA and SOGAT have taken the first steps by calling out their News International members. Victory to the print workers means stepping up that action — now!



PICKET WAPPING!