

Socialist Challenge

Before death intervenes...

STEP UP THE FIGHT FOR THE HUNGER STRIKERS

THREE of the ten hunger strikers in the north of Ireland are now approaching death. But over the past week support for the prisoners has been building up.

An estimated 50,000 people marched in Dublin last Sunday in the biggest anti-British demonstration there since Bloody Sunday, 1972.

Thatcher's visit to Dublin makes one thing absolutely clear. The British government is under pressure to agree to the hunger strikers' demands, and is desperately looking for a way out.

The hunger strike was adopted by the seven prisoners from Long Kesh and the three women in Armagh only as a last resort, after years 'on the blanket' in their campaign for political status.

The prisoners were picked up under special legislation, interrogated under special legislation, tried in special courts and convicted by special laws. Yet the

government still denies their special status.

The fight for political status has reached a crucial stage. If it is defeated, not only will it be an important victory for the Tories, it will be a defeat which could set back the Irish struggle for years. It is time for the British labour movement to swing its weight behind the hunger strikers.

Last week's march in Dublin was complemented by a number of marches in the north of Ireland, and one of more than 5,000 in London. But this is only a small fraction of the support that could be mobilised.

The message of Thatcher's visit to Dublin, and the wave of protest

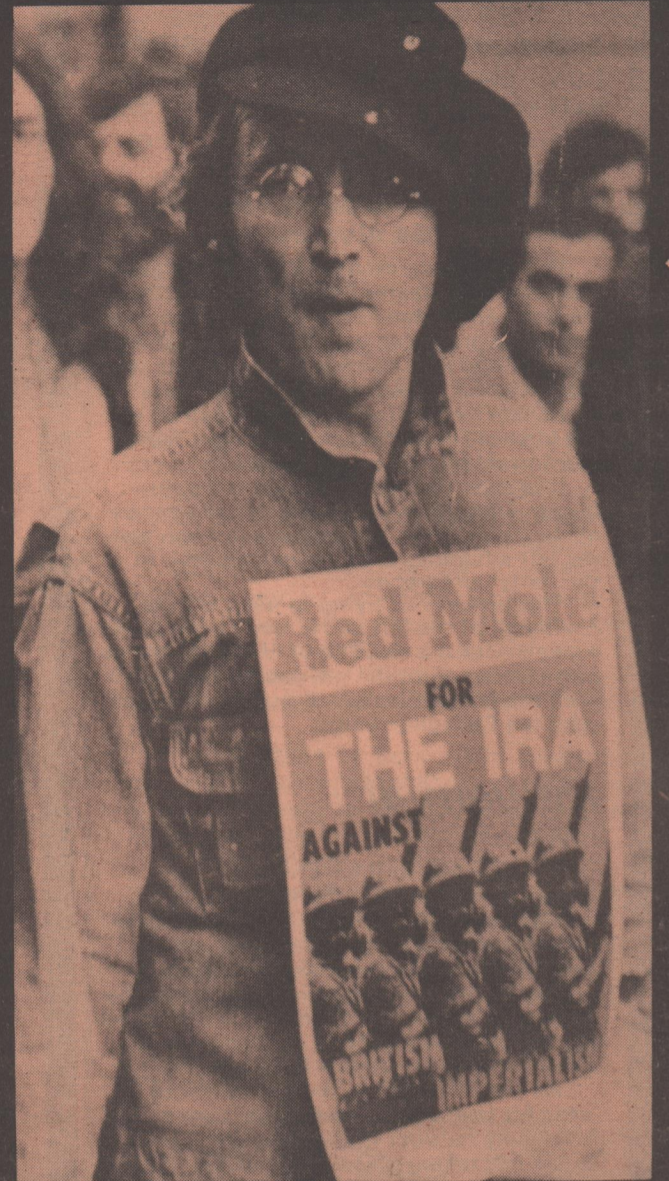
in the north of Ireland — which far exceeds the expectations of the British government — is that victory can be won.

Instead of total intransigence, government spokespeople are now beginning to talk about 'humanitarian concessions'. Before the hunger strikers start dying — and the first could be dead by Christmas — the fight for political status must be stepped up.

As the latest statement from the Armagh women says: 'Mobilise your resources and use every possible means to pressurise the British government into conceding our just demands before death and all its stark reality intervenes here'.

**Demonstrate: Manchester, 20 December, 12.30pm All Saints.
Lobby: Labour Party national executive, 17 December, 144 Walworth Road, South London.**

John Lennon



The Luck of the Irish

John Lennon, November 1971

If you had the luck of the Irish,
You'd be sorry and wish you were dead.
You should have the luck of the Irish
And you'd wish you was English instead!

A thousand years of torture and hunger
Drove the people away from their land,
A land full of beauty and wonder
Was raped by the British brigands! Goddamn! Goddamn!

In the 'Pool they told us the story
How the English divided the land,

Of the pain, the death and the glory
And the poets of auld Eireland.

Why the hell are the English there anyway?
As they kill with God on their side!
Blame it all on the kids and the IRA!
As the bastards commit genocide Aye! Aye! Genocide!

If you had the luck of the Irish,
You should have the luck of the Irish
You'd be sorry and wish you were dead.
And you'd wish you was English instead!
Yes you'd wish you was English instead!

DEATH OF A WORKING CLASS HERO

IN THE deluge of coverage of the murder of John Lennon, we can be sure that the media will want to bury his radical past.

Socialist Challenge has no intention of doing so.

On pages 8 and 9 we pay tribute to him and recall his stand against oppression — the side of John Lennon that led to some of his best music.



A section of the H Block march in Dublin last weekend

TROOPS OUT OF IRELAND NOW!

Editorial

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THE right wing of the Parliamentary Labour Party were exultant last week after the results of the shadow cabinet elections. The right-wing 'Manifesto' group saw eight of its slate for the twelve places elected.

Pro-NATO warmonger William Rodgers received a handsome 116 votes, while the leading candidates of the left — Heffer and Benn — were voted out. The *Times* pointed out that 'the four so-called left-wingers who were elected — people like Shore, Orme and Silkin — can certainly be classified as the kind of left winger that the right feels comfortable doing business with'.

It is clear that the PLP right wing, in league with other 'moderates' in the centre of the party, hope to marginalise Benn and the left advance which he represented at the party conference.

This process of trying to head off the challenge of the left had already been set in motion with the election of Michael Foot as party leader. Foot did not associate himself with the left at Blackpool, nor did he break with the Callaghan camp.

Influential

But as a result of his one-time 'left' credentials a number of influential trade union bosses and other 'moderates' pushed him forward for leader. The party centre saw him as the best candidate around which the trade union bureaucracy and the party as a whole could 'unite', as well as being the best candidate to cut the ground away from under Benn's feet.

As the *Times* put it, his election was a 'vote for peace and quiet'. This manoeuvre is unlikely to work in the long run. The shift to the left taking place in the party, reflected in the election of Foot himself, is profoundly influenced by a growing radicalisation and class hatred directed against Thatcher's government.

This process, rooted in the crisis of British capitalism, will not be halted by an MPs-only election in the palace of Westminster. It is inevitable that the question of the party leadership and democracy will remain on the boil, especially if Foot is the prisoner of his own shadow cabinet on issues like that of nuclear disarmament.

As Labour MP Reg Race said after the shadow cabinet elections: 'Labour MPs have shown that under no circumstances can they be trusted with a substantial voice in the election of the leader.'

Under duress they elected Michael Foot. They have now packed the shadow cabinet with Healeyites. Constituency parties should understand the message: Labour MPs are telling them that the truce is over.

Because of this PLP activity, Socialist Challenge has called on its supporters to support the broadest possible franchise in electing the party leader.

We think that the role of the PLP should be minimised, and that they should have no more say than any other party members. We think that the trade unions should play a role commensurate with their size and status in the party. In other words, we think that conference should decide the leader.

Election

At the present time the AUEW supports giving 75 per cent of the votes to the MPs. The General and Municipal Workers Union wants 50 per cent for MPs, while the TGWU and NUPE seem to be backing the one third each to MPs, trade unions and constituency parties scheme put forward by the national executive itself.

If there is no possibility of the 'conference decides' option being accepted, then the executive's proposal should be voted for.

The lesson of the election for the shadow cabinet is that the right are not at all prepared to give up the struggle against the left. They will try to reverse the gains of the Blackpool conference. The fight for democracy needs to be continued.

Labour Party - democracy

Organising in the unions: vital task for Labour left

THIS weekend sees two important conferences of the Labour left: the annual general meetings of the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy (CLPD) and the Labour Co-ordinating Committee (LCC).

Both these organisations play important but distinct roles in the Labour left. The CLPD, which launched the Rank and File Mobilising Committee, is a united campaign on the single question of democracy; the LCC was founded to fight for a mass campaigning Labour Party.

Organising inside the unions is crucial to winning both these objectives inside the party. At both conferences Socialist Challenge supporters will be proposing motions on the importance of this question.

At the CLPD conference a resolution from Hugh Richards stresses the importance of union policy-

making bodies discussing Labour conferences and mandating delegates. The undemocratic wielding of the block vote is a crucial aspect of the strength of the right wing.

At the LCC conference the resolution from Socialist Challenge supporters points to the fight against unemployment as crucial for the mass campaigning of the Labour Party, and proposes a series of objectives — around the 35 hour week, worksharing with no loss of pay, and a woman's right to work — which should be fought for.

At the CLPD conference, Socialist Challenge

supporters will also be arguing that the ultimate objective of the democracy fight should be that the Labour conference should decide both the leader and the manifesto.

While the proposals for an electoral college electing the leader and for the party executive to decide the manifesto should be supported against those of the right-wing, the highest and most democratic body of the party is the annual conference: it should have the power to decide.

The resolutions to the LCC conference reveal a number of problems if the campaign is to go forward.

At least two resolutions propose that the LCC should campaign on the basis of support for the Alternative Economic Strategy. Against this, resolutions from Socialist Organiser supporters counterpose the revolutionary road to socialism.

While Socialist Challenge obviously opposes the AES and supports the content of the Socialist Organiser resolutions, we feel that it is not appropriate for such resolutions to be put. For the LCC to be united around a mass campaigning approach, it is not necessary to have a position

on the AES.

The adoption of the AES as the basis for the LCC will mean simply that the LCC will be reduced to a rump — that those many socialists in the Labour Party who do not agree with the AES will not participate in the LCC.

The LCC executive has to make up its mind. Either the LCC can be a small and exclusive pressure group, or it can seriously organise forces to fight for a mass campaigning Labour Party. The position adopted by the LCC executive towards the AES proposal will show which way they want to go.



Michael Foot, right, looking to the future — but does it include Tony Benn?

NEC retreats on re-selection

AT its meeting last week, the Labour Party executive took an important decision which undermines the Blackpool conference resolutions on mandatory re-selection.

On a proposal from Eric Heffer, the executive decided that mandatory re-selection could be interpreted as being effected by a short list of one.

The 'short list of one' method effectively gives the right wing and 'moderates' in each constituency the opportunity to launch a prolonged fight against any re-selection process taking place.

The NEC's decision is against both the spirit and the letter of the Blackpool conference decision in favour of compulsory re-selection.

Communist Party to affiliate?

By Bob Pennington

AFTER a weekend of press speculation that moves were afoot for Communist Party affiliation to the Labour Party, the left leaders of the Parliamentary Labour Party were called out to pour cold water on such a subversive idea.

Eric Heffer, chairperson of the Labour Party's organisation committee dismissed the idea as ludicrous, and Gordon McLennan, the CP's general secretary, agreed that there was no immediate possibility or prospect of such a development.

Presumably the matter can now be put safely to one side, the Labour right can feel a little safer, and Mr McLennan will not have to worry about his Eurocommunist 'wets' being

organisationally, as well as politically, incorporated into social democracy.

Putting this idea into cold storage may appeal to reformists and bureaucrats, but such methods do not serve the purpose of turning the Labour Party into a mass campaigning party that unites all those who claim allegiance to socialism.

Ranks

Last March at the 'Debate of the Decade', Tariq Ali called for the right of all socialist organisations to be affiliated to the Labour Party. This could only strengthen the Labour Party, as it would bring into its ranks thousands of new activists and strengthen those in the Labour Party who are waging a serious fight against the right wing.

There is no reason why the CP, the Socialist Workers Party, or the International Marxist Group should dissolve their organisations. They should have the same rights to organise for their ideas as any other tendency inside the Labour Party.

The right-wing leaders of the Labour Party from MacDonald and Thomas to Deakin and Attlee to today's leaders have always organised as a secret group whenever they have felt the Labour Party was heading down the path of socialist policies.

The affiliated organisations would have the merit of not only organising openly, but of actually organising for socialism. And that wouldn't be such a bad thing for a party that claims to be socialist.

— the fight for policy goes on

**But this
isn't how**



IN A recent edition of Socialist Organiser (22 Nov) Vladimir Derer, secretary of the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy, took Socialist Challenge to task for not supporting Michael Foot in the recent Labour leadership election. Here Phil Hearse replies for Socialist Challenge.

VLADIMIR Derer's criticism of Socialist Challenge is that we made a severe tactical mistake in not supporting Foot. He claims that this mistake has its roots in a leftist and sectarian attitude towards political work in the Labour Party.

We agree with Derer that the decision to support or not to support Foot was a tactical question, not one of principle. But the danger with comrade Derer's approach is that if you base yourself simply on short-term tactical calculations you lose sight of the overall objective in the fight for democracy and socialist policies.

Defeat

Undoubtedly Healey's defeat in the leadership election was a blow to the right. But that does not alter the fact that the election was designed to overturn the left's victories on democracy at this year's party conference. Sixty six MPs agreed with that assessment when they opposed the holding of the election.

Neither does the victory of Foot signal further uninterrupted progress for the left. Foot was elected because many MPs hostile to the left saw Foot as the best way of heading off the left's challenge and, in particular, of stopping Benn. The shadow cabinet election results confirm this point with the failure of Benn and Heffer to be elected.

Tactical

Vladimir Derer's motivation for his tactical support for Foot reveals that he unfortunately accepts one of the decisive rules of the right wing's game: the division which they impose between the 'economic' and the 'political' struggle, between the mass struggle and the unions on the one hand, and the Labour Party on the other.

Socialist Challenge does not accept that the fundamental way to alter the political relationship of forces in favour of the working class is through

political struggle in the constituency parties or in the PLP — important though that is.

Because of the historical links between the unions and the Labour Party, the decisive say in the outcome of political struggle in the Labour Party lies with the unions.

To defeat the right wing, it's not enough just to defeat Healey — we've got to remove Chapple and Duffy as well. That is why Socialist Challenge supporters have put resolutions to the forthcoming CLPD and Labour Co-ordinating Committee conferences on the importance of organising in the unions.

Derer attacks Socialist Challenge for its preference for 'extra-parliamentary, extra-Labour Party activity'. Since Derer wants to restrict the definition of 'political class struggle' to the Labour Party alone, then obviously for him anything else is worthless and his tactics follow accordingly.

But in reality political developments inside the Labour Party are always the reflection not just of acute

Socialist Organiser

tactical moves by the left, but of the class struggle as a whole.

The strength of the 'Benite' left is not just the product of the ideas of the Labour left but of the massive upsurge of the British class struggle between 1968 and 1974.

This interaction between the Labour Party and the trade unions is the most important structural feature of British politics. It is vital that we break the artificial divide between the 'political' and 'economic' wings of the movement if we are to disrupt the hold of the right wing and the labour bureaucracy.

The tactical conclusion is obvious: it is necessary to link the struggle inside the unions and the Labour Party.

Socialist Challenge supporters played a leading role in organising the recent 1000-strong Lambeth conference against the cuts. That is a practical example of how to link the mass struggle with activity inside the Labour Party. Presumably the Lambeth conference was an example of the 'fantasy world' we

Vladimir Derer on Socialist Challenge

'THOSE socialists who place themselves outside the Labour Party have in fact abandoned political struggle, and opted for the status quo, which accommodates them in a "radical" ghetto. Real struggle for socialism must give a high priority to the practical struggle against those elements inside the Labour leadership which are ideologically opposed to the party's nominal aims.'

'SO LONG as the composition of the party remains what it is now, the left cannot win without the support of the centre. This may mean that apart from pressing for those socialist changes that are already broadly acceptable, it has also from time to time to promote "compromise" candidates in opposition to right wing nominees.'

'THEY still hark back after the dream world (inhabited by the CP, the SWP, and the WRP) in which the far left is in effective political competition with the Labour Party. Their continued preference for extra-parliamentary and extra-Labour Party activity as well as tactics appropriate to such an orientation is a clear indication of this.'

'ACCEPTANCE of work within the Labour Party framework involves the recognition not just of the limits imposed by this framework, but also acceptance of the need to carry on such struggles as are possible within it.'

are alleged to inhabit.

To channel everything into the tactical fight inside the Labour Party and 'parliamentary activity' is to abandon the struggle against the cuts, unemployment and the wage freeze. It is to abandon the 'political class struggle' — the fight

for mass action to throw out the Tories. It would divert revolutionary forces into reformism and the methods of compromise. If everything is tailored to the present composition and consciousness of the Labour Party, reformism is the only outcome.

Labour executive cuts conference fails to lead

By Phyllis Duniface, Lambeth local government committee delegate

LAST month labour movement activists in Lambeth brought together more than 1,000 delegates to discuss the way forward against local authority cutbacks.

As a response to the Lambeth conference — entitled 'Crisis in Local Government' — the Labour Party executive called its own conference ('Local Government in Crisis') which took place last Saturday in Leeds.

Only 100 people turned up and the platform offered no way forward at all. Resolutions put forward by Lambeth and Sheffield Labour Parties, which had precise proposals for action, were not put to the conference.

Legislation

The crisis facing the Labour-controlled local authorities is acute with a £3.3bn cut in the rate support grant looming. To compensate for that councils would have to put up rates by a gigantic 70 per cent. Even that wouldn't save capital spending plans because government legislation prevents more money being spent on housing.

The big problem that last Saturday's conference had to confront was what to do about the cuts. How should Labour-controlled councils fight back? Frank Allaun, speaking for the party executive, urged councils to raise money from the rates.

He said that he personally supported industrial action against the cuts, but the NEC were not going to tell councils what to do. He urged 'tolerance in the movement'.

Labour Party spokesperson on local government, Roy Hattersley, argued that we had to 'accept that we had a Tory government', and that cuts were inevitable. We had to work out where cuts would hit working people least, he said, and implement them.

Action

Sheffield Labour Party proposed that the NEC should initiate a campaign and co-ordinate action against the cuts. Their resolution was not put. As a result all the NEC conference achieved was to urge local councils 'to do their own thing'.

No lead was given for a real struggle against the Tories' massacre of local government services.

Local Government in Crisis Conference
 January 1981
 Central Hall, Westminster
 Credentials from: Steering Committee,
 Lambeth Town Hall, Brixton, South London



Labour on the march



Bill Rogers

Steelworkers defend jobs

By Clive Tumbull

SHEFFIELD and Rotherham steelworkers have called a national, multi-union conference to fight for jobs to be held in February or March.

The decision was taken at a meeting organised by the Sheffield steel working party which consists of steelworkers in both the public and private sectors.

According to a delegate from South Yorkshire crafts committee, the body which proposed the resolution, the aim of the conference is to mobilise the working class against the Tory offensive.

This was necessary at grass roots level as there had been no leadership coming from the top. All labour movement bodies will be encouraged to send delegates.

Joan Maynard, one of the Labour MPs present, argued that we couldn't wait for the next general election to fight unemployment:

'Democracy isn't a question of putting a cross on a piece of paper every five years. There won't be anything worth fighting for after the Tories have finished.'

Scottish unions call for public sector alliance

By Des Tierney

WITH the Tory Government pursuing its attacks on public sector wages and jobs, two powerful calls were made in Scotland recently for an alliance of public sector unions to defeat the Government's plans.

At the special general meeting of the Educational Institute of Scotland held on 29 November in Edinburgh the delegates made clear, despite the advice of their executive, that they saw the way forward for Scottish teachers being in alliance with other public sector unions.

Rally

It was the same story at the mass rally of civil servants held in Glasgow on 1 December to protest at the suspension of their pay review. At least 6,000 of the 25,000 civil servants in the West of Scotland attended.

Speaker after speaker emphasised that they did not see their situation in isolation from that faced by other public sector workers. They saw the necessity of joint action to force the Tory government to retreat.

Movement

This was expressed most dramatically by Stewart McLennan of the CPSA: 'It will not be enough,' he said, 'to engage in token stoppages to halt this government. What is needed is a powerful movement built throughout the public sector and trade union movement which will deal body blows to this government and its strategy.'

Welcome

To show how serious they were in this, the civil servants gave a rapturous welcome to Ronnie Robertson, the chairperson of Strathclyde FBU.

Although he was talking before the new deal for firefighters was announced, Ronnie emphasised that none of them thought that they were a special case. 'With inflation running at 15 per cent, and this government offering 6 per cent, then all workers are a special case.'

Torch

Neither was it enough to concentrate on fighting for wages, he said. This government was intent on reducing the numbers employed in the public services dramatically and public sector unions had to realise that there should be no trade off between jobs and wages.

He hoped that it would be the FBU which would 'light a torch' under the Tories, which would benefit all public sector workers. However, he warned, if any union tried to take on the Tories itself or was not given the support of other public sector workers, then it was doomed to defeat.

Boss 'hired boxer for assault on shop steward'

By John Larkin

PETER Howe had an 'industrial relations' problem at his small engineering factory in St Annes, Lancashire.

So he hired former British heavyweight boxing challenger Paul Sykes to beat up the AUEW shop steward.

Howe paid Sykes £1000 and shop steward John Turton was attacked near his home with an iron bar and suffered a broken leg and needed ten stitches in his head.

The trouble started after the AUEW, led by Turton, had imposed an overtime ban and, later, a strike during the September '79 national AUEW wage dispute.

Howe was imprisoned for 18 months last week at Preston Crown Court.

All quiet on the wages front?

By Pat Kane

On 1 December, the National Union of Mineworkers announced that their members had voted to accept a 13.8 per cent pay deal. The Tory establishment breathed a sigh of relief. The *Daily Telegraph* declared that it was 'all quiet on the wages front'.

Thatcher appears to be pleased with her government's handling of this year's pay round, and at first sight the miners' ballot result seems to justify her optimism. But this only tells one side of the story. The impact of the economic crisis on working people can quickly spoil the best laid plans of government ministers and officials.

Take the public sector as an example. On 23 November Chancellor Howe announced in his 'mini-budget' that the government would stand firm on its new six per cent wage limit. Only one week later, the Fire Brigades Union won a two-stage, 18.8 per cent wages settlement. The FBU secured this deal simply by threatening strike action.

Control

The strings contained in the final deal have resulted in nearly all the militant areas rejecting the settlement. They realise that they will be storing up big problems for future pay rounds when the Tories will not give anything away.

The government have very little understanding let alone control over what is actually happening in the economy. Their wages policy is an attempt to deal with the militancy of public

sector workers and satisfy the growing demands for more public sector cuts.

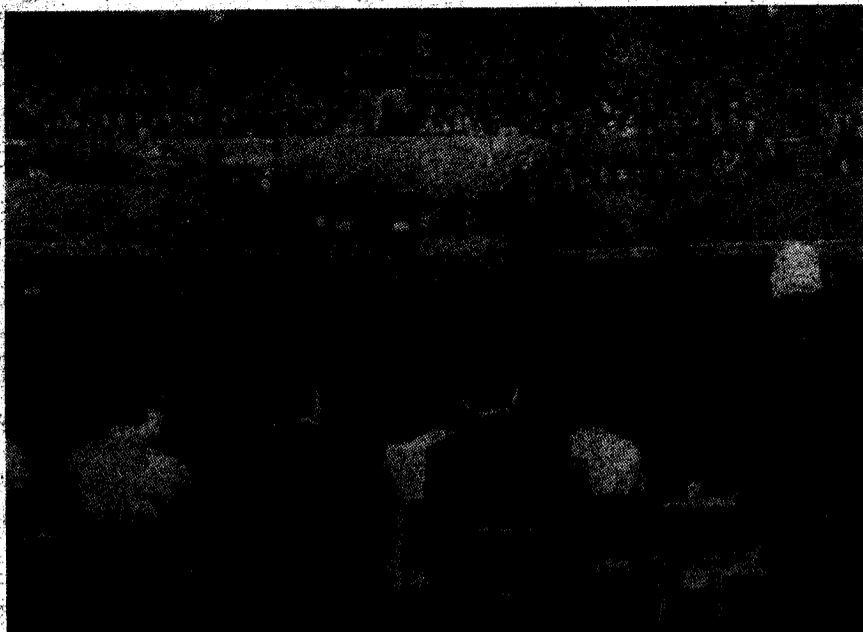
The latest 'secret' documents revealed in the *Guardian* last week showed that the miners' settlement would act as a damper on other workers, and that the defeat of the NUM's left wing would weaken the militants in other industries.

Public sector cuts affect the nationalised industries as well as social services. Howe cut a further £750m from the nationalised industries in his 'mini-budget', raising the spectre of unemployment over steel, the railways and the mines. This fear lay behind the miners' decision to accept lower wage increases in the mistaken belief that 'balancing the books' will save jobs.

In private industry the pattern of wage settlements is similar. Unemployment is being used to try to keep wages down. The right-wing leadership of the main engineering union, the AUEW, has succeeded in driving down the national minimum wage, but the strength of the shop

Deal

But as the failure of the last Labour government's pay policy testifies, there is a world of difference between Thatcher announcing a six per cent limit and actually imposing it for the



Six thousand at civil servants' rally



Thatcher's police — earning their 75 per cent, indexed linked pay rise on the picket line

WHO EARNS WHAT: THE WEEKLY PAY LEAGUE

	Doctors	Prison officers	Police sergeants	Local govt. admin.	Mech. engineers	Coal-miner (Face)	Ave. non-manual	Firemen	Train drivers	Manual workers	Mach. tool operators	Postmen	Nurses	Secretaries
Ave. gross earnings 1980 (£)	242.20	191.70	172.90	166.80	160.10	153.60	141.30	118.40	115.20	111.70	110.60	105.50	97.86	80.20
Including overtime of (£)	12.10	75	23.10	2.70	4.80	15.50	4.90	6.80	14.40	15.80	11.50	24.10	4	0.60
Min. ave. earnings for top 10% (£)	375.70	263.50	230.30	232.30	225.90	189.20	215	144.20	147.50	156.70	142.80	157.20	138.10	107.40
Ave. gross earnings 1979 (£)	175.10	129.30	130.40	127.70	136.60	128.60	113.50	96.30	99.30	93.10	94.80	84.10	74.10	65.30
Increase 1980 over 1979 (%)	38.3	48.3	32.6	30.6	17.2	19.4	24.5	23.1	16	20	16.7	25.5	32	22.9
Ave. gross earnings 1975 (£)	92.0	86.50	76.20	79.10	80.30	74.50	68.40	61.40	64.30	55.70	56.20	54.20	51.50	36.80
Increase 1980 over 1975 (%)	163.3	121.6	126.6	110.9	99.4	106.2	106.6	92.8	79.2	100.5	96.8	94.6	89.9	117.9

next two years.

At British Leyland, the employers pushed through a 6.8 per cent deal with the support of national and local union officials. After two years of constant attacks from the BL board, Leyland workers voted by 2 to 1 to reject the pay offer.

In private industry the pattern of wage settlements is similar. Unemployment is being used to try to keep wages down. The right-wing leadership of the main engineering union, the AUEW, has succeeded in driving down the national minimum wage, but the strength of the shop

stewards movement in the localities has maintained settlements at an average of over 20 per cent.

Ford workers have rejected the 9.5 per cent pay offer, and the AUEW was forced to call strike action in support of a reduction in the length of Ford's working week.

The Ford settlement will have an effect on the giant Transport and General Workers Union, whose officials lead the negotiations. Already the T&G's membership figures have been reduced by 150,000 through unemployment and now stand at less than two

million.

Esso tanker drivers, another important section of the T&G, have just rejected a pay offer of 14.1 per cent.

As the recession bites, more workers are demanding shorter hours, and worksharing to offset redundancy. Many workers come right up against the argument that higher wages cause unemployment. But steel workers have had two low pay settlements and also seen fifty per cent of their jobs disappear in the last three years.

More and more trade union leaders are having to

face the growing anger of their members against increasing unemployment and productivity. The agreement between rail, steel, and coal mining unions to defend jobs and services must be frightening the Tories as they try to further cut the nationalised industries.

The fight for higher wages is increasingly bound up with the fight to save jobs and both are important to defend living standards. It may be quiet on the wages front but there's still a long way to go to the end of the round in the spring. Anything can happen — it's our job to make sure it does.

Photo: John Sturrock (Report)

By Mick Sullivan,
North Islington CLP

QUESTION: What have Tony Benn, Gordon McLennan, general secretary of the Communist Party, Jill Tweedie of the *Guardian*, and Bishop Winter of Namibia all got in common?

Answer: They are among the small number of MPs, labour movement leaders, and personalities who signed Charter '80, the petition in support of the five demands of the Republican prisoners in Long Kesh and Armagh jails in the north of Ireland.

They are to be congratulated in going this far against the grain of anti-Irish opinion in British society.

However they will need to go a lot further if they wish to see, in this country, the type of mass movement seen in Ireland in support of the hunger strikers: a movement built on marches, meetings and public statements from a whole host of individuals.

And what should Labour do now?

There is no doubt that if Tony Benn, Eric Heffer, and Gordon McLennan were really fighting, day in and day out, on this issue there would be a much better chance of saving the prisoners' lives. And if those lives were saved that would be a step nearer to ending the division of Ireland and British interference in that country.

There have been a number of developments within the Labour Party over the past year to suggest that there is a growing sentiment for ending the British presence in Ireland. Both the London and Scottish

regions of the party have called for an end to Labour's bipartisan support for Tory policy on Ireland.

Labour's national executive committee has set up a working party to propose policy on Ireland, and last June it condemned prison conditions in the north. Then, at this year's party conference in October, large numbers of constituency delegates supported a motion calling for British withdrawal and supporting the prisoners' demands.

Much of the credit for these developments can be given to the nine-month

old Labour Committee on Ireland which, on 13 December, is holding its first national meeting since its founding conference last March.

At that conference delegates voted to make Charter '80 a high priority, and although the main aim of the meeting on 13 December is to discuss what submission to make to the national executive's working party, it also provides an opportunity to discuss what Labour Party members can do on behalf of the prisoners.

This involves winning support for the prisoners' demands in the leadership of the trade unions and the party itself.

Among the proposals likely to be floated are for an LCI-sponsored lobby of the next Labour Party executive, and for the LCI to call its own public rally on behalf of the prisoners, inviting the participation of Benn and Heffer.

The LCI's influence and credibility give it an important role in building such initiatives. It would be a tragedy to let the opportunity pass.

When the Labour leaders and Mr Benn were not afraid to support Irish hunger strikers

By Geoff Bell

ON 2 October, this year, Tony Benn opened his speech at a fringe meeting of the Labour Party conference with these words:

'I was brought up to believe, very strongly, from my father, that the partition of Ireland was a crime.'

Benn went on to recount how his father had believed that British policy in Ireland from 1918-21 was 'one of the blackest episodes in Britain's imperial history'.

Tony Benn said he shared this opinion: 'My view has never altered on that and I must say quite

clearly... I have never varied in my view that there was no future for peace and co-operation in Ireland that did not include a clear presentation of an alternative perspective of reunification and dependence.'

Tony Benn then said: 'If

I say no more than that I will have discharged an obligation to my father and to those whom he supported'.

Since making that speech Tony Benn has not said a great deal in public on Ireland. In particular he has been reluctant to state an opinion on the hunger strikers in Long Kesh and Armagh.

However, if Tony Benn wants to further 'discharge' an obligation to his father, it is interesting to note that the father in question, William Wedgwood Benn, MP was not at all reticent on the subject of Irish hunger

strikers.

Neither, more importantly, were the then leaders of the British Labour movement.

The year in question was 1920 when there were three separate hunger strikes by Irish political prisoners, then engaged in the Irish War of Independence against Britain.

The first was in April 1920, when 60 Republican prisoners in Mountjoy Jail, Dublin, embarked on a hunger strike. They were protesting at their internment without trial. After ten

days all the strikers were unconditionally released.

Several days later 170 Sinn Fein prisoners, held at Wormwood Scrubs prison, London, started another hunger strike and demanded 'political treatment'. None of these prisoners had been tried before a properly constituted judge and jury.

Rough

They objected to the arbitrary arrest system by which they had been picked up and to the rough treatment they had received during arrest and in prison from the hands of the British authorities.

William Benn, then a liberal MP — he was later to switch to Labour, voiced the complaints of the Wormwood Scrubs' hunger strikers. On 13 May, in the House of Commons, he asked the Home Secretary, 'Have any of these men who complain of ill-treatment been charged or tried with any offence under law?'

Benn knew that none of the prisoners had been so charged: his question was a means of exposing as much.

Inquiry

Five days later William Benn was on his feet again to call for 'a judicial inquiry into the circumstances of these arrests'. No inquiry was forthcoming, so, the following month when the hunger strike had been going a couple of weeks, Benn again raised the issue in Parliament.

He asked the Home Secretary whether the prisoners 'have been informed of the charges laid against them, and, if they persist in their hunger strike, what will the Government do?'

The pressure applied by Benn and others in Parliament and more dramatically a 10,000-strong demonstration outside Wormwood Scrubs had their effect: all the prisoners were released.

The third, and most famous hunger strike of that year was led by Terence McSweeney, the Lord Mayor of Cork, who was arrested by the British in August 1920. McSweeney was transferred to Brixton prison and, after being brought before a military court, he went on hunger strike.

Once again William Benn raised the issue in the Commons. On 20 August he demanded to know from the prime minister, 'for what



Terence McSweeney, the Lord Mayor of Cork

offence the Lord Mayor has been arrested, what is his present state of health, and when will he be brought to public trial?'

The British government never had any intention of trying McSweeney before a judge and jury. He continued with his hunger strike and, after 73 days, he died. But during those agonising days the British labour movement threw its support behind him.

On 30 August the following telegram was sent to the prime minister:

'The whole of organised British Labour asks you to reconsider the Government's decision to allow the Lord Mayor of Cork to die rather than release him. His suffering greater than lengthy imprisonment. His death will make Irish solution more remote. Appeal to you to do the big thing.'



J H Thomas

The appeal was signed by W Adamson, chairperson of the Parliamentary Labour Party, HF Lindsay, secretary of the PLP, JH Thomas, chairperson of the parliamentary committee of the TUC, CW Bowerman,

secretary of the same committee, AG Cameron, chairperson of the Labour Party, and Arthur Henderson, its secretary.

This was not the only effort made by prominent figures in the British labour movement to save McSweeney. On 1 September, for example, the South Wales executive of the National Union of Mineworkers unanimously passed a resolution calling for his release.

Then on 3 September a group, described by *The Times* as 'prominent labour leaders' and including George Lansbury and Ernie Bevin, launched a fresh appeal.

Voices

All these efforts failed, but at least the leaders of the British labour movement — and the father of one of today's leaders — let their voices be heard on the issue.

The hunger strikes currently taking place in Long Kesh and Armagh may not be an exact parallel with those at Wormwood Scrubs and Brixton in 1920. But now, as then, the prisoners are refused open jury trials. Now, as then, they are subjected to brutal treatment during arrest and in prison.

Now, as then, they are prisoners in a political conflict. Now, as then, their cause is the freedom and independence of Ireland.

Sadly, the similarity ends when it comes to contemporary opinions and actions of the leaders of the British labour movement. In 1920 there was solidarity with the Irish hunger strikers; today there is silence.



Photo Joanne O'Brien

UP TO 5,000 people demonstrated in London on Sunday in support of the Irish hunger strikers.

Labour Conference Against the Missiles —

It's lift off

'WE need to get the mighty force of the labour movement into action against the missiles.' That was the message Ernie Roberts MP gave to the 6 December sponsors' meeting of the Labour Movement Conference Against the Missiles.

By Paul Smith

Labour Movement Conference Against the Missiles

Draft Agenda

- 10.30 am: Registration
- 11.00: 'Missiles Madness': speakers from Labour Party NEC, CND, TUC.
- 12.00: 'Strategy and Experiences', a) Organising in the Labour Movement.
- 1.30-2.30: Lunch
- 2.30: 'Strategy and Experiences', b) Organising in the Workplace
- 4.00: 'Jobs Not Bombs' discussion
- 5.30: Vote on conference statement
- 6.00: Conference ends

The meeting settled on 28 March as the date for the conference and it's likely to be held in Manchester.

An agenda proposed by representatives of the Manchester organising committee was agreed in outline (see box), as was a provisional list of speakers to be approached for the major sessions of the conference. These include Michael Foot, Bruce Kent and Arthur Scargill.

Gains

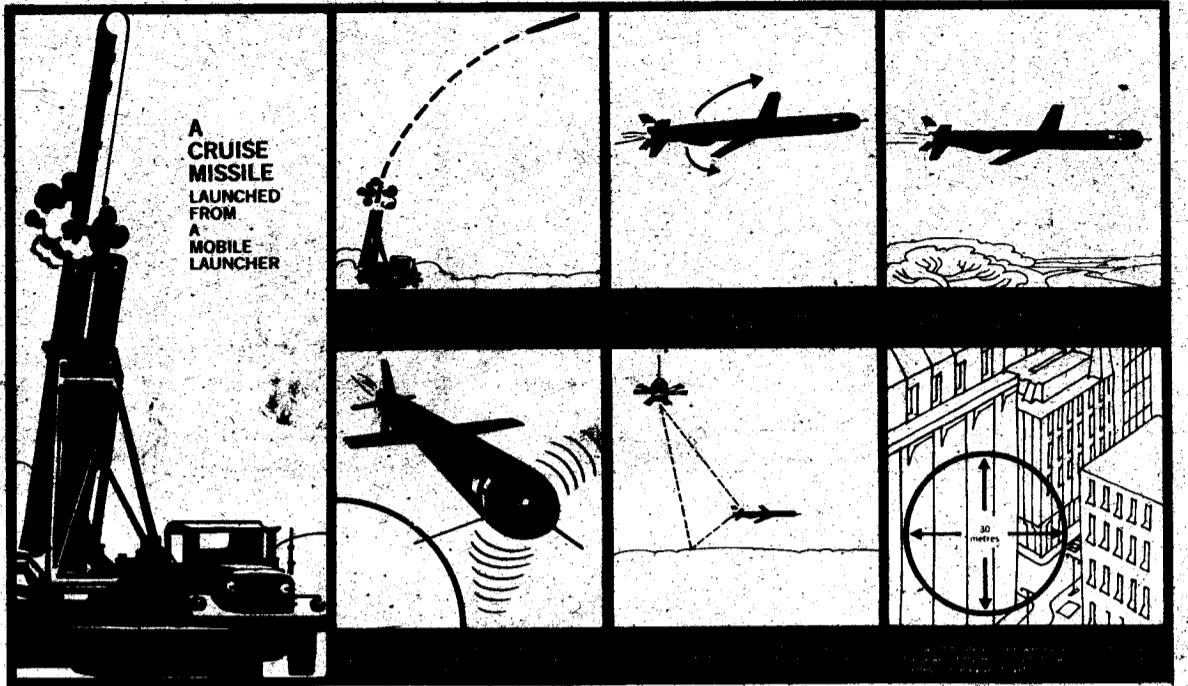
It was stressed that representatives from the major industrial plants, especially those engaged in the production of arms, should have plenty of time to speak at the conference. A final agenda and complete speakers list will be drawn up by a further sponsors' meeting on 20 December.

Ernie Roberts, Walter Wolfgang and others from Labour CND stressed the importance to the conference of the recent

elections for Labour's shadow cabinet. It was pointed out that the right wing in the Labour Party were committed to an all-out offensive to reverse the policies decided on in

Blackpool — especially on unilateral nuclear disarmament.

'The conference can defend those gains by bringing the labour movement into action,' said



Join CND now! Write to: CND, 11 Goodwin St, London N4

Dick Withecombe from the Manchester organising committee.

Moves are under way to gain support for the conference from the Labour Party NEC and the national committees of the trades unions. There was considerable optimism that several large unions would come in behind the conference. The news that

Alan Fisher, General Secretary of NUPE, was among the latest list of sponsors for the conference showed that such optimism was not misplaced.

National CND announced that it was putting its full weight behind the conference. Sally Davidson pointed out that CND was the main

national organisation campaigning for nuclear disarmament and would have to be at the centre of organising for the conference.

She promised 'full time resources and financial back up for the conference' if CND were to play this role. A special meeting between the Manchester

organising committee and National CND has been set up to sort out the details.

The Labour Movement Conference against the Missiles is off the ground. A hundred and one details remain to be tied up, but the first material inviting delegates from the trade unions and Labour parties should be out in a matter of days.

British Telecommunications Bill:

PLUCKING BUZZBY

By Colin Talbot, Westminster Branch POEU

How would you like Sir Keith Joseph as your boss? Not a lot? Well that's the prospect facing half a million Post Office workers if the British Telecommunications Bill becomes law.

The Bill, which received its second reading in Parliament last week, is supposed to be mainly about splitting the Post Office into two — the postal service and Giro Bank will remain as the Post Office and all PO Telecommunications will be split off to form the new British Telecoms Corporation.

The aim of the Bill isn't just to carve the Post Office in two — it's also to carve it up. It gives the Secretary of State (in this case our beloved Sir Keith) the power to grant 'licences' to anyone to do anything covered by the postal and telecoms monopolies.

Powers

It also gives him wide-ranging powers to say how much British Telecoms can spend on research, what it can and can't manufacture, what subsidiaries it must have, what private apparatus can be attached to the public network, and how its finances should be run.

Even our subservient management are worried by the sweeping nature of these powers. Similar powers, in Part II of the Bill, apply to the postal business.

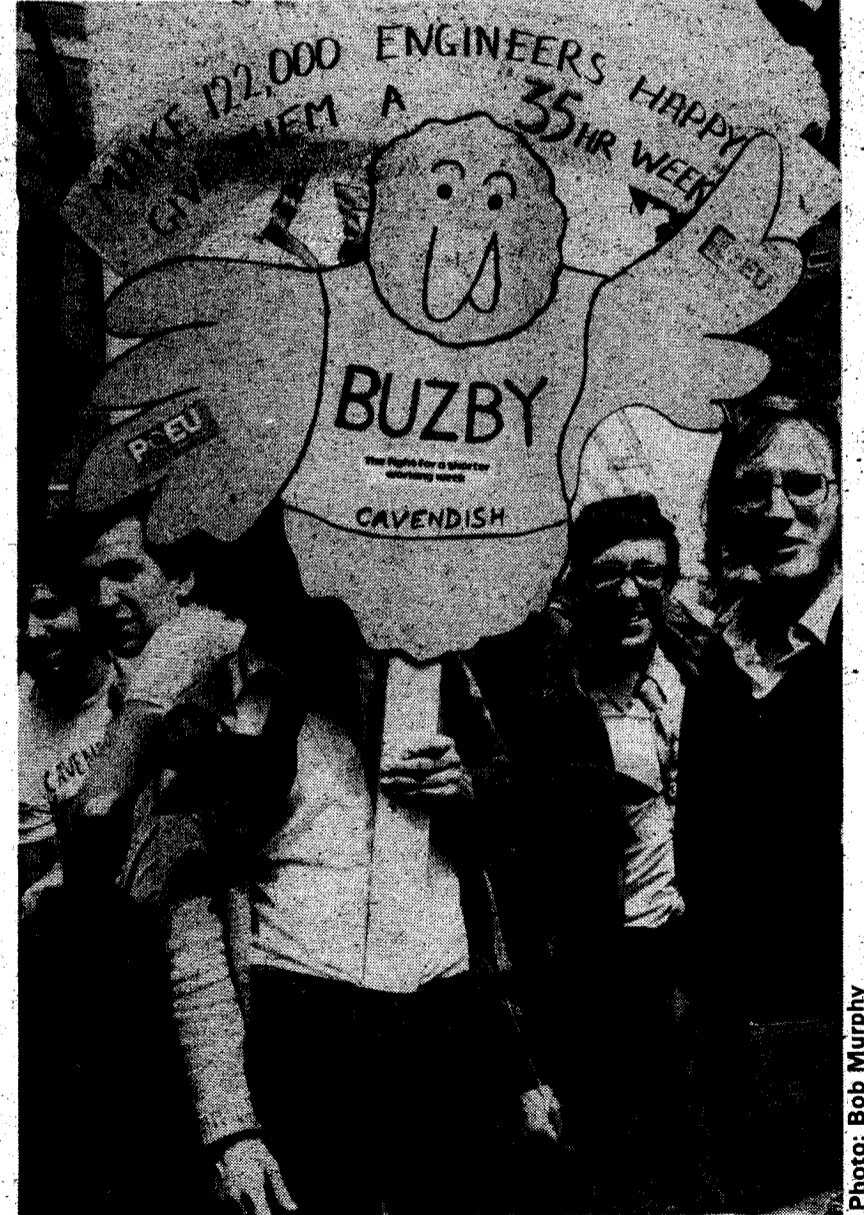
The Tories are trying to hide these enormous changes by repeatedly stating that they are only introducing a limited relaxation of the monopoly. But if that is the case, why such sweeping powers?

Why should they include in the power to grant licences the power to make them irrevocable, which would mean a future Labour government would have to pass legislation to repeal what Sir Keith will be able to do at the stroke of a pen?

Already, the sharks in the private sector have scented blood. If they have their way Buzzby will be killed, plucked, stuffed and served up for their dinner by next Xmas.

John Gorst MP, famed for his support for George Ward at Grunwicks, has joined forces with the giant IBM to set up the so-called 'Telecommunications Council'. Their aim is quite explicit — to bust the monopoly wide open. (And Gorst is reputed to be getting a £10,000-a-year retainer for his services.)

The desire to get their grubby paws on a slice of Post Office Telecoms is gripping the bosses of the



POEU members striking for a 35 hour week

private giants IBM, GEC, ITT and the rest.

However far Joseph eventually decides to go in hiving-off the Post Office, this Bill is going to be used as a big stick to beat Post Office workers. Our jobs, wages, conditions and hours will all be at risk. Management will be telling us to work harder, longer and for

less, or else...

We need to join together now to build rank and file resistance to these attacks — joining up the main unions, the POEU and Union of Communication Workers, in a massive campaign to action and information.

Instead, the POEU leadership is in favour of the split and doing nothing about the attack on the

monopoly, while the UCW is formally against both and doing nothing about either.

Some branches of the POEU are calling for action now, and are campaigning to get it going. The whole labour movement should support them before the Tories do damage to the public communications network which will take years to repair.

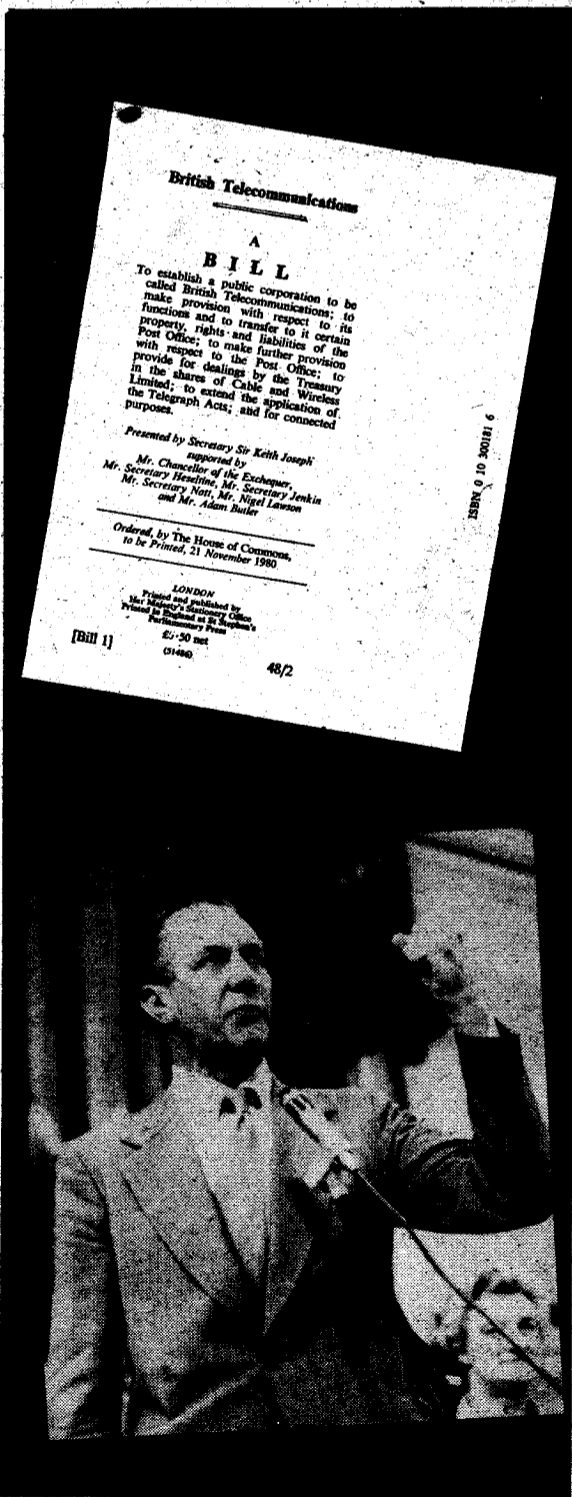
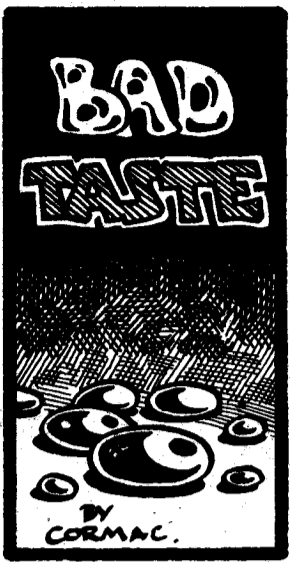


Photo: Mark Rusher

Keith Joseph, the Tory behind the bill

Photo: Bob Murphy



Atkin's plan only cosmetic

TOM Marlowe's article on the demise of the Atkin's plan was quite extraordinary. Does he really believe that 'the Tories' whole political strategy for the north of Ireland' has collapsed? Then he must believe it was a revamped Sunningdale, and that the most experienced ruling class in the world has grown very stupid indeed to try and repeat that debacle.

The reality is a little different, I think. British imperialism knows only too well that there is no 'political solution' for Ireland because it knows better than anyone that without a strong, native bourgeoisie to which it can attach a political party designed to tie the working population to new state structures there's no chance.

The Atkin's plan was a cosmetic job, no more, designed to be a fig leaf for the real, continuing strategy of repression of the nationalist population. Tom Marlowe forgets this plan was first announced in the USA, by the British ambassador, at a time when Edward Kennedy had temporarily rediscovered the vote-winning power of the Irish question.

The Social Democratic and Labour Party's antics which ended the Atkin's plan were a diversion to hide their complicity in the repression strategy, which is of course centred right now on the H Blocks. When Tom Marlowe gives them credit for wrecking 'the Tories' whole political strategy' he unintentionally aids the projects of the collaborators by spreading illusions about them.

I also think Tom Marlowe underestimates the importance of Haughey's dilemma and completely fails to understand that the law of permanent revolution not only makes the action of the southern Irish working class decisive in the long term, but also in the immediate struggle for political status.

Socialist Challenge should immediately commission an article on the crisis south of the border to correct the wrong impressions in Tom's article.

AILEAN O'CALLAGHAN, London

Watch out, there's a red pencil about

All the letters on this page have been edited...so, please try to keep letters to 300 words.

'Zionism a form of racism'

TRADITIONALLY Zionism has distinguished itself from other forms of racism by having both a right and a left wing. The left wing used anti-Semitism in order to dispel doubts about an ideology which would otherwise have been branded as reactionary and racist.

Today when the logical outcome of Zionism — the State of Israel — is there for all to see, it becomes somewhat harder for the traditional Zionist left, Mapai, to defend Zionism by an appeal to socialist sentiments.

Hence the letter from Dave Rosenberg (20 Nov) of the Jewish Socialist Group and Mark Solomons (6 Nov). While neither proclaim themselves Zionists (and Mark apparently opposes it) both accept the central thesis of Zionism: that there is a Jewish people and hence an Israeli Jewish people (an Arab national minority!).

Judaism is a religion, Jewish people are members of different nations and Zionism is a political doctrine. Hence the racial discrimination in Israel between Black (Arab) Jews and ashkenazi

(western) Jews. Israeli Jews are however no more an Arab minority than Afrikaaners are an African national minority. They are settlers oppressing and exploiting an indigenous population — in this case the Palestinians.

Mark Solomons is wrong in referring to Jewish oppression in the Arab world. It was precisely because of the lack of such oppression that Zionist emissaries were sent out from Israel to Iraq and Egypt after 1948 in order to create an atmosphere of fear in their Jewish populations. In Iraq they planted bombs in the Masuda Shemtov synagogue and in Egypt did likewise.

Their activities were co-ordinated at the highest levels of the Israeli state and caused the resignation in the early 1950s of the Israeli Defence Minister, Pinhas Lavon.

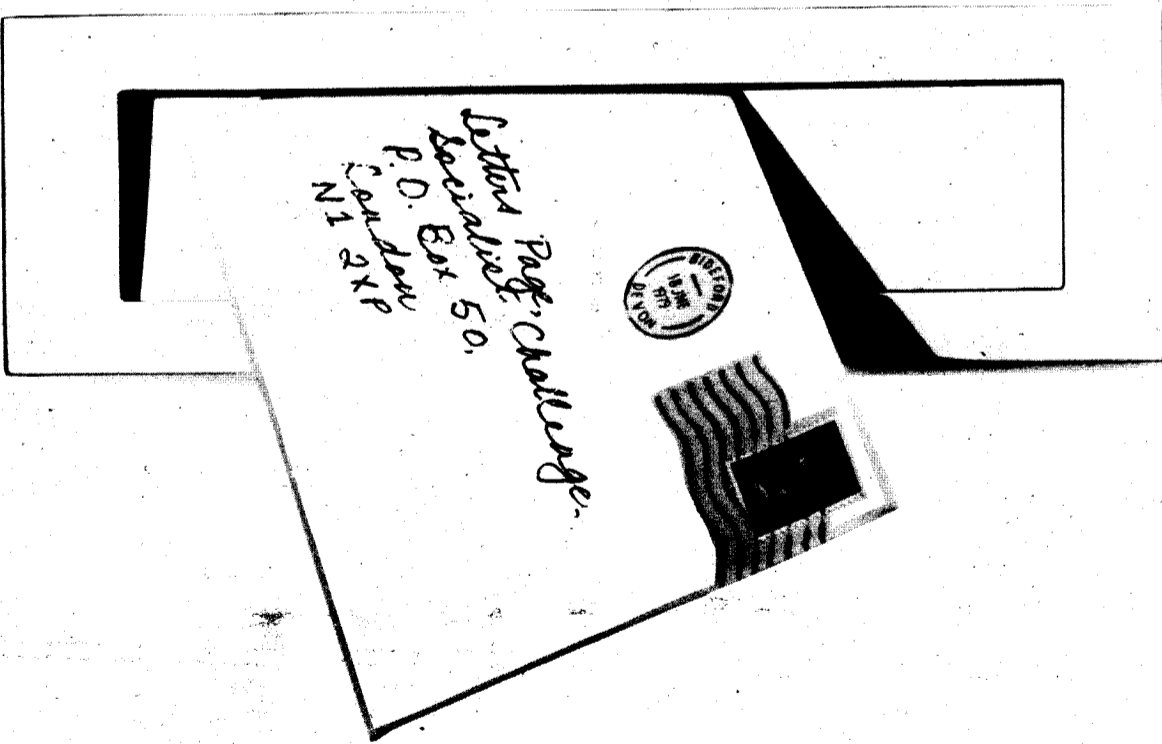
Far from Zionism being a 'bogey', it is central to the fight against fascism and racism in this country. Zionism maintains that racism and anti-Semitism are inherent in any gentile (non-Jewish) society and its conclusions from

this are that Jews should therefore run away from racism instead of fighting it alongside the left and the working class. It is this that explains the passivity of Jews in this country in the fight against racism not the anti-Zionism of the left.

Finally it is a lie to state that the PLO had links with the Nazis in the 1940s — the PLO was only formed in the mid 1960s. It is worth pointing out that Menachim Begin, Israel's Prime Minister, was condemned as a Hitlerite both by Albert Einstein and even David Ben Gurion, and in fact it was the Zionists who had the closest links with the Nazis.

It is a pity that the Jewish Socialist Group devotes its time to whitewashing Zionism instead of fighting this reactionary ideology among Jewish people. Socialist Challenge would not have printed a letter seeking to whitewash apartheid; this is due to a general confusion and ambivalence on the left about the subject. Can I suggest a full page article on Zionism is the least you can do to help rectify this situation.

TONY GREENSTEIN, London



In defence of the jazz radicals

of the left. Archie Shepp, whom Bell's hero Leonard Feather labelled a racist for his open support for Malcolm X, pointed out that the white jazz establishment 'owns the music, and we make it.'

Feather, about whom one can read at length in Frank Kofsky's book *Black Nationalism and the Revolution in Music** illustrates this completely.

While Eric Dolphy was alive, Feather branded him as 'anti-jazz', joining a

vicious campaign in the magazine *Down Beat*, against the jazz revolution starting at that time.

But when Dolphy died Feather picked up the commission from Vee Jay records for the 'memorial' album.

The following exchange on this incident between McCoy Tyner, pianist in the classic 'John Coltrane Quartet, and Kofsky sums it up:

Tyner: 'That's what I'm

talking about. That's something... I can't accept that. And I mean after he dies, (they) put him in the *Down Beat* hall of fame.'

Kofsky: 'The same people who put him in poverty.'

Tyner: 'That's what I mean, see, he couldn't work in this country.'

Today Dolphy is recognised — 16 years after his death — as one of Jazz music's greatest innovators.

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DEATH OF A WORLD

Woman is the Nigger of the World

Lennon/Ono

Woman is the nigger of the world
Yes she is... think about it
Woman is the nigger of the world
Think about it... do something about it.

We make her paint her face and dance
If she won't be a slave, we say that she don't love us
If she's real, we say she's trying to be a man
While putting her down we pretend that she's above us

Woman is the nigger of the world... yes she is
If you don't believe me, take a look at the one you're with
Woman is the slave of the slaves
Ah, yeh... better scream about it.

We make her bear and raise our children
And then we leave her flat for being a fat old mother hen
We tell her home is the only place she should be
Then we complain that she's too unworlly to be our friend

Woman is the nigger of the world... yes she is
If you don't believe me, take a look at the one you're with
Woman is the slave to the slaves
Yeh (think about it).

We insult her every day on TV
And wonder why she has no guts or confidence
When she's young we kill her will to be free
While telling her not to be so smart we put her down for being so dumb

Woman is the nigger of the world
Yes she is... if you don't believe me, take a look at the one you're with
Woman is the slave to the slaves
Yes she is... if you believe me, you better scream about it.

Repeat:
We make her paint her face and dance.
We make her paint her face and dance.
We make her paint her face and dance.

JOHN Lennon was one of the most talented of Britain's post-war musicians. His murder at the hands of a young lunatic will probably force some contemplation by those normally complacent of the deep-rooted cancers which exist in American society.

The derangement of the assassin is as much a reflection of the sickness of American capitalist values as of the individual in question.

In his short life John Lennon received many threats: from Ku Klux Klanners, from racist British army officers in Aldershot, from religious maniacs. The one death he did not expect was at the hands of a mindless assassin, no doubt desirous of achieving fame.

In the late '60s and '70s, John Lennon was part of a radicalisation which affected millions of young people. His finest songs fed that radicalisation and revealed him as someone who cared about the world

and its problems. In 1969 he returned the MBE he had been awarded four years earlier, as a protest against British policy in Biafra.

The extracts published below are from an interview which Robin Blackburn and I conducted with him for the Red Mole in 1971. We discussed everything under the sun and the final published version was greatly shortened.

The day following the interview I received a phone-call at The Red Mole's offices on Pentonville Road. It was Lennon. He wanted to say how much he'd enjoyed the interview and then came the bombshell:

'I was inspired by that talk to write a marching song for our demos. Do you mind if I sing it to you on the phone.' He sang the words of 'Power to the People' without musical accompaniment. We then discussed the tune and the same month he released it as a single.

Following that Lennon and Yoko Ono came on a number of demonstrations and he normally

insisted on holding up a copy of Red Mole, though in private he used to say: 'I can't understand half the articles in there, but I suppose that's a good thing...'

Unlike many others like him Lennon never forgot that he was of Irish and working class origin. He had a deep contempt for the ruling class and its ideological and cultural establishment.

Even though his departure to the States heralded a flight from politics and commitment he never became a spokesperson for the other side. In his most recent interview he stressed the necessity to combat male chauvinism.

Others will pay their own tributes. Ours is to reprint an extract from the Red Mole interview as well as the words of his most political songs.

This was Lennon at his most powerful and for that reason the Lennon that will always live.

TARIQ ALI



John Lennon carrying Red Mole, predecessor of Socialist Challenge

I've always been politically-minded, you know, and against the status quo. It's pretty basic when you're brought up, like I was, to hate and fear the police as a natural enemy and to despise the army as something that takes everybody away and leaves them dead somewhere.

I mean, it's just a basic working class thing, though it begins to wear off when you get older, get a family and get swallowed up in the system.

In my case I've never not been political, though religion tended to overshadow it in my acid days; that would be around '65 or '66. And that religion was directly the result of all that superstar shit — religion was an outlet for my repression.

I thought, 'Well, there's something else in life, isn't there? This isn't it, surely?' But I was always political in a way, you know.

In the two books I wrote, even though they were written in a sort of Joycean gobbledegook, there's many knocks at religion and there is a play about a worker and a capitalist.

Hurricane

I've been satirising the system since my childhood. I used to write magazines in school and hand them around.

I was very conscious of class, they would say with a chip on my shoulder, because I knew what happened to me and I knew about the class repression coming down on us — it was a fucking fact but in the hurricane Beatle world it got left out — I got farther away from reality for a time.

We went to America a few times and Epstein always tried to waffle on at us about saying nothing about Vietnam. So there came a time when George and I said 'Listen, when they ask next time, we're going to say we don't like that war and we think they should get right out.'

That's what we did. At that time this was a pretty radical thing to do, especially for the 'Fab Four'. It was the first opportunity I personally took to wave the flag a bit.

But you've got to remember that I'd always felt repressed. We were all so pressurised that there was hardly any chance of expressing ourselves, especially work-

ing at that rate, touring continually and always kept in a cocoon of myths and dreams.

It's pretty hard when you are Caesar and everyone is saying how wonderful you are and they are giving you all the goodies and the girls, it's pretty hard to break out of that, to say 'Well, I don't want to be king, I want to be real.'



So in its way the second political thing I did was to say 'The Beatles are bigger than Jesus'. That really broke the scene, I nearly got shot in America for that. It was a big trauma for all the kids that were following us.

Up to then there was this unspoken policy of not answering delicate questions, though I always read the papers, you know, the political bits.

The continual awareness of what was going on made me feel ashamed I wasn't saying anything. I burst out because I could no longer play that game any more, it was just too much for me.

Of course, going to America increased the build up on me, especially as the war was going on there. In a way we'd turned out to be a Trojan Horse.

The Fab Four moved right to the top and then sang about drugs and sex and then

POWER TO THE PEOPLE

Power to the people
Power to the people
Power to the people
Power to the people

Say we want a revolution
We better get it on
Get on your feet
And into the street,
Chorus... Power

A million workers
You better give 'em
We gotta put you down
When we come into town
Chorus... Power

I gotta ask you come
How do you treat your
She got to be herself
So you can free your
Chorus... Power

WORKING CLASS HERO



Working Class Hero

AS SOON AS YOU'RE BORN THEY MAKE YOU FEEL SMALL
BY GIVING YOU NO TIME INSTEAD OF IT ALL
TILL THE PAIN IS SO BIG YOU FEEL NOTHING AT ALL
A WORKING CLASS HERO IS SOMETHING TO BE
A WORKING CLASS HERO IS SOMETHING TO BE

THEY HURT YOU AT HOME AND THEY HIT YOU AT SCHOOL
THEY HATE YOU IF YOU'RE CLEVER AND THEY DESPISE
A FOOL
TILL YOU'RE SO * CRAZY YOU CAN'T FOLLOW THEIR
RULES
A WORKING CLASS HERO IS SOMETHING TO BE
A WORKING CLASS HERO IS SOMETHING TO BE

WHEN THEY'VE TORTURED AND SCARED YOU FOR
20 ODD YEARS
THEN THEY EXPECT YOU TO PICK A CAREER
WHEN YOU CAN'T REALLY FUNCTION YOU'RE SO FULL
OF FEAR
A WORKING CLASS HERO IS SOMETHING TO BE
A WORKING CLASS HERO IS SOMETHING TO BE

KEEP YOU DOPED WITH RELIGION AND SEX AND TV
AND YOU THINK YOU'RE SO CLEVER AND CLASSLESS
AND FREE
BUT YOU'RE STILL * PEASANTS AS FAR AS I CAN
SEE
A WORKING CLASS HERO IS SOMETHING TO BE
A WORKING CLASS HERO IS SOMETHING TO BE

THERE'S ROOM AT THE TOP THEY ARE TELLING YOU STILL
BUT FIRST YOU MUST LEARN HOW TO SMILE AS YOU KILL
IF YOU WANT TO BE LIKE THE FOLKS ON THE HILL
A WORKING CLASS HERO IS SOMETHING TO BE

YES, A WORKING CLASS HERO IS SOMETHING TO BE
IF YOU WANT TO BE A HERO WELL JUST FOLLOW ME
IF YOU WANT TO BE A HERO WELL JUST FOLLOW ME



SUNDAY BLOODY SUNDAY

Lennon/Ono - Feb. 1972

Well it was Sunday
bloody Sunday
When they shot the
people there
The crys of thirteen martyrs
Filled the Free Derry air.
Is there any one amongst you
Dare to blame it on the kids?
Not a soldier boy was
bleeding
When they nailed the
coffin lids!

Sunday bloody Sunday
Bloody Sunday's the day!

You claim to be majority
Well you know that it's a lie
You're really a minority
On this sweet emerald isle.
When Stormont bans
our marches
They've got a lot to learn
Internment is no answer
It's those mothers' turn
to burn!

Sunday bloody Sunday
Bloody Sunday's the day!

You anglo pigs and scotties
Sent to colonize the North
You wave your bloody
Union Jacks
And you know what it's
worth!
How dare you hold to ransom
A people proud and free
Keep Ireland for the Irish
Put the English back to sea!

Sunday bloody Sunday
Bloody Sunday's the day!

Yes it's always bloody Sunday
In the concentration camps
Keep Falls Road free forever
From the bloody English
hands
Repatriate to Britain
All of you who call it home
Leave Ireland to the Irish
Not for London or for Rome!

Sunday bloody Sunday
Bloody Sunday's the day!

that many black singers were still labouring under that problem of God, it was often 'God will save us'.

But right through the blacks were singing directly and immediately about their pain and also about sex, which is why I like it.

To begin with, working class people reacted against our openness about sex. They are frightened of nudity, they're repressed in that way as well as others. Perhaps they thought 'Paul is a good lad, he doesn't make trouble'.

Also when Yoko and I got married, we got terrible racist letters — you know, warning me that she would slit my throat. Those mainly came from Army people living in Aldershot. Officers.

Now workers are more friendly to us, so perhaps it's changing. It seems to me that the students are now half-awake enough to try and wake up their brother workers. If you don't pass on your own awareness then it closes down again.

Convince

That is why the basic need is for the students to get in with the workers and convince them that they are not talking gobbledegook. And of course it's difficult to know what the workers are really thinking, because the capitalist press always only quotes

mouthpieces like Vic Feather anyway.

So the only thing is to talk to them directly, especially the young workers. We've got to start with them because they know they're up against it. I'd like to incite people to break the framework, to be disobedient in school, to stick their tongues out, to keep insulting authority.

Students

I think it wouldn't take much to get the youth here really going. You'd have to give them free rein to attack the local councils or to destroy the school authorities, like the students who break up the repression in the universities.

It's already happening, though people have got to get together more. And the women are very important too, we can't have a revolution that doesn't involve and liberate women. It's so subtle the way you're taught male superiority.

It took me quite a long time to realise that my maleness was cutting off certain areas for Yoko. She's a red hot liberationist and was quick to show me where I was going wrong, even though it seemed to me that I was just acting naturally.

That's why I'm always interested to know how people who claim to be radical treat women.

We have to make the workers aware of the really unhappy position they are in, breaking the dream they are in a wonderful free-speaking country, they've got cars and tellies and they don't want to think there's anything more to life, they are prepared to let the bosses run them, to see their children fucked up in school.

They're dreaming someone else's dream, it's not even their own. They should realise that the Blacks and the Irish are being harassed and repressed and that they will be next.

Aware

As soon as they start being aware of all that, we can really begin to do something. The workers can start to take over. Like Marx said, 'To each according to his need' — I think that would work well here.

But we'd also have to infiltrate the army too, because they are well trained to kill us all. We've got to start all this from where we ourselves are oppressed.

I think it's false, shallow, to be giving to others when your own need is great.

The idea is not to comfort people, not to make them feel better but to make them feel worse, to constantly put before them the degradations and humiliations they go through to get what they call a living wage.

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into more and more stuff and that's when started dropping us. I was very miserable. I apart from the first of making it — the thrill of making it — the first number one the first trip to

ca. First we had some sort of objective like being as big as — moving forward a great thing, but actually it was the big one. I found I was hav- continually to please the people I'd always when I was a child. It began to bring me to reality. I began to that we are all oppress- which is why I would like something about it, h I'm not sure where my

is. Then I started, Rock and myself was the basic of people of my age situation. We needed thing loud and clear to through all the unfeel- repression that had coming down on us kids.

change

we were a bit conscious to with of being imitation cans. But we delved into music and found that it half white Country-and- and half black in and blues.

Most of the songs came from Europe and Africa and they were coming back to

any of Dylan's best came from Scotland, or England. It was a cultural exchange.

ough I must say the interesting songs to me were the black ones because they were more simple. They said shake your arse, or prick, which was an anation really.

and then there were the songs mainly expressing in they were in, They

express themselves in- ally so they had to say ery few words what was ing to them. And then was the City blues and a that was about sex and

lot of this was self- ion but only in the last ars have they expressed ives completely with Power, like Edwin Starr ng War records. Before

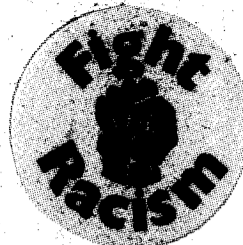
Socialist Challenge News

Building the Party

IN January the second phase of the renovation of our national centre begins. Phase one saw work completed on the printshop, bookshop, and communal areas. Phase two will involve fitting out the meeting rooms and offices including building an archive and library.

A very simple contribution our readers can make is to provide us with the materials. We need all the following: timber (especially 3 by 2), plasterboard, cement, bricks, cable (both 2.5mm and 1.5mm), fluorescent light fittings, 30 stacking chairs, woodchip paper, paint, nails, screws, and shelves.

So turn out your attics and sheds! We can collect. Phone us on 01-359 8371 and ask for Nick or Alan.



Sell badges — make a fortune!

SOCIALIST Challenge supporters have found badge sales a very popular and effective fundraiser.

Hackney supporters have sold 12,000 copies of 'I won't die for Thatcher' (Grant supports) and 'Kick out the Tories' badges.

on the 29 November Liverpool demonstration.

And the Tower Hamlets supporters' 'Jobs not Bombs' badge is going great guns (sic). With the rise of the British Movement and the relaunch of the Anti Nazi League, now is the time to sell the 'Fight Racism' badge too.

All these badges are obtainable individually or in bulk. 20p each plus 12p post and packing, or 12p each for bulk orders, payment in advance. Socialist Badges, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.



Photo: Cookson (Socialist Challenge)

Bernard Connolly

Rotherham steelworkers give us £25

BERNARD Connolly, BSC Joint Crafts Committee convenor, recently moved a resolution for financial support to Socialist Challenge explaining that it was 'in recognition of the sterling support received from the IMG during the steel strike.'

'In view of the tremendous amount of assistance we received, it was agreed that it was in the interests of the working class to support Socialist Challenge financially in this way.'

'We were given a national and international base which was of vital aid when we were in conflict. This was particularly important for the steelworkers in the absence of the leadership of our unions doing this job.'

'The £25 is not a once and for all payment, as we were low on funds at the time, and we will be reviewing the situation periodically.'

Socialist Challenge sales — a good beginning

SINCE the new-look Socialist Challenge was launched in October, weekly sales have risen by 750 and subscriptions by 80. Total sales are now 5,800 and new subs are coming in at a rate of 20 a week.

That's a great start, but we've still a long way to go to reach our target of 6,200 sales, including 800 subscriptions, by the end of 1980.

So how about a little extra effort before you relax over Xmas? We'll be losing out on college sales over Xmas so our Lewisham supporters are organising student supporters to put in an extra sale round dole queues and estates to win new readers for the paper.

There's no better time to win new subscriptions for the paper than Xmas. Fight commercialism and send your friends a sub as a present: every one year subscription secures a free copy of the 1981 Big Red Diary.

International Marxist Group notices

RAIL FRACTION: Sat 13 Dec, 1-5pm at national centre.

IMG WOMEN'S LIBERATION NOTES: Is your branch receiving them every week? If not write to women's organiser at the centre. And why not send in a report for inclusion in the bulletin? All contributions in by Monday each week. Ring Judith on 01-359 8371 to discuss a visit from the IMG women's organiser this autumn.

IMG MEMBERS: We urgently need you to fill vacancies in a variety of technical posts in National Centre. Any odes interested ring Penny on 01-359 8371.

FOR SALE: Back copies of IP/1 for SC Fund Drive. Vols 16/17/18 (1978, 1979, 1980). Offers to Fed, Camden IMG, c/o PO Box 50, London N1.

MISSILES FRACTION: Sat 13 Dec, 1.30-5pm Caxton House, St John's Way, nr Archway Tube, Nth London.

ABORTION FRACTION: Sat 13 Dec, 10.30am at National Centre.

POEU FRACTION: Sat/Sun 13/14 December in Leeds. Agenda includes perspectives, Labour Party and women's liberation. Ring Colin (01-228 2223) for venue details.

TGWU National Fraction, Sat 17 Jan. Details Later.

NALGO National Fraction, Sat 17 Jan. National Centre, 11am-4pm.

REMEMBER THE PARTY AT XMAS

LAST month we launched Fund Drive '81, a national fund appeal linked to a huge sales and subscriptions drive.

We've made a good start. Since last week we've received a further £1,000 in donations and promises, bringing our total up to £2,818.29.

Fund drive activities like Xmas dinners and socials are under way in many IMG branches in London and Manchester. How about your branch?

IMG members have responded to our appeal to increase their regular voluntary contributions. Over 20 branches have raised their contributions, bringing our total to £400 in November.

The fund drive money we have received so far has been used for badly-needed materials for our printshop, and to help buy Xmas stock for our bookshop. But we need to reach £8,000 by the end of December and £15,000 by the end of January.

This money will be used for essential work on our national centre, further capital for our printshop, and for vital campaigning activities in the new year. These include major drives leading up to the recall Lambeth conference against

the cuts in January and the labour movement conference against the missiles in March.

Socialist Challenge is also planning extensive coverage of the 24 January special Labour Party conference, as well as stepping up our solidarity work with the Irish hunger strikers.

How do we aim to get the money in? From national events and activities our target is £80,000. That means we want £20,000 between now and May from you, our supporters and sellers, through local activities.

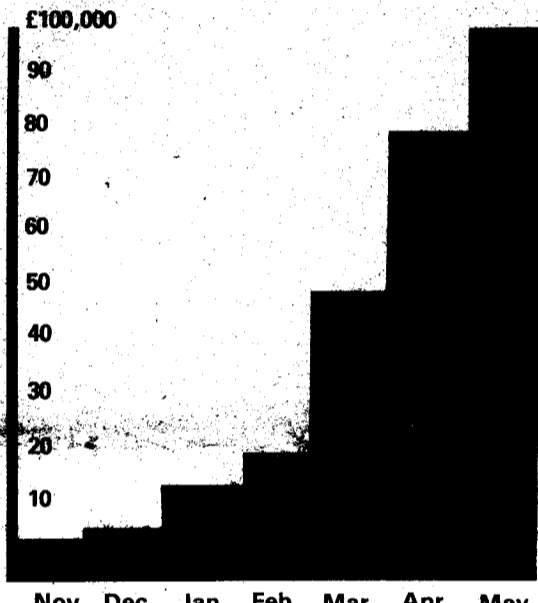
The graphs below show our monthly target between now and the end of May for the fund drive, and the amounts we expect from national supporters.

We also include a target figure for each district and area. We want our supporters to draw up plans for meeting these targets each month between now and May.

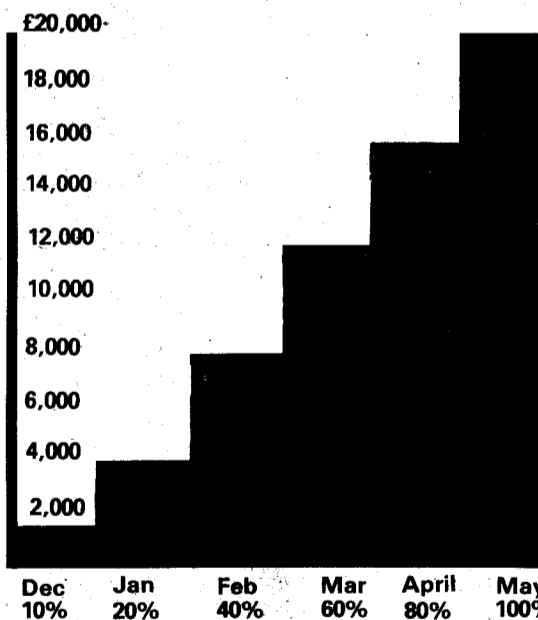
But for now, think about December! We aim to reach £2,000 from local supporters before the end of the month. So far you have sent us £1,018 out of our £2,818 overall total. So we need a further £1,000 this month.

Give a really useful Xmas present — help to raise a thousand pounds for Socialist Challenge to finish 1980!

FUND DRIVE



LOCAL SUPPORTERS



Branch Targets

East London	£2,400
Outer West London	1,200
Brent	1,000
North London	1,200
Lambeth	1,500
Other South London	760
West of England	1,170
South Wales	1,000
South England	450
West Midlands	2,600
East Midlands	550
North West	2,470
North East	400
Scotland	1,500
South Yorkshire	900
West Yorkshire	900



By Geoffrey Sheridan

NOW OUT — the 2nd edition of Socialist Challenge's highly popular pamphlet 'The Tory Press and How to Fight It'.

If you gritted your teeth at the coverage of the Labour Party conference, and thrilled at the TUC decision that media workers should ensure the right of reply... this pamphlet is for you.

Single copies 10p plus 10p pp; multiple orders at 5p a copy pre-paid post free, direct from: Socialist Challenge, 328 Upper St, London N1.

What's Left

RATES for What's Left ads. 5p per word or £4 per col. inch. Deadline: noon Sat. prior to publication. Payment in advance.

BIRMINGHAM STA Xmas social. Fri 12 Dec, Bournbrook Hotel, Bristol Rd, 8pm-midnight. Disco, food, late bar. Adm £1.

DON'T LET IRISH PRISONERS DIE: March from Clapham to Brixton organised by South London Action Cttee (Supported by SWP, IMG, RCT, Workers Power, Big Flame, TOM & RCG). Banners welcome. Clapham Common tube, 12 noon, Sat 13 December.

NO NUKES MUSIC: Fri 19 December benefit concert featuring the Thomson Twins, the Lucy's and Changing Trains at Brixton Town Hall, Stn London. Food, drink & 'surprise events'. Price £1.50 in advance, £1.80 £1 unwaived.

BOLIVIA: Vice-President elect Jaime Paz speaks on resistance to the July coup. Grand Committee room, House of Commons, Tues 16 Dec, 7pm.

Is your town or city mentioned above? If not, send in details to this sales column.

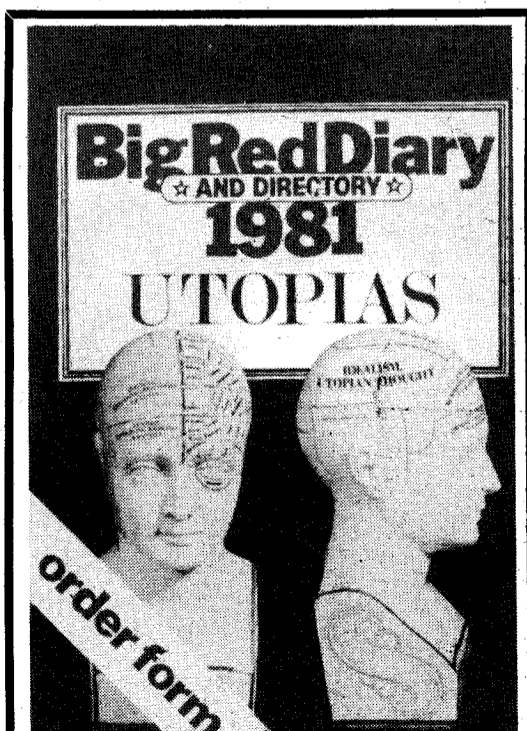
REVOLUTION

FOR A UNITED REVOLUTIONARY YOUTH ORGANISATION

REVOLUTION HAS A NEW PHONE NUMBER 01-359 8301

FUNDRAISING: All Revo branches to organise Xmas parties and other fundraising events.

REVOLUTION Youth and IMG student fraction — note change of date. Now Fri 12 Dec in MANCHESTER at the 'Squat', Devas St, Oxford Rd, Manchester. Noon to 6pm. Details: ring Stephanie on 021-359 5921.



I would like a year's sub to Socialist Challenge and a free 1981 Big Red Diary (for £12.50)

Name

Address

to: Socialist Challenge, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

Poland — A decisive showdown is inevitable

Central committee purges Gierek team

THE Polish Communist Party central committee meeting of 1-2 December purged the Gierek faction from all leading party posts. Four of his leading supporters were all dropped from the political bureau.

Piotr Jaroszewicz, prime minister under Gierek, was purged from the national parliament and may face possible expulsion from the party after a special party control commission inquiry. Gierek too has been stripped of all his positions. The resolution passed against him claimed that: 'The major error of Gierek was to create relations and methods of functioning at the heart of the party leadership which went against the principles of the party.'

'He created an atmosphere of intrigue and substituted appearances for real democracy. For that reason the CC decided to relieve him of his CC post.' He was further attacked for failing to heed 'critical opinions'.

New promotions to the party political bureau include Tadeusz Fiszbach, the party chief from Gdansk, who pleaded for dialogue with the independent unions throughout the summer crisis. His appointment is seen as directly reflecting the pressure from Solidarity.

By Davy Jones

'If the threat to socialism was real, Polish communists would have a right and a duty to ask for aid from other socialist countries.'

With these words Jozef Klasa, Communist Party member responsible for the press, made it clear that sections of the Polish party are prepared to support a Soviet invasion if their power is threatened.

Last week's threats and intimidation by the Soviet Union and their supporters within Poland have already had the desired effect.

Solidarity, the independent trade union, have called off a demonstration planned for 16 December in Warsaw to commemorate the deaths of 1,000 shipyard workers in the December 1970 riots. A similar demonstration in Gdansk on the same day is expected to draw as many as one million people.

Invasion

At the 5 December emergency Warsaw Pact summit the Soviet and Eastern European leaders expressed their confidence that the Polish people will be able to overcome the present difficulties. But the threat of invasion still hangs over Poland.

The Soviet Union already has a vast military presence in the country irrespective of the recent military build-up around its borders. There are some 57 major Soviet bases throughout Poland where 23,000 soldiers and 650 tanks are stationed, as well as 340 fighter planes.

But the Soviet Union wants to use military force only as a last resort. They know that bloody fighting would result. Already 60 Polish generals and 200 staff officers have handed in a document to the Polish Communist Party saying that such an intervention would be considered as 'an act of war'.

At this stage the Soviet Union aims to use threats of military intervention combined with economic austerity to force the independent unions to moderate their demands and police their own militants. That way they hope in time to roll back the gains of the Polish workers.

At every step the incompatibility of independent trade unions and the monolithic one-party state becomes clearer. The Soviet rulers know it, the Polish bureaucrats know it and increasingly the workers organised in Solidarity are learning it.

Monopoly

When the unions have opposed price rises on essential goods the regime has cited the crisis of the economy. But the bureaucrats cannot allow the new unions any access to collective discussion on economic planning without undermining their own monopoly of power. Premier Kania has already warned against the development of 'dual power'.

When dissident intellectuals have given support to Solidarity they have been harassed by the security forces. The Polish rulers cannot allow the genuine in-

Solidarity with Polish Workers

Messages of support to the independent unions and solidarity messages against any outside intervention can be sent to: MKZ, Hotel Morski, 103 Grundwalska, Gdansk, Poland.

Copies of the British labour movement solidarity appeal, which calls for raising funds to send a small printing press to print the new union journal, can be obtained from: Steve Griffiths, Polish workers' appeal, c/o 137 Digbeth, Birmingham B5 6DR.

quiry into the security forces which the unions are demanding for fear of revealing the scope of their power.

And the development of free trade unions has inevitably led to calls for democracy within the Communist Party itself, especially as, according to the French paper *Le Monde*, some sixty per cent of the worker members of the party are now members of Solidarity.

With the calling of the special party congress for next March or April the struggle within the Communist Party can be expected to hot up. Already the regional conferences held in early November witnessed a dramatic flowering of internal opposition to the party leadership.

In 17 counties opposition cells have appeared and begun to develop powerful rank and file coordination outside the normal party hierarchy. In some areas they have managed to oust the party's intermediary



Polish shipyard workers — will they have to face Soviet troops?

leadership. Others have prepared programmatic motions which they intend to submit to the extraordinary party congress.

The rank and file coordination in Torun for example, one of whose leaders was expelled last week for 'factionalism and clericalism', has put forward a platform which comprises new elections at all levels of the party; 'de-bureaucratising' the party by means of more regular meetings of its members and the suppression of all directives from the top apparatus. 'The working class must take control of the party, and thus of power,' the platform says.

In Lodz the local party journal *Glos Robotniczy* (The Workers' Voice) has

published resolutions adopted by local factory cells of the party which go far beyond the accepted limits. The Fonica factory cell demanded a purge of the party.

Through this process they claimed the party could 'be cured of the incurable disease which devours it, namely sectarianism' which finds its expression in 'its lack of confidence in the people, its intolerance of any form of autonomy ... and its manipulation of information and monopoly of power.'

The resolution goes on

to propose that power be shared jointly with two other legal parties — the peasants' and democrats' parties. The resolution concludes by demanding

'authentic socialism: the dictatorship of the proletariat must not be the dictatorship against the proletariat'.

Polish party chiefs are terrified of these developments within their own party. To head off this radicalisation they have proposed a number of reforms. The recent central committee voted to draw up a programme of comprehensive economic reforms to be put to public discussion, together with immediate moves to decentralise control of the economy.

The Polish crisis is far from over. The decisive showdown is still to come between the new workers' power embodied in Solidarity and their bureaucratic rulers.

'In the present economic situation there is no problem which is strictly economic'

WE reprint below excerpts from a statement from the editors of *Solidarity Bulletin* No. 8, reproduced in the latest *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe*. It shows how far the independent unions are beginning to challenge fundamental aspects of Polish society.

'We consider that in the present situation there is no problem which is strictly economic, even when it's a question of technical or immediate matters ...

'We know the world political situation; we know that we have duties linked to our membership of the socialist camp and the Warsaw Pact and that we have to stay loyal to them.

'Our demands are designed neither to put in question the foundations of the socialist regime in our country, nor its position in inter-

national relations, and we support no one who wants to exploit the present circumstances with this aim: on the contrary we would oppose them ...

'We believe that none of our allies has an interest in us having a badly organised economy ...

'It is important first of all to create conditions which will guarantee that losses (due to bad administration) will not be repeated. One cannot get there without decentralising power, without creating the conditions which will permit the utilisation of the professional knowledge of scholars and the collective intelligence of the working class ...

'We know that this is impossible without a programme which includes our participation in decisions ... creating the conditions for the participation of all those who work and who have the right to receive the results of their activity, in working out the destiny of our country.'



Solidarity leader, Lech Walesa, right, signs the Gdansk agreement with Mieczyslaw Jagielski of the Polish Politbureau.

LABOUR FOCUS ON EASTERN EUROPE

A Socialist Defence Bulletin on Russia, Europe and the USSR
Vol. 4 Nos. 1-3 Spring - Autumn 1980 £1.50/\$3.50

POLISH FREE TRADE UNIONS

Solidarnosc



Complete *Solidarnosc* Strike Bulletin
Confidential Government Document on 'anti-Socialist Activity'
Students Defend Themselves

New 64-page special issue on Poland of *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe*. Available from: The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper St, London N1.

Sexual Politics

By Trina Shane

ONCE again we may be forced to defend the 1967 Abortion Act.

Timothy Sainsbury, Tory MP for Hove, who came top in the private members' ballot, has suggested that he may introduce a bill to lower abortion time limits and to tighten the conscience clause.

How much longer will we have to defend what is itself an inadequate Act which restricts a woman's right to choose?

The National Abortion Campaign (NAC) has always fought for free abortion on demand and for a woman's right to choose. But these principles will never be achieved if we are forever fighting new anti-abortion legislation.

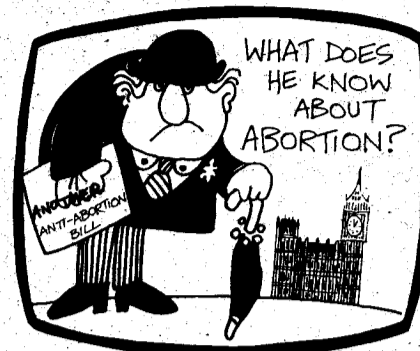
That's why this year's NAC conference launched a campaign for positive legislation aimed at winning the labour movement to support a woman's right to choose. The TUC's call for the 28 October 1979 demonstration against the Corrie Bill was the high point of the broad labour movement support for NAC's anti-Corrie campaign.

The defeat of Corrie represented a major victory for the pro-abortion movement and NAC's strategy of fighting for support from the labour movement. It aided the fight for other feminist issues within the labour movement.

The National Abortion Campaign helped to set up the Labour Abortion Rights Campaign (LARC). In 1978 NAC and LARC held a successful joint trade union conference

Abortion campaign calls labour movement conference

MAKE IT LEGAL!



which helped spur the TUC into taking up the issue. NAC and LARC have a joint trade union liaison committee fighting for labour movement action on abortion rights.

LARC have drawn up a three point plan for abortion legislation. Firstly they aim to build a campaign for adequate facilities, making their provision mandatory under law. Secondly they want a bill to decriminalise

abortion by amending the Offences Against the Person Act and the Infant Life Preservation Act. Finally they seek the introduction of a woman's right to choose Bill to give positive rights to women and to repeal all existing abortion legislation.

It will not be a Tory government that will introduce positive legislation. It is therefore essential to commit the Labour Party to inclu-

sion of such legislation in its manifesto. The labour movement conference called by NAC and LARC for 14 March 1981, will begin that fight to commit the labour movement to abortion rights.

NAC/LARC Conference is open to all TUC-affiliated unions and Labour parties. It will be held at Starcross School, Rising Hill St, London N1. For more details write to: NAC, 374 Grays Inn Rd, London WC1.

The Women's TUC — a useless diversion or an aid in the fight for women's liberation?

By Denny Fitzpatrick

'The Women's TUC ghettoises women and relegates them to insignificant bodies out of the mainstream of decision-making.' That's the argument made by many trade unionists.

My own union, the post office engineers (POEU), disaffiliated from the Women's TUC in 1976 and the teachers' union, the NUT, did so in 1978. They argued that we're all equal and that women should play a full role in all the structures of the trade union movement.

The facts don't bear this out. There are no women on the POEU executive and only 6 out of 49 on the NUT's executive. There is very little provision to take up issues relating to women.

Many other unions disagree with this approach and have advisory bodies and women's officers. The AUEW also has a women's conference, and the journalists' union (NUJ) held its first one this year. Both these unions support the women's TUC.

It is because women's interests have been neglected that women have found it necessary to organise to make sure that their voices are heard. Women occupy some of the worst paid, least organised jobs with little industrial power.

But times are changing. Women's self-organisation in the unions and within important struggles has given rise to the Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination Acts. It

has also resulted in the TUC drawing up its working women's charter and more recently a Charter for Equality in the unions. One aspect of this is the allocation of special seats for women on the TUC executive.

The Women's TUC has campaigned for these special measures as well as fighting for the TUC to defend abortion rights. Last year it recommended positive action for women from which the TUC organised a recent conference.

The Women's TUC will be reporting on this conference to the 1981 Trade Union Congress. The TUC should fight for positive action through local agreements and a vigorous campaign to force employers by law to establish goals and targets for women to enter male-dominated industries. These measures could be a real step towards ending job segregation and low pay for women.

Motions to the Women's TUC have to be submitted by 2 January and delegates nominated by 16 February. Send in your motions supporting positive action and make sure your union branch sends a delegate.



Women throughout the country are fighting back against violence against women

The Ripper, feminism and Mary Whitehouse

'However we dress, wherever we go, yes must be yes and no must be no' — that was the message from women to the National Union of Students (NUS) conference last Monday. The conference voted to launch an action campaign round the theme, 'Self-defence is no offence'. Students will demand better lighting and transport facilities around colleges. Below Valerie Coultas looks at violence against women.

WHEN I was 14 years old two young men at a party grabbed hold of me, threw me into the back of a van and drove me to Sheen Common. I thought I was

going to be raped. In fact they drove me back to the party... it was only a joke to teach me not to be stupid. I was very frightened and I hated not only the men

but every person in the street who ignored my abduction. Their reaction was typical of the public's attitude to attacks on women, particularly if the woman seems to know the men involved.

In all the massive press coverage of the Ripper case the only advice for women has been to stay at home. Some feminists have responded with a call for a curfew on men, as they believe that all men are potential rapists.

But if individual men are to blame for sexual violence against women why stop at a curfew? Why not have longer prison sentences for male rapists, perhaps the death penalty? These feminists shy away from such demands because they know that the government, courts and police are not impartial.

Repress

The state and its institutions, far from protecting women and other oppressed groups in society, will repress any challenge to its authority, including women or blacks organising to defend themselves. We can place no trust in the forces of 'law and order' to protect women.

Blaming individual men detracts from the role of the state and society in encouraging rape and sexual

Women fight back

Margate — women protesters forced cinema management to stop showing the film *Dressed to Kill*.

Cardiff — university women students in halls of residence won the right to free alarm/ torches.

York — women university students won free transport home after late lectures as well as free torch/alarms.

Manchester — 200 women held a protest picket on 28 November against violence against women

Bristol — university students held a week of action on women and violence.

violence. The education system, the newspapers, television, and the laws of the land all incite men to regard women as objects of sexual gratification and abuse.

A change in the law to allow wives raped by their husbands to take them to court, or to stop judges dragging up a woman's sexual history in rape cases, would do more to change attitudes than any number of curfews on men.

Progressive sex education would do more to stop men wanting to go to porn movies than increased censorship. Mary Whitehouse supporters have already opportunisticly pointed to a possible alliance with

'women's libbers' against pornography. If the Ripper thought that his murders had forged an alliance between feminists and Mary Whitehouse he'd be laughing all over his women-hating face.

In the long run only a society that frees women from class exploitation and sexual oppression — a socialist society — will be able to establish full equality and freedom between men and women.

But right now women should demand better street lighting and late night transport as well as taking a campaign against sexual violence and harassment into the labour movement.

ANGELA PHILLIPS (IFL)

WOMEN AND THE UNIONS

Union	% Women Members	Women on Nat Exec	Size of Nat Exec
Bankers, Insurance & Finance Union	48	4	26
Nat Union of Hoisery & Knitwear Workers	72	3	21
Nat Union of Tailors & Garment Workers	90	5	15
Confed of Health Service Workers	75	3	28
Union of Shop, Dist & Allied Workers	66	3	18

Assoc of Professional & Executive Staff	50	1	14
Civil & Public Service Association	68	6	29
Equity	47	15	65
Bakers' Union	50	2	18
Nat Union of Public Employees	66	8	26
Tobacco Work Union	66	2	18
Transport & General Workers Union	15.9	0	41
Amal Union of Engineering Workers	16	0	52
Nat Union of Teachers	70	4	44

(source: Guardian, 10.3.80)

By Pat Kane

Right-wing terror continues to sweep the Central American country of El Salvador.

The latest outrage by the country's National Guard and ultra-right terrorists was the assassination of three Catholic nuns who were engaged in social work in the area north of the capital, San Salvador.

The killings follow the assassination of six of the leaders of the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR), the country's main opposition group. The leaders were seized during an executive committee meeting of the FDR and found shot the following day.

The latest killings bring the total number of political killings since the beginning of the year to 10,000. Despite the terror thousands turned out for the funerals and the FDR continues to gain popular support.

The US Congress had approved a further \$5.7 million in military aid, before Carter's recent announcement that US aid was being cut off because of the murder of the nuns. No doubt aid will now be channelled to the regime under cover.

Within the regime itself there is a growing opposi-

El Salvador: as right-wing terror continues, the opposition grows

tion current calling for restraint. The British-based El Salvador Solidarity Committee has revealed that this grouping has produced a position document. The document makes the following admissions:

* The US is stockpiling arms in the Panama Canal Zone for use in El Salvador. Preparations for direct military intervention have already been made.

* The Salvador regime is too weak to survive without massive US aid. In an attempt to prevent the victory of popular forces occurring before the US elections, Carter has poured more aid into El Salvador than has been devoted to any other crisis in the hemisphere since 1965.

The training programme for Salvadoran officers is the biggest ever sponsored

for any Latin American country in one year.

* A paramilitary 'strike force' exists in Guatemala, ready to intervene in El Salvador. It consists of Guatemalan soldiers, former Nicaraguan National Guards, anti-Castro Cubans and mercenaries of other nationalities.

The organisers of such groups are allowed to enter and leave the USA without hindrance, although their identities and activities are known.

* The US government deliberately distorts media coverage of El Salvador to prevent favourable coverage of opposition forces and criticism of the junta.

El Salvador continues to move towards a showdown between the popular opposition and the regime. The Farabundo Marti Libera-

tion Front now claims 5,000 armed soldiers and the opposition has countless local organisations and militias.

With the continued forward march of the Nicaraguan revolution, imperialism and the local regimes know that 'stability' in El Salvador is essential. But the heroic struggle of the El Salvadoran people is denying them this luxury.

March against US military intervention in Salvador

Speaker's Corner

Sunday 14 December

Starts at noon

Called by El Salvador Solidarity Committee, 29 Islington Park Street, London N1



Otelo de Carvalho, candidate of the far left in Portugal, stood on a platform against capitalist austerity.

Portuguese elections Why Trotskyists supported Otelo

IN LAST Sunday's presidential election in Portugal, the incumbent president, General Eanes, won a decisive victory over the right-wing challenge of Soares Carneiro. The PSR (Revolutionary Socialist Party), the Portuguese section of the Fourth International, supported the candidature of Otelo de Carvalho whose vote, at the time of going to press, is not known.

Otelo played an important part in the revolutionary events in 1974-5. The decision of the PSR to

support Otelo arose from the failure of the main Portuguese workers' parties, the Communist Party and

the Socialist Party, to stand against the incumbent president, General Eanes, who has presided for several years over capitalist austerity measures.

The Democratic Alliance, the grouping of right-wing parties which won a decisive victory in the parliamentary elections in October, put up its own candidate, Soares Carneiro, a former fascist.

The CP and SP, instead of putting forward a candidate to fight for workers'

unity and independence against austerity, chose to back Eanes as a lesser evil to Carneiro.

This attitude was only finalised after considerable in-fighting in both organisations. Socialist Party leader Soares was backed by sections of the SP leadership as a candidate, but this option

was defeated by the party's national council.

The CP initially put forward its own candidate, Carlos Brito, but later withdrew in favour of Eanes.

Otelo was sponsored by the FUP (Popular Unity Front), which drew up a six-point agreement with the PSR. The agreement includes:

- *opposition to austerity;
- *defence of the gains of the revolutionary events of 1974-75, including the agrarian reform;
- *freedom of the trade unions and defence of democratic rights;
- *the fight for the overthrow of the new Democratic Alliance government, and for the unity and independence of the working class.

The other left-wing candidate was Aires Rodriguez, who was backed by two small Trotskyist organisations associated with the international 'Parity Committee'. The PSR did not support Aires because of his record when he was a Socialist Party parliamentary deputy, and because of the scandal around his candidature.

Timidity

It is alleged that his supporters obtained numerous signatures to get Rodriguez on the ballot by asking people to sign for a competition to win a free colour television, or alternatively by posing as investigators in a survey about cigarette smoking.

Otelo is the best known leader of the Portuguese far left. His candidature provided the best opportunity for the working people of Portugal to express their opposition to austerity and to the cowardice and timidity of the workers' parties.



Prime Minister, Sa Carneiro, died in a plane crash last week throwing the country into political crisis

ARGUMENTS FOR SOCIALISM



Do the bosses care about unemployment?

By Brian Grogan

FORMER Tory Premier Edward Heath made a bitter attack on the Thatcher Government last week for making the Tory Party 'appear as the party of unemployment'.

Terence Beckett, leader of the Confederation of British Industry, echoed Heath's attack and called the latest unemployment figures 'devastating'.

These protests so heartened the TUC that, with the CBI, they made a common approach to the Government to ask it to cut unemployment.

The TUC ignored the awkward fact that Terence Beckett's alternative is for even more cuts in public expenditure — a proposal that would increase unemployment.

At the same time Beckett's former firm, Fords, have rejected a claim for a 35-hour week, saying that it is 'unacceptable in the present economic situation'. Both Fords and Beckett are aware that a national 35-hour week would boost employment by 10 per cent, thereby wiping out the dole queues.

But the bosses and the Tory politicians, be they Heath or Thatcher, like unemployment. The recession has two effects. Firstly it concentrates production in the more efficient and profitable sectors and drives the weak and inefficient to the wall.

Secondly, it creates a reserve army of unemployed, which the bosses hope to use to keep the rest of the working class in line. However, even with real unemployment at three million, the 'climate of fear' has up to now only had limited effects on workers' militancy.

Many people thought that the workers at Leyland had been well and truly cowed by redundancies and short-time working. Yet when they heard of the success of the Metro, they soon showed that they were willing to fight back against a third year of wage cuts.

This is what the bosses fear. They know that at the first sign of an upturn in the economy, the workers will use their strength to get back any losses they have

suffered in real wages.

The CBI is aware that the Tories have made savage cuts in the public sector and ruthlessly imposed their cash limits. What gets up their noses is that the government has not been able, up to now, to really slash public sector workers' wage packets.

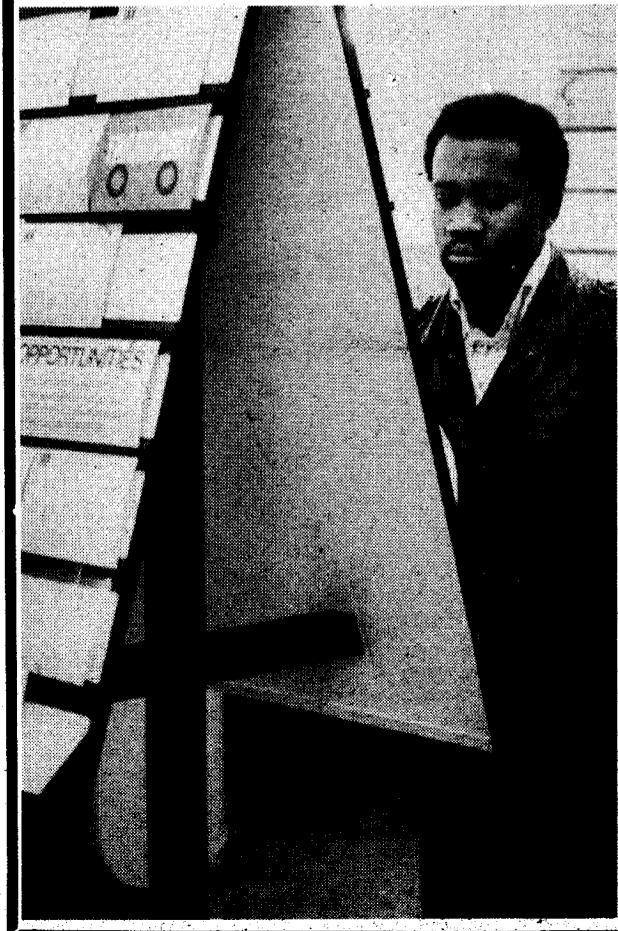
They complain that too many of the cuts have been concentrated on capital expenditure which hits their friends in the building trade and manufacturing.

Thatcher's crude monetarism has also had the effect, with its concentration on the money supply, of hitting not just the weak firms, but also stronger and more competitive companies. The capitalists are predicting a temporary easing of the depression by the autumn of 1981, but they are worried at the thought of having to compete with foreign firms at a time when their own profits are being eaten up by bank charges and high interest rates.

The same high interest rates have sent up the value of the pound and made British goods more costly abroad, thus undermining profitability.

These side effects of Thatcherism seemed OK on a short-term basis if the eventual prize was to be a weakened working class. Now as the Tories' 'wasted year' comes towards its end there is growing disquiet among sections of the employers and some Tory MPs.

They are angry that instead of the workers paying all the costs of the recession, some firms are having to pay their share. The TUC should be reprimanded for seeking allies in those quarters which are just as anti-working class as Thatcher.



Photocredit: MARK RUSHER (IFL)

It's your right to reply!

By James Curran

WITHIN a month of the Campaign for Press Freedom launching its right of reply campaign, the demand became official TUC policy. But a motion passed with overwhelming support at Congress is not necessarily the same thing as positive action that gets things done.

This is why the CPF has followed up its initiative with publicity within the trade union movement for active support for the right of reply campaign, so that bias and distortion in the

media does not go unanswered.

The campaign is convening a conference on the right of reply, which is jointly sponsored by the London branches of the press unions

NUJ, SOGAT, NATSOPA, NGA and SLADE.

The conference, to be held early in 1981, will discuss how and in what circumstances the right of reply should be enforced.

The CPF produced a leaflet for the South-east Region TUC's Month of Action in November, to answer the question: 'What can you do if your activities are ignored or distorted by the press, radio, or television?'

The leaflet urges trades unionists to monitor media

coverage and to contact trades unionists in the media over instances of distorted coverage.

This theme is developed in a CPF leaflet now being prepared for mass distribu-

Research

tion. This sets out what you can do to secure your right to reply, and specifies who should be contacted in the media.

NATSOPA and the NGA assisted with research for the leaflet by requesting

all their Fleet St chapels to submit details of cases where their members had been involved in obtaining the right of reply.

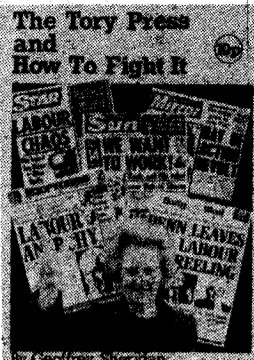
A surprisingly large number of instances have come to light, many of them previously unpublished. Among those who have won space to answer back are railway porters, school caretakers, black people, train drivers, printers, gay people, and the Grunwick strikers.

Within this background of spontaneous and uncoordinated activity among press workers, there is every prospect that the CPF's right of reply campaign — now that it is backed by the

print unions and the TUC — will start to dramatically advance public access to the press.

This article is taken from 'Free Press', the bi-monthly bulletin of the Campaign for Press Freedom. The bulletin contains news on press freedom developments, information on media bias, and debate on the kind of fightback that's needed.

Single copies are 10p plus 10p p&p; multiple orders at 5p a copy post free — ask your trades council, trade union or Labour Party branch to order copies now, from: CPF, 274-288 London Rd, Hadleigh, Essex.



OUT NOW! Single copies 10p plus 10 p&p. Socialist Challenge, 328 Upper Street, London N1.

Labour's industrial policy: a workers' autopsy

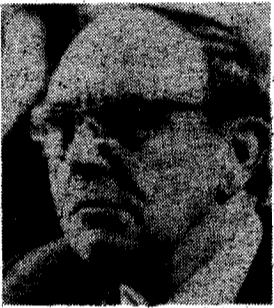
By John Harrison

ON TONY Benn's first day at the Department of Industry he was greeted by Permanent Secretary Sir Anthony Part with these words:

'I presume, Secretary of State, that you don't intend to implement the industrial strategy in the Labour Party's programme.'

This story — which is too good not to be true — is told in an excellent book called *State Intervention in Industry* produced by Coventry, Liverpool, Newcastle and North Tyneside Trades Councils, price £2.

The book — the report of a workers' inquiry conducted by these trades councils — looks at just what did happen to this strategy. It is, to quote the cover blurb, a 'story of high expectations turned sour, of hopes, of worker's control leading to the realities of closures...'



Jack Jones, architect of Labour's 'Social Concrick'

Learn

But the report is more than just a story; it is an attempt to learn from the experience. This is important because much of the labour movement, including Benn himself, remains committed to this approach.

(Sir Anthony, for his part — get it? — has quit the Department of Industry. But he manages to fill his time and pockets by sitting on the boards of directors of Lucas Industries, Debenhams, EMI, Metal Box, Savoy Hotels, and so on. So I doubt if he has changed his views much.)

The best thing about the book is the way it links national developments with those in local labour movements. I have not seen this done so well before, and I doubt if anything but a workers' inquiry could do it as well.

A good example is the way detailed autopsies on local struggles show how the parliamentarianist blinkers worn by the Labour left weakened both them and, more importantly, the rank and file of the movement. The industrial strategy was conceived, born and hacked to death without ever leaving the corridors of Westminster.

Inquiry

The Labour Party did not hold a single day-school on industrial policy in 1973, the year the strategy was drawn up. The TUC was no better. Jack Jones, leader of the Transport and General Workers Union at the time, told the inquiry:

...I don't think there was enough understanding of planning agreements and the NEB. We had not sold the ideas to the membership. The TUC Economic Review... (is not) read by most of the members — this

IT'S UTOPIAN!

The Big Red Diary takes utopias as its theme this year. Gerry Kelly reviews it for us.

From Plato's vision of a perfectly ordered, slave-owning paradise to Joanna Russ's dream of a world without men; from the simple pleasures envisioned in the poor man's utopia of a 14th century ballad to Ernest Callenbach's elaborate, ecologically balanced 'Ecotopia' — all the wonders of the many imaginary worlds that human beings have

thought up for themselves are detailed.

Not all have been mere wishes. Some have tried to put their utopian ideas into practice. Gerard Winstanley's Digger commune in England in 1649 was a year-long experiment in communistic living. It died, as all such experiments have, but it provided lasting inspiration.

Other examples followed. The Russian revolution was the first occasion in history when the oppressed classes of a country took power. That revolutionary society also perished, but, on a larger scale than mere utopian experiments and with a will to transform the whole world, rather than a small quarter of it, it prompted workers all over the world to take



Louis Sebastian Mercier was one of the few utopian writers to see his dream come true. (and rather quicker than he expected).

In his book, he falls asleep in 1768 at the age of 28. When he wakes up it is the year 2440 and he is 700 years old. Louis XXVI, a philosopher king, more desirous of the happiness of humanity than the illusions of power has restored the prerogatives of the Elats Generaux. France is a republic, the King merely its president. The Bastille has been demolished, Versailles lies in ruins. Ostentation has gone with absolutism. The only mark of distinction is an embroidered hat.

In real life, Mercier was expelled from France on the book's publication in 1770. But in 1789 revolution broke out and he returned to become a member of the National Assembly.

similar action.

Not all utopias have held out hope for humanity. George Orwell created the most famous anti-utopia in 1984. That book had its forerunners in Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* and Evgeny Zamyatin's *We*.

Zamyatin wrote his book in Petrograd in 1920, three years after the victory of the Bolsheviks. He paints a pessimistic

picture of the future, with humans reduced to the level of machines.

And there are the reactionary utopias. The two best examples of these are Henry Ford's contribution to a capitalist utopia with his 'motor car for the multitudes', and *The Blazing World* of Margaret, Duchess of Newcastle, written in fury at the defeat of the royalists in England's civil war.

The layout of the diary is imaginative and some of the graphics are stunning. There is also, for the first time, a directory of publications and organisations ranging

from animal liberation through revolutionary socialists to youth. If a left organisation or pressure group isn't there, it probably doesn't exist.

And in case you still wonder why so many people have spent their time dreaming of a better world, there is an introductory section called 'Britain Under The Tories'. Need I say more?

You can get your copy of the *Big Red Diary FREE* with a 12-month subscription to *Socialist Challenge*. Why not send the offer as an Xmas present? Fill in the form on page 10.



Lesson

As a member of the works committee at Vickers Scotswood plant put it, 'Tony Benn and the left did support the Industry Bill — there must have been something in it for us'. That something turned out to be the dole queue; Scotswood was closed.

But it is not just the way the programme was presented and fought for. The most important lesson is that its content was — and is — inadequate. As a Liverpool Trades Council delegate put it:

'What the whole experience of the NEB and planning agreements has confirmed for me is that you cannot plan what you do not control and you cannot control what you do not own. Right on.'

This book is available from The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper Street, London N1, or from the Newcastle Centre for the Unemployed, 5 Queen Street, Newcastle 1. Price £2.32 or 10 or more copies for £1.50 each.

Xmas at THE OTHER BOOKSHOP

THIS Xmas why not treat yourself, or your friends to a present from The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper Street, London N1. The Other Bookshop stocks a good selection of books, posters, calendars, diaries, badges, feminist symbol earrings and pendants, as well as attractively produced secular greeting cards.

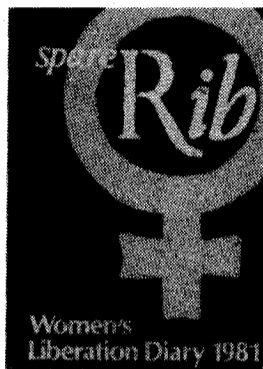
Instead of boosting the coffers of the big chain stores, do your Xmas shopping at a socialist bookshop and help the anti-capitalist struggle.

Diaries

There are two good diaries this year. Pluto's **Big Red Diary** (£2.00) takes utopias as its theme and is reviewed more fully on page 15.

At £2.50 the **Spare Rib** diary is a bit dearer but it is full of useful information such as how to start a woman's group, how to complain to the media about sexism, and how to lobby your MP.

It also contains numerous addresses of women's centres, campaigns and so on, a menstrual calendar, and an often amusing and inspiring quotation or cartoon for each week.



Books

Bombers and Mash by Raynes Minns, published by Virago at £5.50, tells the story of the lives of women during the Second World War. It records how they coped with rationing, evacuation, long hours in the factories and endless queuing.

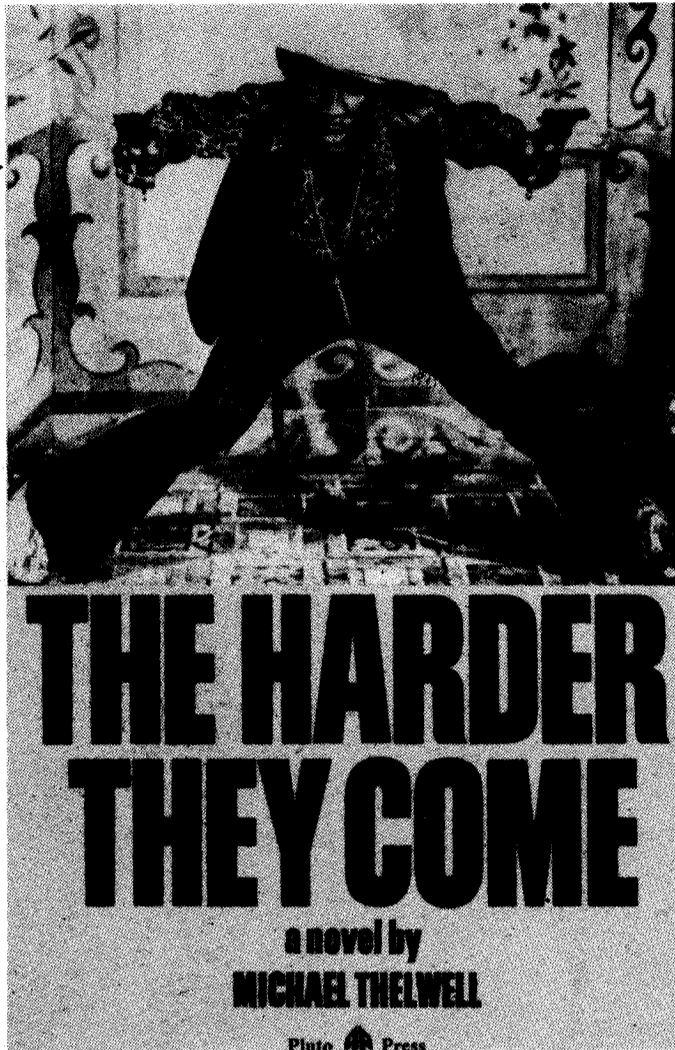
A useful feature is the inclusion of some war-time recipes that provided cheap, nutritious meals — they could come in handy to those of us feeling the 'pinch' today!

Minns looks beneath the surface at the impact of the war on women's independence, marriage, and sexual relationships. With much new material, photographs, posters, government-issue literature, songs, and the voices and thoughts of women themselves, **Bombers and Mash** provides a graphic picture of life on the 'home-front'.

The Harder They Come by Michael Thelwell is published by Pluto Press and costs £2.95. As the author explains: "There is an African tradition in which an artist is merely a man of the culture, working in the culture, refining perhaps, but certainly reflecting the collective cultural experience".



Sounds a bit long-winded perhaps, but it's the author's own summing up of what makes **The Harder They Come** a very good book. It tells the luck and hard luck story of a young Jamaican up from the countryside trying to make it as a reggae singer in Kingston, Jamaica's capital.



It is immediate, exciting, hard-hitting as well as being vivid and warm. It is about common dreams built on and shattered by the contradictions of Jamaica today. Read it, enjoy it, and learn from it.

Another novel that makes good reading is Bernard Malamud's **Dubin's Lives**, published by Penguin at £1.75. In William Dubin — a suc-

cessful, middle-aged, Jewish, biographer seeking love, increased accomplishment and his secret self — Malamud has produced one of his best characters.

His novel is a compassionate and wry tragedy of how a man lives by discipline, love, honour, fidelity and his passion for work. As in one of his other books, **The Fixer**, Malamud gets very close to the core of human feelings.

Poplarism by Noreen Branson, published by Lawrence and Wishart at £2.95, is a really good buy. This is a well-researched and well-written account of the revolt of the Poplar councillors during the period 1919 to 1925. It is the story of ordinary men and women taking on the might of the state and defying the law in the interests of working people.

Of course their action aroused the wrath of the ruling class and the anger of the Labour leaders. Shirley Williams does not own the sole rights on betraying the working class — her forerunner J H Thomas, later to become a Labour minister, was quick to denounce the Poplar councillors.

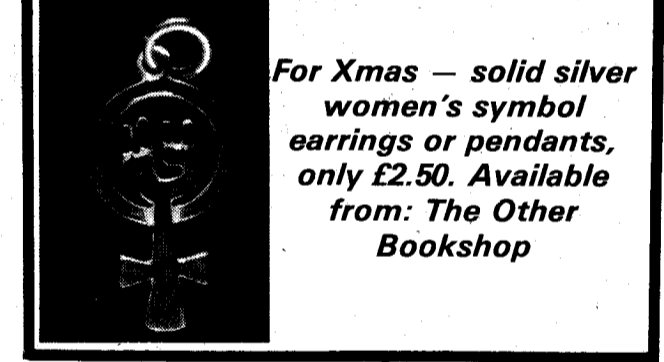
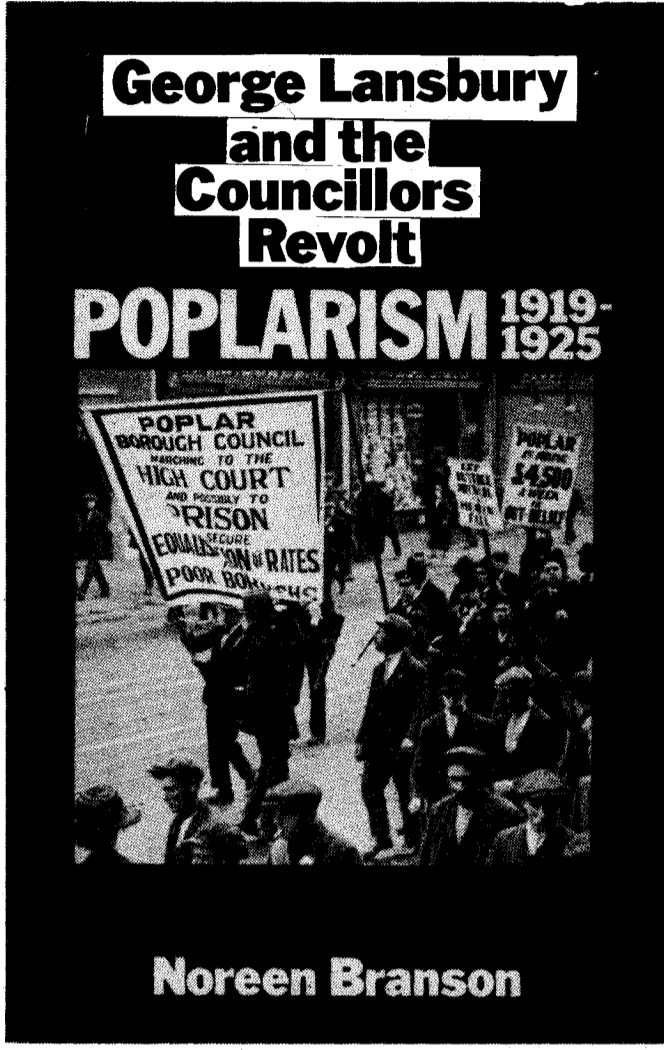
This is more than an interesting book; it has a lot to teach us at a time when Labour authorities are confronting the choice of doing a 'Poplar' or attacking the

living standards of the people who elected them.

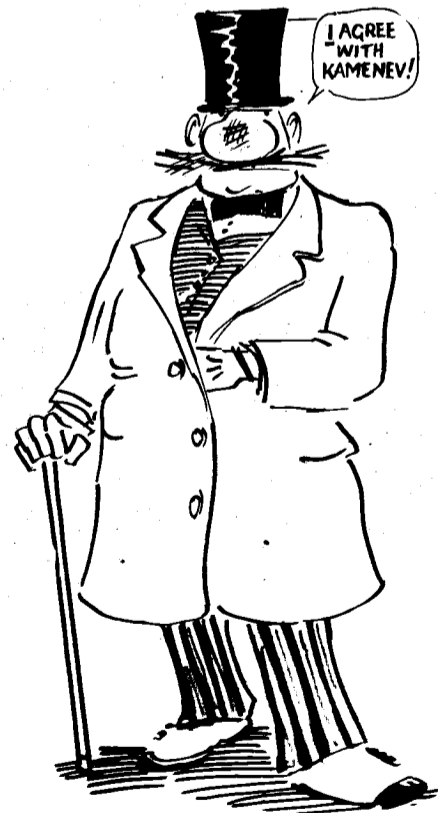
In **Readers and Writers' Trotsky for Beginners**, Tariq Ali and cartoonist Phil Evans try to unravel the story of the man who fell, in the space of a few short years, from being one of the world's most powerful figures to being one of its most reviled.

They trace Trotsky's career from prison to leadership of the Red Army to his tragic death at the hands of Stalin's hired killers. This book, a snip at £1.95, is a guide to an entire historical period, touching on the upheavals in Russia, the Spanish revolution, the rise of Nazism. It is not only good for beginners, but is also excellent for every militant and socialist.

What makes hundreds of men and women live naked in conditions of horrific squalor? Why are seven men and three women fasting to death? In a real masterpiece of investigative journalism, Tim Pat Coogan tells the story of H-Block. After reading **On the Blanket** (Quartet, £2.75) you may not agree with all his conclusions, but you will have a better understanding of what makes people take such desperate measures, and why support for the hunger strikers and the blanket prisoners is growing throughout Ireland.



For Xmas — solid silver women's symbol earrings or pendants, only £2.50. Available from: The Other Bookshop



The nearest tubes to The Other Bookshop are Angel (Northern Line) and Highbury and Islington (Victoria Line). Buses 19, 73, 38, 30, 4, 43, and 171 take you almost to the door. The shop is open six days a week from

10.00am to 6.00pm and will be open Xmas Eve for last-minute shopping. If you order by post, add 15 per cent postage and package. If you have any queries give us a ring on 01-226 0571.

Why we oppose votes for men

1. Because man's place is in the army.
2. Because no really manly man wants to settle any question otherwise than by fighting about it.
3. Because if men should adopt peaceable methods women will no longer look up to them.
4. Because men will lose their charm if they step out of their natural sphere and interest themselves in other matters than feats of arms, uniforms and drums.
5. Because men are too emotional to vote. Their conduct at baseball games and political conventions shows this, while their innate tendency to appeal to force renders them particularly unfit for the task of government.

Alice Duer Miller, 1915

Alice Duer Miller, the American novelist and poet, lived from 1874 to 1942.



Socialist Challenge

British Leyland: more shop stewards sacked,

Rover workers fight back

TORY MINISTERS IN

By Phil Hearse

TWO top Tory ministers helped to swindle the government out of £1000m worth of tax revenue.

This was revealed last week on ITV's 'World in Action' which showed that finance minister Peter Rees (responsible for Inland Revenue) and trade minister John Nott had been involved with a firm called Rossminster, which exploited legal loopholes to prevent hundreds of millions of pounds being paid to the treasury.

Also involved with Rossminster were Peter Walker, the then shadow agriculture minister, and Tom Benyon, Tory MP for Abingdon, who touted for business on Rossminster's behalf.

Among Rossminster's clients were National Car Parks, the building firm George Wimpey, together with rock stars like George Harrison and Led Zeppelin.

For years the Tories have campaigned against 'scroungers' who 'swindle' the taxpayer, so it is worth looking at what our Tory friends have been getting up to.

Rossminster's operation, run by two men called Tucker and Plummer, involved complex legal operations, fake deals, and mythical purchases to evade tax.

The nature of the 'services' which Rossminster could perform for rich clients was revealed by the case of George Miller, a Newcastle property dealer.

Miller sold a piece of land for £1m, making a whacking £650,000 profit. Most of that would have had to go in tax, but Miller was contacted by Benyon who put him in touch with Rossminster. Rossminster then proceeded to make Miller a fake 'loan' and charge mythical interest.

This loan amounted to £2¼m, but Miller only held the cheque in his hands for a few seconds. The interest on that loan was of course huge and could be discounted

against tax. Miller kept his £650,000 profit.

During the course of its operations Rossminster set up 1000 subsidiary companies to shuffle money around. Over 450 of these were set up by one of Rossminster's associates, a certain William Halliwell, and many of them were registered at his mother-in-law's cottage in Kent.

Many of Rossminster's other firms were set up in tax havens in the channel islands — on Guernsey and Sark — with others in Douglas on the Isle of Mann.

During the course of Rossminster's operations it is reckoned that Tucker and Plummer between them cleared £5m. A slush fund to pay people like Tom Benyon and John Nott was set up.

So wealthy are the people involved that they were able to happily offer one of the associates, Arthur Lewis Gray, £125,000 to keep quiet and refuse to co-operate with Inland Revenue investigators.

Social security fraud is reckoned to cost about £15m a year — much less than unclaimed benefits. For people like the Rossminster clique, who are just the tip of the top people's tax evasion iceberg, figures like £15m are hardly worth bothering about.

£1,000m TAX SCANDAL



PETER REES

By Pat Hickey, Rover Solihull

TWELVE workers have been disciplined at Leyland's Longbridge plant in Birmingham. Five are shop stewards, including a supporter of the Leyland Action Committee.

They were sacked for participating in the 'riot' at the new Metro plant two weeks ago when hundreds of workers from the trim and assembly plants went to the company office to protest against being laid-off without pay.

Despite media stories to the contrary, there was virtually no damage done and production was able to restart without delay.

This latest sacking of militant shop stewards led to an immediate walkout of the shift involved in the original dispute.

It is a repeat of the situation that plant convenor Derek Robinson was in last year when he was sacked for opposing the Leyland's closure policy.

Then the Transport and General Workers Union blamed the Engineering Union for not giving a lead in the defence of Robinson. This time they have no such excuses because the men involved are its own members.

The Leyland Action Committee will be organising a campaign against the company and the weakness of the present leaders.

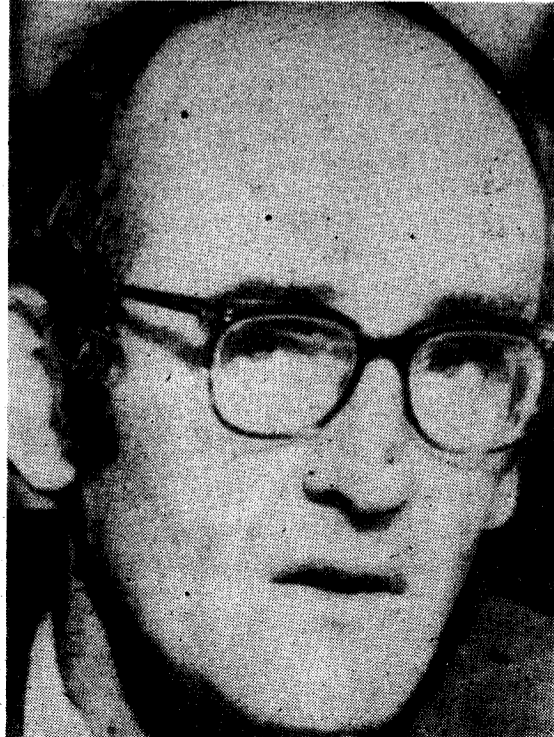
BL are still pushing ahead with their master plan for the company. They are now demanding a further 360 redundancies at the Rover Solihull plant and the closure of one assembly line by Christmas.

Last year the plant lost 1,600 jobs through voluntary redundancy. But this time the company could only find 160 volunteers, a reflection of rising unemployment in the West Midlands. Leyland have now announced that they will be selecting those who will get the sack.

At the same time, Leyland declared their intention to speed up the remaining lines by 20 to 30 per cent. In response to this, the Rover shop stewards committee has voted to oppose compulsory redundancies, and to take action including occupation of the plant if necessary. This was backed by a mass meeting of all the 2,500 workforce.

Leyland are determined to push ahead. If Rover gets the kind of weak leadership that led to the acceptance of the 6.8 per cent pay deal, the sackings at Longbridge, and a host of other setbacks, the situation looks bleak.

But the shop stewards' attitude is that 'enough is enough', and they have taken a big step towards fighting to save jobs.



JOHN NOTT

The only way..OUT

Mirror

by the then Labour Government to claw back the money lost to Rossminster.

To most people, tax avoidance is immoral and distasteful—as the Vestey family found out recently. But there is suggestion that Mr. Rees did anything illegal.

Nevertheless, his position is embarrassing and he ought

to resign. That is what the late Reginald Maudling did in similar circumstances, while the police, for which he was responsible as Home Secretary, investigated the affairs of his former employer, John Poulson.

If Mr. Maudling hadn't resigned Mr. Heath no doubt would have sacked him. Mrs. Thatcher can be no less keen to uphold the standards of public life.

Mr. Rees should go of his own accord. If he won't, Mrs. Thatcher should remove him.



PETER REES

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