

Socialist Challenge

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EXPOSED** *see page four*

NO SURRENDER TO BLACKMAIL LET THEM GO!

LABOUR'S right-wing Gang of Three — Owen, Williams and Rogers — are busily organising with Roy Jenkins to set up their own 'social democratic' party after the Labour Party special conference on Saturday.

The threats of the Labour right are a gigantic exercise in brinkmanship and blackmail. They hope that by threatening to split from the party they will force a climb-down by the left.

There can be no compromise with their threats.

Control of party policy and of any electoral college has to be wrested from the right wing-dominated Parliamentary Labour Party, not just in order to ensure that the next government implements socialist policies, but so that a massive campaign of action can be organised to bring down the Tories.

That means a battle to the finish with Owen and Co, even if they leave the party.

Michael Foot wants to compromise with the PLP in the name of 'party unity', to keep the right from splitting. That's why Foot continues to support 50 per cent of the votes in an electoral college being given to the MPs.

But we have to learn the lessons of the past year's struggle for democracy in the party. The Gang of Three and most of the Parliamentary Labour Party will never be reconciled to democracy and socialist policies.

The only way to get a fighting Labour Party, committed to such policies and to mass action to kick the Tories out, is to fight the right wing to the bitter end.

Socialists in the Labour Party have to demand an end to Michael Foot's 'compromise' approach.

Trying to compromise with the right over the electoral college is part of the same approach which leads him to tell working people to wait for the next general election before taking on the Tories.

When 2,600,000 people are unemployed such an approach is useless.

Michael Foot should not only refuse to compromise with the right, he should give all-out Labour support to the seafarers' struggle.

He should support BL workers against the continual attacks of Edwardes. He should denounce MacGregor's destruction of the steel industry.

A combination of the occasional protest march and compromise with the Labour right is not the way to defeat the Tories.

Mass action and war against the right wing can achieve the goal — the sweeping of the Tories from office and their replacement by a Labour government committed to socialist policies.

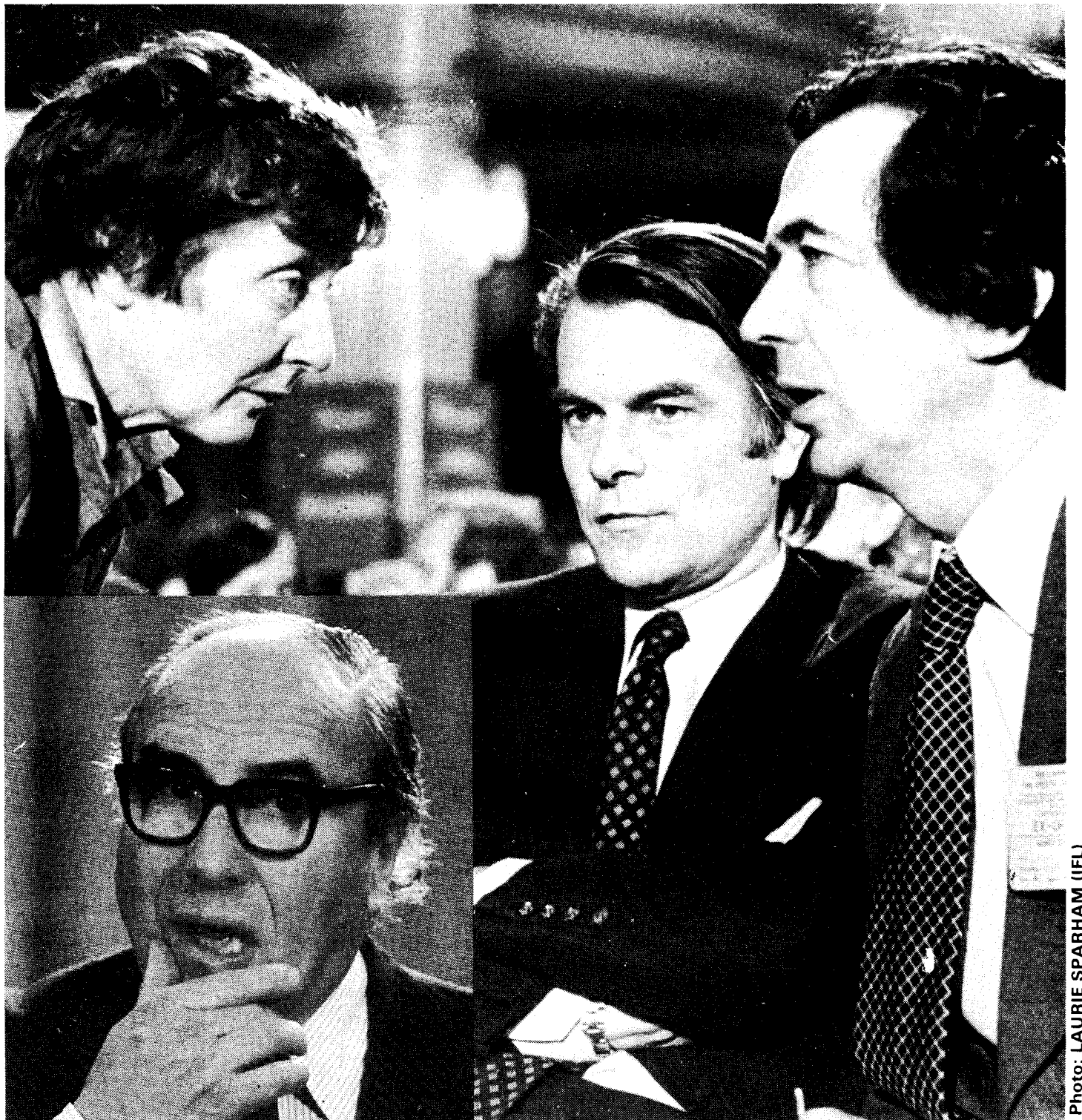


Photo: LAURIE SPARHAM (IFL)

21 FEB GLASGOW FIGHT UNEMPLOYMENT

IT was the campaign against Corrie's Bill that really changed things. We thought he was going to win and when he didn't we realised what powerful allies the pro-choice movement had.

We said then that we had to use this strength not just to defend the abortion laws from attack but to change the act itself as it doesn't do enough for women.

The conference will begin discussion on positive legislation for abortion rights and how to involve the labour movement in fighting for it. It has already won support from industrial unions like the sheet-metal workers union and from Bill Sirs of the

Build the labour movement conference on abortion rights

TIMOTHY Sainsbury has decided not to sponsor an anti-abortion Bill in the next parliamentary session. This setback for the anti-abortionists follows the success of the campaign against the Corrie anti-abortion Bill inside the labour movement.

As the Labour Party's special conference

steelworkers. During the Corrie campaign three unions wrote to their sponsored MPs on the issue — NUPE, ASTMS, APEX — which challenges the notion of abortion being a matter for individual conscience.

The fight for abor-

tion rights is bound up with the struggle for democracy in the Labour Party. LARC will be putting the case at the 14 March conference for the unions to campaign against the MP's free vote on abortion, and for the party manifesto to be committed to changes in

meets to discuss how to elect the party leader, pro-abortion activists are organising a labour movement conference on abortion on 14 March. Ann Kingsbury of the Labour Abortion Rights Campaign spoke to Socialist Challenge about the aims of the conference.

the law on abortion.

The free vote is vital. In 1977 the party took a vote for a woman's right to choose but on a show of hands the motion to stop the so-called free vote was lost. Only on abortion and hanging are MPs allowed the 'free-

dom' to consult their consciences.

It was the trade union delegates that voted to retain the free vote so we have to campaign in the unions to explain why abortion is a political issue, not one of individual conscience.

The free vote should be opposed because in effect it means that a small handful of people decide on behalf of the rest of us. LARC will also campaign in the Labour Party for abortion rights to be an issue for constituency parties in deciding on reselection of their MP. Abortion is a good litmus test for accountability.

Now that Sainsbury has cried off because of the 'fanatics' likely to disrupt parliament if a restrictive Bill went ahead, we have to be aware of his threat that 'abuses' would be challenged in the courts. Part of LARC's struggle for positive legislation will include the demand for

decriminalising abortion.

Many people still don't realise that under present laws abortion is a criminal act. This means that the DHSS has special responsibility for abortion clinics, giving them wide power over the charities that carry out about half the abortions in this country.

So changing the law is very relevant and important to the struggles around abortion today. We would urge every trade union and constituency Labour parties to be represented at this conference.

For details of positive legislation on abortion conference, write to: NAC/LARC, 374 Grays Inn Road, London WC1. Tel 01-278 0153.

'Morning Star' covers up for French CP's racism

By Davy Jones

IT'S OFFICIAL — the British Communist Party supports its French counterpart's racist campaign against immigration.

In a grovelling article in last Thursday's *Morning Star*, Harry Samson justified the French Communists' call for a halt to all immigration. He claimed that the press in France and abroad had been 'scraping the bottom of the barrel of anti-communism to smear the French Communist Party with racism.'

The main argument of Samson's 750-word article, headlined 'French media smears Communists', was that 'to avoid adding to the 2m French and immigrant workers already unemployed the French Communists are calling for a halt to immigration in the mutual interests of all workers in France, irrespective of their origin.'

This echoes the speech by George Marchais, the French CP leader, to a party rally two weeks ago in which he said that it was 'inadmissible to allow immigrant workers into France when we have 2m French and immigrant people on the dole.'

in areas where there are many immigrants — or black people born in France or Britain. This unrest is stirred up by racists.

The way to stop it is not by campaigning for a halt to further immigration but by confronting the racists and their arguments, and by attacking the social system that breeds unemployment, bad housing and poverty.

Campaign Against Racist Laws

National Demonstration Against Tory Nationality Bill

Sunday 29 March in London

For details write to: CARL, c/o Lansbury House, 41 Camberwell Grove, London SE5.

Next week: *Socialist Challenge* will be looking at the Tories' Nationality Bill.

Immigrants are not responsible for increased rate charges; nor do they cause unemployment. It is capitalism and its economic priorities that produce these and other social ills.

If the economy was organised in the workers' interests money would be spent on jobs not bombs, on

improved social services not interest repayments to the finance houses.

By campaigning for an end to immigration the French Communist Party is whipping up reactionary sentiment against one of the most oppressed groups in French society. It should instead be fighting for



workers' unity against the capitalist class and its government, headed by Giscard D'Estaing, whose economic policies are responsible for the present crisis.

The British Communist Party's position is completely

hypocritical. On the same day Samson's article appeared, the *Morning Star* carried a front page story attacking the Tory Nationality Bill proposals as racist. The paper declared its intention of campaigning against the proposals. But the *Morning*

Star can't have it both ways. If it is correct to oppose further immigration into France because there are 2m unemployed, then why should socialists oppose Tory restrictions on immigration and nationality in this country which also has more than 2m unemployed?

If the French CP mayor was right a few weeks ago to lead the bulldozing of an immigrant hostel as a protest against immigration, then would it be right for British Communists to lead similar attacks on immigrant centres in areas like Southall or Brick Lane?

Questions

The British Communist Party has to come off the fence. Does it support an end to immigration in countries with high unemployment or not? Does it think immigration causes social unrest or not? Is it going to continue to support the disgraceful chauvinist and racist campaign of the French CP or not?

The immigrant communities and the anti-racist movement have a right to know the answers to these questions. Will the Communist Party provide them?

Tensions

Too strong a concentration of immigrants, he continued, 'created tensions among the population and increased social charges on ratepayers.'

In other words, French Communists think that immigrants cause social unrest, put the rates up, and aggravate unemployment. And now the *Morning Star* defends the French CP holding these views.

The common root of all these positions is the racist claim that immigrants are the problem, not racism. This argument is false and reactionary. We will not mince words: it is the same argument used by the extreme right wing of the Tory Party.

It is true that there is often social unrest



Photo: NEWSLINE

The immigrant hostel in Vitry, Paris after the CP mayor led a mob in bulldozing it to the ground



El Salvadoran guerrillas during preparation for the offensive

US imperialism tries to strangle El Salvadoran

By Davy Jones

US Imperialism has shipped a \$5m emergency arms package to the El Salvadoran ruling junta. On 5 December last year the US administration cut off aid following the regime's ruthless slaughter of four American nuns.

Now President Duarte's embattled regime is under such pressure from the revolutionary offensive of the Salvadoran rebels that the US fears its complete collapse. Direct 'lethal military hardware' shipments are the result.

Imperialism is also mobilising the other military dictatorships in the region to defend the El Salvadoran regime. The Honduran human rights organisation has announced that 500 Honduran troops not in uniform have crossed the border to El Salvador to fight alongside Duarte's troops.

Border

A further 3,000 troops are massed on the Honduran border under the supervision of US military advisers. Last week 500 ex-members of the Somoza National Guard joined the government troops' offensive against the guerrillas.

Rebels

The European representative of the El Salvadoran Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR) told a London press conference last week that without imperialist military support the regime would be overthrown by the rebels within a matter of weeks.

Now the barbaric regime has received its imperialist arms package the vicious fighting will continue and thousands more people will die.

Death

The Human Rights Commission 1980 report on El Salvador has just been released. It claims that the total death toll in the country in 1980 was over 13,000, mostly at the hands of the regime's repressive forces and other right-wing terror groups.

American imperialism's resumption of military aid to the El Salvadoran regime was based on the false allegation that Nicaragua had secretly sent in troops to support the guerrillas. Even *The Times* has admitted that this was a lie.

Support

But in Nicaragua the El Salvadoran revolutionaries have found support from unexpected quarters. Some 300 American citizens in-

revolution



Ambassador Roberto Castellanos denounced the military men in President Duarte's cabinet as 'assassins and fascists'.

Aid

The fighting in El Salvador continues. With increasing imperialist aid to the regime it promises to continue for some time.

Ruthless

Now is the time for the labour movement in this country to lend its support to the El Salvadoran people against their ruthless oppressors, by demanding imperialist hands off El Salvador.

EL SALVADOR WILL WIN RALLY

Fri 23 Jan, 6.30pm

Collegiate theatre, Gordon St, London WC1.

Film premiere: 'El Salvador: the people will win!'

Speakers: representative of FDR in Britain, Grenadan High Commissioner in London, Stan Newens MP, Salvadoran folk singer Jose Armijo

Entrance £1/ All proceeds to FDR in El Salvador.

Everyone to Arms!

The following is the full text of the call issued by the revolutionary forces in El Salvador on 10 January.

THE Unified Revolutionary Directorate of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) — which has assumed the general command of all the revolutionary armed forces of the five organisations that make up the FMLN — addresses all the heroic people of El Salvador:

Workers and peasants, revolutionary men and women, democrats and patriots:

The hour has arrived to begin the decisive military and insurrectional battles for the taking of power by the people and for the formation of a revolutionary democratic government.

Decades of suffering and more than fifty years of military dictatorship are about to be destroyed once and for all through the people's struggle.

At this historic moment, crucial to the destinies of the Salvadoran and Central American people, the Unified Revolutionary Directorate of the FMLN — the general command — calls on all the people:

On the workers, peasants, students, teachers, employees, democratic sectors, progressive soldiers and officers, religious sectors — everyone;

On the men and women fighters of the regular troops and guerrillas;

On the revolutionary militias and on the combative masses:

Triumph

To immediately launch the military actions of the people's insurrection in order to gain the triumph of the revolution.

We call on the entire people to rise up as one single person, using all possible means of combat, on all fronts of the war and throughout the length and breadth of the national territory. We call on the entire people to fight valiantly under the orders of their immediate commanders until the definitive overthrow of the oppressive, genocidal regime of the privileged oligarchy and of imperialism.

Everyone to arms:

We call on all progressive and patriotic soldiers and officers to join the ranks of the people. This is the moment to identify with your fellow workers, to turn your arms against the bloody chiefs of the high command and general staff of the counterrevolutionary army. The hour of the revolution has arrived — the hour of liberation has arrived!

The final victory is in the hands of this brave and heroic people, who for so many years have spilled their blood for the right to be free, to enjoy democracy, for genuine independence, for social progress, sovereignty, and self-determination.

At this historic moment in which the entire people are rising up to conquer freedom, we can affirm with emotion that the people of El Salvador are not alone: All our Central American and Latin American brothers and sisters are with us. The masses of the entire world are with us.

Forward, heroic Salvadoran people. To total combat until the final victory, to the decisive military battles, to popular insurrection. Prepare for the general strike until victory.

United to fight until final victory!
Revolution or death! We will win!

Reagan's bonanza hits the poor

By George Reynolds

EIGHT million dollars — that's how much money the new American president has wasted on this week's inauguration banquet.

Those suffering most directly from this extravagance were the 50,000 local poor people whose state allowance cheques were held up by the bureaucratic snarl-up caused by the inauguration week.

Reagan made it known that he intended to bring back the pomp and ceremony (ie. waste of public money) of the presidency to restore public pride. And he brought in arch-mafioso Frank Sinatra to organise the showbiz side of the week for him.

Sinatra is currently under a cloud of suspicion over his links with mafia leaders in America. Jimmy Gratianni — better known as 'Jimmy the Weasel' — was a high flying Mafia boss who has now grassed on his former friends. And Sinatra is among those he has implicated. Rumours that Sinatra is to be offered the ambassadorship to Sicily were being discounted in Socialist Challenge circles last night.

Edwardes' plans police state plants — exclusive

By Pat Kane

MICHAEL EDWARDES, chairperson of BL, comes from the police state of South Africa. Now his management has drawn up plans to impose similar despotic methods on the long suffering BL workforce, according to a top secret document in the hands of Socialist Challenge.

The document, headed 'Directors' and Personnel Managers' Briefing on Disciplinary Policy', reveals that BL's board is planning a new disciplinary code to deal with what the company describes as 'gross misconduct'.

The proposed code will turn every plant into a mini-police state, with security guards and line supervisors having more powers than the police and courts.

Risks

When I asked BL management on Monday to confirm the authenticity of the briefing paper, a nervous-sounding press officer, Murray Loake, called back to say: 'This is a confidential management briefing document and we have no comment to make.'

The company is well aware of the risks it is running by such policies. The document, extracts of which we publish here, concludes by stating that the following points 'will not be easily agreed':

- Exclude the police until company investigations are complete.
- Permit dismissal before the results of a prosecution are known.
- Permit personal search.
- Permit dismissal on 'the balance of probabilities'.

The document proposes extensive measures to step up security checks, many of which constitute an invasion of civil liberties. It makes clear that usual standards of justice are inadequate for BL's purposes.

Guilt

'Courts require the case against a person to be proved beyond reasonable doubt,' the paper notes. 'This is a significantly more stringent test than that which the new BL Ltd policy sets.'

The test of guilt proposed is 'the balance of probabilities', which means that rumour and surmise will take the place of evidence in BL's own court, with management acting as police, judge, and jury.

Present BL disciplinary codes, drawn up in consultation with the unions in 1976, allow for any worker sacked for actions such as theft, to

be suspended pending the outcome of any police and court proceedings. Under the new codes the court can find BL workers not guilty, but by then the workers will already have been dismissed and the case may never go to court.

Accused

The document states that 'it is highly probable that the company has no legal authority' for the personal searches it plans to undertake.

The company anticipates that it will meet resistance from the trade unions. It expects strike action *after* it carries out a sacking under the new code.

'Implementation of the policy will generate conflict ... The possibility of industrial action following the implementation of the new policy ... cannot be discounted. Such action could be both constitutional and official.'

Last month, BL sacked nine workers at the Mini-Metro line at Longbridge in Birmingham. They were accused of 'gross misconduct' when they participated in a protest against enforced company lay-offs during the nightshift.

Sacking

The company action provoked a strike at the Longbridge plant which cost the company millions in lost production. They blamed the strike on the unions, and the media did everything possible to present the management's view of the events.

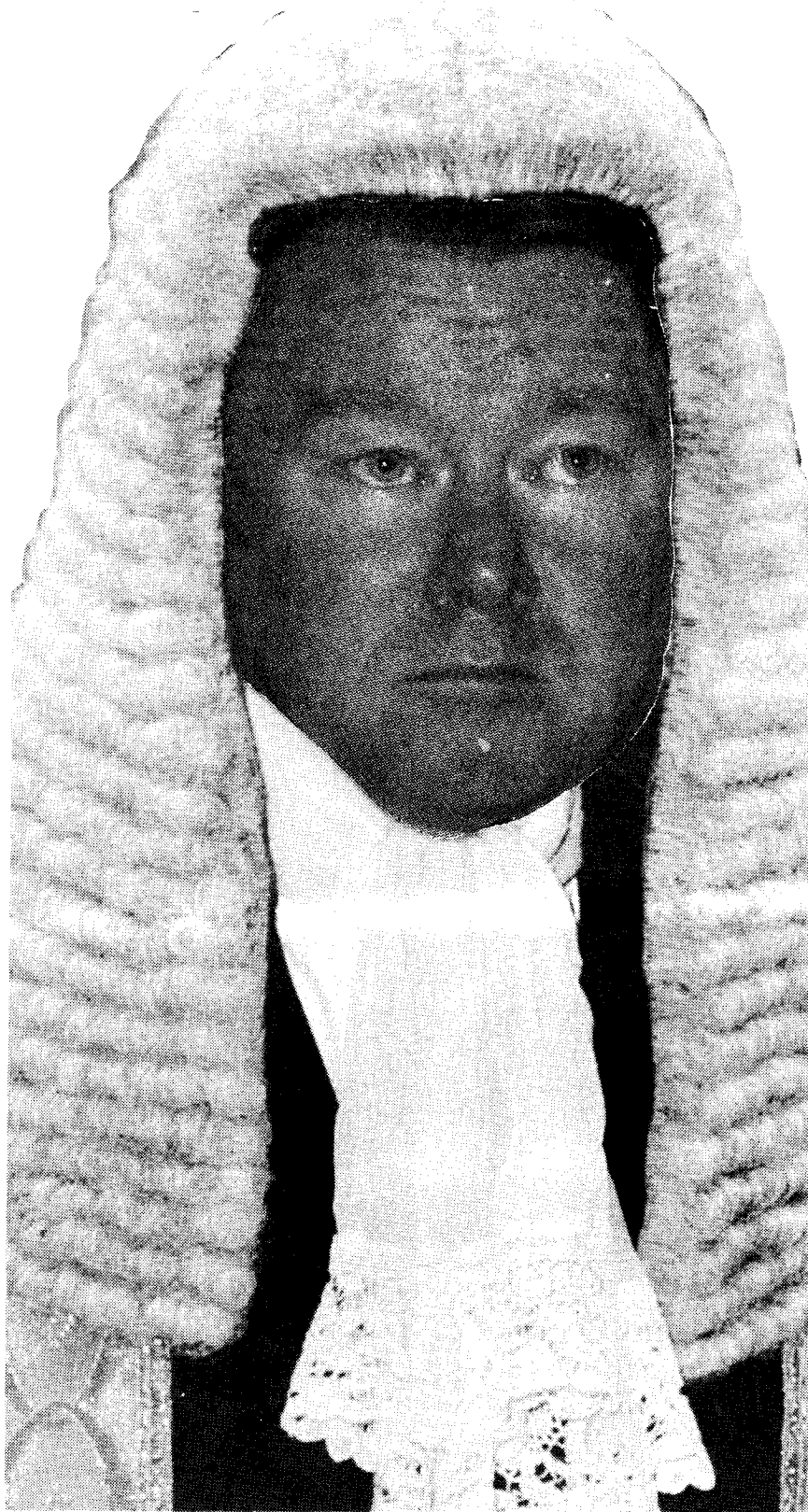
The confidential document in our possession shows just how far BL is willing to go to implement its policies.

Over the past two years, BL has victimised shop stewards, including plant convenor Derek Robinson, and sacked thousands of workers. It has stepped up intimidation of the unions and the workforce.

Retreat

Thatcher's recently-appointed economic adviser, Alan Walters, who admires Pinochet's Chile, will find much to support in Edwardes' proposal to turn BL into a mini-police state with its own private laws.

Unfortunately, BL's



Edwardes plots to become judge and jury of BL workers

senior stewards have done nothing to prepare the fight against Edwardes.

Every time the company attacks the workforce, they retreat. They have accepted lay-offs, redundancies, low wage deals, increased productivity, and still Edwardes demands more.

After passively accepting the sackings at the Metro plant, and refusing to mount a campaign in defence of the sacked workers, the senior stewards will find it difficult to stop the company this time.

But the workforce should be in no doubt that any further acceptance of Edwardes' plans will effectively put union activists behind bars and tens of thousands of BL workers on the dole.

What the BL Briefing says

THE following are extracts from the secret BL management briefing:

The BL Ltd Board has decided that at the appropriate time all BL Ltd Companies will seek through negotiations to:

- Regain the right to dismiss an employee summarily for theft (or other forms of gross misconduct) and to refuse re-engagement to an employee so dismissed.

- Introduce into all contracts of employment a consent to personal search.

- The decision to dismiss summarily in cases of suspected criminal acts will in future be based upon 'the balance of probabilities' as deduced by management investigation, ie not depend on the decision of a court...

Discipline

A BL Ltd personnel policy has been prepared upon discipline which modifies previous policy statements... It requires, among others that:

- To avoid involvement of the police unless it has been suspected that a serious criminal act has been committed.

- Dismissal action to be taken (whenever possible) before calling in the police...

BL companies to:

- Ensure that security forces are adequately manned, trained, and equipped, and that facilities are available and laid out so that security forces may carry out and record regular searches of male and female persons and belongings, and of employees' visitors, company, and produc-

tion vehicles.

- Rebuild plant exits and entrances where necessary to permit searches to be carried out.

- Improve the training of foremen and line managers in security and disciplinary matters...

Note: Courts require the case against a person to be proved beyond reasonable doubt before guilt is recognised.

This is a significantly more stringent test than that which the new BL Ltd policy sets, ie dismissal will be actioned when 'the balance of probabilities' suggests that an employee has committed a criminal act or another gross misconduct...

Employers relations implications: Implementation of the new policy will generate conflict. This is because both 'activists' and 'moderates' among employee representatives will have genuine reservations regarding an initiative by the company to revise existing disciplinary practices and employee contracts...

The possibility of industrial action following the implementation of the new policy... cannot be discounted.

Search

If introduced on a gradual basis it is probable that an increased intensity of non-personal search would be obtained without generating conflict, though the risk of a challenge to the company's legal right to take such action must also increase. Personal search is, however, a highly emotive issue. An initiative to introduce personal search into the company will not be without risk.

Demonstrate against unemployment

Huddersfield, 31 Jan at 11am

Assemble at Beck Road and Cambridge Street. Speakers include Joe Ashton MP, and Bill Maddocks, secretary of the Textiles Union.

Called by Huddersfield Labour Party and Trades Council

Bleak prospects for Scottish jobs

By Des Tierney

SIXTY thousand fewer jobs — that's the prospect for Scottish workers in 1981.

A recent survey by the government-sponsored Scottish Council (Research Development) estimates that there will be 25,000 fewer jobs in manufacturing and 60,000 less jobs in total throughout Scotland this year.

It's not difficult to see where these job losses will come from. BL and Talbot cars have already embarked on redundancy schemes at their plants. British Steel is pushing through its 'productivity' plans, and British Shipbuilders is forcing through another 700 redundancies.

In the public sector, George Younger, the Scottish Secretary of State, has called for a further 10,000 jobs to be axed.

With such a catastrophe facing working people in Scotland Labour leaders, are being forced to act. Following the example of the Labour Party demonstration in Liverpool, the Scottish Council of the Labour Party has called for a massive demonstration on 21 February.

Over 100,000 demonstrators are expected to march through Glasgow to a rally with Tony

Benn, Michael Foot and trade union leaders. The demonstration will be the largest in Scotland since the Second World War dwarfing even the 80,000 who marched in support of the Upper Clyde Shipbuilders 'work-in' in 1973.

Support for the demonstration is already massive. Miners, steelworkers, engineers, and local authority workers have finalised plans to mobilise their unions' membership. Trains have been laid on from every part of Scotland.

The organisers have stressed that this is not just a Scottish demonstration, but one for the whole of the British working class, and already plans have been drawn up for union contingents from various parts of the country.

Eric Clark, Scottish secretary of the miners' union, told a packed Labour Party meeting in Glasgow last week that it was not enough to democratise the party; what was also needed was a massive mobilisation of the labour movement to kick out the Tories.

He told the meeting that unless the 21 February demonstration was as big as the Liverpool demonstration, and was used to win support for the triple Alliance of steelworkers, miners, and railway workers, the fight against unemployment will be stalled.

Labour Party

By Brian Grogan

DESPITE all the outcry against the IRA, the shooting of Bernadette McAliskey and her husband shows once again that terrorism and individual assassination is much more often the weapon of the right than of the left.

In Chile, and today in Argentina and El Salvador terror gangs — often off-duty members of the 'security' forces — have murdered and tortured tens of thousands of victims.

It is believed that those who attempted to assassinate Bernadette McAliskey are members of the Ulster Defence Association (UDA). Socialists should shed no tears over the shooting of members of the UDR or

Socialists and terrorism

the RUC.

Our criterion for judging such actions, and bombing campaigns either in Britain or in the Six Counties, has nothing to do with the moralistic approach of the British Communist Party which declared in the *Morning Star* on 10 January: 'For God's sake stop the bombing'.

The opposition of the CP and the Labour left to the IRA is simply a blanket opposition to their continuing fight against imperialism — whatever method they use. The CP and the Labour left believe that the IRA should give up the struggle and compromise over the

Arguments for Socialism



presence of British troops in Ireland.

Socialists must first stand up and be counted with the Republican community against imperialism. Under no circumstances do we join with imperialism in denouncing the Republicans — whatever reservations about their tactics we might have.

It needs repeating again and again that often the main cause of

the resort to bombing in Britain by the IRA is despair in the Republican community of the possibility of winning the support of the British working class.

The main responsibility for this lies with leaders of the Labour Party and the unions, most of whom have not lifted a finger to help the struggle of the Irish people.

resolve and self-confidence of the masses. This was recently the case in El Salvador.

But in each case a judgement has to be made about the actual stage of the struggle; in most cases acts of individual assassination or bombing are appropriate only when the mass struggle has reached either civil war proportions or mass involvement in the armed struggle.

Such actions are not appropriate to the working class struggle in bourgeois democracies such as the United States, Britain and the rest of West Europe.

Here the actions of self-appointed 'armed vanguards' substitute for the struggle of the masses and play into the hands of the ruling class.

Italy is a classic example. The Red Brigades may make the ruling class jittery, but the unwanted side-effects of their actions, and their contemptuous attitude towards working class struggle, are used by the bosses to divide and confuse the masses.

As Leon Trotsky, leader of the Red Army, once put it: 'If it suffices to arm oneself with a revolver to arrive at the goal, why then the efforts of the class struggle? If one can intimidate high ranking people with the thunder of an explosion, why then the party?'

Imperialism will always find new figure-heads and personalities. The action of an elite force won't budge them, only the power of the masses will.

No room in the Labour Party for non-socialists — Scargill

IT WAS not my intention to make any comment about Barnsley Constituency Labour party, but following the publicity of the speech made at the last meeting by Roy Mason, I feel it essential that I make my views known on the issue before our local party and on the general issues raised by the MP.

It has been alleged that there is a great deal of concern and worry in the Labour Party about the attitude being expressed inside the Parliamentary Labour Party, following the decision of the 1980 Labour Party conference to introduce democratic reform.

The MP for Barnsley said that there is a crumbling of unity in the party; if that be so, then those responsible for ignoring or violating the conference decisions or the basic aims of the labour movement must take the blame.

MPs who are a race apart

I am amazed at the suggestion that the proposal to expel the 'Social Democratic Alliance' (the grouping of right-wing socialists in the country) because of its threat to contest Labour marginals is a further indication of the break-up of the party.

There was no such suggestion when the right-wing dominated Labour Party expelled left-wing members in the '50s and '60s for disagreeing with the policy of the party and withdrew the whip from a number of MPs, including the present leader, Michael Foot.

It would appear that

certain sections of the Parliamentary Labour Party are perfectly happy to accept decisions provided they agree with them, but consider themselves a 'race apart' if policies emerge with which they disagree.

The right wing of the Parliamentary Labour Party have attempted to stop every democratic reform introduced, including the mandatory re-selection of MPs and the establishment of an electoral college (a group who would be charged with electing a future Labour leader which at present is done by MPs alone).

College

After failing to stop the decision to form an electoral college, they then submitted a proposal to win a minimum of 50 per cent of the voting strength inside the college.

These MPs, all of whom have been selected by (constituency) general management committees, seem impervious to the fact that about 90 per cent of ordinary constituency parties and members are demanding an equal say in the election of leader of the party. The MPs are, in effect, treating the ordinary workers of the party with utter contempt!

Mr Mason said that, if constituency parties do not get their fair share of voting rights, they will condemn the process as a charade and their frustration will turn to anger and this constitutional issue will rumble on.

He then said that, if the Parliamentary Labour Party do not receive at least 50 per cent of the votes, then a further crumbling of party unity cannot be discounted.

It is clear from this statement that any

'There is a crumbling of unity in the party; if that be so, then those responsible for ignoring or violating the conference decisions or the basic aims of the labour movement must take the blame.'

Arthur Scargill, President Yorkshire miners



crumbling of unity within the party will be the responsibility of MPs and not the ordinary party workers.

Party workers understand

His suggestion that every fracture in our party will be highlighted and encouraged by the Press to divert attention away from Tory troubles is true; but his speech can only be intended to widen that fracture and inflame any disagreement that exists within the party.

To make a speech of this type and then to appeal to all sections of the movement not to exacerbate the tensions to breaking point seems to me the height of hypocrisy.

He said that he wanted our movement to have a conscious grasp of the significance of these strands and strains — meaning the policy decisions to withdraw from the European Common Market, to implement unilateral nuclear disar-

armed, impose import controls, along with a general economic policy determined by the party.

I would remind the MP that ordinary party workers do understand the significance of these decisions. They were passed at the annual conference and emanated from within the party and the trade union movement.

Mr Mason suggested that right-wing MPs see these new left-wing policies and democratic rules as a take over of their national movement.

Our party does not belong to a select bunch of MPs. It was created out of the womb of the trade union movement and belongs to all of its members!

The only disagreement that now exists in our party is in the minds of right-wing MPs and their supporters who were and are opposed to extending the franchise for the election of leader and deputy leader of the party; who were and are

opposed to the introduction of mandatory re-selection; and who have consistently opposed policy decisions democratically decided upon by the annual conference.

It is they who are responsible for the splits and divisions within the party. And it is they who can produce the unity referred to, providing they will stop their sniping and accept the views of ordinary members rather than treat them with contempt.

Nothing could be fairer than giving the trade union movement (which gave birth to the Labour Party), the constituency parties (who keep this party together) and the Parliamentary Labour Party, an equal number of votes.

The comments made by Mr Mason regarding re-selection must be regarded very seriously, particularly in view of his assertion of what MPs will do if they are not re-elected.

In view of his statement, I feel that every constituency party has a right to ask its MP his or her intention on this most important issue.

The suggestion that some MPs who are not re-elected will band together and eventually stand against the official Labour candidate implies a form of blackmail, and people who support this view would be better leaving the party.

Rank and file members of the Labour

Party are sick and tired of the elitism displayed by MPs who for some inexplicable reason feel themselves superior to ordinary party members.

These same MPs were quite content to be selected at an initial conference of the party, but are almost paranoid about facing a reselection conference and having to answer for their stewardship during their period of office.

If an MP has acted throughout that period in accordance with the constitution and rules of the party, and carried out the wishes of the constituency, he or she has nothing to fear.

On the other hand, if MPs blatantly ignore or disregard decisions of their general management committees on major issues, then they must expect reaction and possible rejection if and when a reselection conference takes place.

Privilege

These prima donnas in Parliament apparently want the privilege of sponsorship by a trade union and/or the party and at the same time demand the luxury of independence.

A person who wants to act independently in Parliament should stand as an independent candidate and not use the Labour Party merely as a vehicle for propelling them into an exclusive club in the centre of Westminster.

It was this elite band of MPs who were responsible only a short time ago for electing Reg Prentice to the Shadow Cabinet, after he had already served as a Labour Party minister.

Within months he had left the party. He is now a Tory MP and ardent supporter of Mrs Thatcher and her

policies. If this is an indication of the judgement of Labour MPs, then the quicker we extend our democratic reforms to include the election of the Shadow Cabinet and Cabinet by an electoral college or the annual conference, the better for democracy and the party generally.

No room for non-believers

It is often said that the Labour Party is a broad church and, although this is true, I submit there is no room in that church for non-believers in socialism, like Reg Prentice, Dick Taverne, or others who disagree with its basic aims.

Keir Hardie once said that any MP who has the support of the millionaire press and the mass media cannot be acting in the best interests of the labour movement and fighting for a socialist Britain.

I suggest that any MP who receives public support from leading Tories, and even the offer of financial assistance, must seriously ask himself (sic) why.

It is true that 1981 will be a year of decision. Leading members of the Labour Party, including the 'gang of three' threaten to leave the Labour Party. The sooner they do so the better — for them and for the party!

I believe that 1981 will be a momentous year — it will be a year when the party rediscovers its basic concept and faith in a socialist alternative policy.

It will mark the start of a massive campaign to get rid of the Tories and elect a Labour government pledged to socialist policy and realise the dreams and aspirations of Keir Hardie and the Labour pioneers.

Set up by the British, shot by the UDA

By Geoff Bell

THE condition of Bernadette McAliskey was described as 'very serious but stable' as we went to press.

It is believed that neither she nor her husband Michael, who was also injured in the attack on Friday morning, are in immediate danger of losing their lives.

Bernadette and Michael were severely wounded at their home at Derrylaughlin, near Coalisland, Co Tyrone. Bernadette was shot five times in her chest, legs and arms. She underwent two operations within hours of her being rushed to hospital.

After the second she went into 'post operative shock' and her condition deteriorated. But a spokesperson at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Belfast, where Bernadette now is, denied that she ever went into a coma.

The attempted assassination of Bernadette was the responsibility of the Loyalist paramilitary Ulster Defence Association, according to 'reliable sources' quoted in the *Irish Times*.

Army

But if the UDA were directly responsible for the assassination attempt the British government and the British army did much to facilitate the attack.

Their contribution was three-fold: first, there are many unanswered questions concerning the role of the British Army personnel who supposedly 'rescued' Bernadette; second, British governments have refused to allow Bernadette the means to defend herself; third, British governments have repeatedly refused to outlaw the UDA, despite being fully aware of its murderous activities.

On the question of the patrol of the British Army which apprehended three men after Bernadette and Michael had been shot, the following facts have emerged.

According to neighbours on Thursday, the day before the attack, a British army helicopter landed near Bernadette and Michael's home and dropped off a number of soldiers.

Shooting

There are no reports of these soldiers being picked up again before the shooting, and the suggestion being made by neighbours is that the army mounted a 'stake out'.

The only target for such an operation in the area is Bernadette and Michael's house. This house is only ap-

proachable by car via a rutted, muddy lane full of potholes. Maximum speed along this lane has been estimated at 10mph, so any vehicle using the lane could be easily spotted, and if necessary stopped, by anyone watching the house.

Masks

On the Friday morning when the UDA men broke into the house they were wearing woolly masks over their heads. They were met at the door by Michael McAliskey, and a shot was then fired at him. The men then broke their way into the house.

Anyone watching the house would have seen this and would obviously have concluded that something was up.

The McAliskey's nearest neighbour is Michael Donnelly. He lives 200 yards from Bernadette and her husband. He did not hear any shots, which suggests that the soldiers who claimed to have rushed to the house after hearing the gunshots must have been nearer than 200 yards.

The British 'security forces' have been extremely reticent in explaining what the army was doing in the area at the time of the attack.

A spokesperson for the police, the RUC, said: 'The patrol was carrying out military duties', but declined to elaborate. The commanding officer of the soldiers concerned, when asked whether his men had mounted a 'stake out', said: 'I can't answer that. It was a routine patrol.'

Cynical

It seems likely that the arrival of the British army on the scene may have prevented the UDA from finishing off Bernadette and Michael, but the questions remain:

Could they have arrived sooner than they did, and if they had a reason to 'stake out' the house, why did they not inform Bernadette and Michael? In other words, was the army aware that an attempt on the life of Bernadette was to be made, and did they know that attempt to be made?

Frank Maguire MP was one of those to express cynicism about the army's role. 'Not at all they weren't lucky,' he



Photo: LAURIE SPARHAM (IFL)



said. 'They just happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time.'

Whatever the exact details of the shooting it is indisputable that British governments have refused Bernadette the means to defend herself.

Michael Farrell, a leading member of Peoples Democracy, who was interviewed on Irish radio at the weekend, disclosed that Bernadette, fearing for her life, had applied for a gun licence but had been turned down.

What is also uncontested is the tolerance that British governments have shown towards the UDA.

Numerous demands for the banning of the UDA have been made in recent years, but both Labour and Tory politicians have rejected such calls.

One of the latest was

made in November by Michael Canavan, the SDLP spokesperson on law and order.

In a statement he said that he knew that Secretary of State Humphrey Atkins had seen intelligence reports which indicated UDA involvement in the assassination last year of other H Block campaigners, Ronnie Bunting, Noel Little, and Miriam Daly.

'Since the start of 1980 alone,' Canavan pointed out, 'court convictions show UDA involvement in six murders, one attempted murder, and five armed robberies.'

For its part, the present British government has done its best to cover up for the UDA. A statement from the Northern Ireland Office in November described the UDA as 'essentially

political'. But even leaders of the UDA have admitted that this is not the case.

In an interview with the Belfast *Irish News* in December, Andy Tyrrie, commander-in-chief of the UDA, said of the killing of Ronnie Bunting and Noel Little: 'It's quite likely people from the UDA did commit the murders.'

Last Friday the UDA attempted to add Bernadette and Michael McAliskey to their ever-lengthening list of victims. Hopefully they have not succeeded.

Bernadette is a born survivor, and, it seems, even the joint efforts of the UDA and the British government have failed to end her fight for justice and socialism.

H Block/Armagh committee expresses 'total abhorrence'

THE National H Block/Armagh Committee, which organised the successful campaign in support of the Irish hunger strikers, has expressed its 'total abhorrence' at the shooting of Bernadette and her husband Michael. The full statement reads:

The national H Block/Armagh Committee is shocked to learn of the attempted assassination of Bernadette McAliskey and her husband, Michael. We express our total abhorrence at this latest shooting which is clearly part of a concerted campaign or murder against H Block activists and leaders.

To date, several leading members of the campaign have been murdered, including two members of the National H Block/Armagh Committee, Miriam Daly and Noel Little. Three other leading members of the campaign, John Turnley, Ronald Bunting and Tony Valenti, have also been murdered.

Little or no attempt has been made by the British authorities to apprehend their killers.

The peaceful and legal campaign for the rights of political prisoners in the H Blocks and Armagh has been the victim of slander, intimidation and physical elimination from the British establishment and its supporters. While the H Block/Armagh Committee has used only the methods of peaceful and legal pressure, its opponents have not.

Bernadette is the latest victim of the assassins, obviously because she is seen to embody the determination and success of the campaign. She is Public Relations Officer of the National H Block/Armagh Committee and, as such, has travelled all over Ireland and Europe holding press conferences and speaking at public meetings.

The mass support for the prisoners all over this country is due in no small measure to the efforts of Bernadette in urging the setting up of local H Block/Armagh groups in every county in Ireland.

While expressing our sorrow at this attempt to kill Bernadette and her husband, we are equally determined, as she and Michael are, to press this campaign to a successful conclusion. Our sympathy goes out to her family, neighbours, and friends.

Bernadette has 'shown us the way forward'

THE Irish revolutionary socialist organisation Peoples Democracy condemned the attempted assassination of Bernadette as 'the latest and most dastardly incident in the catalogue of horrors perpetrated by the British and their Loyalist allies'.

Bernadette, a founding member of PD retains close links with the organisation, which was the most prominent political organisation to fully support Bernadette in the 1979 EEC elections.

PD notes that 'the H Block/Armagh cam-

paign, a legal and open campaign, has had to contend with vicious attempts by the British and their supporters to harass, intimidate and murder supporters of the political prisoners.

'There can be no more telling indictment against the democratic pretensions of the Six-County statelet. The Catholic minority is exposed day in and day out to vicious attacks, both legal and illegal, by the forces of the British crown.'

Strength

PD concludes by saying:

'Bernadette has shown us the way forward: continue to press the H Block/Armagh campaign to a successful conclusion; rely only on our own strength and force those who claim to speak in our name to do as we say.'

'Whether they be in Fianna Fail, the Social Democratic and Labour Party or in the leadership of the trade union movement, they must be forced to act in our interests. Otherwise we will act ourselves, as we have done in the H Block/Armagh campaign.'



Socialist Challenge

Labour Special Conference Issue

40-30-30!

THE MOST democratic and therefore the best way to elect the leader of the Labour Party is by a vote at party conference.

The 24 January special conference won't have the chance to vote for such a proposal. Instead it will have to choose between two methods: an electoral college or a vote for every party member.

The electoral college proposals fall into three main types. There are those which give the main say to the trade unions. Those which divide the vote equally between trade unions, constituency parties, and the parliamentary party, and those which give the major say to the parliamentary party.

The '40-30-30' formula, giving the trade unions the biggest say, is the best. It is also the single most popular option, although more trade union votes support the NEC third-third-third proposal to divide the say equally.

The advantage of giving unions the most say is that it tilts the balance away from the parliamentary party, and weakens — albeit insufficiently — the power of MPs. This must be our main objective.

Reselection of MPs and the movement's right to elect the Labour leader is part of the fight to break the Labour Party leadership from collaborating with the bosses and defending their interests.

The Gang of Three and their supporters want to ignore conference decisions — unilateral disarmament and withdrawal from the EEC are two examples of this. They are not only willing but anxious to overturn the democratic decisions of the rank and file in order to preserve the interests of capitalism.

Loyalty

They claim their loyalty lies with 'public opinion' and their own consciences, but what does this mean? Having lost the reselection argument and given that they are now likely to lose the leadership battle, the right wing have championed a 'one person-one vote' system because it corresponds most closely to their interests.

The right wing — the very people who argued that parliament should be free of party control, and that only MPs know who will be best as party leader — have now completely turned about and are arguing that everyone in the party should have a say. Why have they changed their minds?

The answer is they haven't. What they are advocating could well turn into a system of confusion and even corruption, where anyone can join the party in order to influence the choice of leader — and where they are in the best position, with the support of the capitalist media, to influence those people.

By Carol Turner
Southwark Labour councillor



Photo: LAURENCE SPARHAM (IFL)

This system benefits people like David Owen and Shirley Williams because it removes the power from the hands of the people they most fear, the people in the best position to assess and democratically control their performance: the party activists.

As long as party democracy was restricted, the right were strong, and what the *Sunday Times* called 'the great decisions of power' were taken '...in the Cabinet Room and the House of Commons'.

Labour leaders and their cabinets were accountable — to the capitalist state, whose civil service formulates their choices and whose military determines arms expenditure. These are the 'public' whose opinion the right wing take account of.

It is not the opinion of workers, nor of the unemployed; it isn't even the opinion of Labour Party activists.

To hear MP Bill Rodgers sound off about his conscience is obscene when we recall his enthusiasm for NATO and nuclear weapons. To hear Roy Jenkins pleading for incomes policy (which means a wages freeze!) is a sick joke when we learn that he's just taken a part-time job with merchant bankers Morgan Grenfell to supplement his already-enormous EEC pension.

Dr Owen, stalwart defender of the former Shah, and Shirley Williams, who includes Reg Prentice in the many dubious causes she has espoused — these are the people who claim to defend democracy.

The fight for democracy within the Labour Party and the unions is



1980 Labour Party conference platform — now right wing plot split

a battle over different class interests.

Capitalism's success depends on excluding working people from the decision-making processes. It needs people like Shirley Williams and Frank Chapple to police the organisations of the working class, and to keep them in line behind the needs of the ruling class.

If the struggle for socialism is to be won, democracy is not a fringe benefit, not an added extra — it's an absolute essential. Socialism depends on mass participation; it cannot happen without mass involvement. A socialist society is one where we all decide how our lives should be run.

Even if the special conference adopts the best available option, our fight is not over. We must continue the struggle to control the manifesto, and we must take the democracy issue into the trade unions.

Democracy is the great divide: the right cannot afford it, that is why they are so bitterly resisting even the most tentative steps proposed at the 24 January conference.

As socialists, we can't afford not to have it. That's why we not only support these first steps, but give notice that they are only a beginning. There is much, much more to come if the mass of the population are to impose their will on the handful who run and benefit from this society.



Tony Benn moving conference resolution on NEC control of the manifesto

Photo: ANDREW WIARD (Report)

Photo: CHRIS DAVIES (Report)

Strategies for banning the bomb

The Peace Makers and the Labour Movement

LAST week JULIAN ATKINSON began a three-part review of the new book *The Protest Makers* by Richard Taylor and Colin Pritchard (Pergamon Press, £10) which discusses in detail the successes and failures of CND's first wave between 1958 and 1965.

The first article was an overview of the different strategies for winning the campaign that were debated in CND. This week Julian discusses CND and the labour movement.

The authors of *The Protest Makers* argue that there never was any possibility of CND winning the labour movement to its ideas in the '50s and '60s. One of the key factors in this, they maintain, was the defection of Bevan, the only alternative leader the left possessed.

This is the wrong way to approach the question. It is not an issue of prediction but what lessons we can learn from the way in which CND dealt with the labour movement and what is the likely response of the Labour lefts of today.

CND never had any systematic strategy towards the labour movement. There was certainly no consistent campaign aimed at the factories and the rank and file



Aneurin Bevan with Harold Wilson

members of the unions and LP. Instead there was the Labour Advisory Committee.

This was set up in the autumn of 1958 and comprised left MPs and union leaders like Frank Beswick MP and John Horner of the Fire Brigades Union. They were not used to the open, mass campaigning of the CND. To be less than kind, their major experience had been political

ing in little rooms during the Bevanite revolt and then being thrashed by Gaitskell and the right.

Ian Mikardo expresses the blinkered view of much of the Labour left when, in an interview with Taylor and Pritchard, he dismisses the importance of CND as a mass movement as against the strategy of winning key figures in the organised

labour movement:

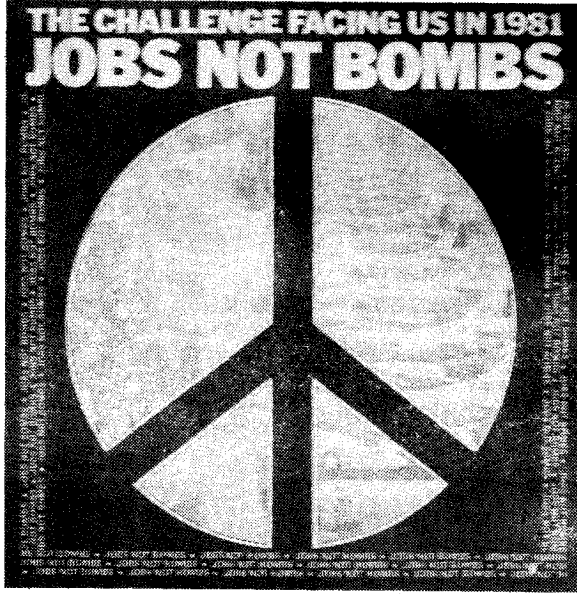
'Another 10,000 or 20,000 or 50,000 non-political people don't compensate for the loss of those who can exert political pressure at the point of action.'

CND's work in the unions was sketchy. Far more was done by the pacifist-controlled Direct Action Committee, whose main spokesperson was Pat Arrowsmith. The aim of the DAC, a few local CND trade union committees and, later, the industrial sub-committee of the Committee of 100 was to popularise and agitate for industrial action against the bomb.

In 1962, the CND conference passed a resolution, in opposition to Michael Foot and the rest of the executive, for a campaign in favour of such industrial action. The EC refused to implement the policy and Arrowsmith and Michael Scott resigned.

Some industrial action did

LABOUR MUST FIGHT FOR UNILATERAL DISARMAMENT



CND labour movement conference against the missiles

THE Labour Movement Conference against the Missiles is to be held on 28 March this year.

The conference aims to mobilise the support of all those in the labour movement who support the fight against Tory missile madness, to stop Cruise missiles and the £7bn Trident submarine programme.

Last year the Labour Party conference backed unilateral disarmament. Now that has to be translated into action.

Delegates to the conference, to be held at UMIST Students Union in Manchester, will be accepted from all bona fide trade union and Labour Party organisations — two from each Labour Party branch or constituency, trade union branch, trades council or shop stewards committee — at £3 a delegate.

For delegations and further details write to: Labour Movement Conference, CND, 11 Goodwin St, London N4.

By Paul Smith

MICHAEL FOOT says that he supports unilateral nuclear disarmament. Despite this, he has appointed as shadow spokesperson on defence Brynmor John, who openly opposes unilateral disarmament.

The Labour Party conference in October voted for unilateral disarmament. The membership of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament is 20,000 and rising fast. Canada has already got rid of its nuclear weapons.

Despite this there are still many in the labour movement who oppose getting rid of Britain's nuclear arsenal — that has been the case ever since Aneurin Bevan said that Britain could not walk naked into the conference chamber.

Socialists have to maintain the fight for unilateralism. There are four crucial arguments which we should take up.

Multilateralism doesn't work

The argument of those who say we should keep our nuclear weapons is that the best way to abolish nuclear weapons is through winning agreement from the main powers to abolish them at the same time.

All the hawks, both in the West and the Soviet Union, support this approach. But the balance sheet is crystal clear — it does not work.

In the past 20 years the explosive power of nuclear weapons has increased a thousand times, and the number of nations which possess them has increased dramatically. It is thought that Israel and South Africa, for example, now possess



Michael Foot leads CND march in 1959 nuclear weapons.

The furthest that the world has gone towards mutual disarmament has been the SALT 1 and 2 conferences. Yet these conferences were a farce.

SALT 1 did not deal with the main breakthrough in weapons technology at that time — multiple warheads, known as MIRVs, on one rocket. SALT 2 has not been ratified by the US Senate, and is unlikely to be.

While the USA and USSR have spent 10 years talking in Geneva the number of nuclear warheads has continued to multiply. The SALT conferences have acted as a cover for doing nothing.

Britain doesn't have an independent nuclear deterrent

The argument that in a nuclear world Britain is defenceless without an independent deterrent ignores the basic fact that Britain would never use nuclear weapons independently of the United States.

In the event of a conventional war in Europe, NATO is committed to some form of nuclear response. Britain's possession of nuclear weapons and membership of NATO could easily drag Britain into the American's nuclear war.

With the Britain, which and control last remnant of stagflation and control over the

Even be hand and strategy. Friend of mented last contemplate the US be would be to Soviet Union partial'.

take place. In 1957 it was announced that a missile site was to be built on the East coast of Scotland. The Dundee area of the Building Trades Operatives came out against the base:

'Not a pick, not a spade, not a trowel will be used for the establishment of rocket sites in the area.' The proposal was withdrawn.

In the summer of 1960 there was a two-month campaign aimed at Bristol Siddeley Engines which culminated in a token stoppage called by the shop stewards committee. In the autumn of 1961 some gangs of London dockers refused to handle cargo for Aldermaston.

On Merseyside, at the petrochemicals site at Carrington, the workforce of 1000 held a one-day strike on 14 May 1962 against the resumption of surface nuclear tests in America and Russia.

The actions were small. They were token. But they in-

dicated a potential that the CND leaders and their labour movement friends in high places refused to explore.

The mass movement of CND and its general campaign did have an impact on the unions — and in some amazing places. In June 1959, the General and Municipal union went unilateralist. An outraged leadership was thus put to the bother of having to arrange a recall conference and bully the delegates into getting it right in time for the TUC.

The TGWU then went unilateralist. Right-wing commentators normally write this off as a result of the bureaucratic influence of the new general secretary, the left-winger Frank Cousins. How this explains the G&M and, in the following year, the AEU, USDAW, NUM and a host of smaller unions is not clear.

In reality there was a big shift of opinion going on in the working class. What

undeniably hastened the process was the decision in 1960 of the Communist Party to support CND and to reverse its position of voting against unilateralist resolutions.

Before May 1960 the CP position had been expressed by the May 1959 editorial in *Marxism Today*:

'Unilateralism only divides the movement and diverts attention from the real issue, namely, international agreement to ban nuclear weapons.' By the time of the LP conference, a majority of union votes had been won for unilateralism.

There had been a steady advance in the influence of unilateralism within the LP. In 1957 66 unilateralist resolutions went to conference. This was partially a response to the British H-bomb test at Christmas Island. The composite resolution was moved by Harold Davies MP and seconded by the Trotskyist Vivienne Mendelsohn.

This was the moment when Bevan made his move to the right and savaged the resolution as an 'emotional spasm'.



Hugh Gaitskell

The defeat was huge — 5,836,000 to 781,000 — partially due to the impact of Bevan and partially due to the votes of the CP-influenced unions.

The '58 Conference saw a small advance in the unilateralist vote and '59 was an election year with no conference. By 1960 the swing was on in the unions. This was helped by the cancellation in

April of the production of the proposed Blue Streak missile — Britain's very own, independent deterrent.

The Tory and Labour leaders had British H-bombs but to get them to Moscow they would be forced to innovate the Busby bomb and send it by parcel post. The confusion was more apparent than real.

What Gaitskell grasped, and some of the left didn't, was that it was not particular missiles that were crucial but allegiance to the foreign and military policy of NATO. It was not Blue Streak, nor Thor, nor Skybolt — not even Cruise — that was central. It was, and is, the NATO alliance.

The 1960 Scarborough conference should have been the greatest victory the Labour left had ever won. The union votes were there but the proposing speech of Cousins was lack-lustre. The response of Gaitskell was

electric. He rejected unilateralism and would 'fight and fight and fight again to save the party we love.'

Many of the Labour left leaders listened with a sinking feeling. The issues were now wider than mere nuclear annihilation — the party could split and the next election be lost. Another worrying feature of the victory was that the constituency parties supported Gaitskell by 512,000 to 260,000.

The right wing was prepared to wage a counter-attack to reverse the decision. The problem was whether the Labour lefts were prepared to seize the victory that the Aldermaston marchers had put into their hands. Their proven specialism was in gallantly losing and remaining a critical but loyal minority. Would the Lefts have the will or political ability to fight again?

Next week: CND's defeat and its lessons for today.

HT

NT



ing of Cruise missiles in all be targeted, serviced, by the United States, the an 'independent' deterrent Wall Street, the Pen- Reagan will have con- nuclear weapons in Britain.

Cruise, Britain was tied to the US's nuclear Marshal Lord Carver (no nuclear disarmament) com- that Britain would never nuclear conflict without 'the risk to ourselves whereas the risk to the could be great but only

The cost of nuclear weapons is appalling

Trident, the replacement for Polaris will cost the equivalent of 100 hospitals, 4,000 houses or 1,000 schools. At a time when resources are desperately needed for precisely such things; when massive cuts are being made, the economic waste involved is appalling.

It is arguable that the political and military cost of Britain's nuclear weapons is even higher than their purchasing price. The United States appears to have decided that it can win a nuclear war if it is fought in the European 'theatre'.

Per head of population, Britain has more nuclear bases and devices than any other European nation. It would be a primary target, the first nation to get zapped, in any nuclear exchange — unlike the Swiss, for example, whose very lack of nuclear weapons makes them safer.

Getting rid of nuclear weapons is not primarily a moral gesture aimed at the rest of the world — it is a very practical step aimed at securing our own existence.

It is a myth that the Soviet Union is preparing to invade Western Europe.

Defence thinking in the West is

dominated by crude anti-communist ideas which suppose that the Soviet Union aims for world domination, and is preparing for an assault on West Europe through the 'central front' in Germany.

Yet the bureaucrats who rule in the Kremlin are defenders of the status quo; they seek to preserve their own rule. Twice in this century — in 1917 and 1941 — the Soviet Union has been invaded by the world capitalist powers.

The Soviet rulers must know that they have no hope of — and for that matter any reason for — dominating West Europe militarily. They have difficulty enough controlling East Europe.

An overview of the disposition of the military forces of East and West shows

clearly that it is the forces of the United States and NATO which surround the USSR and not the other way around.

Both in numbers and technology the USA is way ahead in the nuclear arms race.

In a nuclear war there will be no winner. Strategies based on nuclear war are built on quicksand. We can start to fight the danger of nuclear war by disarming our own rulers. There is little chance that it can be stopped by discussions at the conference table in Geneva.

The Tories' missile policy can and must be stopped. A mass movement based on unilateralism can stop it. Michael Foot should sack Brynmor John and give full backing to CND.

By Pat Kane

THE recall 'Local Government in Crisis' conference held in London last weekend gave backing to the anti-Tory strike called by Lambeth trade unionists for the first week in February.

Though smaller than last November's conference, some 430 delegates from trade union and Labour Party branches from all over the country attended the 18 January conference.

Since November the Tories have continued their vicious attacks on all aspects of the welfare state. The latest measures by the government aim to slash local services by withholding government grants and restructuring the rating system to ensure that local councils strictly conform to Tory policies.

Fight

Peter Coles, TGWU branch secretary in Lambeth, told delegates that he had come to the conference to look for support for a fight against the Tories. He said that without support and solidarity, the Tories will be able to defeat Lambeth, and any other group of workers who decide to fight.

'The Tories frighten people,' Cole told the conference, 'but they're not going to frighten us. Some

Lambeth conference votes to fight Tories



Delegates attending the 'No cuts, no rate and rent rises' fringe meeting

people have said that we're jumping the gun by calling strike action in February, but if we don't fight we won't have a job left anyway.

'Heseltine can stick who he likes into Lambeth — commissioners or even Maggie herself — but they won't find anyone to work with them.'

The conference agreed to organise support and solidarity for the Lambeth week of action which begins on 2 February, and to support the demonstration called for 4 February.

Many councillors, including Ted Knight from Lambeth, had voted at the November conference for

resolutions to oppose Tory local government policies. Since then they have flaunted the decisions of the conference.

Labour councils have sold council houses, increased rates, and cut services. It's okay for trade unionists to make sacrifices in the fight against the Tories, but according



Vanessa Wiseman

to Ted Knight councillors are exempt from the hardships of the class struggle.

Knight argued in favour of councillors implementing Tory policies, such as the sale of council houses.

The fear of isolation from the corridors of local government, or possible surcharging by the Tories if they refuse to implement cuts, has led the Lambeth council leader away from policies which can defend jobs and living standards.

Control

'We intend to stay in control in Lambeth and not to hand over control to anyone — either to Heseltine or the bankers,' he said. But despite Knight, the conference reaffirmed a 'no cuts, no rate rises, no sales' position.

Vanessa Wiseman, president of Lambeth Trades Council, outlined why everyone should support the stand taken by the Lambeth unions, but she

also criticised Knight for doing little to make sure that the Lambeth Labour group were active in the struggle.

At a lunchtime meeting she pointed out that it was not good enough for councillors to pretend that they were not implementing Tory policies. She argued that councillors should play their part in the struggle and share the hardships too.

Prison

'Of course we don't want anyone to go to prison, or be surcharged,' Vanessa said, 'but if you are a councillor and you are against the Tories there is that danger. Trades unionists run the risk of arrest every day they are on picket lines. Councillors have to be prepared to make sacrifices too.'

Many delegates were disappointed by Lambeth's decision to raise rates and sell council houses. South Wales councillor Ray Davis, a steelworker, said:

'Lambeth should have done a charge of the light brigade and made a firm stand. Like Clay Cross, they would have received the support of the whole movement, and provided a focus for the fight against the Tories.'

Despite the weakness of Ted Knight and his friends on Lambeth council, the trades unionists' planned week of action will show that some people are willing to make the sacrifices necessary to beat the Tories.

Lambeth council raises the rates to save Tories

By Graham Norwood, Norwood Labour Party, Lambeth

TED Knight and most of Lambeth's controlling Labour group voted on 12 January to levy a supplementary rate of 20p in the pound — in direct opposition to the Lambeth-inspired 'Local Government in Crisis' conference held last November.

Knight, the council leader, accused those Labour councillors who wanted to fight the Tories by refusing to implement cuts or raise the rates of 'not being socialists'.

In a bitter exchange at the end of a special council meeting, Knight said that the call for a direct fight with Thatcher and Heseltine, which would be an inevitable result of not raising rates, could not be supported by the majority of Lambeth councillors because it 'has no backing whatsoever from the national Labour and TUC leadership'.

The council meeting was a set-piece argument

between the Tories in opposition, and the bulk of the Labour group. A number of Labour right wingers spoke against the policy of no cuts in existing services, and three abstained in the final vote.

But the key political debate — short as it was — concerned the move by four Labour councillors to seek 'reference back' of the proposed rate rise on the grounds that such a rate burden would fall mainly on working class people in the borough. It would effectively be a cut-by-the-back-door.

Moving the reference back, Neil Turner said working people would suffer from the rate increase because it would

not be completely covered by rate rebates.

In political terms, he argued, the rate increase would offer no greater security for the continued existence of the direct labour organisation in Lambeth.

Both Turner and Steve Stannard asked the council leadership to say whether they would simply keep increasing the rates to compensate for Heseltine's reduced rate support and block grants, or whether the much-rumoured 'socialist cuts' would come about in April 1981.

Ted Knight refused to say anything in reply except that Lambeth had resisted making cuts so far, and would not refuse

this rate increase because the alternative would be to let the City of London take over the running of the council.

He made no effort to say what future strategy would be, nor would he comment on the political alternatives outlined in the debate.

Neil Turner had argued that with Heseltine forcing Lambeth council to attack working class people through rate rises, it was time to take political action, via resignation, or bankruptcy, or refusing to step down and allow the Tories to put their commissioners in to do the government's work.

The main issue now is how the unions mobilise in the proposed week of action in the borough in February. Support within the council is limited: the leadership refused to comment on the likely prospects for the strike when questioned by both Labour and Tory councillors.



Wandsworth workers picket council

Wandsworth fights the Tories

By Dave Benlow, Wandsworth NUPE shop steward

WANDSWORTH council in South London was brought to a standstill on Wednesday of last week.

Michael Heseltine has achieved what the 'winter of discontent' and the TUC's Day of Action last May did not bring about — unity in action between white and blue collar workers.

Over the past two years a thousand jobs have gone from the Tory-controlled council. And thanks to the new system of government rate support grant, by which poorer areas will be under-financed, Wandsworth has been told to lop

£20m off this year's budget.

This amounts to a third of what the council was spending on local services. The council additionally spends £33m on bank interest charges.

The Wandsworth Tories announced their proposals for cutting local services and jobs a fortnight ago. Just over 700 jobs would go; £7m would be saved through job loss, and rent and rates were to be increased. Meeting the government's requirements will mean a 40 per cent rate rise and a £6 rise in rents for council tenants.

The response of the NALGO branch was particularly rapid. It had begun a compulsory branch levy to establish a local strike fund 18 months ago. The branch had also prepared a plan of action if the council broke the redundancy agreement.

Four days after the announcement of the cuts, this plan was activated at a mass meeting of 2,000 members. They voted for a day of all-out strike action for 14 January, to be followed by selected strike action.

A liaison committee set up between NALGO and the shop stewards committee of the manual worker's unions voted on Monday for a programme of action to fight to defend services and jobs.

Wandsworth trades unionists know that it is impossible to fight the cuts borough by borough. They are supporting the call for a combine committee meeting for local authority shop stewards to be held at Camden Town Hall on 29 January. And part of our programme is support for the week of action called by Lambeth local authority trade unionists.

SOCIALIST CHALLENGE

Special subscription offer for Labour Party supporters — 10 issues for £1

Just send £1 cheque/postal order made payable to 'Socialist Challenge'.

Name

Address

Send to Socialist Challenge PO Box 50, London N1 2XP

Bloody Sunday march on 25 January

THE annual march commemorating Bloody Sunday is due to take place this Sunday, 25 January, in Cardiff.

Both the National Front and the British Movement are believed to be planning to attack the demonstration. The Anti Nazi League is expected to mobilise in support of the right of the march to take place.

The march is called by Sinn Fein and marks the ninth anniversary of the murder of 14 anti-internment demonstrators by British soldiers in Derry's Bogside in 1972.

This is the first time a major Irish demonstration has been planned for Wales, although socialists in Wales together with Welsh Republicans have always shown an active interest in building solidarity with the Irish resistance.

The fascist threat against the march

needs to be taken seriously. The NF and BM have publicly vowed to stop the march, with the NF planning a counter-demonstration to take place a couple of hours before Sinn Fein's is due to start.

The NF is then planning to 'disperse' in time for its members to secure vantage points against the Bloody Sunday pro-

testers.

The ANL is still discussing its plans. Originally these consisted of a march against the NF counter-demo, but it may be that these may now be dropped in favour of protecting the Sinn Fein march. This would certainly seem the more sensible course.

The Bloody Sunday demo will assemble at 1.30am at Fitzallen Place. The Troops Out Movement will be running coaches from London, leaving York Way, Kings Cross at 9am. Coaches from Birmingham depart at 9.30am, from the Hall of Memory in the city centre.

Labour and Ireland: the next step?

THE Northern Ireland Study Group, set up by the national executive of the Labour Party, has just produced a consultative paper entitled, Northern Ireland, the next step?

The Labour Party has asked for a full discussion on the paper's contents in constituency Labour parties and affiliated unions.

As an aid to this discussion, Socialist Challenge will be running a series of articles taking up the five questions asked in the consultative paper. This week we begin with a commentary on The Background, the introduction to the consultative paper, which is also reprinted below.

By Mick Sullivan, North Islington Labour Party and Labour Committee on Ireland.

THE 1920 Government of Ireland Act which established the partition of Ireland was, at the time, opposed by the Labour Party.

In January 1920 the Parliamentary Labour Party published the report of a special Commission of Inquiry into the Present Conditions in Ireland, outlining what the party policy should be.

Malady

The commission began its report by declaring: 'Ireland is suffering today from a malady which has many civil effects, but only one cause.'

'The frustration of national aspirations in social as well as political affairs has produced a feeling of bitter resentment, transmitted from one generation to another, against British rule.'

The commission went on to detail the justification for this resentment. It noted, for instance, that the British 'civil and military authorities between them have destroyed practically all the safeguards of political and personal liberty'.

Majority

The views of the Irish people themselves were then recorded. The majority won by the Republican party Sinn Fein in the 1918 election was referred to and the commission concluded that:

'The country is overwhelmingly opposed to the present political system', and 'the majority of Irish people are not happy under British rule.'

The 'principle of self-determination', said the

The background

SINCE 1921 Northern Ireland has been part of the United Kingdom following the 1920 Government of Ireland Act, which established separate parliaments in Belfast and Dublin. This Act also established a Council of Ireland to deal with matters in which both parts of Ireland had interests. It was hoped the setting up of such institutions would lead to a united Ireland.

In 1949, however, the Westminster Parliament passed the Ireland Act which said that no part of Northern Ireland would break away from the United Kingdom without the consent of the Northern Ireland Parliament. When the Northern Ireland Parliament was prorogued in March 1972, and direct rule introduced, its powers were transferred to the UK Parliament.

The 1973 Northern Ireland Constitution Act later repealed the provision in the 1949 Act regarding any change in the constitutional status of Northern Ireland. Instead it laid down that 'in no event' would Nor-

thern Ireland cease to be part of the United Kingdom without the consent of the majority of the people living there.

On 8 March 1973 voting took place to determine the views of the electorate on the constitutional status of Northern Ireland. Some 60 per cent - 600,000 in all voted; and 99 per cent (57 per cent of the electorate) voted in favour of remaining in the United Kingdom. However the poll was boycotted by the Social Democratic and Labour Party and by nationalist and Republican organisations.

In late 1973 the Sunningdale Agreement, which included the establishment of a Council of Ireland, had started to be implemented with the election of an Assembly and a power-sharing Executive. However, this Executive was eventually brought down in May 1974, by a successful province-wide strike organised and led by militant Protestant workers and trade unionists. Since then Northern Ireland has been governed by direct rule.

From the Labour Party's consultative paper

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From the Labour Party's consultative paper

was unsuccessful in securing these demands. Partition was imposed on Ireland by the British. The Council of Ireland, established by the Government of Ireland Act, never met.

But at least the Labour Party had established the principles by which the 'Irish problem' should be resolved.

Partition

Unfortunately these principles were overturned by the Labour Government of 1945-51. The Ireland Act of 1949 rather than challenging partition strengthened it. It gave the Unionist

majority in the north of Ireland - a majority created out of the partition settlement originally opposed by Labour - a permanent right to veto the ending of partition.

At the time this met with some opposition in the Labour Cabinet. Lord Longford, then Lord Pakenham and Minister of Civil Aviation, wrote to Prime Minister Attlee to object:

'The record of the Northern Irish governments since 1920 has revealed an attitude to freedom of speech, (to) a fair delineation of constituency boundaries, and to democracy generally which is quite out of keeping with our Labour

ideas.'

Longford concluded by saying the one satisfactory solution of the 'Anglo-Irish problem' was 'the political unity of Ireland...the end of partition'.

In his reply to Longford, Attlee dealt with not the political principles behind

Media unions to hold Irish conference

By Larry Herman

SEVERAL media unions are supporting a conference which will discuss coverage of Ireland. The conference, to be held on 28 February at the Digbeth Civil Hall, Birmingham, was initiated by the National Union of Journalists as a result of a deci-

sion taken by last year's annual conference.

Other media union support has come from the television technician's union ACTT, the print union SLADE, and the BBC staff union ABS.

NUJ assistant secretary Bob Norris has said: 'Consistent fears have been expressed about our members' ex-

perience in reporting events in Northern Ireland. The conference takes place with no specific prior assumption about the nature of the censorship involved.'

Details of the conference, which is open to the labour movement, from: Ron Knowles, NUJ, Acorn House, 314 Grays Inn Rd, London WC1. Tel 01-278 7916.

Longford's objections but rather how partition was in the interests of Britain.

He said 'the World War had proved the necessity of Northern Ireland's continued adherence to the United Kingdom for defence purposes'.

This ditching of the principle of self-determination has informed Labour governments' attitudes to Northern Ireland since Attlee's fateful moves.

As partition was designed to ensure a majority inside an artificially created state, it is obvious the voting inside the North of Ireland would reflect that majority.

Whenever the Unionists have felt that the views of their majori-

ty were not being adhered to strongly enough they have reacted violently. The 1974 Loyalist strike which brought down the power-sharing Sunningdale settlement was one such occasion.

This strike was accompanied by a Loyalist campaign of violence which left 43 dead. The Labour government's reaction to this strike was timid.

In his book, *The Point of No Return*, Robert Fisk of *The Times* has shown how the Labour government refused to take the necessary steps to break this strike.

At no time since 1949 has any Labour government challenged the 'right' of the Loyalists to maintain their state and the partition of Ireland.

Socialist Challenge News

SC Sales

ABERDEEN: SC sold Saturdays outside C&As — for more info ring Colin, 574060.

BATH: SC on sale at 1985 Books, London Road, and Saturdays 2pm-3pm outside the Roman Baths. Phone 20298 for more details.

BIRMINGHAM: SC on sale at The Ramp, Fri 4.30-5.40, Sat 10-4. For more info phone 643-0669.

BRADFORD: SC available from Fourth Idea Bookshop, 14 Southgate.

BRIGHTON: SC sales regularly every Sat outside Open Market, London Road, from 11am-1pm.

BRISTOL: SC on sale 11-1, 'Hole in Ground', Haymarket. More info from Box 2, c/o Fullmarks, 110 Cheltenham Rd, Montpellier, Bristol 6.

BURNLEY: SC on sale every Sat morning 11.30-1pm St James St.

CARDIFF: SC sales Newport Town Centre outside Woolworths 11-12.30; Cardiff British Home Stores 11-12.30. Also available from 108 Books, Salisbury Road, Cardiff.

CHESTERFIELD: SC supporters sell outside Boots, Marketplace, Saturdays 11.30am-12.30pm.

COVENTRY: SC available from Wedge Bookshop. For more info about local activities phone 461138.

DUNDEE: SC available from Dundee City Square outside Boots, every Thursday 4-5.30pm, Friday 4-5.30pm, Saturday 11-4pm.

EDINBURGH: SC sales every Thursday 4.15-5.15pm Bus Station, St Andrew's Square; Saturday 11.30-2pm East End, Princes St. Also available from 1st May Books, or Better Books, Forrest Rd. More info on local activity from SC c/o Box 6, 1st May Bookshop, Candlemaker Row.

ENFIELD: SC available from Nelsons Newsagents, London Rd, Enfield Town.

GLASGOW: SC sales every Thur/Fri 4.30-5.30pm at Central Station. Also available at Barretts, Byres Rd; Clyde Books, High St; Glasgow Bookshop collective, Cresswell Lane; Hope Street Book Centre.

HACKNEY: supporters sell SC every Saturday morning at Ridley Road market E8.

HAMILTON: SC on sale 8-11 every Sat outside County Bar, Alameda Street, every Sat outside Safeway 1.30-5. For more info contact Paul, 17 Clyde View or John at 54 Eliot St, Hamilton.

HUDDERSFIELD: SC supporters sell papers every Saturday 11am-1pm, The Piazza. SC also available at Peacocks.

KILBURN: SC sales every Sat, 10am in Kilburn Square.

LAMBETH: SC available from Village Books, Streatham; Tetric Books, Clapham; Paperback Centre, Brixton; Oval tube kiosk. Also sold Thur and Fri evenings and Thur mornings outside Brixton tube.

NEWCASTLE: SC on sale every Sat 11-1pm outside Fenwicks. Also available at Days of Hope bookshop, Westgate Rd. For more info ring Phil or Pete on Newcastle 737507.

MANCHESTER: SC supporters sell 11-1pm Sat at OLDFHAM outside the Yorkshire Bank, High St; at BURY in the shopping precinct and at Metro Books; at BOLTON in the town centre; and in MANCHESTER outside the central reference library in St Peter's Square and at Grassroots and Percivals Bookshop. Tel: 061-236 4905 for further info.

NEWHAM: SC sale every Saturday, 11am to noon, Queen's Rd Market, Upton Park.

OLDHAM: SC sold every Saturday outside Yorkshire Bank, High Street. For more information about local activities. Tel: 061-682 5151.

OXFORD: SC supporters sell every Fri 12-2pm outside Kings Arms and every Sat 10.30-12.30pm in Cornmarket.

STOCKPORT: SC sold every Saturday, 1pm, Mersey Way. Can be delivered weekly: phone 483 8909 (evening), 236 4905 (day).

SWANSEA: SC sales outside Co-op, Oxford St, 11am-1pm, Saturdays.

SWINDON: SC on sale 11-1 every Sat., Regent St (Brunel Centre).

TEESSIDE: SC on sale Sat lunchtime in the Cleveland Centre, and in Newsfare, Linthorpe Road, Middlesbrough, and outside Woolworths on Stockton High Street.

WOLVERHAMPTON: SC sales on Thur/Fri at Poly Students Union from noon-2pm and British Rail 4.30-6pm; an Saturday near Beatties, town centre from 11am-2pm.

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

SC Events

LABOUR PARTY: Day school on the Labour Party, open to SC supporters only. Details to follow.

International Marxist Group notices

ENGINEERING: National fraction Sat 7 February.

MISSILES: National fraction now Sun 8 Feb. Ring national centre for details.

NW: Branch leaderships meeting on Sat 31 Jan, 2pm at Manchester centre. Agenda: Missiles conference, NW TUC march, NW IMG organisation.

WOMEN'S LIBERATION: National fraction now Sat 31 January.

IRISH LIBERATION: fraction on Sun 1 March. Details to follow.

POSITIVE ACTION: Day school on Sun 1 February. Ring centre for details.

NUT: commission, Sat 24 Jan, 11-5pm. To discuss: Tasks, turn, women's oppression, education 16-19, conference. Venue next week.

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

What's Left

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

SOUTH AFRICA and Namibia public meeting, Sat 24 Jan, 2.30-5pm includes film 'We are all workers' and speakers (free). 8pm SACTU benefit (£1) with bar and food. All at Trades Hall, 96 Dalston Lane, London E8.

NEWCASTLE West nuclear disarmament group public meeting on 26 Jan at 7.30pm. Speaker from END and Brian Heron of Socialist Challenge.

FIGHT Racism! Fight Imperialism! No. 8: the Irish War — what is to be done in Britain. Interview with Thozamile Botha, leader of Ford's strike, South Africa; the Communist tradition in Ireland pt 2 — Irish Labour confronts British imperialism; Greensboro murders; other news and articles on Britain and internationally. 20p plus 15 p&p from RCG publications, 49 Railton Rd, London SE 24.

BLOODY Sunday demo coaches from Leeds: leave Trades club, Savile Mount, Leeds 7 at 6am sharp and 6.10am from University steps, Woodhouse Lane. Tickets from Corner bookshop, Woodhouse Lane.

BLOODY Sunday Commemoration demo organised by Sinn Fein in Cardiff on 25 January. Coaches from London (£4 return), Coventry, Manchester, Canterbury, organised by RCT. Details: 01-274 3951.

DEBATE between Nth London Poly women's group and NLP Spartacists 'Which way forward for women's liberation — autonomous women's movement or communist women's movement?' Tue 27 Jan, 7.30pm NL Poly, Kentish town site TV room.

STUART HOOD, author of *On Television*, discusses the structure of TV and who controls it with Peter Fiddick, Guardian TV correspondent, and Brian Wenham, controller of BBC2. Thurs 22 Jan, 7.30pm, at the ICA, The Mall, London SW1. Adm £1.40.

Revolution Youth notices

WOMEN'S LIBERATION: fraction on 7/8 Feb. All women members welcome. Ring Ann/Alix 01-359 8301.

MEMBERSHIP CARDS: Cards now available for members of Revolution Youth. All branches should place orders with national office.

SHOCKING PINK — Out Now! Any Revolution Youth branches wanting copies of the new young women's magazine should order them direct from: Shocking Pink, 4 Essex Rd, London W3. Pay in advance. 40p per copy incl. p&p.



STILL AVAILABLE: the badge that shows where you stand on Thatcher's war-mongering. 20p plus 10p p&p. Send to: Hackney Socialist Education Group, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

By Davy Jones

ONE of the most important battles against the US government's attacks on working people in America will begin on 16 March.

That is when the lawsuit against government spying, disruption, and harassment filed by the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialist Alliance — who politically support the Fourth International — comes up in court.

Spies

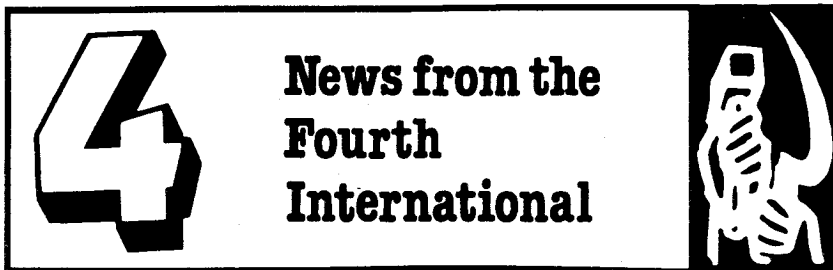
The lawsuit against the FBI, the CIA, and other government spy agencies such as the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (INS) aims to stop further harassment against the SWP and YSA.

The organisations also want to recover all the spy agency files on harassment, and to seek compensation for the disruption suffered up to now.

The government already admits that its 40-year investigations of the SWP and YSA has revealed no illegal activity. The socialists were harassed for their legal activities.

Unpopular

The SWP and YSA have been prominent in opposing the draft and the Vietnam war; in advocating union rights; in organising against racist police and Ku Klux Klan terror; in supporting women's equality; in organising solidarity with the revolutions in El



SECRET POLICE ON TRIAL

SOCIALISTS VERSUS FBI, CIA, INS

Salvador and other countries.

The Reagan administration, like Carter's, will need the secret police agencies

because the new government knows that its

policies of inflation, unemployment, union busting, cutting social services, attacking

undermining safety conditions are unpopular with most working people.

Successive American governments have resorted to wire-tapping, surveillance, harassment

and violence in order to intimidate and disrupt any groups or individuals who oppose them.

The SWP and YSA lawsuit, filed in 1973, has forced the government to release tens of thousands of pages of official documents.

Illegal

These show how the FBI plotted against the black movement; how it tried to drive union militants from their jobs; how it sought to discredit the women's rights movement; and how it tried to prevent the rise of a massive movement against the Vietnam war.

The files reveal the systematic use by the government of burglaries, wiretaps, informers, and other illegal techniques.

Under the pressure of widespread opposition to the FBI spy operation, the government announced in 1976 that it was ending its investigation of the SWP and YSA. That was a lie.

Trial

Last autumn the socialists uncovered a six-year investigation of Marian Bustin, a coal miner in West Virginia and a member of the SWP and YSA. The INS visited neighbours, relatives, and landlords to try to find grounds to deport her because of her political views.

The US government is at war with working people at home and abroad to defend US profits. American socialists are putting the government itself on trial. *Socialist Challenge* will be following the case in future issues.

Funds for the revolution

By Toni Gorton

LARGE-SCALE money gathering is a very serious business — ask any capitalist. Supporters of Socialist Challenge, however, can't invest money to make money, or finance TV time for a personality to appeal for funds for the revolution.

We have to do it the hard way — penny by penny, pound by pound. Because we have such limited resources we have to think out seriously what we are going to do and how we are going to do it.

Big opportunities are opening up for radical ideas in Britain today.

To be part of this ferment and an effective part of the struggle against the Tories, we need some basic facilities.

To print our pamphlets, to send journalists around the country reporting first hand on the latest developments, to spend time working with activists on their political tasks and problems — all this requires a professional apparatus.

It means typewriters, paper, ink, phones, train tickets and printing presses, collators, and photographic supplies.

'Raising money is a chore, to be finished with as quickly as possible so we can get down to the real politics' is a familiar idea. 'Real politics' is taking a serious approach to all the questions that are thrown up in the process of fighting for your ideas.

Every task can benefit us if we look at it politically. When we organise a jumble sale, a disco or a raffle, we increase our organisational skills and get a chance to work with people we don't ordinarily.

When we sell badges against Cruise missiles, against the Tories, and for jobs not bombs, we spread our ideas. When we hold a banquet with a speaker from Grenada, we inform and inspire people and help to organise the defence of the Central American/Caribbean revolutions.

Socialist Challenge supporters in Hackney, for example, will be dropping their pennies into piggy banks every night as

part of their efforts to raise over £1,000 for the paper's fund drive by the end of May. They have promises of £150 as a result of one night on the phone.

A whole series of events and ongoing projects have been planned with teams organised around each one. They are collecting goods like posters from Solidarity in Poland which will be framed and auctioned at a social.

Two raffles are under way, one for a pair of Who concert tickets and the other for a large sum of money.

Socialist Challenge is asking for £20,000 out of its £100,000 fund drive target from this sort of local activity. To reach our target by May, we'll need around £3,000 every month. If all supporters follow Hackney's lead, it can be done.

December got us off to a good start with nearly £1,000 in fund drive money rolling in over the New Year. But so far in January we've only had another £160. So now's the time to start pulling out all the stops. So far we've received £5,692.67.

Socialist Challenge National Sales Day

Sat 21 February

On every coach and train to Glasgow Socialist Challenge sales teams will be out in force. At the demo itself we will be fighting to win new regular readers and subscribers. Make sure you're in Glasgow on 21 February selling Socialist Challenge!



Socialist Challenge London Day School
Sat 24 January 10.30-4.30pm

East Europe and Poland

Speaker: Oliver MacDonald

Open to Socialist Challenge supporters Adm £1. Venue: St. Matthews, Brixton (2 minutes Brixton Tube station)

By Geoff Bell

COMMENTING on the planting of bombs by the Provisional IRA in Belfast's city centre during the early 1970s, the narrator of the fourth part of *The Troubles*, to be screened on ITV next Monday, says the bombs were for 'defensive purposes'.

The narration goes on to explain that the bombs were designed to occupy the attentions of the British Army while the IRA organised the defence of the Catholic ghettos. What is remarkable is that a documentary on Ireland, made by a British TV company should choose to relay this fact.

Equally abnormal, part four of *The Troubles* describes the policy adopted by the Tory Government in 1970 in Ireland as one of 'coercion'.

For those who have watched the first three parts of *The Troubles*, the use of such descriptions, accurate as they are, will not come as much of a surprise.

The series has got steadily better, which means more pro-Republican as it has progressed. Last Monday's episode, on the first 50 years of the Northern Ireland state, was the most forthright exposure of the policies of that state that

The Troubles continue

has ever been put on film.

Using much of the information contained in Michael Farrell's book *The Orange State*, as well as interviews with Michael, the film underlined the repressive policies of the Unionists, their use of discrimination, and the apathy and censorship of the British media and governments.

One criticism that can be made of this episode is the use of Glen Barr, as the Loyalist 'expert' chosen to counter Michael Farrell. Barr is no fool, and as the leader of the Ulster Defence Association he could be considered to be a fair enough representative of the Loyalists.

The content of what he said on Monday suggests otherwise. His condemnation of the Unionist government was, at times, as harsh as Michael's; especially his comments on the 1932 unemployment demonstrations and their aftermath. And yet the opinions Barr expressed on such incidents show just how unrepresentative of Loyalist opinion he is, or at least appears to be.

uses this as a political justification for murdering those who reject this schema. It seems the way to hell is paved with good intentions. That, however, is little comfort this week to the friends of Bernadette McAiskey.

It would have been better if the makers of *The Troubles* had chosen someone who would have attempted to justify the Unionist government. Perhaps, though, none could be found to defend the indefensible.

Just how indefensible is underlined in next Monday's episode, which also puts under scrutiny the role of recent British governments. Watch out for the way Reggie Maudling is described, and for the section on Bloody Sunday.

Indeed the technique used by the filmmakers on Bloody Sunday is representative of the entire series: the evidence is presented, both sides of the dispute are stated, no final judgement is made. But the viewer is left in little doubt about who was right and who was wrong, and it is not the British Army, the Unionists or the British government who are given the benefit of any doubt.

Which is why *The Troubles* is not only good television; it also displays a degree of honesty about Ireland which has rarely been seen before on British TV.

If it is the case, as Barr suggested, that he is fully aware of and opposed to the attempts of the Unionist leadership to divide and rule the Northern Irish working class, then there is an obvious riddle. How come that Glen Barr heads an organisation, the UDA, which consciously adopted and still follows a policy of assassination against Catholics in general, and more recently against the most socialist leaders of the anti-imperialist movement?

Is this Barr's path to working class unity? Is not what he is involved with merely carrying on, indeed intensifying, the practices he condemns?

The answer to this riddle is that Glen Barr is a hypocrite, a liar, and an intellectual confidence trickster. He declares loyalty to the cause of a united Northern Irish working class within the UK, and

'Babylon' - see it!

By Paul Gilroy

YOU HAD better go and see *Babylon* before it disappears. There is every reason to suppose that even the mild version of racism the film uncovers will be considered an unpalatable exaggeration by many.

The unprecedented complexity of the censor and the Commission for Racial Equality, resulting in the award of an X certificate for political reasons, is alarming enough. Then there is the fate of Horace Ove's *Pressure*, scarcely shown for four years after it was made, as a reminder of the 'sensitivity' of the subject matter of racism.

Rosso, the director of *Babylon*, focuses on the resistance and survival strategies of a group of young men who run the Ital Lion sound system in the run-up to an important competition with their arch rivals Jah Shaka. The central character is Blue, the DJ who introduces and interrupts their selection of music with rhyme, humour and political commentary.

We see him fired from his mechanics job, brutalised

by the police, sent packing by his companion for being unreasonably possessive, and finally driven to stab one of the racists who wrecked the sound's electronic equipment.

But any one of the sound's followers could tell a similar story, and Rosso is less concerned with the individual solution to these political problems than with an emerging communal solution, visible in the consciousness and organisation of the mass of black youth.

Jah Shaka quells a dance-hall fight with the words: 'You think the walls of Babylon can mash down by just one man?'

The talents and wit of the black actors, who have obviously improvised much of the dialogue, make the film very funny in places. Their influence is also detectable in the skilful way the

film avoids most of the pitfalls involved in realist representation of black people.

At last on screen there is a black household in which parent and child stand indivisible against the police, and where the pressures of racism are seen to produce the tension too often explained by reference to black culture or generational conflict.

Culture

Though poorly photographed in contrast to the rest of the film, and conveying nothing of a real event, the dance-hall scenes present black culture in an altogether different light, revealing the sound system institution as a vital cultural and political force — the heart of resistance, with dub music its pulse.

Bob Marley's rise to stardom has confirmed the fact that black culture is now big business for the white capitalist. Though the record industry has been involved in financing this film, it represents a break

with the colour-supplement glamourisation of Rastafarianism which is at the centre of marketing reggae.

Unlike its predecessors, *The Harder They Come* and *Rockers*, this film is not an extended commercial for Island records. There is an explicit challenge to the white consumer's sycophantic relation to the film itself in a powerful scene after the racist attack in which the solitary white youth is rejected by the others.

His presence is important because it helps Rosso emphasise the class character of the youths' sub-culture, so that race and class consciousness are seen as inseparable aspects of the same dynamic process.

This 'lads together' format rapidly becomes a fetter and the marginalisation of women which follows from it is an outrageous distortion, needlessly opening the door to those who argue that black culture is inherently more patriarchal than its white counterpart.

The film has been beautifully photographed, and the corrugated iron landscape of South London

is an unsettling backdrop to the comedy scenes which give way gradually to an intense and optimistic climax.

The dancing crowd take up Blue's chant of 'We can't take no more of that' as the forces of law and order break down the barricaded doors of the hall.

Babylon cannot solve the political crisis of the anti-racist movement, nor can it transform the political consciousness of the real black youth who will recognise their experiences in the screen version. But these are not the tasks that it sets out to accomplish.

Education

It is a first rather than a final step.

Incomplete it may be, but it will be entertaining for blacks, who seldom see their community sensitively depicted. And it is a useful education for whites, whose anti-racist zeal is yet to be matched by even rudimentary knowledge of the brutal reality of racial oppression suffered by the blacks in their midst.



'Wolcott' - stop it!

By Bob Findlay and Paul Gilroy

FEW readers will be unaware of the arrival of Winston Churchill Wolcott, Britain's first black TV detective. The build-up to the four-part film serial screened last week made it plain that he has a rosy future.

The implausible, incoherent, and eventually amateurish programme portrayed Wolcott's lone struggle against corrupt colleagues, the rather half-hearted racism of his brother officers, and the apparently unreasonable contempt of other blacks who felt that he had no business policing them and should therefore be regarded as a traitor.

Symbol

Since there are only 80 black officers out of 23,000 in the Metropolitan Police, you may well query Wolcott's validity as a symbol.

As he conscientiously prides apart warring racist and anti-racist militants in a street-market battle, you may begin to glimpse the kind of symbol he is for a sup-

posedly colour-blind law.

In four hours there is not a single black character of any worth, depth, or dignity. The programmes present instead a cavalcade of cardboard cut-outs, radiating racist stereotypes with every twist of the meandering plot; the drug dealer, the mugger, the Rasta, the rapist, the politico, the illegal immigrant, and the helpless shopkeeper who pays protection money.

Self-help projects and the Rasta movement, which are in reality organs of black resistance, are associated with a variety of criminal activities. The leader of the black gangsters describes his drug racket as the 'revolution' and cannot decide 'whether to be Malcolm X or Fagin'.

His sideline is extortion from an Asian supermarket owner portrayed here as a tearful and isolated victim, not of racism but of other black people.

Clothes

Wolcott's status as a law officer does not save him from sudden lapses into 'primitive' behaviour. These are sometimes acceptable — he tortures the white gang-leader — and sometimes not, as when he threatens to rape the white journalist who has extended a hand of friendship.

The producer has not missed an opportunity to have him shed his clothes. This may be stupid but it is in fact very serious.

The series opens with the sadistic night-time murder of a defenceless old white woman by a young black man who steals her purse. This portrait of the 'mugger' is already at the heart of

popular racist ideas and is increasingly central to the way police see the black community.

Wolcott contained an exceptional degree of explicit violence which, like the racist stereotyping, insults, and sexual innuendo, became a humorous way of presenting racist ideas in a popular manner.

Mask

We have yet to see how many millions watched this programme. 'The tell it like it is approach' attempted to pull a mask of credibility over the same old insults. If it becomes a series there must be an immediate campaign to have it withdrawn.

If you watched the programme and were as appalled as we were, please complain to ATV at this address: Jean Morton, Head of Audience Relations, ATV Network Ltd, ATV Centre, Birmingham B1 2JP.

World crisis deeper than SC suggests

I WELCOME the greater emphasis being given to the economy in recent issues of Socialist Challenge. But I feel Brian Grogan over-emphasises the role of government policy when he claims that the sharp drop in British manufacturing output 'has been deliberately provoked by the Tories' (8 January).

The implication of this is that the solution lies in a change of government and 'alternative policies'. This is the answer of the Labour left, except that they insist that we wait until the next election.

But Foot's 'alternative' is well-known. His own constituency of Ebbw Vale had 15 per cent unemployment before the Tories came to power — and Benn was in the Cabinet that agreed to close the steelworks.

Brian would doubtless agree that a Labour government could not solve the problems of the British

economy. But this conclusion is not that suggested by his analysis, which is misleading on several grounds.

Firstly, he looks only at the current world recession, which he argues 'will be much less severe than 1974-75'. So why does the OECD predict 23m unemployed in the imperialist countries for 1981? This will be caused not by the sharpness of the current recession but because it comes on top of the prolonged crisis of world imperialism evident from the late 1960s.

Even in the 'boom' year of 1978, Britain had 1.4m unemployed and nobody seriously expects world unemployment to fall dramatically when this particular recession ends. It is the inability of imperialism to solve its historic crisis that is the most important feature of the economy.

Secondly, in his effort to

prove that Tory policy is the main problem, he minimises the extent of the world recession. The following figures for the seven largest capitalist countries are taken from the *Economist*:

1. Britain's official unemployment rate of 8.4 per cent is the highest, but only Japan and West Germany have less than 7 per cent.

2. The decline in British industrial production of nearly 10 per cent over the past year is the sharpest, but only Japan has not experienced some decline.

In other words, even if Britain's crisis was no worse than elsewhere, there would still be the best part of 2m people on the dole.

Thirdly, even that part of the crisis which is unique in Britain is not only caused by government policy. At least two other factors are important:

1. The historic decline of Britain as an imperialist power. The Empire both gave a market for British goods and allowed British capital to put its resources into exploiting the colonies rather than introducing new

technology. This accelerated the decline of British competitiveness, which has been sharply exposed since the Empire's collapse. The delay in re-orienting towards the EEC worsened the problem.

2. Oil: sales of North Sea oil on the world market have kept sterling high and further reduced the competitiveness of British manufacturing capital. Relatively few workers have been needed to achieve high oil sales because a large part of the price of oil is currently made up of the monopoly profits enjoyed by the oil companies.

Government policy has of course worsened the situation and Thatcher has been quite happy to see rising unemployment reduce the confidence of workers. But the fundamental problem is the crisis of world capitalism and the implication of this analysis is the need to build a revolutionary international capable of leading the working-class in the struggle against imperialism.

LYN EYNON,
Cardiff

Redgrave and Gaddafi

ERICA Flegg's review of *Playing for Time: a humanist statement* (15 January) singles out Vanessa Redgrave's performance as 'beyond praise' and dismisses the suggestion that Redgrave has any truck with anti-Semitism as a slander, 'not only absurd, but distasteful, almost obscene'.

This moral enthusiasm could well have been balanced by a comment on Redgrave's known political connections.

The Workers' Revolutionary Party, of which she is a leading member, has for some time been the totally uncritical mouthpiece of Colonel Gaddafi's 'Libyan Arab Socialist Republic' (that is military junta). Redgrave has been his honoured guest at Libyan official celebrations.

And Gaddafi is not a man who distinguishes his

anti-Zionism from anti-Semitism. Last week he addressed his call for a more favourable view of Hitler, whom, he thinks, suffers a bad press only because he lost:

'It is the allies who have turned Nazism into a bad thing and have portrayed it as such.' (*Le Monde*, 11-12 January). As is well known the call for 'historical revision' is also a main plank of today's European Nazis.

Will Redgrave repudiate one of the WRP's main patrons? Unlikely. Instead of Gaddafi's pro-Hitler speech, *Newsline* carried its

usual official handouts, glorifying the annexation of Chad and the democratic reform of the Libyan Foreign Office ('to enlighten humanity at large').

I'm neither Jewish nor Zionist. But I feel little of Erica Flegg's moral exaltation when *Newsline's* advertising revenue (from recruiting adverts for Gaddafi's colonial army) is augmented by Redgrave's royalties from Auschwitz.

ADAM WESTOBY,
London N4.

Turkey Solidarity Campaign

Defend Democratic Rights in Turkey

public rally

Conway Hall, Red Lion Square,
London WC1

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Speakers from the Labour and Trade Union Movement

FREE BRITAIN'S NUCLEAR COLONY

By Dale Gash

SOUTH Africa's sabotage of the latest negotiations on Namibian independence, sponsored by the United Nations, ensured that the talks broke up last week without result.

The racist regime denounced all the parties to the conference, including the UN, the front-line states, and SWAPO, the Namibian liberation movement.

The problem for the West is that it has nothing on which to base its continued defence of South Africa, and no cover for its refusal to implement economic sanctions against Namibia which have been laid down by the UN. In particular, the West is concerned to maintain its supplies of uranium from the country.

Sanctions

After the break-up of the conference, held in Geneva, SWAPO and the front-line states repeated the call for sanctions and pledged themselves to intensify the armed struggle to end South Africa's occupation of Namibia.

From the last century the Namibians have resisted the ruthless exploitation of their labour and land at the hands of colonial occupiers. First the British and then the Germans moved in; after the First World War came the British-created racist monster of South Africa.

For 20 years after the Second World War, the Namibians petitioned the UN for independence.

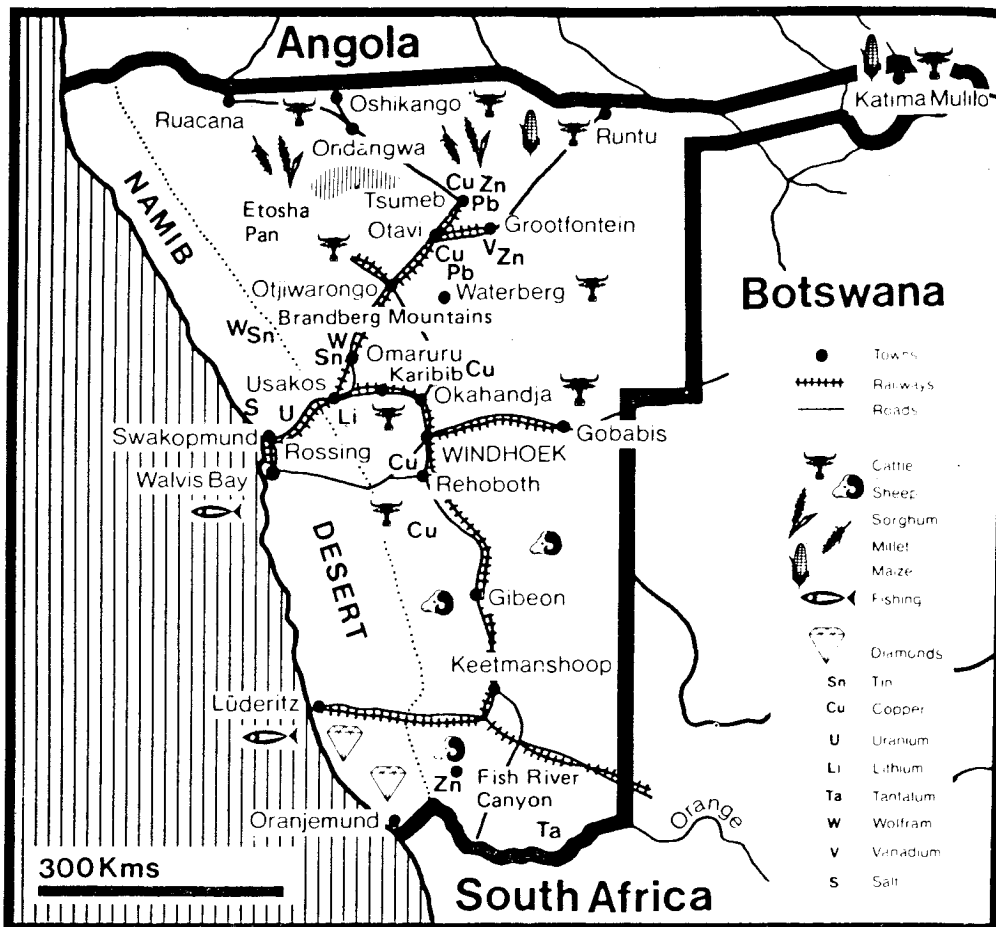
In the mid-'60s SWAPO saw no alternative but to turn to armed resistance to the South African occupation. It was then, in October '66, that the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 2145 which ended South Africa's League of Nations mandate and placed Namibia under direct UN control.

Isolation

In March 1969, the United Nations Security Council declared South African occupation of Namibia illegal and called on South Africa to immediately withdraw its administration from the ter-

Namibia: after the failure of Geneva conference

'Tony Benn, as Minister of Technology, authorised secret contracts between RTZ and British Nuclear Fuels. The decision violated a UN Security Council resolution. Namibian uranium is, quite simply, stolen'.



ritory. It also called for international diplomatic and economic isolation of South Africa wherever it acted on behalf of Namibia.

Since then there have been many attempts at a negotiated settlement between SWAPO and South Africa, courtesy of the UN.

The aim is for free elections leading to independ-

ence, but although the West has been willing to make extensive concessions to the racist regime, the latter has always backed off.

South Africa has used the negotiations as a delaying tactic, giving those imperialist powers which have large economic interests in South Africa and Namibia an excuse to avoid the immediate im-

plementation of comprehensive economic and diplomatic sanctions against the racists.

The pattern of land-ownership in Namibia is only too predictable. Forty-three per cent of the territory, including the best agricultural land and most mineral deposits, is held by less than 12 per cent of the population — the whites.

Namibians are forced to work in the white areas, nearly half under a contract labour system, and live in heavily policed compounds. Women, children and the old people eke out a meagre existence in their 'homelands'.

South Africa is taking no chances: over 75,000 of its troops and 1,500 police are stationed in Namibia. The north is under martial law, with a free-fire zone along the Angolan border.

The South African army makes extensive sweeps through the martial law area, terrorising the population, making mass arrests, torturing detainees and holding them without charges or trial for indefinite periods.

But the racists haven't been able to hold back SWAPO's growing support. Some 60,000 refugees have fled into Angola where their camps have been bombed by the South African Air Force armed with NATO weapons.

Terror

Internally there are a number of white terror groups, private armies, and vigilante groups to defend racist interests against any hint of liberalisation from the puppet government of the South African-backed Democratic Turnhalle Alliance.

Apart from the weapons shipped to South Africa, imperialist backing is shown most vividly by the British, French, West German, US, Dutch, and Japanese contracts for supplies of Namibian uranium.

The Rössing mine, the biggest single investment in Namibia and source of one-sixth of the world's uranium, is half owned and wholly managed by Rio Tinto Zinc. It supplies nearly half of Britain's uranium.

Contracts between RTZ and British Nuclear Fuels were authorised secretly in 1970 by Tony Benn, as Minister of Technology. The decision violated a UN Security Council resolution. Under international law the uranium is quite simply stolen, the profits going to international banks and RTZ shareholders like Lord Carrington.

Meanwhile the contract workers at Rössing live and work under appalling conditions. Organising through the Rössing Mineworkers Union,

a branch of the National Union of Namibian Workers, their struggles for better wages and conditions have been brutally suppressed by RTZ security guards and South African police.

The Campaign Against Namibian Uranium Contracts (CANUC) has been working for a halt to uranium supplies entering Britain, as part of the demand for comprehensive sanctions against South Africa.

Boycott

Since 1973 the Labour Party conference and manifesto have pledged cancellation of the Rössing contract. There is now an increasing possibility of direct trade union action to halt supplies and implement other boycotts against South Africa.

The two major French union federations (CGT and CFDT) attempted to boycott Namibian uranium supplies en route to Britain, but at the last minute officials changed the route that had been unearthed by CANUC.

The executive of the seafarers' union NUS and the loco-drivers' union ASLEF have asked their members to refuse to handle this cargo, and the TGWU is considering a boycott.

The uranium is taken to the BNF plant at Springfield near Preston under strict security, and efforts are under way to locate the new route.

Solidarity

At its conference on 25 January CANUC will plan a more intensive campaign in the labour movement to develop solidarity with Namibian workers through a boycott of the uranium and to stop the renewal of the contracts in 1981.

Several organisations, including CND and the student's union NUS are organising a national day of local action on 13 March, directed at Central Electricity Generating Board depots and offices to highlight this campaign.

For details on the conference and publications on Namibia, SWAPO, and CANUC, contact: Namibia Support Committee, 188 North Gower St, London NW1. Tel 01-388 5539.

Fisons fightback

By Ian Parker and Simon Hampton

WORKERS at the Fisons fertilizer plant in Catfledown, Plymouth, have halted the movement of lorries in and out of the factory in a bid to prevent its closure.

The 120 workers were given 90-days' notice of redundancy last week, in spite of evidence of the plant's economic viability. They are particularly angry at having put in long hours before Xmas to stockpile fertiliser.

Redundancies have already boosted Plymouth's unemployment rate to 14.5 per cent. Hopefully the resistance of the Fison's workers will help to turn the tide.

Appeal against gay sacking

By Barry Prothero

GORDON Wiseman was sacked from his job as a lecturer in drama therapy at Salford technical college last February following a conviction for 'gross indecency' with another man aged over 21.

By a majority decision, the dismissal was upheld by an employment tribunal, and the case is now being taken to the Employment Appeals Tribunal, where it is expected to come up next month.

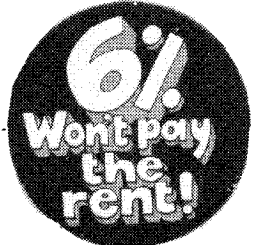
It will have serious consequences for the employment protection of gay women and men.

Gordon was dismissed in spite of the fact that his employers had received no complaints, and that a large number of students, teachers and others who know him through his work sent letters in his support.

Sheila Egan, a former regional secretary of NATFHE, the union of further education teachers, was the dissenting member of the employment tribunal appeal. She said that Gordon's dismissal was tantamount to sacking him for soliciting and promiscuity, but that a heterosexual was most unlikely to be sacked for this reason.

She concluded: 'In treating a homosexual man more harshly because of his homosexuality, the governors had shown themselves to be less than "unprejudiced" and "fair minded", as the law required them to be.'

On Tuesday 27 January, the National Council for Civil Liberties is holding a public meeting on the issues raised by the case, at 7.30pm, Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq, London WC1.



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Escalation not arbitration, say South Wales seafarers

By Celia Pugh in Cardiff

OVER a hundred ships are now out of action as a result of the industrial action being taken by the National Union of Seamen.

The union is demanding a 25.7 per cent wage rise and increased overtime payments. This week, however, the NUS executive decided against escalating the action to a two-day all-out strike.

The union's Cardiff branch was the first to begin industrial action when it refused to allow the Texaco Gloucester to sail before Xmas and held four more ships over the New Year period.

The militancy of the South Wales seafarers was evident at the first mass meeting of the Cardiff branch on Tuesday of last week.

Full-time area official Tommy Hanley told members: 'The government is behind this. They want shipowners to follow others like Michael Edwards and force us onto our knees. But we'll win by sticking together.'

Mobilise

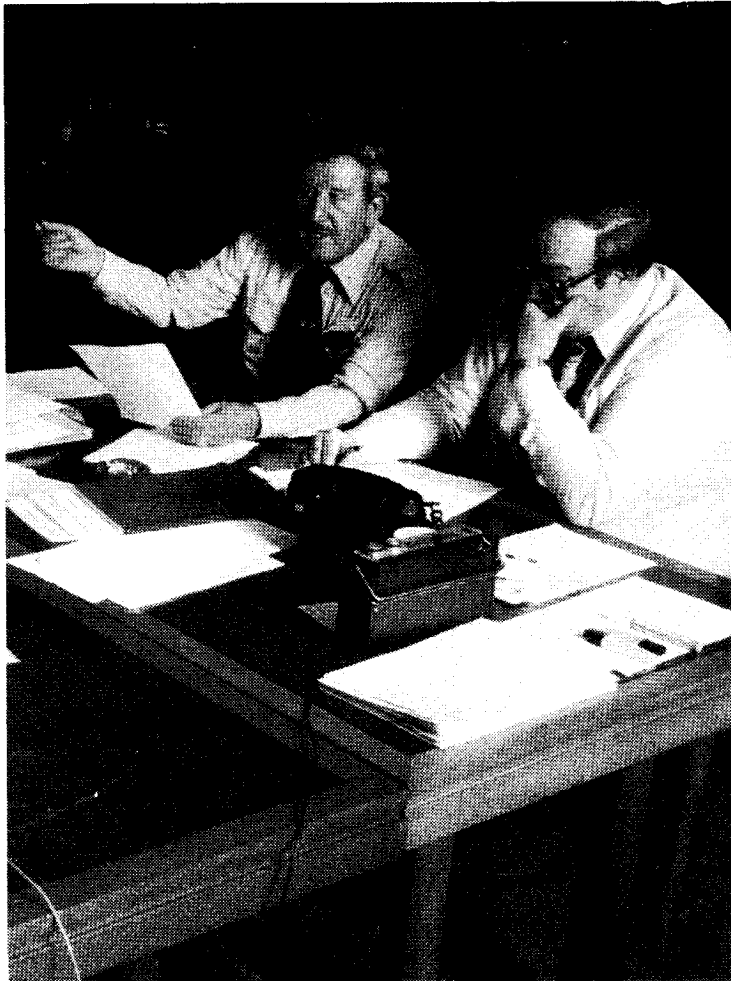
The meeting unanimously adopted a resolution calling on the NUS executive to drop its demand for arbitration and instead mobilise the membership to win the full pay claim. The meeting also pledged itself to a fight for jobs.

Tommy Hanley explained: 'The changes that have taken place over the past 25 years have benefited the owners, not us. The NUS has lost 155,000 members in that time.'

'Bigger and bigger ships have been introduced but with smaller crews. Our membership has been reduced to around 30,000.'

Musa Nogan, substitute NEC member, backed this. He told the meeting: 'Since the war we have seen owners trying to keep up profits in a declining market by making fewer workers produce more.'

'West Germany and Japan have come into competition with Britain and the successes of the national liberation movements have meant a declining piece of the cake for the owners.'



Jim Slater at NUS Executive meeting last week

He added: 'Our union officials fell for the propaganda of politicians and academics by accepting demanning and productivity deals. It is now time to rescind these "General Purpose and Interdepartmental Flexibility Agreements". This will give us a chance to keep jobs, cut our hours and employ our unemployed members.'

A resolution to the NUS executive demanding such action on jobs was passed unanimously. Winding up the meeting, Musa Nogan announced: 'We have the strength and resolve to go forward to victory.'

To demonstrate this point, a disputes committee was elected from the floor of the meeting, which also agreed to involve all members in decision-making through weekly mass meetings and to

provide regular information through a disputes committee bulletin, *The Welsh Seaman*.

Successes already notched up by the disputes committee include solidarity and financial pledges from the Welsh TUC, TGWU, NUR, NUM and local trades councils.

Seafarers' pay in the West

COUNTRY	\$ PER MONTH
Denmark	1139
USA	1022
Norway	968
W Germany	922
Japan	836
Holland	799
Liberia	674
Britain	575
Greece	430
Philippines	200

Anti-nukes demo at airforce base

UNDER the banner of High Wycombe Students for Peace and CND up to 15 young people undertook a 72-hour protest outside the gates of an American Airforce base just before Xmas. The base is to be the site for the back-up

system for Cruise missiles.

One of the demonstrators, Lorraine Edwards, said: 'We were amazed with the local support we got. We were loaned and given tents, heaters, hot water bottles, food and drink. Loads of people stopped to say they were so glad that someone was protesting.' Support also came from black GIs in the base.

The long wait for a Bristol bus

By Chris Nash
TGWU 3/111
(personal capacity)

THE Bristol bus company does things by halves, literally. It has just announced 50 per cent cuts. Management wants to sack 540 bus workers, close four depots, and impose a total ban on overtime.

The Bristol bus service will be devastated when the cuts come into effect in late May.

The busworkers have rejected these proposals. At a mass meeting on Wednesday of last week they instructed an action committee to build a publicity campaign and a demonstration. The meeting also decided not to implement fare rises set for next month.

TGWU regional secretary Ron Nethercott has pledged that there will be no industrial action. But a strike response is the only way to rally busworkers in struggle, and draw in the labour movement to defend the bus service.

Nuclear free zone on Tyneside

By Phil Dexter
West Newcastle CND

THURSDAY night is normally tranquil in Newcastle. This was not the case last week when 2,500 took to the streets behind the banner of Tyneside for Nuclear Disarmament.

The torchlight procession was part of an action week which included the distribution of 3,000 posters, 80,000 leaflets and a march in Sunderland.

At a packed rally after Thursday's demo, the message was: We don't want Cruise, and we do want unilateral disarmament.

Tyne and Wear county council has joined areas such as South Yorks in declaring itself as a nuclear-free zone. We now want the council to refuse to take part in so-called civil defence exercises and close down the bunker in Sunderland.

The weakness of the Newcastle demo was that there were no trade union or Labour Party banners, which is why a labour movement anti-bomb group has been formed.

Printworkers back fight to save newspaper

JOURNALISTS fighting to save the *Camden Journal* from closure had their first taste of victory last week when print union support prevented publication of the *Hornsey Journal* and *Islington Gazette*. The three papers are within the same North London group.

union SOGAT. But the executive of the main craft union NGA has decided to take no supportive action.

The striking journalists continue to receive strong local backing. Five thousand copies of the *Save the Journal* newsheet are being sold each week, with over 200 Camden people involved in distributing it.

A mass picket was held outside the *Camden Journal* offices yesterday, and a local demonstration is planned for 7 February. This will be in opposition to cuts and unemployment, as well as the newspaper closure.

The solidarity came from the London Central committee of the distribu-

Steel union leaders back MacGregor's plan

'THE ballot of fear' was how the union leaders christened the British Steel Corporation's ballot on a package of 22,000 redundancies and a month-long pay freeze.

Steelworkers had received three letters from BSC boss Ian MacGregor, which said that there would be total plant closure and liquidation unless they accepted the plan. This blackmail was also illustrated by a video film and glossy leaflets.

National leaders of the craft unions and the National Union of Blastfurnacemen caved in from the start, informing their members that acceptance of rationalisation now could save jobs in the future. Although the main steel union ISTC called for a rejection of the plan, it failed to specify any national fightback.

Not surprising, MacGregor has secured a Yes vote from BSC workers but without the resounding backing that he has claimed.

Almost half the employees voted against the plan or abstained. Of the 63,237 voting for the plan, many were in non-BSC subsidiaries in plastics and engineering.

ISTC's own ballot of its members showed that despite the corporation's threats and the puny national union leadership, a large number of steelworkers are prepared to stand up to MacGregor. A total of 18,392 steelworkers voted against MacGregor. Opposition to closures has been left to local areas, with the national leaders rejecting strike action in favour of negotiating over the details of the plan.

Trades Councils Conference on BUILDING WORKING CLASS POWER

Sponsored by Coventry, Newcastle, Liverpool and North Tyneside Trades Councils and shop stewards committees from Tyneside, Merseyside and West Midlands

Saturday 28 February,
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Lanchester Polytechnic, Coventry
Delegations: from all working class organisations. For information, delegations write to: Coventry Trades Council, 31 Stepney Rd, Coventry CV2 4PX

Socialist Challenge

BACK THE SEAFARERS!

By Tessa Van Gelderen

ALL-OUT strike action by seafarers is needed to unite the various sections of the NUS and win their demands.

Their claim is a very modest one. British seafarers earn £238 a month compared, for example, to the £472 a month earned by their Danish counterparts. The basic weekly wage here is £64 and overtime is worked at the discretion of the ship's captain.

In practice, seafarers are 'prisoners' once on board ship and they work extremely long hours. The NUS says that overtime averages 24 hours a week.

The seafarers' demand for a 16 per cent pay rise plus improved overtime payments is not only for a decent living wage now, but is also a move towards the reduction of overtime.

The long hours worked take their toll. Billy Kerrigan from the Liverpool disputes committee is convinced that the conditions contribute to the high casualty rates of seafarers, which are 5 per cent higher than in the mines.

Reduction of hours will also go some way to providing jobs for the many thousands of seamen and women who are unable to get work.

Technology has affected the shipping industry. Tankers can now do the work of many smaller ships, often with a smaller crew.

Standards

Now is the industry immune from cuts. A pamphlet just published by the four main civil service unions* claim that existing standards of checking on crew levels cannot be maintained and will result in 'an almost total absence of meaningful spot checks on ships'.

At present 70 infringements are uncovered a year, the biggest category being infestation by weevils, beetles, and maggots in cereals or meats. Those responsible for ship safety cannot cope with their existing tasks.

Bitter

Conditions for seafarers often sound like those on the *Potemkin*, the Tsarist ship which mutinied in 1905.

In Liverpool they are prepared for a bitter fight with the employers. Many were involved in the 1966 strike and they know that the employers

will stop at nothing. 'It'll be "Reds under the beds", as in '66,' says Billy Kerrigan. But they are standing firm.

They know the importance of solidarity from other sections of the workforce and are confident that they have the support of the dockers, tugboat, and

lockgate workers. Seafarers' unions in other countries are turning back ships diverted by the employers to foreign ports.

As Billy Kerrigan says: 'We can't win unless the trade union movement gets behind us. They can't afford to let us lose.'

Cardiff NUS branch ups the stakes, page 15.

**Marine Services. Sunk Without Trace' published by CPSA, SCPS, IPCS and CSU.*



Bernadette McAliskey speaking at H Block/ Armagh demonstration — her last before being shot by Loyalist thugs

BERNADETTE FIGHTS ON!

Bernadette McAliskey remained in a 'very serious condition' as Socialist Challenge went to press.

Her condition is now said to be 'stable' and there appears no immediate danger to her life. Michael McAliskey is said to be 'improving'.

The attempted assassination of Bernadette and her husband last Friday is a chilling reminder of the dangers which Irish socialists face every day. To be part of the Irish resistance is to be a target for killers in and out of British uniform.

For the past 12 years Bernadette, more than any other single individual, has been identified with that resistance. She has inspired countless others to take up the struggle for Irish freedom and justice, either in Ireland itself or in the many countries to which she has travelled.

In that respect she has proved one of Britain's greatest enemies in the propaganda war, just as she has been one of Britain's most steadfast and

determined opponents on the streets and barricades of Ireland.

Ever since she was elected as an MP ten years ago, Bernadette has articulated the feelings and interests of the oppressed and exploited Catholic minority in the North of Ireland.

Energetic

Although she lost her parliamentary seat she never retired from politics. She energetically participated in the many campaigns and struggles thrown up in the course of the fight against British imperialism.

In 1979 she stood as a candidate for the European parliament. The campaign was boycotted by the Republican movement, but most actively supported by Peoples Democracy, the Irish revolutionary socialist organisation which sympathises with the Fourth International.

Bernadette received 34,000 votes in the campaign, which helped to build support for the Irish political prisoners.

With the start of the hunger strike by these prisoners, Bernadette emerged as the leader of the National H Block/Ar-

magh Committee and once again inspired thousands to take to the streets against British policy.

Bernadette has been a member of Peoples Democracy, the Irish Republican Socialist Party, and the short-lived Independent Socialist Party. Today she is outside any one organisation but her closest links are with PD.

She has spoken from many Fourth International platforms throughout the world, especially in the United States, Spain, and the Basque country.

During the 1979 general election in Britain she came out publicly in favour of the Socialist Unity candidates.

Recovery

Socialist Challenge joins with many other socialist newspapers, organisations and individuals throughout the world in wishing Bernadette and Michael a full and speedy recovery.

Her inspiration is something the Irish resistance can ill afford to lose.

Background to the shooting, page 6.

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