

Socialist Challenge

No. 193 16 April 1981 25p

Unemployed and strikers 10p



US HANDS OFF EL SALVADOR!

March and Rally Saturday 25 April
Assemble Speakers Corner 12.30pm

Speakers include
Michael Foot and Eric Heffer

All Socialist Challenge supporters in England and Wales should attend

BRIXTON'S OUTSIDE AGITATORS

BUCKETFULS of rubbish have been talked about the Brixton riots by the media and Tory politicians. The biggest lie of all is that the events were caused by 'outside agitators'.

What happened in Brixton was an uprising by a whole community — black and white — against the police; a community which is sick of being treated like garbage by the cops, the bosses and their government.

The Tories have cut back social services and slashed government grants to places like Brixton, and of course, hiked up unemployment.

Government ministers only express their concern at the fate of unemployed youth when they are faced with a community which fights back.

There are six crucial lies which the Tories and the media have used to defend the police.

Lie 1 'It was caused by outside agitators.' Everyone in Brixton knows this is rubbish. The trouble started last Friday after the police already had hundreds of officers in the area.

During the week preceding the explosion, the cops had been carrying out a massive 'stop and search' operation in Brixton called 'Swamp 81'. Over a thousand people were stopped and more than 100 arrested during this period.

It amounted to an attempt to intimidate a whole community, and it

is just part and parcel of their policy of heavy policing of 'troublesome' areas.

The uprising was sparked off when a youth who had been stabbed was interrogated by the police instead of being taken to hospital — that's why black youth rescued him and took him to hospital themselves, thus causing a fight with the cops.

More than 95 per cent of those charged during the weekend have addresses in the Brixton-Lambeth area — obviously 'outside agitators'.

racist, they are only trying to keep law and order.' Nonsense. The police are racist through and through.

They make regular use of the Sus laws to arrest blacks who dare to be on the streets of Brixton. Few whites are arrested under these laws.

Black people are regularly subject to racist abuse from the people.

Lie 4 'The police were the victims of violence, doing a difficult job.' Every police officer with a scratch was counted as an

the small local shops.

Lie 6 'Violence is never justified.' So says Home Secretary William Whitelaw, who's quite happy to see his cops use violence, and to use troops in Northern Ireland to keep 'law and order'.

We say violence is justified when it's used by the poor and oppressed to fight their oppressors. If Whitelaw doesn't want his cops to be the victims of it, then he should get them out of Brixton.

The Tories and the system they run leaves them no option but to use repression to keep the lid on places like Brixton.

They can offer no hope for the youth of the area — their policies only create more unemployment, make more people homeless, close down more social services, there will be more Brixtons, and more police repression.

Lord Justice Scarman's tribunal will produce nothing but more lies. The only way to prevent riots is to offer youth a future — jobs, housing, social services, not the misery of the dole queue.

And that can only be done by getting rid of the Tories and the system they represent. Unemployed youth — black and white — are right to rebel against it. The whole labour movement should defend them against the repression which they will now doubtless face in the courts.

Brixton Defence Committee MASS RALLY

Sunday 19 April, 3pm
Abeng Centre, Gresham Rd,
Brixton

Lie 2 'It was a racial conflict.' Everyone who was on the streets of Brixton knows that no hostility was displayed to whites on the streets — just to the police. Many young whites fought alongside black youth.

But of course the conflict was led by black youth, because they are on the bottom of the pile, the ones who are particularly harassed by the cops. They are the victims of racist attacks, and find it hardest to get a job.

Lie 3 'The police aren't

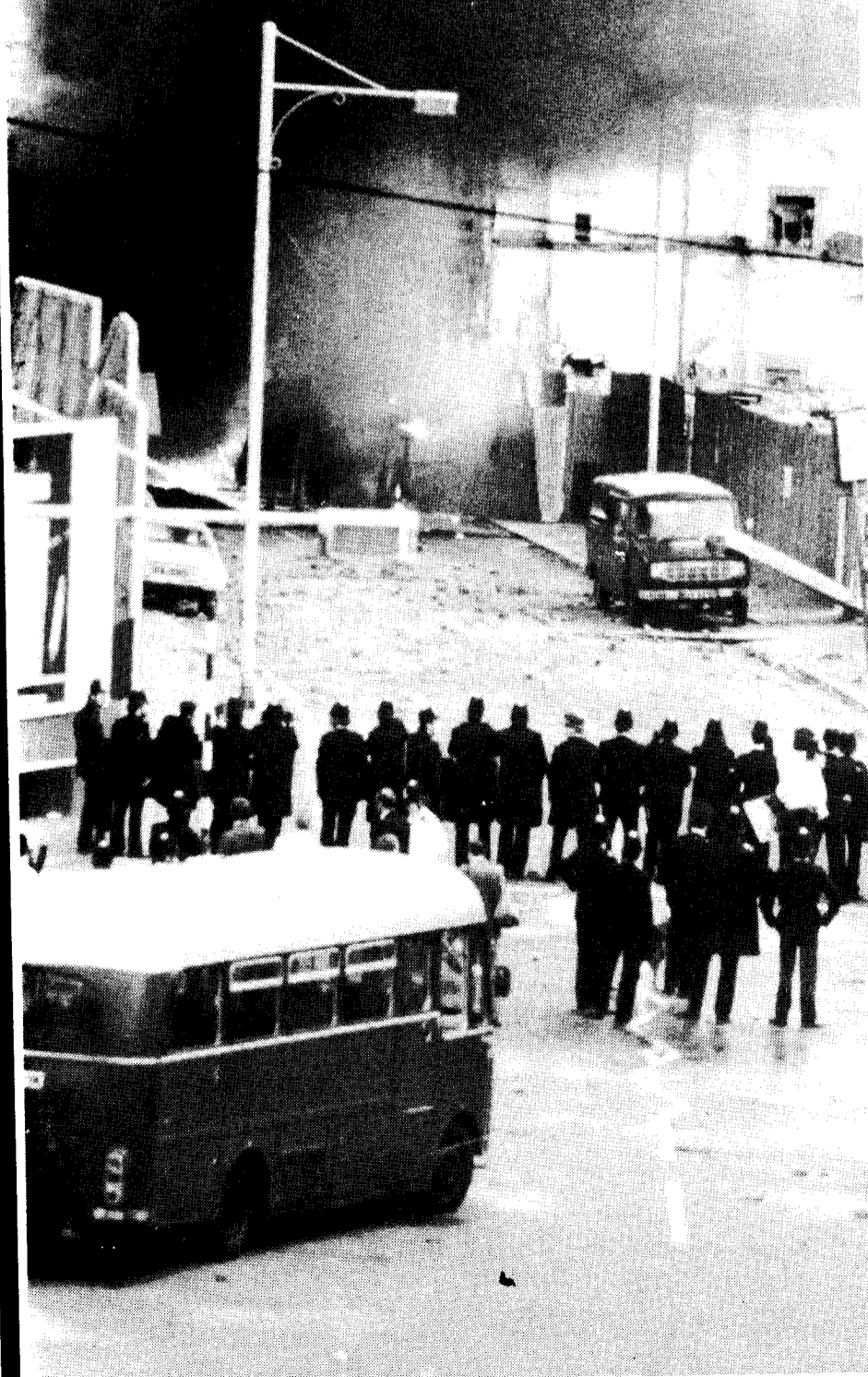
'injury', while many young people went home with bleeding heads without daring to go to a hospital for fear of being arrested.

Roving groups of cops in patrol vans constantly harassed the youth on the streets, goading and abusing them.

Lie 5 'The attacks on buildings were hooliganism.' The biggest targets were two racist pubs, one of which refused to serve blacks.

The shops which were attacked were mainly the big department stores, not

'AN ARMY OF OCCUPATION'



By John East and Hilary Tarr

BY late afternoon on Sunday, Brixton was under para-military occupation. Hundreds of police lined Brixton Road, the main road through the area, while thousands more were in surrounding streets.

Convoys of police vehicles roamed the area, periodically stopping to charge groups of youths standing on street corners. A police helicopter circled overhead.

Transport had stopped, and the area was encircled with a cordon of police. At the police station 150 police vehicles were parked. A hundred dogs and 50 police horses were held at the ready.

Railton Road, known as the Front Line, looked like the aftermath of a bombing raid, with burnt-out cars littered among the gutted buildings. As darkness descended most of the street lights were turned out, as hundreds of police waited in the side streets.

The police surveyed the results of the weekend's conflict. What happened and why?

All day Friday tension

built up in Brixton because of a heavy police presence. At 6.30pm a black youth was stabbed in a fight. Bleeding profusely he was taken to a police van — but instead of driving him to hospital the police interrogated him in the van.

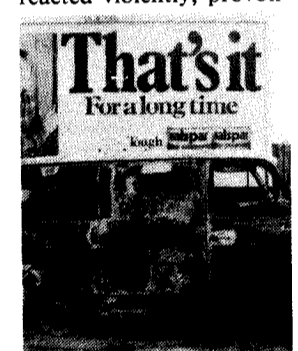
Van

Incensed, black youth attacked the police van, rescued him and drove the injured youth to hospital. The explosion that the heavy police presence had threatened to provoke had begun.

On Saturday the police decided to show that 'We control the streets'. Heavy policing was the order of

the day, as hundreds were drafted in from other areas. Brixton Rd was thick with cops.

At 4pm a mini-cab driver in Railton Rd was stopped; the police insisted on searching his cab for drugs. Black youth reacted violently, provok-



ed by a whole day's harassment by the cops.

The battle was concentrated on the Front Line, Railton Road, heart of the black community. By 5pm riot shields were out and by 6.30pm the first petrol bombs were thrown.

Youth began building barricades along Railton

Rd and Mayall Rd, setting cars alight.

Although under heavy bombardment, the police were determined not to be driven out of the area as they had been in Bristol a year ago. Soon the George pub and the Windsor Castle were on fire.

While the battle raged on Railton Rd, black and white youths began attacking shops in the centre of Brixton — the big shops were attacked, but not the small local shops. A youth running off with a stereo said to us: 'This is the first time I ever got anything free out of Brixton.'

During the height of the fighting, people from the local Community Relations Council got black youths to agree that they would take down the barricades if the police would withdraw — but the cops wouldn't, the fighting continued.

The attitude of the police was typified by an incident which took place outside Brixton library. A police van screeched to a halt by a group of black

— Unauthorised weapons and attacks on the press

SPECIAL Patrol Group cops in plain clothes participated in police charges over the weekend using some of their infamous 'unauthorised weapons', which included pick axe handles and rubber coshes.

This was reported by John Clare, the BBC's community affairs correspondent. It puts an interesting light on the death of Blair Peach during the Southall operations by the SPG two years ago.

Blair was killed as the result of a massive head injury 'which couldn't have been the result of a police truncheon'.

Several press photographers were attacked by police in Brixton over the weekend and cameras smashed. Among them was Larry Herman. He told Socialist Challenge:

'I was photographing an arrest in Brixton Road at 3.30pm on Sunday. The police told me to clear off. I told them that I was press and doing my job. As I was holding up my camera I was hit in the face with a truncheon.

'My index finger on my right hand was fractured and I ended up with a black eye.'

Photo: FLOSSIE FLASHER

Brixton

NOT MANY people in Brixton can have been surprised by the weekend's events, Brixton has been in the frontline of saturation policing for at least 2½ years.

The Special Patrol Group first came into the area in 1978 for a month's stint, the excuse for their arrival being Brixton's 'high crime rate'.

The role of the SPG, operating from a garage at the back of Brixton police station, entailed constant patrols of the area by the SPG's blue carriers. Road blocks were set up more or less at random. The 'stop and search' policy was carried out extensively.

The random searches indicated that the objective of the SPG presence was simply to intimidate the local community. As a result of the SPG's activity the local council, Lambeth, decided in March 1979 to set up an inquiry to investigate local policing.

The presence of the SPG was just one aspect of policing in Brixton. For a long period the 'Sus' laws — the 1824 vagrancy Act — has been used to harass local youth,

especially black youth. According to this law it is an offence to be 'a suspected person loitering with intent to commit an arrestable offence'.

In other words it's an offence to be black and on the streets.

Sus

Home Office figures show that between 1976 and 1979 there were more people arrested under Sus laws in 'L' district (the Lambeth area) than any other area except the West End of London.

A recent survey made at Balham Juvenile Court the main juvenile court for South-West London showed that 89 young blacks appeared on Sus charges, as against 1 whites.

The racism of the

FEAR



youth. When the police jumped out one of them slowly and deliberately stubbed out his cigarette in the face of a young black.

Abuse

On Sunday at least 4,000 cops were in the area. Tension built up all day until William White-law and David McNee visited the area. They were met with angry abuse from the community — 'Sieg Heil' they shouted as the home secretary and the commissioner of the Met were whisked into the police station by a side entrance.

After the departure of the top cops fighting flared again. Unlike the night before, the police had a plan. They tried to force people out of the centre of Brixton with heavy tactics and a cordon.

But in the side streets they were adopting a 'softly, softly' approach, talking to black youth and urging them to go home.



All photos: G. M. COOKSON (Socialist Challenge)

'in the front line



Letting McNee, the Met commissioner, know all about it

police was apparent once again in January 1979 when a policeman was stabbed in Peckham, South London, by a black man wearing a sheepskin coat. The police went around arresting and harassing blacks, especially anyone wearing a sheepskin coat.

The police raided the offices of the Council for Community Relations in Lambeth, roughing up and holding in the cells their workers, including CCRL secretary Herman Ousley. After this both the CCRL and the whole community broke off relations with the police, including with the Police-Community Liaison Committee which had been set up after the SPG's first tour of duty in 1978.

Six

The SPG were back in Brixton for another stay last summer. Apart from their usual 'duties', they went into action against the pickets in the Brixton

dole office dispute, enforcing for the first time the provisions of Prior's Employment Act, limiting the number of pickets to six.

During this stay by the SPG, Lambeth Trades Council organised a rally outside Brixton police station addressed by council leader Ted Knight.

A few months later, the local police commander, Leonard Adams, was replaced. Local people think that Brixton's policing is now run directly from Scotland Yard.

Precept

Last year Lewisham council, worried by police tactics, threatened not to pay the precept — the part of local rates which goes to finance the police. Lambeth council's commission of inquiry reported this January.

With studied understatement its report commented: 'It's quite clear that the present way the police operate is not with

the permission or under the jurisdiction of the local community' and that 'the community may not survive this kind of policing'.

Predictably the police had refused to co-operate with the inquiry.

Inquiry

Brenda Kirsch was the Lambeth Trades Council representative on the council of inquiry. She told Socialist Challenge:

'Black people see the police as an army of occupation and their purpose is to keep the black community in its place. Not only have there been arbitrary arrests, but the police contempt for the community is shown by violent public arrests, of which this weekend is a classic example.

'I've never been to Derry or Belfast, but after seeing Railton Road today, I can imagine what it's like. Now they're going to present Brixton as an unpoliceable area to justify using more paramilitary tactics.'

Racist murder in Swindon

A BLACK youth was knifed and thrown through a shop window in Swindon last Friday night. Markland Chambers aged 17 died later from his injuries.

The attack took place after a disco when 30 white youth chanted Nazi slogans. Michael Hobb has been charged with murder.

On Saturday, about 80 predominantly black youth marched through the town centre. They leafleted Swindon football ground with Anti-Nazi League material.

The youth then picketed the police station. They were angry that on the night of the murder the police had tried to round up black people, not the whites who had caused the trouble.

'Stand up and be counted' says rail militant

GEOFF HENSBY, secretary of Paddington No 1 branch of the National Union of Railwaymen, was one of the speakers at a meeting held on 8 April to defend the railways and build the triple alliance between rail, mine and steel workers.

This is what he said about Benn's decision to stand against Healey:

We'll be backing any move to get NUR endorsement for Benn's bid as deputy leader. The reaction has been hysterical. After all he's only standing on the basis of implementing Labour Party policy.

Our support won't be uncritical. We'll be demanding that he aids us in building a fighting alternative, supporting, for ex-

ample, our efforts to root the triple alliance in the ranks of railworkers.

The Tories and the Labour right fear that Benn might touch off a big rebellion by the working class, as happened with the miners. Unfortunately this response has not been countered by the Tribunites. They've joined in the chorus.

We'll have an uphill battle against the top NUR officials. If Sid Weighell were to spend as much time and effort attacking the Tories and the wages board as he spends spitting in the eye of the left and Tony Benn, we'd be well on the way to removing Thatcher's crowd.

But Weighell seems to want to whip up a new witch-hunt in the Labour Party. There are resolutions for the union's annual conference supporting Weighell's position, and it's vital that these are defeated.

We would very much welcome a statement from the 13 members of the union executive who recently publicly criticised Weighell for attacking Benn. In the present climate everyone should stand up and be counted.

R&F Mobilising Committee secretary says:

'Resolutions for Benn should be pouring in for the union conferences'

By Geoffrey Sheridan and Paul Smith

'THOSE Labour Party and trade union leaders who have opposed Tony Benn standing as deputy leader are promoting a particular kind of unity,' says John Lansman, secretary of the Rank and File Mobilising Committee, which has welcomed Benn's decision to contest the election. 'They want unity on their terms, which is not acceptable,' he explains.



R&F Mobilising Committee secretary Jon Lansman

tion campaign is an answer to a fundamental problem within the Labour Party.

'The democracy issue was in a sense a neutral one', he believes, 'and the Labour left could go along with that.'

Soft

'But the trouble with the right wing of the Tribune Group — the soft left — is that it is not prepared to support the kind of rank and file activity that the left is engaged in; the kind of activity which resulted in the Blackpool and Wembley victories.'

'Tribunites like Eric Heffer and Robin Cook



Denis Healey, friend of NATO, the IMF, and the bankers

have in effect gone over to the other side in the new division within the Tribune Group.'

What the Mobilising Committee wants

THE Rank and File Mobilising Committee for Labour Democracy, which unites all those campaigning for democracy in the Labour Party, has issued the following statement on the Tony Benn election issue:

The Rank & File Mobilising Committee welcomes Tony Benn's decision to contest the election for the deputy-leadership of the Labour Party.

The election will provide an opportunity for party members and affiliated trade unions to reaffirm support for the policies to which the party is committed. It will also help to confirm the validity of the electoral college agreed at Wembley in January.

We are disturbed by reports that the outcome of the election has already been determined, because a number of senior trade union leaders have promised the parliamentary leadership that the votes of their unions will be cast in favour of the

status quo.

We believe that behind-the-scenes deals of this kind can only bring discredit upon the labour movement.

We call for a free election. We call on all trade union members to ensure that they are consulted as to how the votes of their unions are cast. We call for an open and honest discussion at constituency level between local parties and their MPs on this issue.

We call on all supporters of democratic reform of the Labour Party to play a full part in utilising and defending the Wembley decision, and to make sure that this election is conducted in a manner which reflects credit on the labour movement.

To this end we shall be conducting a vigorous campaign.

The Mobilising Committee consists of: Campaign for Labour Party Democracy; Clause 4; Institute for Workers' Control; Labour Action for Peace; Labour Coordinating Committee; Labour Party Young Socialists; Militant; National Organisation of Labour Students; Socialist Campaign for a Labour Victory.

Lansman's view is that the Tribunites right is not primarily worried about its relationship with the trade union leadership, but with parliamentary democracy. Defence of parliamentary privileges is rampant in the Tribune Group, he argues.

'Benn's power base is among the rank and file. Everyone knows that.'

He adds that if Benn is successful it will be because of rank and file pressure, and that same pressure could undermine the trade union bureaucracy, which is why the union leaders are so upset about the election challenge.

How to back that challenge? Jon Lansman wants to see resolutions pouring in for the union conferences.

He envisages various demands being raised in the unions — for executives to support Benn, for the election candidates to address union conferences before delegates are mandated; and in some

cases for the membership to be consulted over which candidate to back.

'One problem is that the union bureaucracy has the excuse that it hasn't developed any structure for consultation. But this election campaign will force the unions to develop such structures.'

'If unions vote against the wishes of the rank and file the pressure will mount against that happening again. Next year the excuse won't wash.'

Lansman is confident that whether Benn wins or loses the election, the campaign will have positive effects.

'The main reason for the Mobilising Committee welcoming Benn standing is to defend the Wembley decision. Once the electoral college machinery is put into operation a lot of the pressure to overturn the 40-30-30 voting pattern will disappear.'

Appeal

On Benn's five-point programme he is not keen. He does not consider, for example, that withdrawal from the EEC should be a central issue. He thinks it's unfortunate that Benn was persuaded to leave out the demand for an extension of public ownership.

While the Mobilising Committee is united in its support for Benn, Lansman says that it is not the kind of organisation which can commit itself to a party programme. He supports the appeal that Socialist Challenge is circulating to gain backing for Benn.

SOCIALIST CHALLENGE APPEAL

We give full support to the candidacy of Tony Benn for deputy leader of the Labour Party.

We believe that the campaign offers the best opportunity to discuss and organise to win policies which the labour movement needs in the face of the Tory attacks.

We call for every branch, committee, and conference of the trade unions and Labour Party to discuss the election for deputy leader of the Labour Party.

Ovation

There was a sustained ovation at the Greater London Regional Labour Party conference when Tony Banks made this point in his summing up on behalf of the regional Labour Party executive.

Banks, a candidate in the GLC elections, directed his remarks at Michael Foot, who was present on the platform. Why, he asked the party leader, 'did you invite members to overthrow the Wembley decision within minutes of it being made? That's breaking unity.'

Delegates at the conference evidently agreed.

Jon Lansman considers that the Benn elec-

THERE is only a fortnight to go for the launch of the Socialist Challenge National Sales Week on 30 April-6 May.

Supporters should by now have decided where they will be carrying out their estate sales. Next week's papers will carry a full list of sales activities nationwide.

We want to reach as many new readers as possible during the sales week. With the local council elections in full swing, as well as May Day celebrations, you won't be short of opportunities.

Take the case of one

new Socialist Challenge reader, Mike Taylor, who is 26 and unemployed. He is going on the 'Peoples March on Jobs', sponsored by the Middlesbrough branch of NUPE.

Mike was on the

special train organised last week by the Northern Region of the TUC to lobby Parliament over unemployment. This is what he said about the newspaper:

'I like the reduced price of 10p for the

unemployed! As a fairly new member of the Labour Party, I find Socialist Challenge's coverage of debates in the Labour Party very useful.

'I honestly think it gives better coverage of the issues than the

Labour Party's own papers!

'Like Socialist Challenge, I support the mandatory re-selection and accountability of MPs. In my own constituency of Teeside Thornaby, we have just

started the re-selection procedure to replace our friendly neighbourhood Social Democrat, Ian Wrigglesworth.

'The paper is absolutely correct to put forward the slogan Jobs not Bombs. I'm going on the 25 April march through Stockton-on-Tees on that theme. It's the constituency of Bill Rodgers - very appropriate!

How socialists should view Benn's campaign

TWO questions have been raised by Tony Benn's campaign. Does the campaign break the unity of the Labour Party, and is his programme adequate to meet the needs of the labour movement?

Those like Michael Foot who are most vociferous in their attack on Benn for standing for election under the Labour Party's new rules declared war on those rules from the platform of the Wembley conference as soon as they were passed.

Foot wants Benn to stop 'rocking the boat' while he cobbles up a deal with the right wing in Labour's solidarity campaign on the right wing's terms.

But the issue of unity is broader than simply the future of the the Foot leadership.

A united workers' movement has to be built in the face of the Tories' attacks and the manoeuvres of the Social Democrats.

Fight

The workers' movement has already passed judgement on the policies of the Callaghan and Healey government.

The former prime minister and chancellor bear the main responsibility for the draining away of working class support for Labour at the 1979 election. More of the same will encourage no one to fight for the party.

Thousands of workers are now moving behind Benn. To them he represents a radical alternative to the Tories.

In fact Benn's policies do not challenge capitalism. But his victory in the Labour Party and the massive defeat for the right that it would represent would immeasurably strengthen the workers in their struggles against Tory attacks and open the way to a fight for real socialist policies in the labour movement.

Rally

A Labour Party which seemed a real alternative to the Tories would rally workers by the million. Benn's campaign is a vital step in rebuilding the unity of the labour movement and guaranteeing electoral

By Paul Smith

success for Labour.

When the Labour Party has appeared to have a radical programme, as in 1945, it greatly expanded its support among working class voters.

Alternative

Today Labour faces the challenge of the Social Democrats. Foot and Healey want to deal with this threat by building Labour's right wing so that they, not the Social Democrats, have the confidence of big business. Meanwhile millions of workers are looking for a radical alternative.

It is Foot and Healey who threaten to break the unity and enthusiasm of the labour movement, and with that they will destroy the fortunes of the Labour Party at the polls.

A Benn victory, by rallying the left, would give a huge boost to Labour among millions of workers.

Is Tony Benn's programme adequate to meet the needs of the labour movement?



His five-point programme is based on a selection of policies passed at Labour Party conferences. But they are not in the slightest way sufficient to deal with the problems facing working class people confronted with the dole and the war stampede.

For the most part, Benn's policies rest on the Alternative Economic Strategy, although certain aspects of the strategy are left out of his platform, such as the extension of nationalisation.

The AES, which includes import controls, planning agreements in industry, and further public ownership, rests on one pillar - the co-operation of big business.

In the imaginary world of this strategy, other countries will accept huge

cuts in their exports to Britain without responding in kind.

The City of London will give up its business secrets. The 'captains' of industry will sit down with the government to work out details of their own take-over. Unemployment and deflation are to be solved by government spending and inflation!

Benn's programme does not deal with how a government based on the AES would protect workers against the ravages of rising prices and shortages. In fact both deflation and inflation are symptoms of the same sick system.

Neither meets the needs of the workers. Neither holds off the war drive or the increasing attacks on working class living standards.

Strategy

And how will NATO react to Benn's defence policy which is 'based on a rejection of nuclear weapons'? The Western alliance is built on a nuclear strategy. Britain's effective withdrawal from NATO would be an enormous reversal for Western political and military strategy. Would the generals just stand by?

Tony Benn's programme is weak because it is not based on the need to



Tony Benn on the move. We need a programme rooted in the organised strength and power of the workers' movement

mobilise and organise in the workers' movement to fight and defeat the interests of the multi-nationals, the City, and those in the police and the army who would plot to defend these businesses and institutions.

We need a programme rooted in the organised strength and power of the workers' movement.

But despite these criticisms of Benn's platform we must wholeheartedly support his candidacy.

It is increasingly obvious that by challenging Healey, Benn provides a focus for all those fighting against the dead hand of the national trade union and Labour Party leaderships. And the movement behind Benn is building day by day.

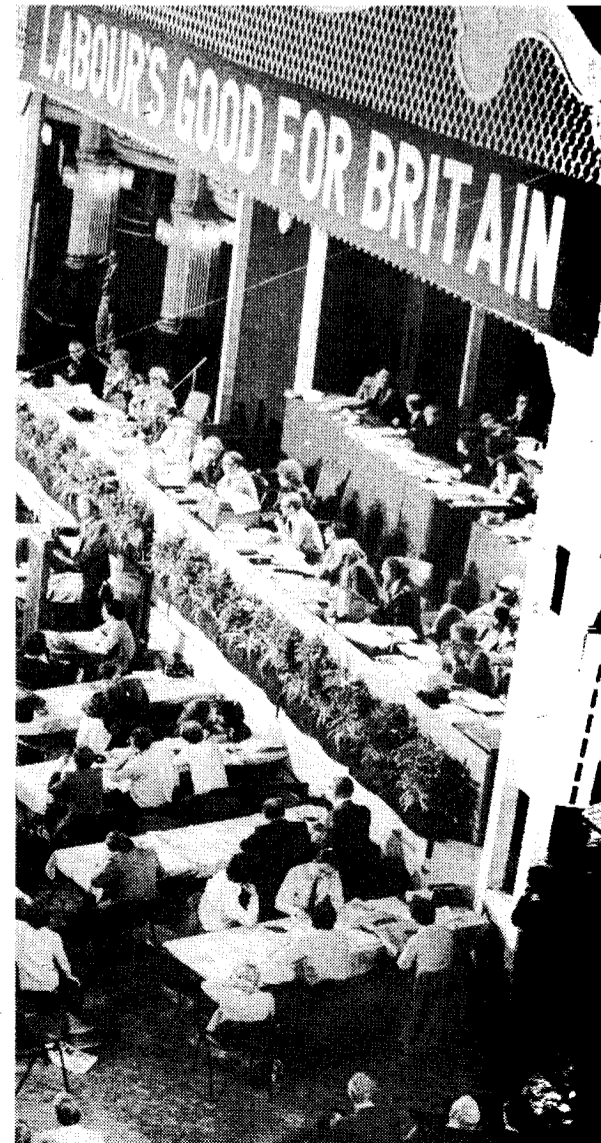
The Scottish NUM, the Labour Party Young Socialists and a projected

500 CLPs are in the Benn camp.

This is not, as Eric Heffer among others tries to claim, an issue of the personality of one Tony Benn. It is because his campaign takes on the trade union bureaucrats,

and enormously aids all those in the workers' movement who are forced to do likewise.

It throws down a challenge to the present leadership of the workers' movement that is desperately required.



Support for Benn mounts in Manchester

SUPPORTERS of Tony Benn for the Labour Party deputy leadership have been on the move in Greater Manchester.

They have circulated a labour movement declaration welcoming his decision to stand.

As soon as the declaration gains a broadly representative number of signatures it will be distributed to all

local labour movement organisations, and a call will be issued to pass resolutions backing Benn's candidacy.

A press conference with local labour movement figures and a rally are also planned. The first signatories include;

M Meacher, MP Oldham West; J Lamond, MP Oldham East; W Daly, chair, Manchester CSEU; D Daniels, secretary, N Manchester

District AUEW; S Cole, president N Mcr District AUEW, H Price, deputy convener AUEW, Massey Ferguson, Trafford Park.

S Taylor, senior steward AUEW Massey Ferguson, Trafford Park; J Taylor, ABS convener, Adamsons Containers, Stockport; J West, ABS secretary, Stockport; T Macafee, AUEW convener, Dan Air Engineering, Mcr Airport.

S Brazil, AUEW convener, GEC, Oppenshaw; S Fletcher, AUEW convener, National Supply, Stockport; T Yates, AUEW convener, Seddon Atkinson, Oldham; H Robinson, AUEW convener, Platt Saco Lowell, Oldham; G Whyatt, AUEW dist cttee, Oldham.

A Hutton, AUEW dist cttee, Ashton-u-Lyne; K Masters,

AUEW convener, Fairey Engineering, Stockport; P Kidd, M Downs, and E Hulsa - AUEW stewards, Mirlees Blackstone, Stockport; J Bonney, AUEW dist cttee, Stockport; P Davies, FTAT general executive council and convener, Schreiber, Trafford Park;

M Moores, branch secretary, CPSA N Mcr MSC; V Lacey, Gtr Mcr regional secretary, CPSA DofE; F Sullivan, national asst secretary, CPSA Employment Services Dvsn, Freemore; P Davies, GMWU steward, Weatherseal Windows, Oldham; R Trueblood, vice-chair, Prestwich CLP; R Mitchell, secretary, ASTMS, ICL, Mcr Co-ordinating cttee.

Government reels from Civil Servants action

THE government is trying to provoke the civil service workers who are taking industrial action for a 15 per cent wage rise.

On Monday the Navy was used to re-arm the Polaris submarine, HMS Resolution. Margaret Thatcher wants to ensure that the country is 'properly defended'.

The civil servants gave their answer on Tuesday, when half a million went on strike for the afternoon.

Des Tierney talked to STEWART MacLENNAN, secretary of the West of Scotland DHSS branch of the CPSA and a member of the West of Scotland Council of Civil Service Unions.

The nine unions involved are using selective strikes involving between 3 and 4 thousand people. The strikes are mainly concentrated on areas supplying vital government revenue and defence installations.

The action in the Inland Revenue probably has had the biggest impact. A thousand million pounds have been lost in taxes already. This is revenue that is delayed and will take them a long time to recover.

The Inland Revenue Staff Federation (IRSF) has traditionally been small, right wing and not involved in major industrial action. Now with the majority of senior management on strike, including 8 out of 14 regional controllers, and 30 out of 49 senior collectors, all this is going to have a profound effect on the IRSF.

The strike is having major effects on Britain's NATO commitments.

Signals

During the 1979 strike by civil servants the stop-

page at General Command headquarters at Cheltenham meant that coded signals about the revolution in Grenada were very late getting through.

Delay

As a result of the 48-hour delay, the Callaghan government was unable to fulfill its pledge to the Eric Gairy government to send British troops to put down any revolt. The current crisis at Dlydeside Marine is another example — it is having major effects on the Polaris commitment.

The government obviously underestimated the mood of civil servants. Their tactics of mass suspensions, mass lockouts and so forth have been completely counter-productive.

The mood is the most militant and determined that it's ever been. During the 9 March stoppage we had 90 per cent of civil servants taking action.

The right wing must be very unhappy. You can

LIVERPOOL TO LONDON 1-31 MAY
ON THE MARCH AGAINST THE

TORIES

also tell the mood from the financial levies — over £1m has been collected — we've collected more than has had to be paid out in strike money.'

I think that most of the more militant civil servants see the strike as a conflict with the government: indeed many see it as a direct conflict with Thatcher, since it's known that she is personally directing tactics against us.

As far as escalation of the strike is concerned,

I'm not personally a supporter of selective action. I don't think it's particularly effective in such a profound conflict as this.

But selective action has been upheld at the union conferences. So the left hasn't won that argument yet.

The way we in the West of Scotland are coping with the question of escalation is first of all by democratising the dispute.

We are running a strike bulletin and in the next

No way forward from TUC

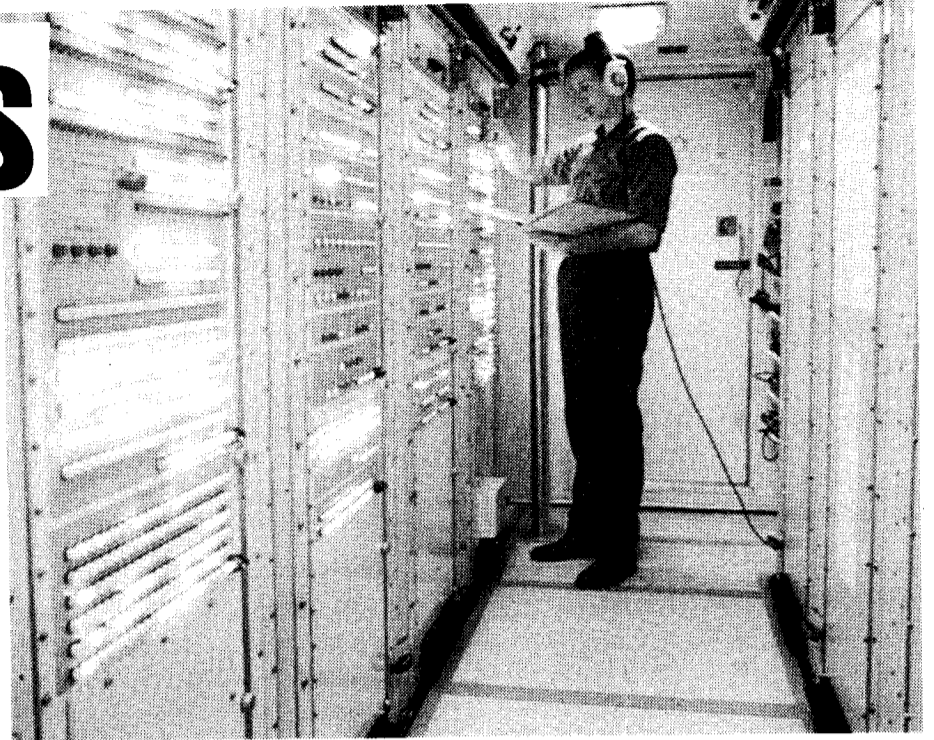
Bradford march — no lead from TUC leaders

By Patrick Sikorski

TEN thousand miners, textile workers, local government workers, teachers, building workers and engineers poured into Bradford last Saturday for the demonstration 'culminating' in the TUC's week of action on unemployment.

But they hardly got any lead from such well-known class struggle fighters as Alec Smith, general secretary of the Tailor and Garment Workers, and John Brown, general secretary of the Tailor and Garment Workers, and John ween them have presided over 110,000 jobs lost in the industry in the last year alone.

TUC general secretary Len Murray talked with more hope than conviction of 'the sands of time running out for the Tories' and the 'gremlins and goblins of uncertainty nibbling away at the resolve



The Royal Navy have scabbed on the civil servants by rearming Polaris (above). Civil servants in Liverpool (below) picketed Thatcher who was visiting a factory involved in weapons manufacture.



Photo: NEWSLINE

week we'll be calling mass meetings of workplace representatives.

We're also linking up with other struggles — in particular Lee Jeans in Greenock where many of the Ministry of Defence workers come from.

There are units at Holy Loch, including the Clyde submarine base which are vital for the

maintenance of the nuclear warheads and the Tiger Fish torpedo.

The selective strikes there are putting these at risk — vital components have been turned away.

We think that the threat that naval personnel would take over the jobs was made directly by the cabinet, but it looks as if they will be extremely

cautious about doing it.

First, it would lead to a total stoppage which would be completely counter-productive and secondly the Navy just doesn't have the skilled personnel to refit the submarines properly. The strike is taking a heavy toll on Britain's nuclear capacity!



Photo: Morning Star

Scottish strike — another STUC flop

By Des Tierney

THE Scottish TUC's contribution to the week of action — a two-hour stoppage on Wednesday 8 April — was a flop. The blame can be squarely laid at the door of the STUC itself and other Scottish union leaders.

Forced on them by the growing anger of Scottish working people, the stoppage was never organised or fought for by the trade union leaders. In many trade unions, members were given no direction by their leaderships and it was obvious that the short period (three weeks) which shop stewards were given to build the stoppage was insufficient.

What could have been a Scottish-wide general strike for two hours, was only partially supported, and then mainly by the

white collar workers. When first announced the Scotsman called the proposed stoppage a 'Polish style strike'. Perhaps there is some comparison which can be drawn between the growing anger and frustration of Scottish workers and their Polish counterparts.

But there's no comparison between the courageous leadership shown by Solidarity in Poland and the timidity and cowardice of the STUC.

National march and rally against unemployment

Sunday 31 May

Assemble noon at Speakers Corner, Hyde Park for march to Trafalgar Square

Sponsors include West Midlands, SE and NW regional TUCs. Irish TUC (Belfast), Manchester City Labour Party, NW Regional Council of the Labour Party, NUM, TGWU, GMWU, FBU, Engineering section of AUEW, Tobacco Workers, Sheetmetal Workers, USDAW, SLADE, Tailor & Garment Workers, NUPE and the civil service union SCPS.

Trains and coaches are being laid on country-wide.

Fight for Jobs

NUT leaders' curious idea of 'internal matters'

By John East, Lambeth delegate to NUT conference

THE right-wing executive of the National Union of Teachers will be calling on delegates to the union's annual conference this weekend to support a vote of confidence in the executive for

upholding union rules.

The motion is an attack on members who wish to build united action by trade unionists against the Tory cuts, such as the six officers of the Lambeth Teachers Association.

Last week the NUT's appeals' committee, consisting of the executive minus the national officers, rejected an appeal from the six.

The NUT executive has taken a whole page of the union's weekly paper, *The Teacher*, to pursue its vendetta. It criticised attempts to 'involve branches of the Labour Party' in what it describes as 'essentially an internal union matter'.

This is not the view of an increasing number of

MPs, councillors, Labour Party branches, and a growing number of trade unionists and trades councils, including the Greater London Association of Trades Councils.

It is vital that Labour Party members and trade unionists take up the defence of the Lambeth Six and show the NUT leadership that its view of fighting the cuts is a recipe for defeat for everyone including teachers.

Messages of support to: Lambeth Six Defence Campaign, 27 Wheathill Rd, London SE 20. Copies to Fred Jarvis, NUT Gen Sec, Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, London WC1.



Vanessa Wiseman and John Esterton, two of the victimised Lambeth teachers

30 April - mass picket at Lee Jeans

By Des Tierney

THE workers occupying the Lee Jeans factory at Greenock are preparing for one of the most important days of their occupation so far.

Thursday 30 April is the day that the factory officially closes and the workers are made redundancy.

They will then have been occupying for almost three months.

The factory is fully equipped and modern, containing over half a million pounds worth of stock, yet the VF Corporation who own the factory have refused to discuss the demands of the workers.

The women in occupation want the work shared among all the factories in Britain.

In two meetings since the occupation the only thing the company has offered was an increase in the redundancy payment of half a week's wages.

Police

The workers at Lee's are already sure of their response on 30 April.

No amount of legal threats or police action will affect their decision to occupy.

'We don't intend to quit' says Bridie Bellingham, a Lees shop steward, echoing the feelings of all the workers.

'They would have to move us bodily.'

To back up these sen-



iments the Lee's workers intend to show the management how they'll defend their occupation.

On 30 April they'll be having a mass demonstration of shop stewards with their union banners to show how solidly workers throughout Britain support them.

Already support has been promised from Glasgow Trades Council and the shipyard workers at Govan and Yarrow.

Speaking at a rally in support of the TUC's week of action, Mr Johnnie Walker, the president of the Glasgow Trades Council promised the full support of the Scottish trade union movement if there was any attempt to move the workers.

While these preparations are being made discussions are also underway about how the



'We don't intend to quit'

workers can intensify their action.

Two lines of action are being considered. There is a possibility of a consumer boycott of Lee's products.

At the moment Lee's have got a £1m advertising campaign aimed at keeping their slice of the British market.

A national campaign,

backed by the trade unions to boycott Lee's products could have a major effect on the company.

The Lee's occupiers

Support Lee Jeans

Women workers occupying the Lee Jeans factory in Greenock, Scotland are organising a tour of Britain to win more support for their struggle. If your trade union, Labour Party, trades council or women's group is meeting, organise a visit from a Lee Jeans worker. Phone Jude (01) 359 8371 to make arrangements.

Visits arranged so far:
Birmingham/Leicester 14-16 April
North-East/Middlesbrough 14 April
South Wales: 2-4 May
London: 2-9 May
Manchester: 4 May

Messages of support and donations to the National Union of Tailors & Garment Workers, 534 Sauchiehall St, Glasgow.

are full of praise for the various ad hoc boycott campaigns which are underway.

The second line of action is the possibility of stopping Lee's products at the ports.

Docks

Lee's is a multinational company with factories throughout Europe.

Four are in Ireland — one in the south and three in the north.

The replacement for the Greenock products must therefore come through the ports and dock shop stewards have indicated their willingness to cooperate in any blacking campaign.

Undoubtedly one of

the reasons for the continuation of the occupation has been the overwhelming support that women have had from workers throughout Britain.

Money and mess of support continue to flood in. Speakers have been requested from over the country.

In the next few weeks this support has to be intensified.

Arrangements for a demonstration to be present on the April picket — through showing that Lee's workers have overwhelming support from the British working class can we make sure that legal measures will be taken against them so that they can go on to secure a complete victory.

Women have the right to work, too

By Judith Arkwright

'WE'RE not rag trade girls. We are women workers fighting for our jobs with the only weapons available to us. Women's jobs are as important as any other, and we aim to prove that women can fight for them.'

The women in occupation at Lee Jeans are showing the whole labour movement how to fight against unemployment.

As women they are demanding that they have as much right to a job as men. 'Some people didn't think we'd occupy', one woman points out, 'but women have the right to work, too.'

It is becoming vital that women raise their demands in the struggle for the right to work. Women's unemployment has increased 207 per cent since 1975, compared to 61 per cent for men.

It is estimated that real unemployment runs at 3.5m and that most of the hidden million are women.

Women have to show that we are sick and tired of being shoved in and out of the labour force at the whim of the capitalist system — trade unionists and politicians must be shown that we have a right to a job.

One way we can do this is by

organising maximum participation from women on the People's March for Jobs from Liverpool to London in May. Our demands have to be raised on every step of the march.

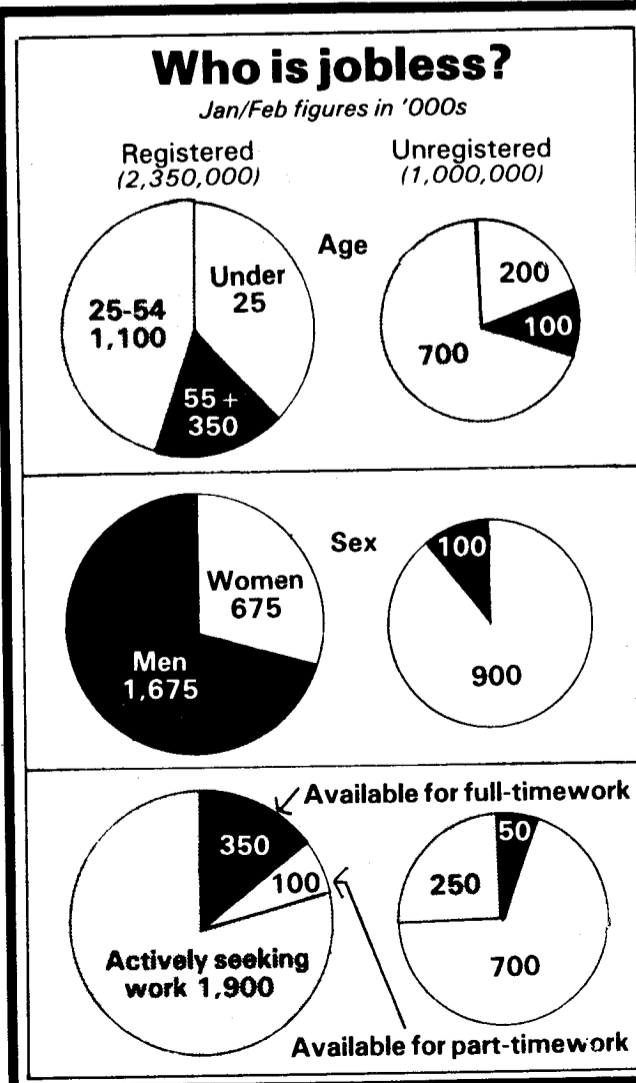
The south east region of the TUC held a meeting last week to discuss this. It is producing stickers, posters and leaflets taking up women's demands; one leg of the march from Letchworth to Luton on bank holiday Monday, 25 May, will focus on a woman's right to work.

The other regions organising the march — north west and west midlands — should do the same. Trade unionists locally have to organise for this.

In the north west, the march should be led by the women from Royal Pride, on strike for over ten weeks for union recognition. They have shown how to fight to defend themselves.

But, in addition to women's demands on the march, our demands have to be raised all along the route — Lee Jeans women should be asked to speak at meetings on the way. The issues of women's rights have to be raised continuously.

SERTUC claim they need more women on the march and we should argue for quotas of women blacks and youth from all trade union delegations.



The festival for women's rights against Tory attacks will have speakers from the People's March for Jobs and Lee Jeans' occupation.

FESTIVAL FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS

AGAINST TORY ATTACKS

MAYA™

BANDS - FILMS - PLAYS - MEETINGS - EXHIBITIONS ETC.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT - FESTIVAL PLANNING GROUP
c/o 374 GRAYS INN RD, LONDON WC1.

Sands' victory 'comparable of the civil rights movement'

THE victory of Bobby Sands has given a tremendous boost to the Catholic population. In Enniskillen the crowd insisted on hearing Bernadette McAliskey, who was seen as the central spokesperson of the campaign. Even the *Irish Times* recognised her role.

In its 11 April issue it said: 'The Sands campaign was generally organised by the former mid-Ulster MP, Mrs Bernadette McAliskey, who must take a large amount of the credit for maximising the vote.'

Bernadette told the people that they had demonstrated their political understanding and their strength.

It's ironic that through this election an area such as Fermanagh in particular should take the lead in the second hunger strike campaign, although it was one of the weakest in the first.

For the first time in many decades real political momentum has been generated in this area and this has set in motion forces throughout the country.

The implications and the impact are indicated by the fact that two major southern politicians were drawn into supporting the Sands' campaign — the Donegal politician Neil Blaney and Sile De Valera, a representative of the De Valera dynasty in the ruling Fianna Fail party.

On the eve of the election De Valera made a

statement indicating support for Sands. The announcement of the victory went out over the radio and TV a few hours before the opening of the convention of Fianna Fail which is being held in an atmosphere of anticipation of a general election.

Ovation

When she arrived on the platform of the convention the delegates gave her a standing ovation. The more nationalist of the two bourgeois parties of the south has obviously been thrown off balance.

The political counter-attack of the Irish bourgeois parties and the British press and politicians has centred around the theme that the Sands' victory represents nothing



Photo: JOANNE O'BRIEN

Bernadette McAliskey, 'the heart and soul of the campaign' for Bobby Sands



THE H-Block STRIKE

THE victory of hunger striker Bobby Sands in the Fermanagh and South Tyrone by-election is a dramatic demonstration of the continued strength of nationalist sentiment among the minority in the Six Counties.

All the accusations that the Republican movement represents only a tiny minority of 'extremists' and 'terrorists' have been shown up as lies.

Nobody in Fermanagh and South Tyrone could have been in the least doubt what the issues in the election were — everyone knows that until he began his hunger strike Sands was the Officer Commanding the Pro-

What sort of balance sheet would you make of the autumn hunger strike campaign?

The H-Block campaign grew up around the single issue of political status for the prisoners, the prisoners' five demands. Following the end of the hunger strike, by January, it was clear that we had not achieved the five demands. Nonetheless, we had achieved a great deal.

The H-Block campaign mobilised the largest number of activists since the beginning of the civil rights movement. We had the opportunity of a second run. We had learnt from twelve years' mistakes. The H-Block campaign was not like the original campaign, a top heavy organisation with unorganised masses.

Every locality that was involved had its own elected local committee. With very few exceptions, the method followed was to call a public meeting in an area. If there were signs that there was enough support, what we did first was hold informative meetings.

The hunger strike itself was very important as a focus for mobilising people. The numbers of people who came out on the streets were much bigger than we had believed

possible in starting out, or in fact those that had been mobilised in 1968-69.

The increase in the political weight of the demonstrations was even greater. When people came out in 1968-69, they had no idea of the serious step they had taken, no idea that they were going to rock this country to its foundations.

Whereas the people who came out this time knew the price that had to be paid and that remained to be paid for standing up to protest against oppression.

The people who came on the streets this time knew of Bloody Sunday, knew of people shot by the British army, they knew about the sort of harassment you face after you stand up and let yourself be counted. And yet they came out in bigger numbers.

This time we got the South moving, and that was of crucial importance. We did not pull out tens of thousands of workers on the 1 December national day of action. We were not in a position to call a general strike.

But we turned what had been an attitude of apathy and hostility into one of sympathy, and we began to organise it, including in the workplaces. We threw the establishment off balance.

At the height of the campaign, the church was afraid to go against us. The police were

visional prisoners' arbitrary demonstrations, the prisoners' and nobody can be political' criminals.

Below we BERNADETTE McAliskey drawing from her prominent role in Sands' campaign with Gerry Foley for publication in the next phase of the campaign.

seriously divided among themselves about how to conduct demonstrations. The British government in Dublin was afraid to oppose the committees politically to maintain a whole pretence of concern, being readily intimidated by the prisoners' relative times.

Even those who at the beginning of the hunger strike demanded that Britain concede, that the prisoners be allowed to die, had turned to support the campaign by the prisoners' reformers by the end of the campaign.

They were saying that they had always and ever been in favour of general reform, and that this situation was implemented in order to change the situation.

The H-Block campaign could give impetus to the development of militancy in the unions, could it? You can make a difference through on this issue then you quickly call against the problem of leadership of the union movement in cases is pro-imperialist.

At a certain point we have to be able to offer an alternative to the imperialist leadership. Moreover, imperialist leaders are not very good defenders of the workers' economic interests, especially

le to the emergence

nt' By Gerry Foley in Enniskillen

a continuation of
ditional polarisa-
Fermanagh/South

however leaves
the picture both the
why Sands could
the agreed na-
candidate and
nationalist people
in such large pro-
when a low poll
forecast.

ct the nationalist
have not always
ed having a
MP as the
of all evils. The
st vote has been
ore than once
even through this
tting in Unionists.
ough the
is nationalist par-
Social Democratic
Party (SDLP)
that it made a
in not standing a

candidate against Sands,
one local SDLP councillor
who said he was hoping
for the lowest possible
Sands' vote told me that
the only one in the area
that he knew who still
argued that the party
should have put up a can-
didate against the hunger
striker was a Catholic
policeman.

Campaigners found
that the nationalist people
responded best to appeals
to use their vote to strike
a blow against British ag-
gression and for the
human national dignity of
the Irish people.

Harassed

In fact, the campaign
had to confront heavy
harassment from the
police, the British army
and the UDR at every step.

As soon as it became
clear that they were losing
the Unionists of all shades
began warning that this
vote meant trouble. They
claimed that the result
showed the Catholic
population supported the
murder of their Protestant
neighbours and issued
condemnation of the more
than 90 per cent of the
Catholics who voted for
Sands.

The truth is that the
Republican spokesper-
sons, who might have been
strongly tempted to claim
that the vote meant
popular support for their
campaign, stressed that
they called only for a vote
against the attempt to
degrade, humiliate and
break the nationalist
prisoners.

The fact that Sands'

victory was quickly
followed by an attack on
the H Block demo in
Belfast on 11 April and the
arrest of 9 of its leaders
points to the dangers fac-
ing the nationalist popula-
tion. What the Unionists'
rumblings about 'threats
to community relations'
really mean is oppressed
Catholics have stood up
and must be beaten down
again.

Crisis

The Sands' victory
means the same as the
emergence of the Civil
Rights movement did in
the late 60s. And in the
same way it can touch off a
violent crisis of the system.



Campaigning for Bobby Sands

Photo: REPUBLICAN NEWS

HUNGER STRIKE AND THE BUGGLE FOR FREEDOM

in Long Kesh. Sands' vic-
s eloquently the justice of
and for political status —
ly believe that a 'non-
could gather 30,000 votes.

ublish an interview with
ALISKEY, who after with-
election, played a promi-
t campaign. The interview,
has been greatly abridged
and centres on the last
vious hunger strike cam-

period of international
capitalist crisis.

The need to offer an alter-
native came up not just in the
trade union movement. It was
posed for Irish society as a
whole. The campaign was
polarising the country.

If anyone ever doubted the
fundamental importance of the
issues of repression, of the
prisoners, they should have
realised it watching the effect
this campaign had on political
and social life in this country.

There wasn't a single
organisation — outside of Sinn
Fein and People's Democracy
— that wasn't rocked to its
foundations over the question
of what attitude to take
towards the prisoners. And it
became clear that those who
were wrong on the question of
imperialism could not fight ef-
fectively either for the interests
of the groups they claimed to
represent.

In the feminist movement,
for example, we had to argue
against feminists who were op-
posed to supporting the
prisoners, and the more they
objected the more anti-feminist
they became.

It was the same in the trade
union movement. Those trade
unionists who tried to argue
against support for the
prisoners found themselves
more and more forced to resort
to reactionary anti-working
class arguments.

For example, Gemma
Hussey, (the spokesperson on
women's issues for Fine Gael,
historically the more pro-
imperialist of the bourgeois
parties) told me that in the
H-Block campaign women
were being used. The most
politically aware women in
Ireland, women who were
fighting, were being used as a
ploy of men.

Those women didn't have
the political intelligence to see
what they were doing. She ac-
tually said that the women in
Armagh prison were only going
on hunger strike to emulate the
men, that they had been
ordered onto it by the men.

Here was a woman who had
been arguing all her life that
women were intelligent human
beings. And then she fell back
on the argument that the reason
Mairead Farrell was on hunger
strike was that she didn't want
to live without Tommy
McKearney.

Tommy McKearney's going
to die and his sweetheart in
Armagh prison, out of dumb
loyalty, is going to lie down
and die with him.

Then you had Mairin De
Buras (a former Official
Republican leader who became
a consistent right-wing pacifist)
who pulled out the argument
that the source of violence is the
male ethic. It has no basis in op-
pression, unemployment, or
slum housing.

Violence is the male ego,
and women should have
nothing to do with it. If men
want to go off and kill them-
selves, we should have nothing
to do with it. Women should
organise themselves against all
violence.

On the other hand, you had
the trade-unionists who did not
want to support the prisoners
turning to class-collaboration-
ist arguments. They said:
You're dividing the workforce,
setting worker against worker
in this factory.

Since we've had to take up
this discussion, the workers are
arguing at their machines. The
level of productivity has fallen.
They would argue that while

jobs were being wiped out in
the North by the recession, we,
the undefined Southern nation,
were doing relatively well, and
the problems of the North were
not our concern.

It's not good for us to be
divided over what was going to
happen in the North, that is not
good for the national interest.
People had come in here and
built a factory and were giving
us jobs. And in the present
recession keeping these jobs re-
quires maintaining a certain
level of productivity.

And you're coming in here
and creating an argument,
you're dividing our workforce
on something that is not wages
and is not conditions, and if
you continue to do that, then at
the end of the day, you will
anger our employer, and if you
anger him he might take our
factory away, and we will have
no jobs.

Then you'd get the other
side of the coin. Look at the
people who support you, you
have Fianna Fail, it's a bour-
geois party. We were supposed
to be class collaborationists
because Fianna Fail people sup-
ported the prisoners.

We got their argument from
the Socialist Workers Move-
ment. We cannot support you
unless you raise a demand that
will make it impossible for
members of Fianna Fail to sup-
port you. The slogan should be
'We support the prisoners and
democratic workers control'.
That way not terrible people
like Fianna Fail will be able to
support it.

**How did the various political
groupings manage to work
together in the campaign?
What did you think about
the tactics followed by the
hunger strikers?**

The hunger strike was
started off by seven men and
three women. I think that they
way they were chosen on the in-
side was very effective and very
political. It showed a great
political ability on the part of

**The hunger strikers
the second time
round (from left to
right) Patsy O'Hara,
Frankie Hughes, Ray
McCreesh and Bobby
Sands.**

the prisoners.

The ones chosen were with-
out doubt the best men. The
prisoners were selected to
represent the various areas, and
there was a great affinity of
people in these areas with their
own prisoner.

This gave the lie to all the
propaganda that the Provos
were a military parasite, that
people were just afraid of
them. The prisoner from this
area was Tommy McKearney.
There were very few people
who didn't know him, didn't
know him as a very good per-
son.

So, there was a great com-
munity affinity with the
prisoners. Moreover, the hero-
ism of the prisoners was an im-
portant factor. I don't think
that the people would mobilise
without this example. The
emotion and the nationalism it
drew out of the people frighten-
ed the establishment.

It was remarkable what
people in their own small way
were ready to do. It came to the
point that people were fighting
for the right to pray. We had
one of the local clergymen up in
Donoghmore, who publicly
stated that people should be
careful how and when they
prayed during the hunger strike
in case it was construed as sup-
port for the prisoners.

What he was saying was:
'You are not allowed to stand
in the street and pray for the
prisoners because it may be
construed as an anti-imperialist
gesture, it might be construed
as part of the resistance move-
ment.'

We had a serious discussion
in this town about whether we
should put up a picket line on
the church with signs saying,
'This organisation does not
support the prisoners'. That
was because the priest had
refused to lead the people in
saying the Rosary for the
prisoners.

It was the ones who wanted
the participation of the clergy
themselves who wanted to
picket the church.

**Well, do you think that the
country was on the verge of
a revolution or not?**

There was a feeling in the
meetings, not that we would
free Ireland by Christmas but
that we were on the start of
something, the end of which
was freedom and a united
Ireland. There was a long road
between here and there but that
we had started on that road
again and we could see the end
of it in our lifetime. It was a
feeling that you could actually
win.

It's like my experience in
elections. You start out think-
ing you don't have a chance of
winning, it's just to get your
positions out. And then you
begin to see that you can win.
It's like the first time I ran for
the mid-Ulster seat.

It's like the beginning of the
civil rights movement, when
people felt that at least they had
ended forever the days of quiet
subjection.

I don't think that this is
something that can be under-
estimated. There is a whole
layer of people who would be
with you, if they thought you
had a chance of winning. As
long as they are not convinced
that you're winning, they
wouldn't touch you. They
don't want to get involved.

We had begun to pull peo-
ple like that over to our side,
not because they supported the
prisoners particularly but
because they gave the impres-
sion of being people who were

confident and determined and
could win a lot more than they
were asking for.

There were some people
who discounted this and made
jokes that we were trying to
drive the people into the post-
office, that is to an insurrection
like 1916. But I was saying
toward the end of the hunger
strike that we had to be pre-
pared for all the possibilities.

One possibility was that
Sean McKenna would die and
be followed within a few days
by Tommy McKearney. The
feeling of the people in our own
area of Tyrone is an indication
of the sort of emotion the Na-
tional Committee would have
had to deal with.

The local committees were
saying that if McKearney died
they would march on Long
Kesh. And come hell or high
water they'd go through her.
They'd go through the wire.
Now nationally they said that
was madness. I can see that it
was madness. But we couldn't
have stopped it.

It was quite possible that
several thousand people would
have marched into a situation
where they would have been
massacred and we could not
have stopped it. If that had
happened it was very difficult
to say where you went from
there.

My argument was that if
something like that happened
you had to push it on. Any
other position would mean
retreat. It was an indication
that people were going to drive
her beyond the bounds of what
we were discussing, which were
shop closures, days of mourn-
ing, or the closest thing to a
general strike we could get.

It was quite possible that we
could be in a situation of a
general explosion and if we
backed away from it, if we
could not handle it politically,
then we were lost because it
would swing against us.

The atmosphere in the
country on the fifty-first day of
the hunger strike was electric —
the hunger strike ended two
days later. We believed that
anything could happen.

Where you can buy Socialist Challenge

Scotland

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

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 Andrews Square and bottom of Waverly steps 4.30-5.30; 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.

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.

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

Wales

CARDIFF: every Sat in Bute Town 10.30-12. Also available 1-0-8 Books, Salisbury Road.

NEWPORT: every Sat in town centre 11-12.30

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

England

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.

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.

HEMEL HEMPSTEAD: SC sales in Time Square, Saturdays 10.30-1.30pm.

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

LEEDS: Every Saturday 11-1 at Lands Lane Pedestrian Precinct and 10.30-12.00 at Headingley Arndale Centre, Corner Bookshop, Woodhouse Lane.

MANCHESTER: SC supporters sell 11-1pm Sat at OLDHAM 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.

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.

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).

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; at Saturday near Beatties, town centre from 11am-2pm.

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.

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).

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; at Saturday near Beatties, town centre from 11am-2pm.

Socialist Challenge is available at the following bookshops:

BRADFORD: Fourth Idea Bookshop, 14 Sandgate.

DURHAM: Durham City Co-op Bookshop, 85a New Elvet.

LYFORD: South Essex Bookshop, 335 Ley Street.

MILTON KEYNES: Oakleaf Books, 109 Church Street, Wolverton.

LONDON: Central Books, 37 Grays Inn Rd; Collects, Charing Cross Rd. WC2; Paperback Books, Brixton and Charlotte St. The Bookplace, Peckham High St, SE15; Books Plus, Lewisham; Balham Food Co-op; Housmans, 5 Caledonian Rd, N1; Compendium, Camden Town NW1; Owl, Kentish Town; New Beacon, Seven Sisters Rd, N4; Bookmarks, Seven Sisters Rd, N4; Centerprise, 126 Kingsland High St, E8; Dillons, QMC; Page One, E15; The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper St, N1; Reading Matters, Wood Green next to Sainsbury's.

London

BRENT: SC supporters sell at Willesden Junction every Thur at 4.30pm.

EALING: SC supporters sell every Thursday, Ealing Broadway tube, 4.30-5.30pm.

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

HILLINGDON: SC supporters sell every Friday, 4.30-5.30 at Uxbridge tube station; every Saturday 10.30-12.00 outside Woolworths, Uxbridge shopping centre.

KILBURN: SC sales every Sat, 10am in Kilburn Square, and Thursday 8.30am at Queens Park tube.

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

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

PADDINGTON: supporters sell at Portobello Rd market every Sat at 12 noon.

WEMBLEY: SC sales Fri 6.45am at North Wembley BR Station.

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

HARINGEY: Tues 28 April, public meeting US Hands off El Salvador. Speakers from El Salvador Solidarity Campaign & Socialist Challenge & film Revolution or Death, 7.30, The Old Library, Brabant Rd, Woodgreen N22.

IRISH FRACTION: 9 May National Centre. Documentation will be sent out.

IMG/REVOLUTION YOUTH: National work on women's oppression fraction, 25/26 April, 137 Digbeth, Birmingham — five minutes from station.

BRANCH ORGANISERS: meeting on 16 May in London.

NATIONAL SCHOOL: open to all Revo members on writing, speaking, etc on 17 May in London.

Speakers: Alistair Logan, John La Rose, Michael Holden, Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! Admission 50p ticket/unemployed, 75p at door.

EASTER weekend Hunger Strike protest: fasts. Called by the H Block/Armagh Committee. A 24 hour fast will be held outside Westminster Cathedral, off Victoria St, SW1.

REVOLUTIONARY Communist meeting: to launch South London Workers against Racism. Wednesday 22 April, 7.30pm Surrey Hall, Binfield Road SW4 (Stockwell tube). For information write to BM RCT London WC1N 3XX. In the GLC election in Lambeth vote KEVIN GREEN! A vote for Kevin Green means a vote for kicking the police out of Brixton!

SC Events

ISLINGTON: Sat 25 April evening social, an African evening with African music, food and films. Keep the date free!

HACKNEY: Sat 18 April, Caribbean Social. Callaloo, foo-foo, fowl-down-in-rice, pitch lake pudding, Cuba libres, pina colodas. £2 per person £1.50 unwaged. Phone Megan 359-8288 (day) or John 254 5274 (evening).

International Marxist Group notices

NATIONAL LESBIAN/GAY: Fraction 16 May National Centre 11 am. All cdes welcome even if not active around this question. Main item: perspectives document, orientation to labour and womens movement. Pooled fare. Childcare if there is advance notice, and accommodation. Ring Jamie on 01-637 2249.

Revolution Youth notices

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

What's Left

RATES for What's Left: 5p per word or £4 per col, incl. Deadline: noon Sat, prior to publication. Payment in advance. Phone 01-359 8180.

TAKE a chance and win £250 or smaller sums of money in the Grand Spring Raffle. Tickets are 50p per book (5 chances) or 10p each. If you want your counterfoils (not necessary as proof of purchase should you win), enclose stamped sae or add 15p for p&p. Cheques/postal orders payable to Hackney Book Group, 24 St Agnes Close, London E9. Draw on 2 May.

SUPPORT the H Block Hunger-strikers! Socialist Action Forum. Speakers include Tony Roberts, Streatham CLP, and a member of the National H Block Armagh Committee. Room 7, Friends House, Euston Rd, London NW1. For further info write to Socialist Action PO Box 65, SW16 or phone 769 1160.

ALL London Rally, Victory to the Hunger Strikers! Political status now! Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Thursday 30 April, 7pm.

International

OUT now! First of a new series of INTERNATIONAL, Marxist journal of analysis produced by supporters of the Fourth International in Britain. Price 60p. Bulk orders at 40p each for pre-payment. Subscriptions, before 31 May, £3.50 inland, £5.50 Europe, \$15 other overseas. Write to: INTERNATIONAL, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

SOCIALIST CHALLENGE BANKER'S ORDER FORM

Your Bank

Name of Account to be debited

Account Number

Our Bank..... Socialist Challenge

..... Lloyd's Bank, 19 Upper St, London N1

Account No 0179678

Sorting Code..... 30-94-57

Amount to be paid..... Monthly

First Payment due..... And on the same date in the month thereafter.

Signed

CNDers should support Socialist Challenge

By Brian Heron, former press officer for the CND Labour Movement Conference

'SOCIALIST Challenge sells well on CND demonstrations' say supporters in Newcastle and Leeds. 'It's getting a name for itself for featuring the fight against the missiles. And it gives really detailed background material on some of the issues that arise in the movement.'

Supporters of the paper who are active in CND branches around the country have been prominent in initiating and building such activities as the CND Labour Movement Conference that took place recently in Manchester.

Not only did we take a lot of organisational responsibility but we had plenty to say as well.

The majority of speakers from the floor at that conference were Socialist Challenge supporters arguing the unilateral disarmament case, explaining the connection between the American war drive and the colonial revolution, and urging the biggest possible mobilisation for the CND October demonstration in London.

It's Socialist Challenge that has been promoting the Jobs not Bombs slogan and East London supporters have sold thousands of Jobs not Bombs badges.

It is important to show there is an alternative to arms race expenditure.

How can the Tories justify the billions of pounds spent on arms when over three million people need jobs, and millions more need homes, health care and schools? It's this crazy system that puts bombs before people.

Another crazy thing is that newspapers like Socialist Challenge that actually fight for and express the views of millions of people have no money; yet newspapers that express the views of warmongers have plenty.

Any way you look at it, anyone who wants to fight the bomb and get rid of the Tories should be supporting this paper by selling it and by raising money for it!

This week brought in £400. Thatcher spends billions on weapons of madness. We aim to raise £100,000 to get rid of the Tories and the bombs. Isn't it worth it? Search your pockets and give your fighting paper a headquarters.

Our thanks this week to:

Burnley supporters	£2.00
Exeter	25.00
Hackney	200.00
Swansea	25.00
Swindon	3.05
US supporter	30.00
Pau Hazell	3.00
Carl Finamore	11.00
MB	20.00
Al Walker	30.00
Ed Mahood	10.00
This week	£359.05
Cumulative total	£18,429.97

Ten-year sentence for Japanese militant

By Chris Pitts

A TEN-YEAR sentence was handed down last month to Watada Kumeo, a leader of the Japan Revolutionary Communist League, Japanese section of the Fourth International.

Watada and thirteen others (mostly JRCL members) were being victimised for their part in the massive demonstrations against Narita airport on 26 March 1978.

The other defendants received sentences of between four and nine years in prison.

Construction of the airport has been delayed by protests and demonstrations ever since the plans were announced in 1965. Although now officially open, it still has only one runway, jet fuel is transported to it by rail rather than underground pipeline, and security is so tight that all departing passengers are body-searched and well-wishers are prohibited.

On 26 March three years ago, thousands of demonstrators gathered at Narita to protest against the impending opening. Despite the largest police mobilisation post-war Japan has seen, about a thousand demonstrators succeeded in occupying the airport, and a handful actually gained access to the control tower and, to the jubilation of the masses, 'rained hammer blows of class anger' down on air traffic control equipment.

Hundreds of demonstrators were arrested but these fourteen were singled out for particularly vicious sentences.

By arguing that the actions of the demonstrators endangered aircraft safety, the courts were able to invoke a law designed for prosecuting hi-jackers, which carries a particularly heavy sentence.

This was in spite of the fact that the airport had not then opened, and no flights were scheduled.

The prosecution naturally had a hard time explaining how an airport

demonstrators are on bail waiting trial.

Protests against the airport still continue focussing on the unsafe transportation of jet fuel by train through urban areas.

Letters of protest at the verdict and sentences should be sent to Judge Hanajiri, c/o Supreme Court, 1-1-4 Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku Tokyo, Japan, with a copy to the Airport Opposition League, c/o Shinjidaisha 5-13-17, Shiba, Minato-ku Tokyo. Messages of solidarity could also be sent via Shinjidaisha.



Demonstrators on tower they constructed to block aircraft

Other THE BOOKSHOP

Sadie Roberts, Anna Coote, and Elisabeth Ball

Positive Action for Women — The Next Step

NCCL, £2

This book points out that despite the Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination Acts women are still channelled into low paid and less skilled jobs. It argues that positive action is needed to give special encouragement and training to women moving into non-traditional jobs.

Duncan Campbell Phonetappers and the Security State

New Statesman Report No.2, £1.50

This report contains detailed facts, figures and photographs that illustrate the growth of state surveillance in Britain and in particular exposes the work of 'Tinkerbell', the Post Office-run national phone-tapping centre in Chelsea.

Available from The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper St, London N1 2XP. Tel: 01-226 0571. Please add 15% if ordering by post.

SUBSCRIBE TO SOCIALIST CHALLENGE

For new readers we are offering TEN ISSUES of Socialist Challenge for the incredibly low price of £3 (real value £3.15!)

With 12 month subscriptions we are giving away a FREE COPY of *The British Economic Disaster* by Andrew Glyn and John Harrison, published by Pluto Press (usual price £2.95).

Complete the form below and rush your order to Socialist Challenge, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP. Cheques and POs payable to 'Socialist Challenge'

SPECIAL OFFER

12 months: £14 plus free copy of *The British Economic Disaster*
6 months - £7
10 issues for £2 only.
Overseas: 12 months — Surface mail & Europe air mail £17.

Other air mail £24
Delete as appropriate.

Name.....
Address.....

For multi-reader institutions double the above rates.

The first immigration laws, 80 years ago

By Steve Cohen,
Jewish Socialist Group

TODAY new movements have emerged against immigration controls and nationality laws. We should not forget that similar struggles occurred at the start of this century.

As early as 1895 the Independent (Jewish) Tailors Union sent a delegate to the Cardiff Trades Union Congress to encourage British trade unionists to campaign against proposals for immigration control.

In the same year Joseph Finn, a leading Jewish trade unionist and socialist, wrote a pamphlet 'The Voice of the Alien' and helped to organise a meeting of Jewish workers at the Great Assembly Hall in London to encourage English workers to support the Jewish struggle.

Federation — blamed the Boer war on 'Jewish capital'.

Less well-known is the fact that both Ben Tillett and Tom Mann, who enjoyed huge reputations as rank and file dockers' leaders and socialists, spoke openly in favour of immigration control (see *London Evening News* of 26 May and 19 June 1891).

However there were notable exceptions. William Morris and the Socialist League consistently opposed all immigration control — though their organisation ceased to exist by the turn of the century.

Energetic

This energetic campaign was necessary because of the disgusting and anti-semitic attitude of the organised English labour movement. For instance immigration control was official TUC policy ever since 1892 — and this was supported by many trades councils, including London, Leeds and Manchester.

Central to Jewish resistance was the idea of self-organisation. For example, in January 1902 an Aliens Defence League was established with its headquarters at 38 Brick Lane in East London. Its aim was to campaign against anti-Jewish legislation.

The strength of growing Jewish resistance to immigration control was evident in a meeting organised in September 1902 by the Federated Jewish Tailors' Union in London, held at the 'Wonderland' Hall in the Whitechapel Rd. Over 3000 people attended the meeting and a large overflow rally was held on the road outside.

The main speakers were prominent Jewish trade unionists such as Lewis Lyons. Just as importantly, many individual English trade unionists felt obliged for the first time to come out publicly against control.

Similar meetings were held in the provinces — for instance in May 1904 at the Labour Hall, Strangeways, Manchester.

Just as significant was the shift made by the Jewish establishment. At first they were not prepared to struggle. By 1905, however, the Jewish communal leadership, under enormous pressure from the Jewish masses, was forced into organising rallies and the establishment *Jewish Chronicle* was at least encouraging write-in campaigns to MPs.

The attitude of the early English socialists was, to say the least, ambiguous. Some were more or less openly anti-semitic. Henry Hyndman — founder of the Social Democratic

In 1904 the Independent Labour Party issued a pamphlet 'The Foreigner in England', arguing against controls. In the same year the ILP established a Manchester Alien Immigration Bill Protection Committee. This held regular city meetings and a demonstration to Heaton Park.

The Aliens Act was eventually passed, though much modified due to the opposition it received. At the same time the Jews were protesting against the naturalisation laws. These laws made it extremely difficult for Jews to become British citizens.

Issue

In 1901 London Jews established a Naturalisation Agency to fight the laws. In 1907 mass demonstrations of Jews were organised in Leeds and Manchester and a deputation sent to Parliament. In 1908 the Jewish Social Democratic Federation supported a socialist candidate in Cheetham Manchester against Winston Churchill solely on the issue of naturalisation.

Moreover the struggle against the naturalisation laws in the early 1900s was over exactly the same issues as today. Firstly there was the prohibitive naturalisation fees (then £5 now £150). Secondly there were objections to internal surveillance and investigation by the Home Office on all applicants. Thirdly, inability to acquire British citizenship made it extremely precarious for Jews once in this country to leave it, as there was no guarantee of re-admission.

This particular campaign against state anti-semitism was unsuccessful. Today we have to remember it and make sure that we win the campaign against state racism as represented by the immigration and nationality laws.

For more information about the Jewish Socialist Group write to JSG, B.V. 3725, London WC1E 3XX.



The ban on NF marches in Tameside didn't stop Martin Webster getting massive publicity for his Nazi views

Police bans hit labour movement

THE National Front are threatening to call local demonstrations across the country on May Day. The purpose is to provoke the police into banning labour movement May Day marches. Until last week demonstrations were banned in areas covering eight million people.

DAVY JONES was on the steering committee of the Campaign Against the Ban on Marches in London three years ago. He recalls the lessons of that campaign and argues the case against bans on fascist marches.

In February 1978 the National Front called a march in Ilford to support their by-election candidate. The Anti Nazi League called a counter mobilisation. The police stopped them both through a month-long ban on marches throughout London.

The ban did not stop the fascists organising. They still assembled in Ilford, distributed propaganda and intimidated the local Jewish and black communities. It did stop the anti-fascists from an effective show of strength against the NF and in support of the local communities.

Furthermore five demonstrations in the capital were banned, ranging from a student grants' march, anti-apartheid and Friends of the Earth demos, and a Harringey anti-racist march. The International Women's Day march ignored the ban and demonstrated anyway.

The contrast with the situation today is striking. Important labour movement figures and bodies came out strongly against the 1978 ban. The north London district committee of the AUEW, the London Co-op political committee, and numerous Labour MPs and councillors sponsored activities including a National Council for Civil Liberties lobby of parliament against the ban.

Casualties of the latest round of bans include the first day of the cross-Pennines CND march, the Scottish TUC demo on 2 May in support of the Peoples March for Jobs (hit by a three month ban in Glasgow), and a Dudley Trades Council unemployment march — banned because the police say it

have welcomed the bans. The NCCL have attacked blanket bans and called for them to be more selective.

Banning marches has a number of useful side-effects for the police and local authorities. First it saves money. Massive policing of fascist marches is a costly business. Secondly it stops street confrontations where the police are openly seen to be protecting the fascists. The police prefer their tolerance of the far right groups to be more covert.

Finally it strengthens the hands of the police and the state to ban street

demonstrations at the drop of the hat. We can be sure that such powers will be used increasingly against strikers and the labour movement generally.

Bans on marches, including 'selective' bans, are the thin end of a wedge against the democratic rights of the working class and the oppressed.

There is an alternative to calling for bans. It might be more mundane and take more effort than leaving it to the police to stop the fascists but it's the only way to defeat them

and to defend the rights of the working class and oppressed.

Socialists and anti-racists have to fight to win the labour movement at every level to support socialist policies which can undercut the fascists' attempts to blame blacks and other oppressed layers for the crisis.

And whenever those groups' democratic rights are threatened by the fascists organising and marching on the streets the broadest possible labour movement counter-demonstration should be built to drive the fascists from the streets.



The way to stop Nazis in Ilford was not by bans

Photo: JOHN SMITH (IFL)

Photo: ANDREW WARD (Report)

BEING a US ambassador, particularly in the third world, demands certain qualities. You must have no scruples. You need to be able to organise political assassinations at the drop of a hat.

You must know how to bribe the generals and colonels, and make speeches about defending Christian values.

Dean Hinton, newly appointed ambassador to El Salvador seems to qualify on most of these counts and, unlike some other applicants, has an

How to become an ambassador

impeccable record to prove it.

From 1969 to 1971, Mr Hinton was the boss of the Agency for International Development's mission in Chile. Like his buddies in the State Department, which plays the tunes to which AID dances, he did not like Allende.

Along with the State Department's representatives, AID and the CIA

distributed the dollars poured into Chile by the US. At first these went in the direction of the Christian Democrats who were fighting an election campaign against Allende.

Chile

Unfortunately for Hinton, the Chilean people voted for better wages, better education and a bet-

ter health service, rather than Coca Cola and anti-communism.

But Hinton knew that when one door closes, another can be opened. If the ballot box could not do it then the carbine could. Out went the Christian Democrats, in came the military. Supported, encouraged and financed by the Hinton men like Pinochet recruited an ar-

my of murderers and torturers.

Two years after Hinton had left Chile his work bore fruit: Allende was overthrown and a nation was put in chains.

What had particularly qualified Hinton for his work in Chile was his previous job as AID top man in Guatemala. There he had been on the best of terms with the military

gangsters who overthrew Joseph Arbenz at the behest of the United Fruit Company in 1953.

With friends like that you cannot help but learn how to keep uppity peasants in their place. But Hinton's education did not end there.

Virtues

After his work in Chile he went home to the USA. There he worked at the shrine of chicanery and crookedness as an international economic advisor to President Nixon's National Security Council.

Like all those who worked with Nixon he had a chance to learn at first hand all those virtues US capitalism prizes such as how to exploit and cheat the majority of the human race.

Hinton was reared by US capitalism, trained in the school of Nixon and taught by the CIA in Guatemala and Chile. No wonder the El Salvador rulers are pleased with Reagan's appointee, but can anyone seriously expect anything else from imperialism?

Guerrillas hold regime at bay

El Salvador — on the scene report
By Lars Palmgren

SINCE the left-wing guerrillas fighting for power in El Salvador launched their offensive against the right-wing dictatorship on 10 January this year, there have been claims and counter-claims about who is winning the struggle.

The head of the military junta, Napoleon Duarte, tries to back up his claim that the situation is being 'normalised' by saying that 'for the past year the streets of this city have almost always been empty. But now the streets are full of people shopping.'

Duarte neglects to mention that due to the curfew everyone has to do their shopping during the same few hours.

But Duarte's claim has been picked up by the international press. Is it true, as Duarte claims, that the political situation is beginning to stabilise?

Is it true as some people say — including acting Archbishop Arturo Rivera y Damas — that the junta has been gaining support and the guerrillas losing since the beginning of the guerrilla offensive on 10 January?

Was the offensive a big military defeat for the revolutionary forces?

Messages

These points are constantly repeated in all the mass media in El Salvador. All the newspapers, radio, and television are under government control. The government has even forbidden privately-owned radio stations from broadcasting the popular features in which listeners can send each other messages.

The prohibition was not just because the messages could contain coded secrets for the revolutionaries. It was also due to the fact that people might learn of the real situation in the country.

We should not underestimate the effects of the intensive propaganda on the population, especially since the possibilities for countering it are limited. The opposition's clandestine radio stations — Radio Venceremos and Radio Liberación — are difficult to pick up.

Danger

Circulating leaflets puts one's life in danger and is only carried out as part of a larger action or

on a one-to-one basis. The circulation of the revolutionary press is too small to effectively counter government propaganda.

Untrue

There has also been a certain amount of fatigue among the population. After two years of intense repression there were hopes that the offensive would bring a quick end to the war.

People's Revolutionary Army (ERP) Commander Alejandro Montenegro told me that some segments of the population, especially the petty bourgeoisie, may have been frustrated that the 10 January offensive did not achieve a quick solution and are therefore more prone to accept the government propaganda.

But considering the government's monopoly over the news media, it is surprising to see how few people actually believe the government line.

The government's false claims that they have made staggering military advances are obviously untrue, and are having bad effects on the morale of their own troops.

Morale

The troops also know that there is no truth to the junta's claims that a stream of revolutionaries are accepting the government's amnesty offer. They are aware of the high morale among the revolutionaries, and of the guerrillas' base among the population.

Many of the government troops are young boys, some only 14 or 15 years old. Their morale is directly dependent on their superior officers.

This was shown by the events in Santa Ana on 10 January. When Captain Sandoval called on his



Left wing guerrillas in action in San Salvador

troops to revolt against the junta, 200 soldiers, most with no direct political contact with the revolutionary groups, followed him.

The rest of the garrison simply melted away, fleeing to their homes, leaving the country, or going into hiding.

According to sources in the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR) and the FMLN, the situation inside the armed forces is very tense. They maintain that there is also great tension within the junta, between Duarte and Col. Jaime Abdúl Gutiérrez and defence minister José Guillermo García.

The return from abroad of the notorious ultra-rightist Maj. Roberto D'Aubuisson is expected to exacerbate these tensions. D'Aubuisson, whose connections with the death squads are common knowledge, has been calling for the military to seize full control of the

government.

All these factors indicate that there is no substance to Duarte's claim that the situation in the country has become more stable since the offensive.

In fact, what the offensive mainly showed is that the Salvadoran junta is totally dependent on US imperialism.

The biggest weakness of the 10 January offensive was the fact that with the exception of Santa Ana, where the offensive took the character of an insurrectionary struggle, the offensive as a whole was almost exclusively restricted to military operations.

There were several reasons why the call for a general strike did not get a massive response. There were problems in coordination and an underestimation of the strength of the enemy's repressive apparatus.

In addition, the planning of the offensive was not carried out in close collaboration with the mass organisations. But these problems are now preparation for the next offensive.

It may be possible in the future to arm civilians to a greater extent than was the case during the January offensive.

The offensive also showed that the unity of the revolutionary forces in the FMLN is now a reality, even though some differences among the groups remain. Some forces within the FMLN favour a prolonged people's war, while others feel the war needs to be of short duration in which the insurrectional aspect must play a central role.

This discussion, as well as that on the formation of a unified party, has now been postponed in favour of working out coordinated plans for a new offensive.

New atrocities in El Salvador

REPORTS from El Salvador tell of a major atrocity against opponents of the regime. Up to 1,500 refugees are believed to have suffocated to death, after an explosion at the caves where they were living on the Salvador/Honduras border.

All the victims were from the fighting and government repression. Many of the refugees in this area are living in open camps, caves and other primitive conditions.

Reports claim that both Salvadoran and Honduran security forces were involved in detonating the explosion.

Meanwhile, last Wednesday there was another ghastly atrocity in the Monte Carmelos suburb of San Salvador, when more than 30 civilians were dragged from their houses and shot dead by a National Guard patrol.

Residents said that masked civilians accompanied the patrol, pointing out the houses to be attacked.

Hands off workers' Poland

LAST August the Polish workers won the right to strike in the famous Gdansk agreement. Last week the Polish parliament withdrew that right for two months after premier Jaruzelski threatened to resign unless the measure was approved.

The meaning of Soviet leader Brezhnev's speech to the Czechoslovak party congress last week is now clear. He told the Polish delegation to roll back the gains of the Polish workers, whatever the cost. Jaruzelski's new stand is the direct result.

Solidarity has also exposed a secret speech to security police chiefs made by Politburo member, Andrzej Zabinski. Zabinski called for repression against the KOR

dissidents and advisors to Solidarity, and for a process of corrupting and winning over the leaders of the new union movement.

This policy of division is not helped by statements such as that made by Lech Walesa who claimed last week that 'it was time Solidarity cracked down on its militants.' There is a tremendous radicalisation going on inside Solidarity and the Polish Communist Party, particularly in the run-up to the party congress.

Below we reprint an abridged version of an article by Peter Green from the latest issue of Labour Focus on Eastern Europe describing the growth of the opposition currents within the Communist Party.

Among the places where party members led the strikes last August one of the most significant was Torun. The Inter-factory strike committee (MKS) was led by Zbigniew Iwanow, a party member from the Towimor ship-machinery plant (we published an interview with Iwanow in Socialist Challenge two weeks ago).

body has become in effect an alternative leadership to the City Committee.

Crisis

The consultative commissions were built in the battle by rank-and-file party members for an extraordinary party Congress. (The last Congress had taken place only in February 1980, and they normally take place every 5 years.)

The party rank and file had gone through a profound crisis in August as they saw the Gierk government seeking to break the mass strike and threatening to open an irreparable gulf between the party rank and file and the mass of non-party workers.

So the demand for the Congress was linked to a campaign to radically reform the party Statutes, to democratise the party, and to prevent such a breach with the workers ever happening again.

Violation

The Kania group at first tried to oppose a speedy congress, claiming it would be won by the confrontationist wing of the party anyway. But in the autumn, the Central Committee finally agreed to an extraordinary con-

gress, while simultaneously Kania denounced the construction of horizontal links at the base of the party as a violation of democratic centralism.

On 24 November, the Torun party Control Commission expelled Iwanow from the party on the grounds that he had challenged the Marxist-Leninist World Outlook.

But this didn't stop the struggle. Iwanow continued to function as if he was a party member, and the horizontal movement, by now called the 'Anti-Apparatus' movement, spread to other centres. Amongst the first were nearby Bydgoszcz and Lodz, where two factories, Fonica and Marchlewski, were the driving force.

By November (according to *Le Monde*), Radom, Katowice and Krakow had become involved. The movement also spread to Gdansk, Szczecin, Pulawy, Poznan and Pabianice by early 1981.

The characteristic components of the movement have been the large industrial plants and the universities and colleges.

By the beginning of March, the factory party organisations around the country involved in the anti-apparatus movement were planning to hold a

delegate conference in Torun in response to the party leadership's postponement of the Congress (which was originally scheduled for March but is now due in July).

Demands

In the end they decided not to call the conference on the grounds that it could have laid them open to expulsion for 'factionalism'. But during the early months of 1981, the movement has deepened and widened as party members have twice defied the leadership by participating in big Solidarity strike actions. By the end of March no fewer than thirteen or fourteen thousand individual proposals for changes to the party statutes had poured in from the membership; while the Higher Party School itself (linked to the Central Committee) has now published its own new draft statutes, involving, amongst other things, the legalisation of horizontal links at the base.

This swelling tide has produced a hysterical reaction from sections of the party apparatus, with Kociulek, the Warsaw Party Secretary, declaring that 'an attack on the ap-



Twenty one times 'Yes' refers to the Gdansk Agreement's 21 demands

paratus is an attack on the party' — a precise formulation of the average consciousness of the apparatchiks.

According to George Kolankiewicz (from whom a great deal of the information in this article comes), during the last 10 years 70% of Central Committee members have been drawn from a band of party secretaries and economic managers who, in terms of occupation, account for only 4.3% of the party membership.

The following demands loom large in the anti-apparatus movement:

accountability of all officials to the organs that elected them; election of all secretaries from the shop floor; abolition of the special career grade of apparatchik; limits on the length of tenure of secretariat posts; voting by secret ballot; the recallability of officials; a free choice of candidates at all levels; at least a 100% increment of candidates over posts at local level, and 50% at higher levels.

Changes such as these, if combined with the right to form political tendencies within the party, would bring about a major

change in the entire functioning of the political system. But at the same time, the fate of the struggle inside the party depends above all on the continued strengthening of Solidarity and upon a growing organised support for Solidarity within the rank and file of the party.

It was from the workers' mass action that the anti-apparatus movement grew, and it is by its assistance to the needs of independent mass movement that the anti-apparatus movement will ultimately be judged.

Movement

When the August strikes ended, Iwanow was elected First Secretary of his party organisation in the factory. He and his comrades then launched a movement which spread to at least 17 provinces throughout the country.

They established a Consultative Commission, deriving the idea from the MKS established in Torun during the strike.

Instead of the exclusively vertical links from basic party organisations upwards to the higher party committees, they built horizontal links between rank-and-file organisations through the Consultative Commission.

Very quickly one party organisation after another in Torun affiliated to the Commission, and by early this year 7,000 members out of 17,000 in Torun city were affiliated to the Consultative Commission. The

'Hands off Polish workers' London march

LAST Sunday, five hundred demonstrators called for hands off workers' Poland.

A delegation of Labour MPs attempted to hand in a petition to the Soviet Embassy. They were politely informed that the embassy 'cannot accept any petition which relates to the internal affairs of the Soviet Union.' But, they protested, the petition concerns Poland. Exactly, replied the embassy.

At a meeting organised by the Eastern European Solidarity Campaign and Hands Off Polish Workers Campaign, Frank Dobson MP gave a message from the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party:

'We support the Polish workers' struggle for free trade unions. There must be freedom from external intervention in Poland's affairs. Everyone in the labour movement should support Polish workers in their struggle.'

Unfortunately, it became apparent in the meeting that support from the labour movement was not forthcoming. The meeting expressed its disgust at the paltry appeal from the TUC for £20,000 which represents 0.0001p for each trade union member.

All speakers stressed the need to support the Polish workers both

materially and by sending messages of support. Such support would make it more difficult for the Soviet Union to intervene.

There was a danger of cold war warriors using this campaign, as Tariq Ali pointed out. But that makes it even more imperative that a massive campaign is built in the labour movement.

The importance of such support was highlighted last week when the official Soviet news agency TASS, alleged that Solidarity was financed by British fascists.

A right wing historian, David Irving, had launched a financial appeal supposedly for Solidarity.

Although Solidarity leader Bogdan Lis had publicly disowned the appeal, this didn't stop the slander machine in the Kremlin from spreading the lie.

Last week another 'Solidarity with Poland' campaign was set up in London by Tory, Liberal and unfortunately, a few right wing Labour MPs.

The Polish workers' don't need this sort of help. But until the labour movement in Britain takes the lead in the campaign, the right wing will dominate.

The labour movement has to show that the struggle of the Polish workers is not anti-socialist as this riff-raff would have us believe, but a struggle for workers' democracy.



Photo: PETE GRANT (Socialist Challenge)

On the march on Sunday

Space shuttle: Pentagon prepares star wars

By Will Reissner

As the launching date for the shuttle Columbia comes and goes, publicity about the shuttle's purpose is focusing on its scientific and commercial potential.

The *New York Times* states that the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) 'hopes companies will use the shuttle to put factories into orbit'.

The article waxes poetical about the shuttle's potential for building and maintaining 'gigantic orbiting communications satellites, solar-power stations that would transmit electricity to earth, and highly automated factories where industry could use the unique environment of space to make things that cannot be made as well, if at all, on earth.'

But that is not the real purpose

of the shuttle. It is a military vehicle designed to orbit the Pentagon's military satellites. Any commercial use would be icing on the cake.

Geoffrey T.H. Kemp, a consultant to the Department of Defence and former staff member of the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, discussed the real purpose of the shuttle in an article entitled 'Defence innovation and Geopolitics: From the Persian Gulf to Outer Space'.

The article was published by the Institute for Contemporary Studies, a right-wing think-tank with extremely close ties to the Reagan administration, in a book entitled, *National Security in the 1980s: From Weakness to Strength*.

'In the military sphere, the shuttle will permit the deployment and servicing of larger, more sophisticated, satellites which can

perform a host of tasks including command, control and communications, navigation, reconnaissance, surveillance, electronic ferreting and eavesdropping, and anti-satellite operations.'

Kemp adds that 'the impact of new space technologies on battlefield management and strategic (nuclear) warfare, including anti-ballistic missile defence, could have as significant an impact as the introduction of the telegraph and the wireless had on naval operations in earlier years.'

According to Kemp, 'ultimately, the space shuttle will permit the construction of large battle stations in outer space'.

He continues: 'the idea that space will forever be a hostile environment for military operations needs to be carefully examined. There is no inherent reason why the

United States should not be able to develop a superior military capability in space ...'

And the best thing about the whole programme, says Kemp, is that it can 'fire the imagination of a new generation of Americans who were too young to have been influenced by Vietnam but who have been raised in the *Star Wars* environment ... It would give the country a national goal ...'

'In short,' Kemp maintains, 'the United States needs to regain its sense of destiny. If this sounds jingoistic, so be it ...'

Despite Kemp's enthusiasm, there is no evidence that the dreaded Vietnam syndrome can be blasted away by his *Battlestar Galactica* fantasy.

— From *Intercontinental Press*



Easter Against the Missiles

OVER the Easter weekend CND will be conducting a series of activities against nuclear weapons. Below is a partial list of the major activities. Further details of all these activities can be obtained from CND, 11 Goodwin St, London N4 3HQ. Tel: 01-263 4854/8546.

ALDERMASTON: Sat 18 April, southern region CND demonstration outside nuclear research centre.

BRISTOL: Sat 18 April Bristol and south west region CND demonstration to Admiralty HQ. For details ring Bristol 32707.

CAMBRIDGE: Mon 20 April, regional demonstration 11am from RAF Honnington to Thetford. Details ring Cambridge 353804.

FARNBOROUGH TO ALDERSHOT: 18 April CND demonstration and rally. Assemble 9.15 Cove Green Farnborough.

LONDON: Five local marches to civil defence bunkers at Cheam, Crystal Palace, Wanstead, Dollis Hill and USAF Uxbridge.

MANCHESTER: Mass demonstration to greet trans-Pennine march.

MIDLANDS: Five prong march on Rugby from Birmingham/Wolverhampton, Derby, Leicester, Milton Keynes, Leamington. Culminate Mon 20 April with march on Rugby. Details Martin Tolman 021-236 9815.

NOTTINGHAM: Sat 18 April. 11am march through town centre. Tel Nottingham 582561.

Wanted by Plaid Cymru: a new role

WHO SPEAKS WELSH WHERE

By Stephen Bell

PLAID Cymru, the Welsh nationalist party, is undergoing a major internal debate on its role and policies.

How does a party based on nationalism respond when the Welsh working class is advancing to confront the Tories?

Plaid has held a commission of inquiry to try and regain the power and perspective it has lost since the general election, and a special party conference is to be held this summer.

While the party is dominated by middle-class intellectuals and professionals, two-thirds of its votes come from the working class, mainly from skilled workers.

Many of the Welsh-speaking workers who support Plaid identify the Labour Party with the hostility displayed to the Welsh language by MPs like Neil Kinnock and Leo Abse.

Labour

Under the last Labour government, Plaid had three MPs and among the successes of its lobbying was parliamentary support for the Welsh Development Agency and relief for silicosis victims. The minority government and the possibility of a Welsh assembly gave the party considerable leverage.

But the devolution referendum was lost, and Plaid's two MPs elected in 1979 are powerless in a Tory-dominated parliament. The party is subdued and demoralised, and even securing the Fourth TV channel for the Welsh language has not revitalised it.

The commission of inquiry resulted in majority and minority reports, and two groupings have emerged from initial discussions on the proposals. There is the possibility of a split in the future.

The majority report, supported by Dafydd Wigley MP and the majority of the leading 'rightists' in Plaid, outlines two main ways of

reactivating the party.

First, through campaigns on such issues as nuclear weapons and dumping, against government policies, in support of the Welsh language, and for Welsh self-government.

Illegal

The report suggests that these may require the party to break with constitutionalism, by committing illegal acts.

Secondly, the report calls for Plaid to be a 'decentralist socialist' party, seeking new alliances to gain concessions for Wales.

The 'decentralist' plan — as against centralism — opens the way for an alliance with the Social Democratic Party and the Scottish Nationalist Party, which would seriously hinder the chances of returning a Labour government.

Career

The majority report dreams of a re-run of the past 20 years, this time without compromise; a return to the well-springs of Plaid. But the party has too many MPs and councillors to begin anew, and there is now a career structure for ambitious Welsh speakers within the state. Anti-constitutional tactics are put forward very tentatively.

The minority report proposes a more thorough-going challenge to Labour as the party of the Welsh working class. It aims to challenge the Labour Party's base in the unions; it prioritises district and county elections; and proposes the setting up of a youth organisation.

PERCENTAGE FIGURES ARE PROPORTION OF WELSH SPEAKERS

POPULATION OF WALES
2,774,700
WELSH SPEAKING
589,687 21%

GWYNEDD
62%
POP. 226,300

CLWYD
20%
POP. 385,600

POWYS
21%
POP. 107,100

DYFED
50%
POP. 325,600

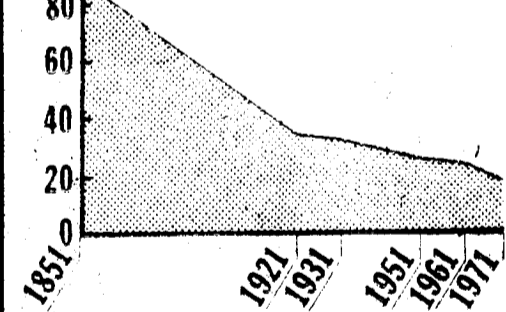
WEST GLAMORGAN
11%
POP. 366,600

GWENT
20%
POP. 435,900

MID GLAMORGAN
11%
POP. 537,500

SOUTH GLAMORGAN
11%
POP. 390,600

DECLINE OF A LANGUAGE



The idea is to take over the state in Wales, so far as this is possible by constitutional means.

Dafydd Ellis Thomas MP supports this strategy, and goes much further than the minority report. He calls for an all-Wales general strike against steel and pit closures, and for

strikes against cuts. He wants MPs to be recognised simply as representatives of the organised power of the working class.

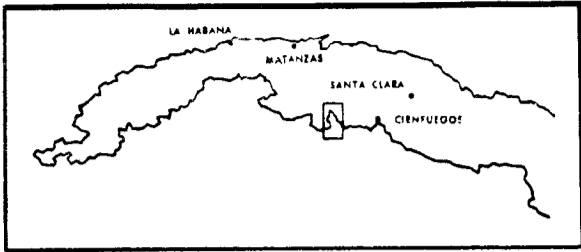
While the minority report insists that its aim is 'independence' for Wales, its nationalism is muted. It stresses the Anglo-Welsh

tradition in place of the purely Welsh. Much of the report reads like the Labour left in Wales — and that is the weakness.

It seeks to promote Plaid at the expense of Labour, but is quite unsure of how to achieve this.

Plaid Cymru has mov-

ed to the left. In the majority report this is shown by the plan to modernise nationalist traditions, while the minority report tailors nationalism to the Labour Party's base. It is a testament to the bruised but undefeated spirit of the Welsh workers' movement.



20th anniversary celebration of Cuba's victory at the 'Bay of Pigs'

By Toni Gorton

ARTHUR Scargill, Yorkshire president of the National Union of Miners, will be a feature speaker at a rally on 22 April to celebrate the victory of the Cuban revolution against the American backed invasion in 1961.

The invasion at the Bay of Pigs was the first real test of the ability of the Cuban people to defend their revolution. President J F Kennedy had been assured by the Central Intelligence Agency that the Cuban people were just waiting for the opportunity to throw off the Castro 'dictatorship' — a view that wasn't borne out by events.

The attack comprised groups of planes attacking four different cities and a number of ships that sailed from Somoza's Nicaragua. The mercenary brigade which consisted of some 1500 men was absolutely defeated within three days.

With the threats against the revolutions in Grenada, Nicaragua and Cuba and the US backing for the genocidal regime in El Salvador, this is a significant time to remember that imperialism has been prepared to intervene militarily against small countries that seek to escape its control.

Other speakers include HE Cro Jorge Bolanos, Cuban Ambassador to Britain and Stan Newens MP.

There will be a photographic exhibition, bookstall, posters and entertainments that include an African group and Cuban singers.

Admission free, 22 April from 6.30-10 at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1.

Thousands of Dutch women strike against new abortion bill

By Leonora Lloyd

ON 30 March 40,000 women in Amsterdam held a day long strike against a new abortion bill. Around 80/90,000 took part in an evening demonstration. Thousands more in towns across Holland struck as well.

Present law makes abortion illegal but the government allows some clinics to operate which Dutch and foreign women make full use of.

The new bill would keep abortion illegal but impose changes to give doctors the final say. It would also create a complicated system of licencing clinics, and make a five day waiting period for 'reflection' compulsory.

This last point would create real difficulties for women from countries like Germany and Spain whose laws do not allow abortions.

The strike action and demonstration was only proposed on International Women's Day, leaving 20 days for the 90 local committees that sprung up to build support.

The main problem they encountered was the attitude of radical feminists who were hostile to the trade unions.

As a result the majority of the strikers were from the public sector unions



and women's liberation groups.

On the day itself in Amsterdam, commuters found that their trains were stopped by women pulling communications cords. While they waited impatiently, they were handed leaflets who told them, 'you complain about five minutes — we will have to wait five days!'

The strike was supported by the International Abortion, Sterilisation, Contraception Campaign and there were solidarity pickets of Dutch embassies in several cities around the world including London.

Fightback with red lobelia

By Toni Gorton

AS A result of a conversation at my local flower stall I am in a position to inform our readers that there is a royalist campaign on to subvert our windowboxes.

Being attracted to an offering of rather unusual red lobelia I was told by the seller that there would also soon be white and blue lobelia on sale.

The purpose is to have patriotic windowboxes at the time of the Royal Wedding.

The woman beside me recoiled in horror. 'I'm a republican' she said. 'I'm a socialist' I said in unison. 'Same thing' she said.

We went away proclaiming our intention to have solid red windowboxes on 29 July. So join the campaign — and keep the red lobelia trailing.



'The union should be big enough to stop this happening'

By Jude Woodward, Ardwick Labour Party women's section

ELSIE works at Royal Pride, a small furniture factory on the Manchester Salford border.

Six weeks ago she, along with 18 other workers, almost all women, were thrown out of work for demanding union recognition.

Since then they've been on the picket line every day. They've toured local factories for support and won backing from the Manchester and Salford Labour Parties. Nonetheless Elsie is still locked out.

'The unions in the country are big enough to stop this sort of thing', she explained. 'But they are not doing anything. They can't see that this is only the beginning.'

'It's only a handful who have been locked out at Royal Pride, but how many will it be with the next shop and the next and the next?'

'Then they'll get round to the dockers and the miners and if something isn't done now they could be the only ones left in a union.'

That's what Royal Pride is, the thin end of the wedge, a small shop and the workers are members of a small union, FTAT. They have to be defended.

All over Greater Manchester it is exactly these kinds of shops where bosses are using mass unemployment to crack down on trade union rights.

Royal Pride workers have taken a stand which is all the more important because it's women who've led the fight for a union shop and who now lead the strike. But how can a small shop like this hope to win?

Maureen, another striker, explained the stakes involved.

'I realise now what power Thatcher has given the bosses. Under Thatcher everything is behind them.'

Railway workers demand 'Benn must organise industrial action'

By Hazel MacPherson, Paddington No 1 NUR

'WHAT we want is direct action against the cuts and we need leadership for this. We must campaign for our leaders to come out and show where they stand.'

This declaration came from Carl Tyndall, a Port Talbot steelworker at a meeting called by Paddington No 1 branch of the rail union on 'Defend our railways — build the triple alliance'.

The meeting which was attended by more than 40 railworkers went on to endorse a call for Tony Benn to organise the Triple Alliance from the grassroots as part of his campaign for the deputy leadership of the Labour Party.

Sidney Weighell, General Secretary of the NUR who has publicly attacked Benn is at the forefront of the campaign against the left in the Labour Party.

John Cogger is one of the 13 members of the NUR National Executive who have dissociated themselves from

Rio Tinto stinks!

By Alma Singh, Rio Tinto Zinc Week of Action Organising Committee, Newcastle

A PUBLIC tribunal to expose the dealings of the British-based multi-national corporation Rio Tinto Zinc will be held in London on 10 May.

It is part of an international week of action that aims to expose and stop RTZ's operations which violate international law, land rights for native peoples and human rights.

Among the victims of RTZ have been Australian aborigines, miners in Namibia, South Africa, Papua New Guinea and Bolivia, and the Indians of South and North America.

The Tribunal aims to expose the role of RTZ, to expand working class solidarity

against it and to demonstrate the racist collaboration of many governments — including the Tory government of ex-RTZ director Lord Carington.

Films, pickets, exhibitions, meetings and other events are being organised throughout Britain.

● Bristol — shop stewards at RTZ works have agreed to a teach-in.

● Newcastle: picket of TRZ Metals North Ltd

● Manchester: a street stall/exhibition

● Edinburgh: activists

will be using the anti-nuclear week of action at Torness to spread the word about RTZ

● London: 9 May the day before the Tribunal workshops will be held to discuss papers by shop stewards, and others with special interests.

It is planned that the Week of Action will kick off a national campaign of disinvestment and against recruitment.

Many charities and labour movement bodies have investments in RTZ. For example, the Tyne and Wear County Council has shares as do groups like Cancer Research and Anti-Vivisection.

Exposing Rio Tinto Zinc's obscene activities will be a huge step forward against the so-called 'invulnerability' of the multi-nationals.

The only group that can successfully do this is the international labour movement in which the British movement should play its part.

Tribunal on Rio Tinto Zinc Representatives of the RTZ workers
10 May
Conway Hall, WC1

For further information contact PARTIZANS, (People against Rio Tinto Zinc and its subsidiaries) Box 797, Peace News, 5 Caledonian Rd., London N1. Tel: 01-509 1852.

Job cuts, millionaire style

ROBERT Maxwell, the millionaire Labour Party member who recently took control of the British Printing Corporation, has announced plans to cut the workforce by a quarter, resulting in some 2,500 redundancies.

So far only the journalists' union appears to be putting up a fight. Print union leaders have agreed to the plan.

Maxwell's style of 'socialism' can be seen at Pergamon Press, his publishing company in Oxford, where nine NUJ members have been on strike for five weeks over a pay claim.

Pergamon, which made a profit of £6m last year, describes sick pay as a 'malingerers' charter'. Pay and conditions are worse than at virtually any other British publishing firm.

The print unions, which could ensure a successful outcome to the strike, have yet to offer any support at national level.

At Futura Books, a BPC subsidiary where journalists occupied for three months against redundancies, Maxwell reinstated the 65 NUJ members saying that he accepted in principle their 'survival plan' to save jobs.

But he is delaying on 'intensive negotiations', with no guarantee that all the jobs will be saved.

Belt & Braces'

accidental death of an anarchist

'Simply brilliant'
Socialist Challenge

'subversive to the youth of the country'
Sir Roy Shaw

'Dramatic tosh'
Daily Mail

'a loud, vulgar, kinetic, scurrilous, smart, sensational show. In other words, everything theatre should be'
New Society

A year at Wyndham's Theatre and better than ever
01-836 3028

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF ACTION

16 May 1981

Contraception/Abortion/Sterilisation/Women decide!

Conway Hall
Red Lion Square WC2

Music, theatre, dance, cabaret, film

Speakers from Britain, Europe, Latin America, Africa and Asia

For further information: contact ICASC c/o NAC, 374 Grays Inn Rd, London WC1, Tel: 01-278 0153

Socialist Challenge

'Friends, I would like to claim victory on behalf of Bobby Sands'

By Gerry Foley in Enniskillen

BOBBY SANDS MP — SAVE HIS LIFE!

By Penny Duggan

THE voters of Fermanagh and South Tyrone have inflicted a massive defeat on British imperialism by electing hunger striker Bobby Sands as their honourable member of parliament.

The Tory government and the establishment press are shocked. Their campaign to brand the Republican movement as terrorists lies in ruins after 51 per cent of the voters clearly supported the prisoners' campaign by electing Bobby Sands.

Labour spokesperson on Ireland Don Concannon did everything in his power to sabotage Sands' victory. In an unprecedented polling day appeal from the House of Commons he asked electors not to vote for Sands. He claimed it would be a vote 'for all the senseless murders that have taken place in Northern Ireland over the last years.'

Concannon is an expert on senselessness. He and the Labour leaders have long pursued the same senseless policy on Ireland as the Tories — repression of the Catholic community to defend the artificial northern Ireland statelet. No wonder that the Tories asked the Labour leadership to support a joint attempt to expel Sands from parliament.

Affront

This outrageous affront to democratic rights, particularly of the people of Fermanagh and South Tyrone, was too much even for the Liberal Party to stomach. After pressure from left Labour MPs it appears that the Parliamentary Labour Party also told leader of the House of Commons Francis Pym that an expulsion move was 'not on'.

At a press conference on Tuesday Welsh nationalist MP, Dafydd Thomas introduced Sand's election agent Owen Car-

ron, and appealed against any moves to expel Sands from parliament.

But that is not the end of the story. Sands' life is in extreme danger. Election day was his fortieth day on hunger strike. He is not expected to live beyond the end of the month if the hunger strike continues.

Support from the British labour movement is urgent. Benn, Heffer and the Labour left should campaign to save Sands' and the other hunger strikers' lives, and for their right to political status.

Favour

A consistent majority of the British people favour the withdrawal of troops from Ireland. Yet they have not supported the Irish prisoners' demands.

The prisoners' case for political status rests precisely on the fact that they are fighting against British presence in the Six Counties — they are fighting for political ends.

No satisfactory resolution of the situation in the north of Ireland is possible until Britain withdraws the troops and allows the Irish people to run their own affairs. The campaign in support of the Irish prisoners strikes an immediate blow at the British claim to rule the Six Counties.

That claim will not be thoroughly crushed until the British labour movement mobilises to force the government to immediately withdraw. We must grasp hold of every step that can be taken towards that goal.

The priority now is to support the prisoners by coming out on the national demonstration on 26 April.



IT WAS 3pm in the courthouse where the ballots in the Fermanagh South election were being counted. I had been standing for several hours in the press room behind the county hall.

Since the morning, a victory for the H Block prisoner Bobby Sands had been looking more and more likely. The vote had been high. The unionists admitted openly that they had been relying on a low poll.

It was obvious that the abstentionist vote of the 'moderate' Catholics had not materialised. There were few spoiled ballots and most of them seemed to be protest votes against the official unionist candidate by more extreme unionists.

Ballots could be seen marked 'No Surrender!', and 'God bless Paisley!' The official unionist campaign manager began talking about the possibility of a serious setback to community relations, meaning relations between Catholics and Protestants.

Banner

I went through the hall down the long outside staircase to the courtyard through a line of heavily armed police. Several hundred persons had gathered behind the banner of the Enniskillen H Block youth committee.

They were chanting the favourite slogan of the mass demonstrations in support of the Irish political prisoners —

'One, two, three, four, open up the H Block door; five, six, seven, eight, open up the Armagh gate'.

Then one of the Sands campaign observers at the count came running down the stairs to meet the crowd. A huge cheer went up. The crowd began to shout for the Sands campaign manager Owen Carron.

He came down and said partly in the Irish language: 'Ladies and gentlemen, friends, I would like to claim victory on behalf of Bobby Sands. Victory to the prisoners in H Block!'

Carron went on to say that the nationalist people had given a clear message: 'It's time for the British to

do what they always should have done — get out.'

Anthem

The first verse of the Irish national anthem started up, 'Soldiers are we, whose lives are pledged to Ireland, some have come from a land across the sea, no more our ancient Ireland shall shelter the despot or the slave.'

But the victory was expressed more powerfully by the quiet speeches of Bobby Sands' mother and sister than by the triumphant shouting and singing.

Throughout the campaign Mrs Sands had not spoken. The audiences were always told that she didn't feel up to it. Now for the first time she spoke in a calm voice to thank the campaign workers and voters.

That was the measure of the hope that the campaign victory had given her. The crowd began a celebration that I was told would go on all night.

I left for Coalisland where there was to be a victory rally at 9 o'clock. As we drove in, the streets of this small town were lined with thousands of people

Band

The local band was out playing the 'Broad Black Brimmer of the IRA'. Behind it youths were waving large tricolours, the flag of the double insurrection seen once again to be lifted on the wings of history.

I could see the flames of a big bonfire that had been lit outside the high wire fence surrounding the police barracks.

The band went on to play Roddy McCorley, a song about an insurgent hanged by the British almost two centuries ago. It is also the tune of the 'Ballad of Sean South', an IRA guerrilla killed during the 1956-61 campaign in a town in the Fermanagh/South Tyrone area.



HIS LIFE IS IN YOUR HANDS

Vote - SANDS

THE BLANKETMEN AND THE WOMEN PRISONERS IN ARMAGH ARE BORROWING THIS ELECTION IN AN ATTEMPT TO ILLUSTRATE YOUR SUPPORT FOR THE PRISONERS AND YOUR OPPOSITION TO THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT.

USE YOUR VOTE TO SAVE THE SEAT

National Demonstration
**Support the
Hunger Strikers**

**Sunday 26 April 1.30pm
Assemble Kilburn High
St (Kilburn tube)**