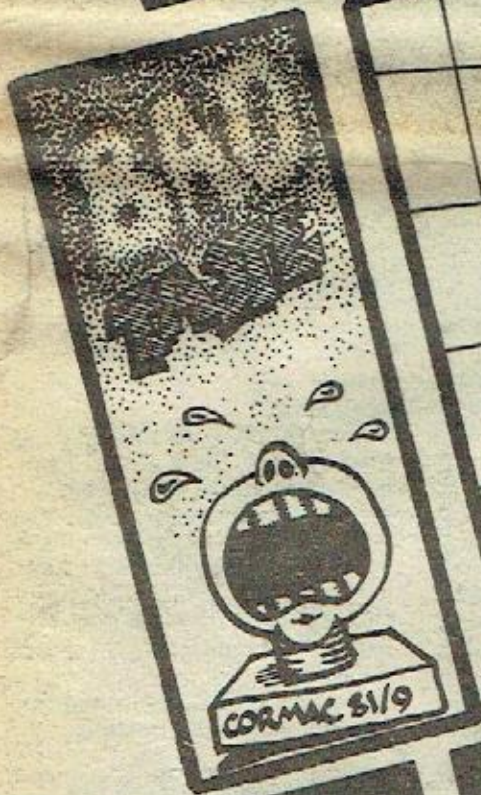


# Socialist Challenge

Big victory for the left in miners' ballot. The landslide election victory of Arthur Scargill as NUM president is a massive boost to all those campaigning for socialist policies. It is a clear rebuff to Michael Foot and the right wing labour leadership's claim that such policies don't have support inside the working class.



# STOP THE WITCH-HUNT



# DEFEND TATCHELL

## CIVIL WAR

**LESLIE HUCKFIELD, not the most left wing member of the Labour Party's organisation committee, declared on Monday that the witch-hunting of Peter Tatchell by the party leadership 'is the start of open civil war.'**

He is correct. But it is a civil war which will be fought on a number of issues.

The first concerns constituency Labour Parties. The CLPs comprise the local trade union delegates, the affiliated organisations, the Young Socialists, and the people who canvas at elections, sell raffle tickets and do the hundreds of other tasks which keep the Labour Party alive.

These members do not have a great deal of say in how the Labour Party operates, or what policies will be put into practice when Labour achieves office.

One of the few rights the CLPs do have is to say who will represent them at elections. Or rather they did have. For Michael Foot and the party leadership have now abolished that right.

By refusing to endorse Peter Tatchell as candidate for Ber-

mondsey, Foot and friends are saying that the vast majority of Labour Party members can no longer decide who will represent them at the polls. That this decision was made in the name of 'democracy' is as sick as it is hypocritical.

The second intended victim of Foot's civil war is the Labour Party conference. It was the 1980 conference in Blackpool that gave CLPs the right to select their parliamentary candidates. Before then it was virtually impossible for CLPs to throw out an existing MP.

Even though the sitting MP in Bermondsey, Bob Mellish, had no intention of standing again, the leadership's vetoing of Tatchell can be placed in the context of the re-selection controversy. For if Peter Tatchell can be thrown out by that leadership, then what chance do parliamentary candidates who replace sitting MPs have of gaining the official seal of approval?

Issue number three in the civil war is the policies decided by the party conference. On such questions as unilateralism, withdrawal from the EEC, and the fight against unemployment, Peter Tatchell has much more in com-

mon with official Labour policy than has, say, Denis Healey.

In the *London Labour Briefing* article which has been used by Foot as the reason for the witch-hunt, Tatchell, also made clear his commitment to fighting the Tories. The tactics he suggested — such as an afternoon sit-down in the 'Westminster area' — were not particularly blood curdling, but for Michael Foot they were too radical.

So much for Foot's claim that he wants to end the divisions in the party so he can concentrate on fighting Thatcher.

The fourth issue in the civil war is the entire future of the Labour Party. By over-riding the decision of the Bermondsey Party and by launching the witch-hunt, the party leadership has shown it is prepared to wreck and destroy the Labour Party, rather than see that party adopt socialist policies or left wing representatives.

Foot and his allies know that if they are successful, their actions will demoralise or drive out of the party tens of thousands of activists. That in turn will ruin Labour's chances not just in this election but in future ones as well.

But Foot and company are prepared to risk that rather than see the Labour Party taken over by the left. They are the agents of the bosses, and the Tories. With Michael Foot around the ruling class can easily dispense with the services of Lord Denning.

Even if Michael Foot succeeds in his campaign against the left he would do no more than turn Labour into a less glamorous version of the SDP: that too would spell electoral disaster.

So the battle underway in the Labour Party is not just for the soul of that party but for its very existence.

Because it is so serious, and because so much is at stake, socialists must fight the civil war with every weapon they can lay their hands on.

The Foot clique have now proved themselves as deadly enemies of the Labour Party and they must be treated accordingly. They should be opposed in the constituencies, in the affiliated unions and at the party conference.

Foot needs to be challenged for the party leadership. The left in the party needs to speed up its plans to launch a new organisa-



*'I wonder if I should be on this extra-parliamentary demo?'*

Photo: LARRY HERMAN

### Stop witch-hunt

THE decision of the party leadership against Peter Tatchell is part of an attempt to witch-hunt the left out of the party. The Labour leaders have declared war on all those who are attempting to carry out conference decisions and who are fighting for policies which can oppose this Tory government. Supporters of *Militant*, *Socialist Organiser* and *Socialist Challenge* have all been under attack.

Such attacks should be vigorously opposed. The NEC should be flooded with resolutions condemning the actions taken in respect of Peter Tatchell and any attempt to witch-hunt socialists out of the party.

We print a model emergency resolution for our supporters to put through their wards. GMCs, trade unions to be sent to the NEC.

### Model resolution

*This branch/committee utterly condemns the action of the party leadership in refusing to endorse the candidature of Peter Tatchell in Bermondsey. The decision denies the right of CLPs to select their own candidates and hence makes a complete mockery of the decision of party conference to reselect MPs. The decision further lays the basis of a witch-hunt in the party against all those members who are attempting to implement conference decisions.*

*This branch/committee calls on the NEC to endorse the candidature of Peter Tatchell and all others who have been selected by their constituencies. To do otherwise will turn the party inwards and will not allow us to carry out conference policies which are needed to oppose the vicious policies of the Tory government, and which can lay the basis for Labour winning the next election.*

### JOIN THE FIGHT FOR SOCIALISM

If you would like to be put in touch with Socialist Challenge supporters in your area or would like more information fill in the form below

Name.....

Address.....

Age.....

Union/CLP (if any).....

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



Peter Tatchell — victim of the right wing witch hunt

### Labour's tradition

*'Nowadays the Labour Party seems to have lost much of its early radical tradition of resistance to Tory government edicts.'*  
Peter Tatchell, 1981

*'All believed that any move against the Parliamentary or Party machines were either undesirable or impossible or both. Aneurin Bevan was one of the few Members of Parliament who was not prepared to accept tamely this paralysing dispensation.'*  
Michael Foot, 1962

*'From Parliament itself nothing can be expected. It is jaded, tired and cynical. It can be stirred from outside,*

*but only from outside.'*

Nye Bevan, 1938  
*'I'm not saying that anyone should choose only Westminster as a battle ground — God forbid. Westminster would be an absolutely fruitless place if there weren't battles going on outside. No left MP can be effective if there are no mass movements outside.'*  
Michael Foot, 1966

*'We must look to new more militant forms of extra-parliamentary opposition which involve mass popular participation and challenge the government's right to rule.'*  
Peter Tatchell, 1981

## Parliamentary democracy and socialism

By Phil Hearse

MICHAEL FOOT, in launching his witch-hunt against the left in the party, has decided to take his stand on the 'sanctity' of parliamentary democracy. In attacking Tatchell, Foot has taken his fetish of parliament to extraordinary lengths. Peter Tatchell never said that he was opposed to parliament, only that mass mobilisations of the working class were needed to fight this government.

In taking his stand on this issue, Foot has highlighted crucial questions for the whole labour movement. Is the rule of parliament sacred for all time? Is parliamentary democracy really democratic? Can the labour movement combine intervention in parliament with mass working class action?

All these questions will be crucial to meet the challenge of the British political crisis.

**Mass struggle is the primary motor of social change**

Michael Foot's views on parliament are notoriously archaic. The whole history of the labour movement, both in Britain and internationally is of victories won by mass struggle, not primarily in parliament. All the major reforms which have been gained by the working class movement — trade union rights, universal suffrage, the welfare state — have been won by tremendous agitation outside parliament.

This agitation changed the political relationship of forces, creating the preconditions for the success of parliamentary legislation in workers' interests. The notion that it is enough to rely on the actions of Labour MPs in parliament is so ludicrous that we doubt whether anyone seriously believes it.

Take the question of nuclear weapons. It's

possible, although by no means certain, that a Labour government would pass legislation banning nuclear weapons from British soil. But if that happened, would it be because of the actions of Labour MPs in parliament? What a joke! It would be because of the mass demonstrations, hundreds of meetings, lobbies and pickets, resolutions, pamphlets — in short mass struggle and agitation.

Michael Foot knows that as much as anyone else. The defeat of the anti-abortion Corrie Bill was due to the mass mobilisation of the labour and women's movement. Peter Tatchell wasn't saying anything revolutionary in his *Labour Briefing* article. He was just stating the obvious.

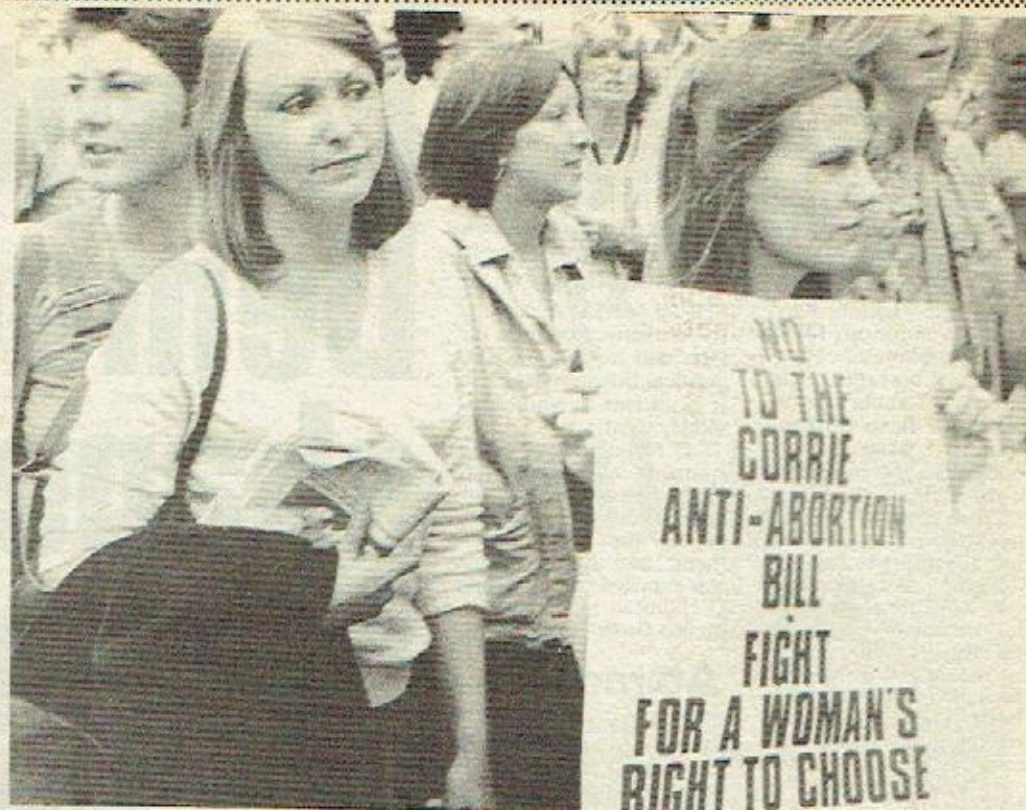
**The highest principle for socialists is defence of the working class, not parliament**

The ruling class has never confined itself to relying on parliament to defend its interests. It uses every weapon to hand.

When the trade unions grew stronger in the 1890s, the courts changed the laws by the infamous Taff Vale decision to fine trade unionists for striking. As we have just seen with Lord Denning's judgement on the GLC's 'cheap fares' policy, the courts have a long tradition of anti-working class judgments — no matter what parliament says.

The other major institutions of capitalist society — the army, the police, the civil service and the bosses are loyal to capitalism and capitalist interests, and are quite prepared to use non-parliamentary means to gain their objectives.

In 1974 the Labour government ordered the army to break the Ulster Loyalists strike, but the army hierarchy refused. In 1950-51 the bosses waged a huge extra-parliamentary campaign to stop the nationalisation of steel.



The Corrie anti-abortion bill was eventually defeated in parliament, but only after a campaign of mass anti-parliamentary action

All these show that parliament cannot be relied on to defend workers interests. During the 1970-4 Tory government huge attacks were launched on the working class. But the workers couldn't rely on the Labour Party in parliament to fight these attacks.

To free the five imprisoned dockers it took strike action by 600,000 workers, and the threat of a one-day general strike by the TUC.

The miners' strikes, which brought down the Tory government, were won through mass picketing by the miners, and vast solidarity actions by other groups of workers. None of these things would have been achieved by relying on the oratorical wizardry of M. Foot in parliament.

For socialists, the highest principle is the interests of their class — the working class. Reliance on the antique rituals of parliament has never been enough to fight the bosses.

**Parliamentary democracy is not the highest form of democracy**

Parliamentary democracy, bourgeois democracy, simultaneously gives the working class important political rights, and severely restricts its real control over events.

The right of working class parties to fight for their programmes in elections, to have MPs as an important gain. It gives the workers' movement an important voice in national politics. But parliamentary democracy is also designed to restrict the self-activity and control of the working class over political events.

Workers are expected to 'participate' in political decision making by just voting once every four or five years — and then leave everything to professional politicians. This isn't the highest form of democracy — far from it.

Socialist democracy might well include a national representative assembly elected by universal secret ballot. But the essence of socialist democracy, in a democratic socialist society, would be the direct participation of the masses in assemblies in places of work and localities, assemblies which would have decision-making power and directly elect delegates to regional assemblies.

Such delegates would be instantly recallable if the body which elected them was dissatisfied. For socialists the essence of democracy is the participation of the masses in running their own organisations, their own struggles, and the institutions which affect their lives.

Bourgeois parliamentary democracy is premised on the masses being passive and leaving politics to the professional politicians. The daily involvement of the masses in real decision making is incompatible with capitalism.

**Parliament is not central to achieving socialism**

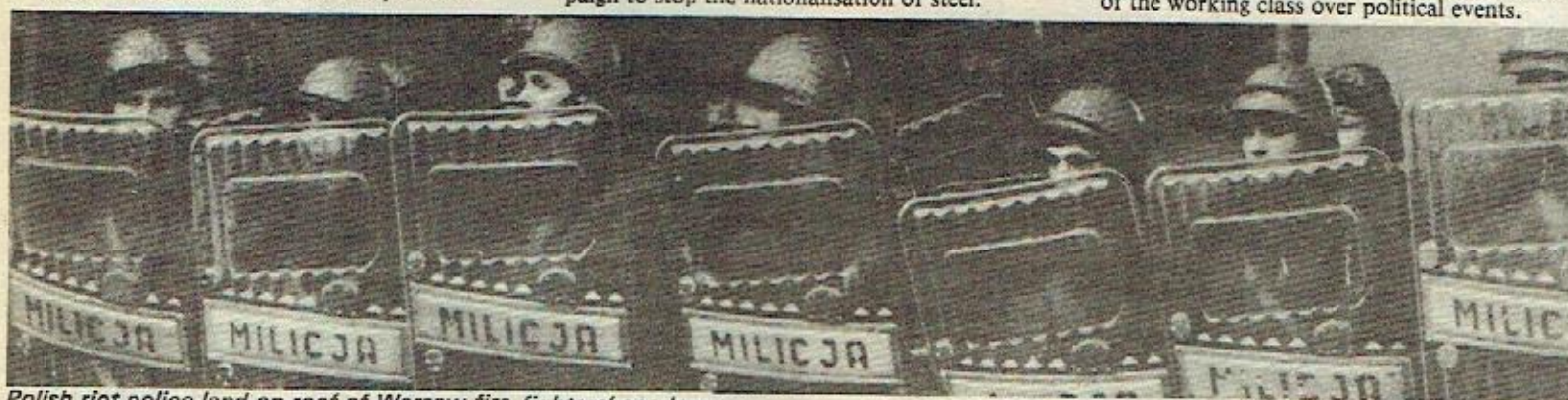
Socialism cannot be achieved by capturing the existing state apparatus and wielding it in the interests of the working class.

The present police force, army, civil service all defend the interests of capitalist society, that is to say the bourgeoisie. Achieving socialism means breaking up this state apparatus and reorganising it in the interests of the working class.

The self-organisation of the masses through workers councils must bring the institutions of the state under their own control.

It may well be that the first decisive step towards socialism is the achievement of a socialist majority in parliament. But if such a socialist majority started to legislate socialist measures, the ruling class would resist with all its extra-parliamentary might.

Once again, in this crucial stage, parliament would be inadequate to defend working class interests. Only the mobilisation of the masses behind socialist measures would defeat the ruling class counter-offensive.



Polish riot police land on roof of Warsaw fire fighters' academy

## Solidarity stands for workers' power

By Davy Jones

'CONFRONTATION is inevitable and confrontation will take place' said Lech Walesa at a special Solidarity leadership meeting in Radom last Friday. The remark has sent the Polish rulers into the same state of frenzy as Michael Foot's reaction to Peter Tatchell's article on parliamentary democracy.

And as for Zbigniew Bujak, head of Warsaw Solidarity, who remarked that: 'A general strike should be prepared and the union should wait for a good reason to start it' — he clearly shouldn't be allowed to stand as a candidate in the Polish elections!

The special leadership meeting was called by the union movement to respond to the police attack on a sit-in by Warsaw fire fighter cadets, and to the government's threat to introduce anti-strike legislation.

The union leadership has announced an immediate general strike if the Bill is passed in parliament, and the Warsaw branch has also called for a series of protest rallies to be held on 17 December against the actions of the police.

Union leaders are also coming under attack from the government. Marian Jurczyk, who came second in the election for Solidarity's national president, is being charged with slandering the state for the perfectly reasonable observation that the Polish parliamentary deputies were 'traitors', and that 'some people might have to be hanged to solve the nation's problems.'

The reality behind this latest war of words is that the Polish rulers, and their institutions like the party and the phoney parliament, are completely discredited. The Polish workers are increasingly looking instead to their own organisations and their own solutions to the

mounting economic and political crisis.

The enormous growth of the workers' self-management movement, the demand that Solidarity should be free to stand its own candidates in the elections, the development of the workers' own media and press, as well as the recent calls for workers' defence squads against the riot police, all clearly show the workers' desire to take their destiny into their own hands.

Socialists in this country should champion both the cause of the Polish workers and also the need for socialist policies and democratic accountability in the labour movement in this country.

The time was when every right winger and demagogue leapt on to the bandwagon to support Solidarity against the 'Communist menace'. They are notable by their silence now. They are too busy attacking socialists in this country.

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# Islington Social Democrats - the shape of things to come

## ARSENAL FOR THE CUP

## LABOUR FOR ISLINGTON

Printed by Camden Labour Centre, 8, Camden Road, NW1 & Published by Dave Davies, 9, Pemberton Gardens, N 19

IN JUST EIGHT months Islington Labour Party has lost its three MPs and control of the borough council. In a fanfare of media publicity, twenty five councillors and two MPs have defected to the Social Democratic Party. JAVY JONES, a member of the general management committee of Islington South Labour Party, looks at the background to these extraordinary events and draws some conclusions for socialists in the Labour Party.

Islington Labour Party has been notorious for its curious mixture of conservative, corrupt and careerist Labour politicians. All these different strands have come together in the recent rise of the SDP.

Throughout the sixties the Labour Council was run, according to the *New Statesman* as 'a secretive, right wing oligarchy under the control of Councillor Bill Bayliss'. So conservative was this group that the Labour government of the day even contemplated moving in a housing commissioner to force them to start building property in the area.

Leading local Labour Party activist, Keith Veness, told the *Islington Gutter Press* in 1975 that, 'the attitude of Bayliss was that if you start building council houses, you're going to encourage other people to come into the area.'

In the late sixties a new phenomenon struck the Islington Labour Party - Michael O'Halloran. His rise to fame is legend. When the sitting Labour MP died in 1969 the obscure councillor for Station Ward, Michael O'Halloran, was a surprise nomination for his placement.

### Big

Even more surprising was that through blatant ballot-rigging he was narrowly elected. Among those who voted was at least one bogus transport union delegate, Michael Weston, subsequently expelled from the party for 'personation', and other delegates with false addresses.

It is noteworthy that the delegate gave their address as that of Eileen Rosman, one of the councillors to defect to the SDP.

In March this year, and at the credentials for the dubious selection meeting were issued by Harry Reid, another SDP defector.

A subsequent inquiry, initiated from the national executive, found that O'Halloran had 'packed' the meeting with supporters but the matter was kept under the carpet because of the imminent election.

O'Halloran retained his grip over North Islington Labour Party through consistently bringing bogus delegates to every voting meeting, and other forms of corruption and 'bully-boy' tactics.

### Donation

O'Halloran had worked as an office manager for a local building firm, Murphys, before becoming MP. Murphys gave £1,000 to the Labour Party after O'Halloran's election. Murphys is also the owner of the controversial transport union branch GWU 1/723.

O'Halloran's other power base in the borough was the Gresham ballroom, whose licence holder, Pat Sherran, was at another Labour councillor who defected to the

SDP in March. According to company accounts, the Gresham made a £2,000 political donation in 1978. It is unclear to whom this money went.

O'Halloran could stomach no opposition. He had party members expelled for not standing during the national anthem, and Keith Veness was expelled for criticising O'Halloran in the *Islington Gutter Press*.

### Attract

The day before Veness was due to appear before the party's national executive to appeal his expulsion his wife, councillor Valerie Veness, was mysteriously attacked by two men with Irish accents who stabbed a broken bottle in her face. O'Halloran denied any involvement in the affair.

O'Halloran finally got his come-uppance in March this year when the left won control of Islington North Labour Party at the annual meeting of its management committee.

The first AGM had ended in uproar, with new bogus transport union delegates including constituency secretary, Morgan Lear, a NALGO member!

When the AGM was reconvened Morgan Lear sent in his resignation from the Labour Party, and the SDP gained their first six councillors one week later.

The third strand of the Islington Labour Party also emerged in the late sixties. The Tories took control of the council in 1968, for the first time in 40 years. Their three year rule coincided with the influx of a new largely middle-class 'left' into the party, particularly in the South and Central constituencies.

### New

This process culminated in 1971 with the election of Gerry Southgate as the new 'left' leader of the council, and an alleged 'new era of participation'.

In September this year Gerry Southgate led a further 16 Labour councillors into the SDP, at the same time as Michael O'Halloran's defection. Last week they were joined by a further three councillors giving the Social Democrats their majority. Gerry Southgate is now leader of the first SDP council in Britain.

Three different components of the old Labour Party had peeled off to join the new Tories, the SDP.

### Chop

The last straw for the councillors and MPs who defected was the threat of reselection. The advance of a new democratic left within the Labour Party committed to fighting for the interests of working people, meant that all of these so-called representatives of the labour movement were likely to face the chop.

It was the same with local party, whose response to the rise of the SDP was the same as that of Michael Foot: to adopt the SDP's policies and to make any concessions to keep the SDP 'fifth column' in the party.

Two incidents in the South constituency in recent months illustrate the point. At the Local Government Committee of the Labour Party an objection was raised to the re-nomination of councillor Chris Pryce to next year's panel of Labour candidates, because of his voting against party policy on housing and other issues.

### Storm

This move caused a storm among some of the councillors and the Labour right wing in Islington South. There were lengthy management committee discussions on the issue, motions of censure on delegates who had not supported Pryce, and a witch hunt against the left who had initiated the move, amid accusations of 'driving people into the

arms of the SDP'. Pryce rewarded his supporters last Wednesday when he joined the SDP.

Similarly with George Cunningham, MP for Islington South and Finsbury. Constituency chair, Ann Page, and husband Bruce, through the pages of the *New Statesman*, conducted an open campaign to have Cunningham re-elected despite his opposition to local party policy on most

major issues, like disarmament and party democracy.

Even when Cunningham publicly refused to confirm that he would fight the seat for Labour at the next election, the Pages and the constituency right wing marshalled the troops to dutifully vote for George at the reselection meeting.

Cunningham was promptly offered a front bench position on Home Affairs in the shadow cabinet by Michael Foot. George said 'thank you' to his supporters in the local and national party the next week when he left the Labour Party and announced his intention to fight against Labour at the next general election.

Charles Chapman, the defeated left candidate at Cunningham's reselection meeting and the constituency vice-chair, told Socialist Challenge: 'While we may suffer in the short term through these defections, in the long run the party will gain from such a shake-out. These people were never really socialists in my estimation.'

### Policies

'You can't beat the SDP by adopting their policies. We can only defeat them by letting the people of Islington know we're still here and fighting for their interests with socialist policies.'

Socialists in the Islington Labour Party are now trying to build a Labour left to provide a forum for developing a socialist strategy and to turn the Labour Party as a whole towards socialist campaigning.

The first test for the Labour Party will be how to respond to the new SDP council. In their first few days the new council has shown its true Tory colours:

\*It voted to sell off some 700 short life housing properties, with the likely eviction of 350 families.

\*It restarted council co-operation with the scab *Islington Gazette*, who are in dispute with the journalists' union, NUJ.

\*It agreed to the 'reorganisation' of social services field work despite opposition from the NALGO branch.

### SDP

Dave Burn, assistant secretary to the local NALGO branch, told us that if the SDP council is to fulfil its promise to keep rates down to 10/15 per cent and stay within the government guidelines, it will have to cut some £14m, or one fifth of its revenue budget.

'This could lead to as many as 1,000 redundancies, the closure of homes and day centres for the mentally handicapped, homes for old people, and reductions in the field services of up to 25 per cent. The SDP are also committed to stopping the funding for voluntary organisations in the borough and to vetoing any money being spent on a campaign against the Heseltine proposals on local government funding.'

It will be worth keeping an eye on the SDP's first council: it may be a foretaste of things to come nationally.



Keith Veness

# Coventry: Labour councils should fight, not cut

By Val Jones

**AT A mass meeting last Saturday, Coventry school meals assistants, cleaners and caretakers in the public employees' union, NUPE, voted to call off their strike which has kept 60,000 students away from schools for four weeks.**

The meeting accepted the recommendation from the district committee backed up by the NUPE officials to refer the dispute to arbitration and to return to work on the basis of the old hours and pay.

Many strikers condemned the return to work as a sell-out. If ACAS's record is anything to go by, arbitration will not ensure that NUPE's members' hours and pay will be defended.

When councils directly attack local authority unions by implementing Tory cuts the most effective weapon is strike action and not arbitration.

Coventry's Labour-controlled council certainly didn't

## Coventry Labour Council implements cuts

Here are some of their most recent achievements on behalf of the Tories:

- 1. Increased charges:** a further 25 per cent rise in the price of school meals, from 52p to 65p; a minimum charge of £1 a week for home help, previously 80 per cent of the service was free; a 10 per cent increase in all day nursery charges; a new charge of 65p for mid-day meals for the mentally handicapped at training centres; a new charge of 23p a day on the physically handicapped for transport to day centres; average rent paid by Coventry's 27,000 council tenants up to £14.25 a week, excluding rates, double the figure for November 1979.
- 2. Cuts in services:** free school meal withdrawn from infants; further cuts in nursery education following the complete shutdown of one nursery; college departments to close; reduced expenditure on repair and maintenance of schools and books; 90 people to lose the meals on wheels service; 270 people to lose their home help; reduced residential day care for the elderly and the handicapped; reduced refuse collection and street cleaning; essential repairs on council houses almost at a standstill.
- 3. More jobs lost:** annihilation of jobs in the parks and direct works department; a further reduction of 130 teachers, leading to bigger class size; further cutbacks on education assistants; nearly 100 jobs lost in social services including home helps, staff and children homes, social workers, nursery staff and the meals on wheels. Almost 200 jobs lost since 1978 in city engineers' department.

bargain for the militant determination shown by NUPE members. They mounted pickets of 21 secondary schools and three colleges of further education throughout the dispute to fight the council's cuts.

NUPE members stood firm, despite expensive adverts in the Coventry Evening Telegraph to con them into accepting a bogus peace formula and threats to use contract cleaners and parents to get the pupils back to school.

But NUPE has not been smashed. Its members, many of whom are women part-timers who have never been on strike before, have demonstrated that they are no easy target for cuts. Whatever the outcome of arbitration, with further cuts on the way for the next financial year, the council will have a battle on its hands again.

Labour councils which refuse to stand with the trade unions against the cuts will be drawn into further confrontation with their employees as the room for manoeuvre through rate rises, increased charges and voluntary redundancies dries up.

## How to fight Heseltine



Heseltine's bill: chickens coming home to roost

'TARZAN' Heseltine has run into problems. First a threatened back-bench Tory revolt is forcing him to drop the controversial proposal for rates referendums for 'overspending' local authorities. And now the courts have granted Norwich Council an injunction to stop Heseltine sending in his commissioners to sell off council houses. But, TESSA VAN GELDEREN argues, the courts and Tory 'wets' are the last people we can rely on to stop the Tories' cuts in local government funding.

The new Heseltine Bill is another Tory attack on workers' living standards. It will restrict local government spending still further, forcing councils to make cuts and redundancies.

Many councils, particularly those under left Labour control like the GLC, have tried to avoid cuts by increasing the rates. Socialist Challenge believes that this strategy is only another method of making the working class pay for the crisis. We have argued instead for a mass labour movement campaign around no cuts, and no rent or rate rises.

But with the new Heseltine Bill the chickens are really coming home to roost. Because rate rises have not only been proven to be an electoral disaster for the Labour Party over the past period, but the

new Bill will remove any possibility of them providing a 'solution' to the crisis of council spending.

Not only might the rate rises need the approval of a local referendum, but the new Bill will also ensure that the domestic rate payers will pay a bigger burden of the increase than the commercial sector. In other words working people will pay.

It is urgently necessary for the Labour left to develop a clear strategy to fight against the Tory cuts in council spending. Most of the options put forward are hopelessly inadequate: labour movement referendums, resigning from office and going into opposition, and so on. They all lack the one essential ingredient: they are not based on a campaign to mobilise the labour movement against the Tories.

Any attempt, no matter how well intentioned, by councils or councillors to place themselves in the front line with surcharges, bankruptcy and the rest, will only create martyrs for the history books.

Without working people fully supporting what is being done in their name, such actions are meaningless and a waste of time. The same is true about resigning from office and voting down Tory/SDP proposals.

The only way Heseltine, Tebbit and the Tories will be defeated is by the working class taking action. The miners' strike against Heath in 1974 showed that. But in a period when the working class has suffered a number of set backs, it is looking for leadership, not martyrs. The Labour left has so far failed to provide that leadership.

It has spent too much time discussing the rights and wrongs of labour movement referendums rather than taking up and supporting struggles that workers are involved in.

The Labour group on the Greater London Council voted to maintain a 'low profile' while the House of Lords decided whether the council had the right to decrease London's fares, the most popular decision the GLC had ever taken! The Labour group was not prepared to mobilise the labour movement in its defence.

The most radical manifesto is not worth the paper it is written on without the active support of the labour movement. When local government workers see that councils are prepared to fight for all jobs, then and only then will they be willing to take action in defence of their jobs and the living standards of working people.

The labour movement led by Labour councils and the Labour Party should be organising demonstrations throughout the country to show that there is opposition to Heseltine. They should be organising a national conference of Labour Parties and trade unions to plan national opposition to the proposals.

Without laying the basis for such a campaign all the other proposals will come to nothing. And the Labour Party may well have no councils left to stand and fight Heseltine in May.



Photo: JOHN HARRIS

## Why should Labour Party members support NUPE?

The job of the Labour Party is to protect the services, jobs and working conditions of working class people, and especially the low paid. The Tories are dismantling the welfare state in order to provide money for tax hand-outs to the rich and increased spending on so-called 'law and order' and 'defence'.

The labour movement exists to oppose these measures root and branch. Our job is to massively increase the spending on education and social services. If the Tories won't allow that they must be replaced by a Labour government that will promote the interests of working people with as much vigour as the Tories look after their own class.

Dave Nellist, prospective Labour Party parliamentary candidate for Coventry South East

'It's a sad day when a Labour council imposes cuts on one of the most vulnerable sections of its workforce. We're not only the lowest paid, it's also our conditions. Let them come and work in our kitchens. We need our jobs, we don't go to work for company or for pin money. They thought we'd be an easy target. It's not just our fight, but your fight.'

Mrs Rowena Mason, NUPE member from Cardinal Newman School addressing a lobby of the City Council last Thursday, two days before the decision was taken to go to arbitration.

### Resolution from Coventry South East CLP

1. To return to the status quo through the immediate withdrawal of letters implementing cuts in hours and wages from NUPE members
2. Pay the wages lost during this dispute
3. Withdraw the £2m cut package and remove the recent spending cuts
4. Reopen discussions between the Labour council, the District Labour Party and the public services trade unions for a joint fight against Tory plans for further cuts in local authority spending.



## Staffa defeat What went wrong?

In 29 September, 390 workers employed at Staffa Products in East London occupied their factory to try to prevent the removal of their factory to Plymouth. The close-down involves a net loss of jobs and the destruction of 30 per cent of all engineering jobs in East London.

The dispute soon won official support. Lack of support for the dispute up and down the country was such that the strike committee was able to pay out £5 expenses per shift to each picket in the last weeks of the dispute.

But after 10 weeks, the workforce decided by a substantial majority to give up the fight and accept the phased closure of the factory on the basis of some limited concessions. Why did this happen?

**BRIAN GROGAN** gives his views on what went wrong. Socialist Challenge invites Staffa workers and supporters to write and tell us what they think of the conclusions of this article and the outcome of the fight for jobs at Staffa.

The minority of strike activists put up a valiant fight. They understood that the best weapon was occupation. After eviction a 24-hour picket was maintained throughout — rain or shine.

The strikers toured the country speaking at labour movement bodies and fighting for finances and backing. When asked why only 31 finally voted to continue the fight, most activists replied, 'apathy was the main enemy'.

But this itself had to be explained. The biggest culprits are the leadership of the engineering union — particularly Duffy and Boyd. What better platform to fight Tory unemployment does the

labour movement need than such an intransigent group of workers? But at no time did they attempt to promote the fight and extend its support.

### AUEW

It is almost certainly true that without the battle of the Laurence Scott workers, they probably would not have even made the dispute official. This undermined the confidence of the majority of inactive strikers.

But it wasn't only the right wing of the AUEW. The local AUEW District, whose President is Communist Party member George Anthony, equally failed to lift a finger to help the fight. The fact of

the matter is that at the end of ten weeks no worker had received more than five weeks strike pay — and some less than that.

The national leadership of the Labour Party also defaulted. It is true that some 30 MPs sponsored a resolution demanding the blocking of the £4m grant which was the basis on which the decision to move to Plymouth was made. But they did not even appear on the picket line, let alone take it to the shadow cabinet and the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party as they promised.

### MP

There were only one or two honourable exceptions. This compounded the problem created by the support given to the Staffa management by the local Labour MP Bryan Magee.

The inexperienced strike leadership had to tackle problems of how to stop the management removing motor stock and machinery when the factory was patrolled by over 100 police. They had to find a strategy for dealing with the hostility to their fight of the local MP.

They had to keep the strike going financially, and win blacking and solidarity. This was aside from dealing with the intrigues and attacks of a sophisticated management of an American-owned international company backed to the hilt by the Tories. It was only on the

basis of tackling these problems that the confidence of the inactive majority could have been won.

Given the default of the official leadership of the movement, the Right to Work Campaign and the Socialist Workers Party, were able to provide collection sheets, leaflets, public platforms and help in raising finance and support up and down the country.

But promoting the

Right to Work Campaign led the strike leaders away from developing a fight to force the top leadership of the trades unions and the Labour Party to act in support of the dispute. This went in the opposite direction to that of Laurence Scott dispute. Right to Work members tried to substitute for the official movement rather than involve it.

Some examples: the collection sheets that were

produced had the Right to Work emblem boldly emblazoned all over them. This publicised the Right to Work Campaign but gave an excuse to the right wing not to contribute to the dispute.

It gave the impression that the workers themselves were not in charge of their own dispute. This was reinforced by giving the Right to Work telephone number as the 'delegation's office'.

The night of the eviction from the factory, most of the leading militants were in Blackpool on the Right to Work demo. This was a disaster as it meant that no leadership was there at a crucial time. Everyone knew the eviction was imminent.

The Right to Work campaign leaders disdained to fight in the engineering unions. Instead, they thought up publicity gimmicks like taking Staffa workers to Tebbit's home in an 'On your Bike' demo.

They actively opposed any fight into the Labour Party. This was crucial. It was both possible and necessary to develop a campaign to force Bryan Magee to change his mind. Indeed, the work that was done on this front by the stewards in collaboration with Socialist Challenge witnessed some success. Magee's about-face to demand the withdrawal of the £4m grant was important because victories in such a campaign are the sort of development which would have inspired confidence in the inactive majority.

Instead of winning the activists to involvement in the Right to Work campaign it was necessary to go on a big campaign to involve the majority of strikers. It is to the Labour Party and trade union leaders that the majority looks.

### Win

It was vital to force such elements to back the fight as a way of winning the hearts and minds of the 'silent majority'. As every good general knows, the middle ground behind the front lines has to be secured in order to achieve victory. This elementary point was not understood.

The Staffa battle is over. But the war against unemployment is not. It is necessary to learn the lessons so that the other groups of workers don't fall into similar mistakes. The active minority of strikers now have a responsibility to the rest of the working class.

They have to go into the unions to win them back for the members. They have the responsibility to go into the Labour Party to strengthen the battle of the left to get a leadership which responds to their needs.

Then, those like the 31 Staffa workers who voted for the dispute to continue, will not find themselves in a minority. Then they can go on to win.



## Liverpool typists' dispute escalates

By Yvonne Taylor

**CITY Council staff in Liverpool have decided to take strike action and to implement selective disruption. The decision was passed overwhelmingly at a mass meeting of members of the local government workers' union, NALGO, on 7 December.**

After five months of strike action, 400 council-employed typists and machine operators had forced council leaders to agree to talks about an inquiry into their claim over pay grading and training.

The strikers were preparing to return to work once the terms of the inquiry were agreed.

Now Liberal Council leader, Trevor Jones, is making it a condition that NALGO must agree not to take action against union members who were involved in strike-breaking. Local union officers see this as an attempt to weaken the union.

Strike breaking has been an important issue during the dispute. In his attempts to crush the strikers, Jones has suspended 250 workers without pay for refusing to scab and 300 NALGO members, mainly in senior posts, have left the union.

The proposals carried by the mass meeting include refusing to prepare next year's city council budget, no covering for absentees, strike action in key departments and refusing to work with officers

who have left the union during the dispute or who have been involved in strike-breaking.

If there are any sackings, the union will take all-out strike action.

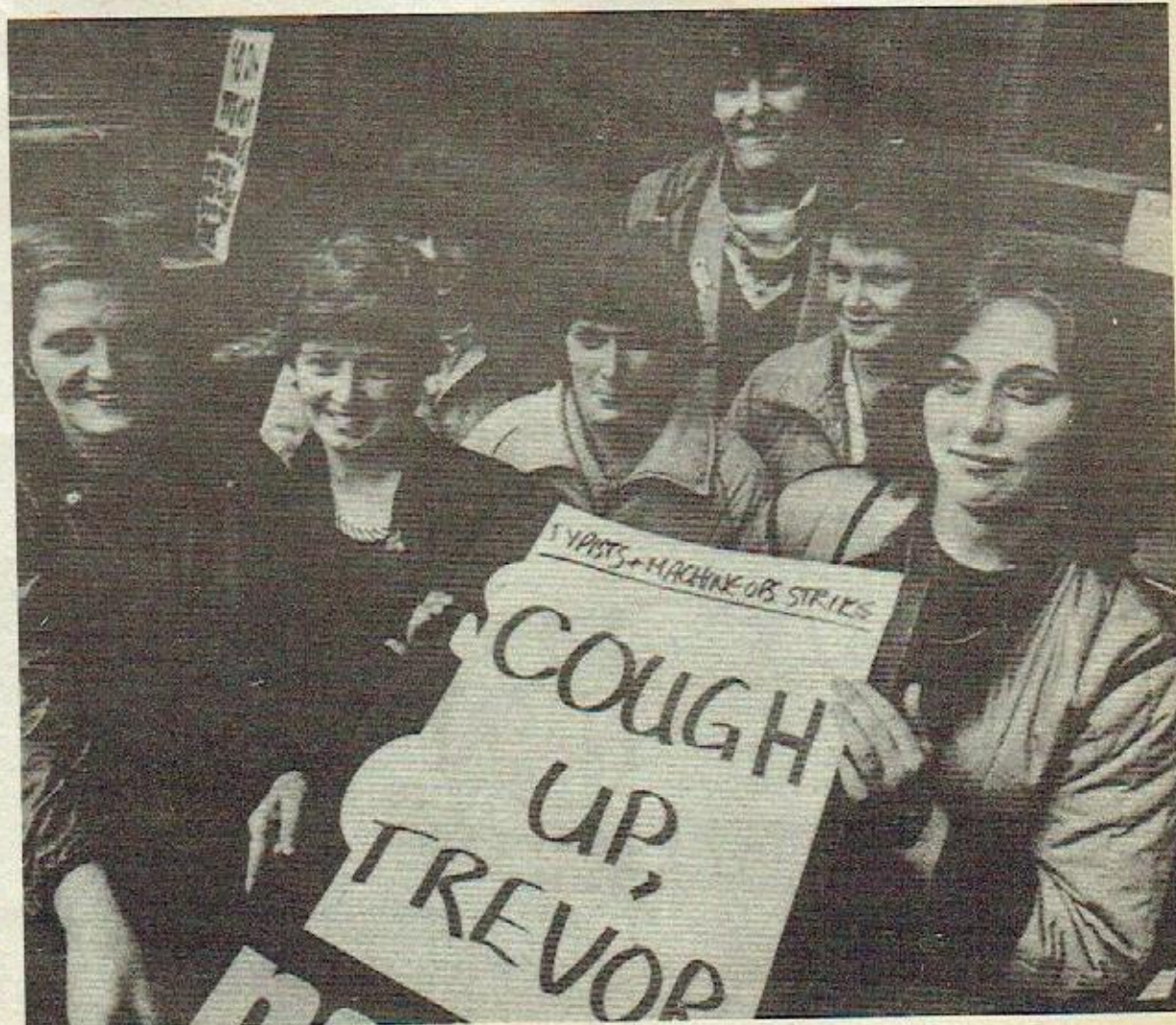
The decision is a massive vote of confidence in Liverpool NALGO's union officers.

Trevor Jones had written to every council employee asking for support for the position he had adopted in the talks and had attempted to whip up a witch-hunt against the left in the union.

He was quoted in the press as saying: 'We are having to defend the members against their own branch executive which is connected to the Militant Tendency.' Jones also gave all council workers time off with pay to attend the mass meeting, no doubt hoping that his red-scare would result in a big defeat for the union's local leaders.

And his campaign did seem to be succeeding. Only a few days previously, Peter Cresswell, the branch secretary, along with the assistant branch secretary, had lost their union positions to right wing candidates in an election ballot. But of the 3,500 members who turned up to the meeting, only a couple of hundred voted against their executive's recommendations.

Al Walker, Liverpool NALGO's Vice-Chairperson, told Socialist Challenge: 'It just goes to show what a difference it makes to people's views when they have a chance to hear the arguments debated out.'



## Strike call at Ford

By Mick Drake, Dagenham Assembly Plant

ALL OUT strike action from 5 January is being recommended by national union negotiators to Ford's 54,000 manual workers in response to the company's 7.5 per cent with strings wage offer.

Shop stewards have already backed the strike call and mass meetings look set to endorse it. The union claim is for £20 across the board and a 35 hour week.

However, the pressure for strike action comes not so much from the money offer but from the shopping list of 'efficiency improvements' attached to it. These were spelled out in a company employee bulletin as follows:

- \* employee mobility between jobs and pay grades
- \* smooth and speedy introduction and effective operation of new technology and work system
- \* avoidance of inefficient demarcation and effective operation of new technology and work system
- \* avoidance of inefficient demarcations between jobs, trades, equipment, operations and shift
- \* flexibility in overtime working including the abandonment of 'one in, all in'
- \* elimination by employees of avoidable lost time during working hours.

As well as bell to bell working, this prepares the ground for attacks on



Ron Todd

preparation and clean up times, line workers' relief times and tea breaks.

All local (plant level) agreements which the company deem to be in conflict with these five points 'are terminated'. In addition, Ford want a panel of full time union officials to police these points, and senior stewards to 'affirm their agreement to them for application in every plant'.

In plain terms, Ford is aiming for total control over line speeds and working practices as it slaughters jobs. And the company wants the trade union and shop steward organisation to disarm itself in order to achieve this.

If this much is becoming clear to the shopfloor,

a great deal more is not. National negotiations have dragged on for seven weeks with virtually no report backs to the shop floor, despite the fact that the main topic of discussion has been 'efficiency'.

At the final meeting with management on 2 December, union negotiators even submitted their own efficiency proposals. Although rejected by management these included concessions on mobility of labour and other items.

Yet in September our chief negotiator, Ron Todd, pledged to a national meeting of Ford shop stewards that there would be no discussions on efficiency before the wage claim was settled. Prolonged negotiations and secret talks have meant that the original claim for £20 and 35 hours has been lost sight of.

Some newspapers have suggested that the company was told privately that 7½ per cent would have been recommended if the strings had been dropped. Now we face a rearguard action on conditions.

But Ford workers need at least £20 to return living standards to their 1979 level. And a 35 hour week is the minimum needed to defend jobs against the onslaught of new technology. Hopefully, a decision to strike will bring these demands back to the centre of discussion.



Picketing at Doncaster: a basic right under threat

# Laurence Scott - Defend the right to picket

By Pete Clifford

LAURENCE SCOTT strikers are facing a serious attack on their right to picket. For four weeks they have maintained a picket of their parent company, Mining Supplies of Doncaster. Six of the stewards have had injunctions served on them under the Employment Act and are due to appear in court on 18 December.

But the picket continues and support grows. Greater Manchester MPs, Charles Morris and Michael Meacher, have called on the labour movement to stand with Laurence Scott strikers in their fight for jobs.

Scott's steward, Phil Penning, said that Michael Meacher, in talks with the convenor, had likened the threat to picketing to that of the five dockers jailed in 1972.

'What's under attack,' Phil explained, 'is the right to effectively pursue a dispute. After the helicopter raid on our factory, we launched the picket at Doncaster. We've got blacking from the miners and as a result Snipe, our boss, is getting worried. He says he'll have to close by Christmas.'

'So we have to keep up the pressure. The law seems to be saying that Snipe can have flying scabs but flying pickets are out.'

The Employment Act has not yet been used in a major dispute against picketing. Passed in 1980, its aim is to stop such actions as the miners' picket at

### Xmas Appeal for LSE families

Rotherham and South Yorkshire BSC Crafts Committees are launching a special Christmas appeal for the families of the Laurence Scott strikers, now in their ninth month of dispute.

Whilst the rest of us are enjoying some seasonal good cheer, the Laurence Scott workers will be on the picket lines fighting unemployment.

We are starting the appeal with two donations of £500 each from Rotherham and South Yorkshire BSC Craft Committees.

We will also be collecting in every possible place — in pubs, clubs, and meetings — to raise money and win support for this dispute.

Please send donations to: Laurence Scott Joint Shop Stewards Committee Xmas Appeal Fund, c/o Bernard Connolly, Convenors Office/CEW, Rotherham BSC, The Ickles, Rotherham, South Yorkshire.

Saltley Gate, the steelworkers' picket at Hadfields. The injunction against the Scott's strikers will be a testing ground for implementing this law.

Engineering union leaders, Terry Duffy and John Boyd, are very wary of a confrontation with the Tories' new act. They've withdrawn the union solicitors from advising the strikers. The dispute has not had the Union's official backing since August.

Yet, despite this, the response from the labour movement has been tremendous. A total just under half the number of engineering union branches, 1,016, have sent resolutions calling for national backing — an unprecedented situation inside the AUEW.

Such solidarity now has to be extended into action to defend the right to picket. Michael Meacher is to raise the issue in parliament and a delegation of North west MPs are to join the picket line.

What is at stake in this dispute is much more than the future of one small strike. The picket line at Mining Supplies has to become an issue for every trade unionist and Labour Party member.

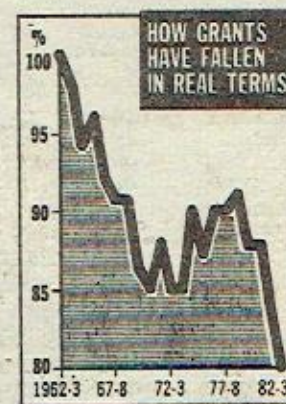


## Students in conference

THE National Union of Students agreed to campaign for a one-week strike in opposition to the government's 4 per cent ceiling on grants. The students' conference in Blackpool last week also adopted policy against Heseltine's attacks on local government and expressed solidarity with the Labour Greater London Council.

But motions from several colleges urging direct action to fight the cuts were defeated. Speakers from the Bradford 12 Defence Committee and Laurence Scott received standing ovations. Owen Carron, however, MP for Fermanagh and South Tyrone, was not allowed to address the conference.

The National Executive,



controlled by the Communist Party dominated Left

Alliance overturned existing procedure with the co-operation of the National Organisation of Labour Students.

Despite these manoeuvres over 500 delegates at observers heard Owen Carr speak at two very successful fringe meetings organised by the Socialist Workers Study Organisation and the Labour Committee on Ireland.

Conference agreed campaign for Britain withdrawal from NATO gave official support Youth CND. Socialist Challenge supporters were instrumental in getting NUS support the recent initiative from the CND conference an international day against nuclear missiles.

### Statement by Charles Morris MP, Openshaw

THE workers at Laurence Scott at Openshaw, Manchester, have now been engaged in a fight with their employers for the 'right to work' for a period of some eight months.

Their 'sit-in' at the factory was brought to an end by a sledge hammer wielding team of bailiffs. Helicopters have been used in a blatant attempt at strike breaking. Now a legal injunction in the High Court is being sought by the employers against six of the leading members of the strike committee to prevent them picketing Mining Supplies, Doncaster, the parent company of the group.

Conscious of the British labour and trade union movements commitment to fight for jobs, we urge support for the Laurence Scott workers in their continuing campaign.

### How to help

\*Join the Picket: Mining Supplies, Carr Hill, Balby, Doncaster. 24 hours, 7 days a week. Mass picket every Monday. Delegations can be accommodated overnight. Tel 061 231 4434.

\*Black Snipe: Companies owned by Arthur Snipe's Mining Supplies are Laurence Scott and Electromotors, Mining Sup-

plies, Mech-Con, Mecho Mech-Electric and Mech-Cast. Blacking is also requested for firms who cross the picket. This includes Armitages, Adams and Eldreds. For full list telephone as above.

\*Send donations: c/o G Fryer, 20 Roundcroft, Romiley, Cheshire.

# A history of bitterness and pain

By Ken Hercules

NORTH of Ireland police tactics have hit Britain. CS gas, water cannon and plastic bullets mean a shift to more repressive forms of policing in the fearful response of the ruling circles to the youth who took to the streets during the summer.

While the media spoke of marauding gangs and criminal elements disturbing the peace, A Sivanandan in the most recent issue of *Race & Class* gives a different view of what happened — black resistance.

The summer disturbances are the latest on a long list of black struggles, filled 'with bitterness and pain all the way.'

Black people whether from the Caribbean, India, Pakistan, Asians from East Africa or from Mother Africa, came to England during the 1950s-70s with a bitter taste of British colonialism in their mouths and a determination to defeat British colonialism in their minds.

Once here they had another, although not new, problem. They had to contend with a united racism which cut straight across the classes.

A racism made so warm a home for itself in British culture that it blunted class conflict.

Subjected to racial attacks, poor housing, super-exploitation by the bosses, resistance by black people was an inevitable outcome of their daily life.

In 1954, the persistent racial violence surged up into two days of 'warfare' in Camden Town which culminated in a petrol bomb attack on the house of a West Indian family.

Four years later, the black community in Nottingham erupted into violence to be followed in Notting Hill, where teddy boys directed by Mosleyites and the White Defence League had for weeks been 'nigger hunting' while the police casually looked on.

The police were to play an even increasing role in brutalising the black community.

The feeling of absolute hatred for the police is never more ingrained than in the minds of the young West Indians.

In 1973, the police received the OK from the courts — who had just given a 20 year sentence to 16 year old West Indian for 'mugging' — and they went on the offensive with the Sus law.



Anwar Ditta — a successful campaign

From then on black youths were assaulted individually, clubs raided, meeting places disturbed and events such as carnival blanketed by police.

Youths struck back at Brockwell Park Fair in 1973 and again in Chapeltown, Leeds, in 1975. However these were only the build up to the first massive explosion of Notting Hill Carnival in 1976, when as Sivanandan says '1600 policemen took it on themselves to kill joy on the streets'.

The youths, while satisfying their anger also learnt an invaluable lesson — that the boys in blue injure just like me and you.

More important, police authority was shown to be questionable — a question which was to pose itself this year with greater intensity.

In showing how today's youth are responding to their situation, Sivanandan also reviews their parents' struggles against racist Labour governments and the trade unions.

'What Enoch Powell says today, the Tory party says tomorrow and Labour legislates on the day after' was a favoured way of summing up the Labour Party approach to the black population.

The racism of the trade unions forced black workers to organise within their community, so that their struggles got bound up with the struggles for community rights.

One such example was the case of Sikh bus drivers fighting to be allowed to wear their turbans.

Although few of the Afro-Caribbean and Asian organisations that arose during this period can claim to have significantly influenced British society, one after the other has come forward on a variety of issues — education, housing, immigration, police harassment, immigration.

When in 1976, Asian women at Grunwicks smashed the myth of Asian passivity they were standing on the shoulders of all the other struggles of the black community and their example established the potential strength of the emerging black women's movement.

Sivanandan puts the 1981 events into their historical perspective. The question remains however, what comes next?

The answer must surely lie in taking the offensive, in forming national organisations which include all minority groupings to defeat racism, to bring forward a programme for black rights, and to push forward the fight for socialism.



Race & Class: Rebellion and Repression: Volume XXIII Numbers 2/3, £1.50

WHAT EVER else may be said about 1981 no one will deny that this was the year that Britain's three million strong black community made its presence felt.

It was the year blacks said enough was enough, and struck back hard at this racist, unjust society. They smashed official indifference to the murderous attacks they have suffered from right wing forces when they campaigned to get the truth out about the New Cross Massacre where 13 young people died in a fire bomb attack.

Asian youth in Coventry and Southall fought police when fascists attacked their communities.

And Thatcher's Britain was truly exposed when youth in Brixton and other major cities, enraged by harassment, discrimination and deprivation fought pitched battles with police.

Racist immigration policies were hammered when Anwar Ditta won her campaign to bring her children to Britain. Here activists in the black movement describe some aspects of the fight against racism.

## 1981 — A YEAR

### 'Why we black have come tog

DAY to day racism in the workplace, v destruction of traditional areas of black labour the textile industry, the new Nationality Bill, tion raids on factories — all affect black wor

BERNIE GRANT is a London area organiser National Union of Public Employees, with res ty for its positive action programme. He is in setting up a new organisation called the Bla Unionists Solidarity Movement. He is also councillor in Haringey, North London.

Toni Gorton spoke to him about the effe year's events on black workers and what he tl happen in 1982.

You are a full time official in a union that has many black members. How is the economic situation affecting them?

In the trade unions we see that when redundancy comes up, since it's usually black people who have been hired last, they're the first out.

Also when youth are selected for training, the bosses tend to choose their 'own people' first.

Indirect racism such as recruitment practice at the factory gate is becoming a hell of a problem. There's a lot of

pressure on the black workers.

For example, a hospital porter was ly for black people white people would hands. Now we're there's competitor jobs.

Before, a black y bring along a cousin for a job, that's no pening. White people taking these jobs.

Since the ri government discrim increased. Supervi union officials and

### In the courts

By Chris Guthrie

INCREASED use of the courts will be part and parcel of the future in trying to intimidate and criminalise black political activists as in the case of the Bradford 12.

They have already been used in two ways. First, individuals have been charged and tried separately as followed the police riots in Southall in April 1979 and with the thousands arrested after the riots last summer.

A very high conviction rate has been achieved in these cases and magistrates have generally accepted the police view even in the face of overwhelming defence evidence.

While charges have ranged from fairly minor ones such as obstruction to more serious such as grievous bodily harm, the sentences, even for the most minor, have been heavy.

Second, group trials have been mounted. In July 1980,

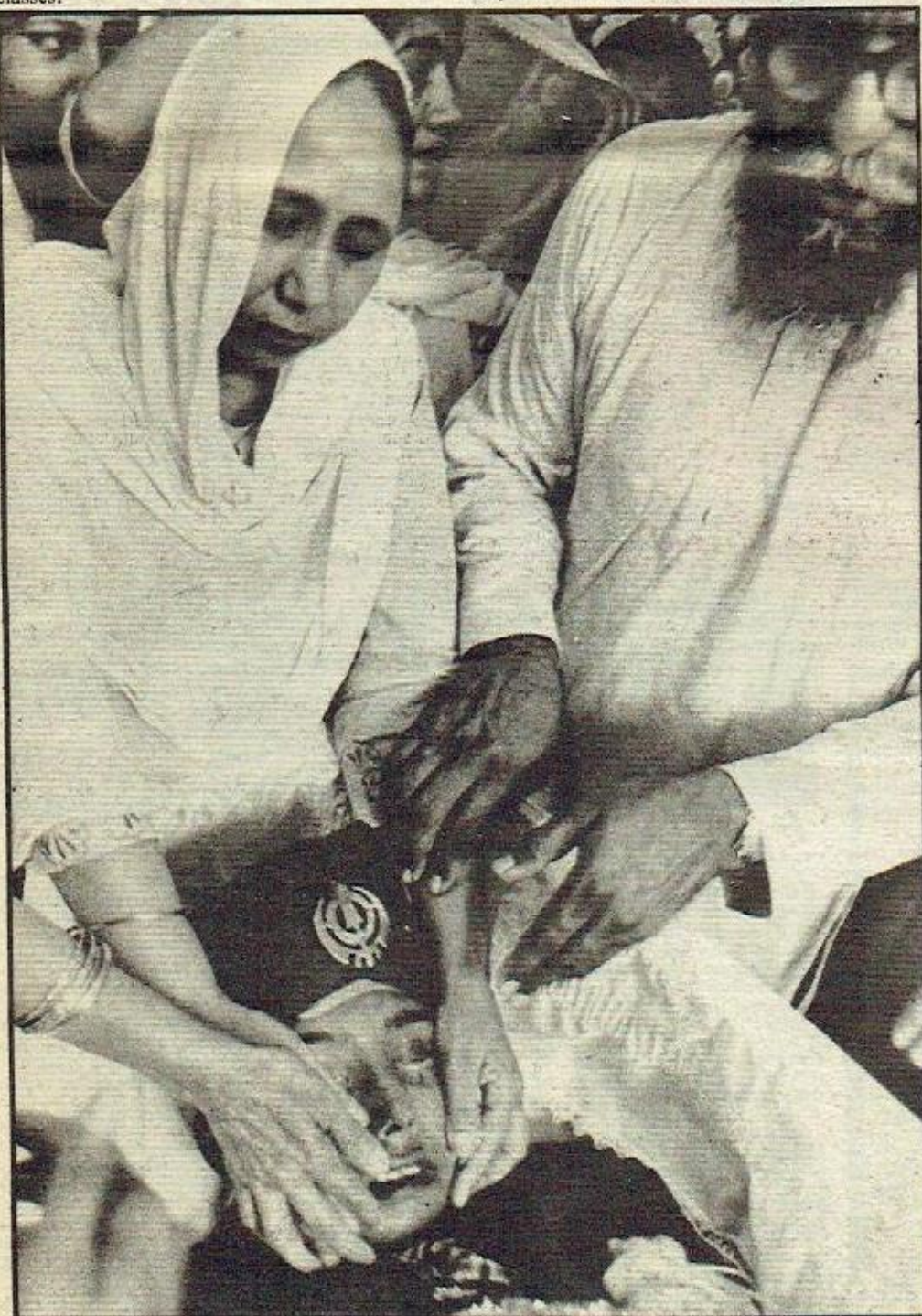
following the riot in area of Bristol 12 p arrested and the riotous assembly, which carries a 1 sentence. However collapsed.

In Bradford tw Asians, most of political activists, rested following so incidents on 11 July a ed discovery by th some petrol-filled n.

They have been with manufacturing and two conspira which carry life. They are all pleading

The use of charges is sinister. be convicted f discussing a crim political background ty of the defendant ed as evidence.

The political na case is shown by th tions on eight of the



Mother with her son Gurdip Chaggar, victim of racist murder in Southall 1976



# Filipino deportations — one way of solving unemployment

By K Sen

**DURING** the past two years, over 500 migrant workers, mainly Filipinos, have been threatened with deportation.

Many workers have been arrested, held in detention and, after interrogation by the Home Office, deported.

Nancy Lomboy, a hotel chambermaid is one of 30 Filipino workers facing deportation by the Home Office before Christmas, unless action is taken to defend her now.

These deportations are 'justified' by reinterpretation and changes in the immigration laws.

During the post-war economic boom, immigration laws were changed to permit easy entry of foreign workers, mainly from the semi-colonial countries, to fill menial and low-paid jobs.

workers have been harassed and their legitimate entry questioned, as part of a campaign to blame unemployment on these workers rather than the system itself.

It is now alleged that the migrant workers entered this country by deception, by failing to declare children or giving false references.

While the workers gave correct information there was deception by employment agencies who filed false information without the knowledge of the people involved.

It now appears that the bosses are trying to force redundancies through repatriation.

The Filipino workers have organised a defence campaign against the harassment of the Home Office. They have won the support of the labour movement.

The Labour Party conference in October pledged to grant amnesty to the migrant workers. However the urgency of the situation still requires immediate action.

The unions concerned (COHSE, NUPE, GMWU and TGWU) have given support to the Filipino workers. They are appealing to the Home Office to stop the deportations.

The deportations can be stopped if there is mass support for the Filipino workers. Already other threatened deportations have been stopped through such mass campaigns.



Nancy Lomboy

But with the end of this boom, new laws were passed in 1968 and 1971 which aimed to drastically reduce the number of foreign workers entering the country.

While the 1971 Immigration Act restricted the application of work permits for skilled workers, some categories were exempted, as there was still an acute shortage of semi and unskilled labour in some areas.

In response to pressure from the employers in Britain the Home Office gave some leeway in granting special quotas for work permits for migrant workers seeking jobs in hospitals, hotels and the catering industry.

Most of these workers came from the Philippines, many of whom were granted full resident status by the Home Office after completing four years work.

However, with the onset of the recession in 1979 with cuts in social services and shut-downs in many industries, the status of these workers has been challenged.

Since that time, foreign



Raymundo Villajuan

You can add your support by doing the following:

\*Write to the Home Office Minister (Timothy Raison) appealing for the Filipino and other migrant workers who are facing deportation.

\*Pass a resolution at your union or Labour Party branch appealing for support.

\*Send money to help the campaign.

For further information contact Migrant Action Group c/o 68 Chalton Street, London NW1. 01-388 0241.

## The case of Mrs Knight and her family

ON the night of 7 November an argument broke out between Mrs Knight and her family and another family in the basement flat. The police dragged her out along with her two daughters aged 19 and 13. Her six year old daughter was left to fend for herself.

Mrs Knight received injuries to her head, arms, thigh and coccyx, and a cut on her face which required stitches, while at Stoke Newington Police Station in Hackney.

She and her two daughters were charged with 'assaulting the police' and with a breach of the peace.

Hackney Black People's Association and the Hackney Legal Defence Committee are calling for a picket of Highbury Magistrates Court on Wednesday 9 December at 10am and a Day of Action on Wednesday 16 December.

Assemble outside Hackney Town Hall, Mare Street, E8 at 1pm.

## Save the Khans from deportation

ALI and Parveen Khan and two children are threatened with immediate deportation.

Mr Khan came to Britain in 1972 at the age of 13 as an 'illegal immigrant'. Thinking that amnesty offered in 1974 automatic he didn't bother to apply.

Parveen came in 1979 to meet him and they have since had children who were born here.

The Home Office is trying to deport her as well because she concealed a 'material' fact — that her husband was an illegal immigrant something she didn't even know.

Write to Gerald Kaufman at the House of Commons urging him to fully support the Khans to the Home Office demanding that they drop the threat of removal.

Contact the support group 595 Stockport Rd, Longs Manchester.



...cette œuvre était consacrée aux deux révois et aux gilets inspirés par le mariage princier. Les producteurs l'ont fait voler en éclats, avant même de réserver leur récompense aux

# OF BLACK STRUGGLE

## Unionists 'ther'

come out into the open with their racism.

The actual number of race discrimination cases that I've had to deal with has increased dramatically.

We get reports that resolutions are being discussed in branches calling for repatriation.

Is there a white backlash? Did the riots mark a watershed in black consciousness and willingness to struggle? Well I think one of the first things that really started to shake black people up was the Deptford Massacre and the Black People's Day of Action.

After Deptford, the riots came and black people felt that they were under pressure. They were definitely getting a white backlash, especially with the Tory MPs talking about repatriation.

It all gelled at the same time to produce this upsurge in consciousness.

In this period the traditional 'muscle men' of the trade unions have been unable to fight back against the govern-

ment attacks because of unemployment and so on.

What's happening is that these other sectors — blacks, women, disabled people, gays — are getting more oppression than the white male trade unionists. There's no alternative but to struggle.

A number of changes are taking place. While militancy is generally at a low ebb there are many political discussions going on in the branches that just didn't happen a year or two ago.

Now is the most fertile time really for any group, black, women or whatever, to make an intervention. Especially in the Labour Party, where we're fighting for the right to have black caucuses.

Now the traditional role of the trade unions is changing, and if we don't organise now we'll never have such favourable circumstances in the future.

This is why we black trade unionists have come together. After the black workers conference earlier this year in Birmingham we set up a steering group in London, representative of 12 to 15 unions at this stage, mainly branch secretaries and shop stewards.

We have two sets of people involved. Some like the Black Media Workers Association

which was formed to protect the interests of black actors and black television people.

There are people from the National Association of Local Government Officers (NALGO) who have set up minority ethnic committees.

Also we have people from the Race Advisory Committee of NUPE, which is a London-wide group set up to fight for positive action programmes and against discrimination on the job.

We have a number of individuals who have come out of struggles in the trade unions,

although not necessarily around black issues.

I think we'll see in the next year a real move forward for black people in the labour movement. There is a strong feeling for getting ourselves organised which has never been so clear as now.

*'I don't believe black people should join the police force because the police force is seen as the enemy — quite rightly — of black people especially the youth.'*

BERNIE GRANT



These leaflets have been produced by the London Divisional Council Race Relations Advisory Committee. They are produced in Hindi, Punjabi, Bengali, Gujarati, Urdu, Spanish and Portuguese and can be ordered from Michael Cunningham 01-446 0061.



Members of the London Support Group of the Bradford 12 mount a gagged protest outside Scarman's press conference to highlight the conditions of the defendants

which stops them from attending political meetings.

These sorts of group trials tells the black community that if they dare to organise and resist racist attacks whether by individuals or by the state then they will be treated as criminals and denied their civil rights.

For further information phone (01) 571 4920.

## Defend the Bradford 12 national demonstration

Saturday 12 December Assemble 1.30pm Manningham Park, Bradford Coaches leave Kings Cross London at 7.45 am

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# Where you can buy Socialist Challenge

## Scotland

**ABERDEEN:** SC available at Boomtown books, King St. For more info ring Bill 896 284.  
**DUNDEE:** SC available from Dundee City Square outside Boots, Thur 4-5.30pm, Fri 4-5.30pm, Sat 11-1pm.  
**EDINBURGH:** SC sold Thur 4.15-5.15pm Bus Station, St. Andrew's Square and bottom of Waverly steps 4.30-5.30; Sat 11.30-2pm East End, Princes St. Also available from 1st May Books, or Better Books, Forent 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 Barreits, Byres Rd; Clyde Books, High St; Glasgow Bookshop Collective, Cresswell Lane; Hope Street Book Centre.  
**HAMILTON:** SC sale every Sat 11-1pm outside Safeway, shopping centre. For more info contact John Ford, 53 Elliot Crescent, Hamilton or Paul Youngson, 18 Forrest Crescent, Hamilton.

**SHEFFIELD:** SC on sale Thursday, Pond St, 4.30-6pm; Saturday, Fargate 10.30-12.30pm.  
**STAFFORD:** SC on Sale Market Sq Sat lunch-time.  
**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 Newsline, Lanthorpe 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; and Saturday near Boat-ties, town centre from 11am-2pm.  
**YORK:** on sale every Thursday, dole office Clifford Street, 9.30-11; University Vanburgh College 12-2; Saturday at Coney Street 11-1.

## London

**BRENT:** SC sold Willesden Junction Thur 4.30pm.  
**EALING:** SC sold Thur, Ealing Broadway tube, 4.30-5.30pm.  
**ENFIELD:** SC at Newsline newsagents, London Rd, Enfield Town.  
**HACKNEY:** SC on sale on estates throughout Hackney, at public meetings, and local factories. Contact us c/o PO Box 36, 136 Kingsland High St, London E8 2NF or phone Megan or John at 359 8288.  
**HILLINGDON:** SC sold Fri, 4.30-5.30 at Uxbridge tube station; Sat 10.30-12.00 outside Woolworths, Uxbridge shopping centre.

**ISLINGTON:** Every Wed from 5.30-6.30pm at Highbury tube; every Fri 8.15-9am at Highbury tube and Holloway Road tube.  
**KILBURN:** SC sales every Sat, 10am in Kilburn Square and Thursday 8.30am at Queens Park tube.  
**LAMBETH:** SC available from Village Books, Southam; Tellico Books, Clapham; Paperback Centre, Brixton; Oval tube kiosk. Also sold Thur and Fri evenings and Thur mornings outside Brixton tube.  
**NEWHAM:** SC sold Sat 11am to noon, Queen's Rd Mt, Upton Park.  
**PADDINGTON:** SC sold at Portobello Rd market Sat at noon.  
**WEMBLEY:** SC sales Fri 6.45am at North Wembley BR Station.

## Bookshops

**BANGOR:** Rainbows, Holyhead Road, Upper Bangor, Gwynedd.  
**BRADFORD:** Fourth Idea Bookshop, 14 Sandgate.  
**BRIGHTON:** The Public House, Little Preston St.  
**BRISTOL:** Fullmarks, 110 Cheltenham Rd, Bristol 6.  
**BIRMINGHAM:** Other Bookshop, 137 Digbeth, Birmingham.  
**DURHAM:** Durham City Co-op Bookshop, 85a New Elvet.  
**ILFORD:** South Essex Bookshop, 335 Ley Street.  
**MILTON KEYNES:** Oakleaf Books, 109 Church Street, Wolverton.  
**OXFORD:** FOA Books, 34 Cowley Rd.  
**LEICESTER:** Blackthorn Books, 70 High St, Leicester, and V Karu, 33A London Rd, Leicester.  
**LIVERPOOL:** News from Nowhere, 100 Whitechapel, Liverpool L1.  
**LONDON:** Central Books, 37 Gray's Inn Rd; Collets, Charing Cross Rd, WC2; Paperback Books, Brixton and Charlotte St; Kilburn Bookshop, Kilburn High Road, NW6; The Bookplace, Peckham High St, SE15; Books Plus, Lewisham; Balham Food Co-op; Housmans, 5 Caledonian Rd, N1; Compendium, Camden Town NW1; Owl, Kenning Town; New Beacon, Seven Sisters Rd, N4; The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper St, N1; Bookmarks, Seven Sisters Rd, N4; Centrepoint, 126 Kingsland High St, E8; Dillons, OMC, Page One, E15; The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper St, N1; Reading Matters, Wood Green next to Sainsbury's.  
**YORK:** Community Books, Walmgate.

## Wales

**BANGOR:** Sat 10-12 town centre.  
**CARDIFF:** every Sat in Butc Town 10.30-12. Also available 1-4-8 Books, Salisbury Road.  
**NEWPORT:** every Sat in town centre 11-12.30.  
**PONTYPRIDD:** SC sales every Sat outside Open Market 11-1pm.  
**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.  
**BIRKENHEAD:** SC on sale at Labour Club, Cleveland St, Thur nights; in precinct outside Littlewoods, Sat 11-12.  
**BIRMINGHAM:** SC on sale at The Ramp, Fri 4.30-5.40, Sat 10-4. For more info phone 643-0669.  
**BOLSOVER:** Cross Keys, every Fri 8-9pm, Bluebell 9-10.  
**BRADFORD:** SC at Fourth Idea Bookshop, 14 Southgate.  
**BRISTOL:** SC on sale 11-1, 'Hoie in Ground', Haymarket. More info Box 7, c/o Fullmarks, 110 Cheltenham Rd, Montpelier, Bristol 6.  
**BURNLEY:** SC on sale every Sat morning 11.30-1pm St James St.  
**CHESTERFIELD:** SC sold outside Boots, Market Place, Sat 11.00am-12.30pm.  
**COVENTRY:** SC available from Wedge Bookshop.  
**HEMEL HEMPSTEAD:** SC sales in Time Square, Sat 10.30-1.30pm.  
**Huddersfield:** SC sold Sat 11am-1pm. The Piazza, SC also available at Peaceworks.  
**LEEDS:** Sat 11-1 at Lands Lane Pedestrian Precinct and 10.30-12.00 at Headingley Arndale Centre. Corner Bookshop, Woodhouse Lane.  
**LIVERPOOL:** SC on sale from News from Nowhere, Whitechapel and Progressive Books, Berry St.  
**MANCHESTER:** SC sold 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 Perivats Bookshop. Tel: 061-236 4905 for further info.  
**MANSFIELD:** Stockwell Gate, Sats 10.30-12 and 2.30-3; West Gate, Sats 10.30-12; Four Seasons shopping centre, Sats 10.30-12. Phone 653216 for further details.  
**NEWCASTLE:** SC on sale every Sat 11-1pm outside Fenwicks. Also available at Days of Hope bookshop, Westgate Rd, every Friday outside Newcastle University between 1-2 and outside Newcastle Polytechnic between 12-1 every Monday.  
**OLDHAM:** SC sold every Saturday outside Yorkshire Bank, High Street. For more information about local activities, Tel: 061-682 5151.  
**OXFORD:** SC sold Fri 12-2pm outside Kings Arms and every Sat 10.30-12.30pm in Cornmarket.

## What's Left

**RATES for What's Left:** 5p per word or £4 per col inch. Deadline: noon Sat prior to publication. Payment in advance. Phone 01-360 8180.  
**SPARE BOOKS!** Any books you don't want taking up valuable space on your bookshelves? Send them to the Other Bookshop, 328d Upper St, London N1 2XP.  
**BADGES:** Make money for your organisation or branch. Huge reductions on anti-racist, Irish solidarity, women's badges and many more. Write for lists of incredibly low bulk rates — from as little as 5p. Free offers for large orders. Send to: SCD Badges, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.  
**BADGES:** Available from Revolution Youth, 20p each plus postage. Big discount on bulk orders. Write to: Revolution Youth, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.  
**BADGES MADE:** Glasgow SC supporters have a badge-making machine, will make badges quickly and cheaply for your campaign/union/Labour Party — and all the money goes back into the struggle for socialism! Write for details/quotes to: SC (Glasgow), PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.  
**FIGHT RACISM!** Fight Imperialism! Rally: Speakers include Alanist Logan, July 11 Action Committee, Leeds 3, Glasgow Irish Freedom Action Committee, Dewsbury/Batley

# Socialist Challenge News



## Christmas is coming and our geese are dying of starvation

**IT's up to you! We've topped £10,000 (let me spell that out, ten thousand pounds) this quarter. With three weeks to go till Christmas we are confident that you, our readers and supporters, will provide us with the Christmas present we need.**

*We must reach our £16,500 target for this quarter if we are to spend a happy Christmas. We've said it before and we'll say it again: our campaigns, our newspaper, organising our supporters to fight for socialist policies in the Labour Party and the unions costs money. To do it well, costs a lot of money.*

*The £16,500 we ask for this quarter is strictly to cover this expenditure. Any shortfall means us paying for our daily campaigning activities out of our £100,000 Special Expansion Fund. We don't want to do that. Help us to prevent it happen.*

*Send us the sort of Christmas present that will enable us to bring you news and analysis of the international class struggle — send us a few quid.*

*This week we thank comrades and supporters from Huddersfield (£5), Southampton (£33), Bath (£27), Cardiff (£85), York (£11), Swindon (£3), Brent (£494), Stockport (£13), and Reading (£33).*

## Why we're going

**Anne McChery, unemployed, Leeds**

I GOT on the Jobs Express because I'm an unemployed young woman. It seemed obvious to me that women bear the brunt of unemployment, and that this fact is often overlooked in the labour movement.

On the Jobs Express I pushed this point forward, and called for support from young people on the train for the Woman's Right to Work march in June, which will be really important for raising women's issues.

I want to be at the conference because I feel that as an organisation Revolution Youth takes women's issues up in a constructive way. They support positive discrimination and the Women's Right to Work demonstration.

I feel that Revo has the best analysis of the political situation today — for example the developments of the left in the Labour Party.

**Paul, age 23, unemployed, Leeds**

I've been unemployed for months now, and went on the Jobs Express.

It is important for the young unemployed to organise and fight back against the Tories. But the TUC leaders try to control everything and stop us pressing our views on how to take the fight forward (by supporting struggles like Laurence Scott and Staffa).

This shows the need for a new leadership in the unions that will build a movement to kick the Tories out.

That's what Revolution Youth stands for — building active support for workers' struggles now, as a part of the fight to get rid of the Tories and their system for good.

Revolution has taken a lead in the fight against the war drive of Reagan and Thatcher by building Youth CND, and showing its solidarity with the struggle in Latin America.

It has been active in the fight against the right wing in the Labour Party, and calls for an LPYS that takes up mass campaigns such as YCND and leads the fight for socialist policies in the Labour Party.

**Joyce, age 25, AUEW engineering worker, Manchester**

I saw how Revolution supporters are leading Youth CND, and I think that the conference should talk about how to build a militant YCND, which should be linked to the Labour Party Young Socialists.

I work in an engineering factory, and think that the conference should be discussing the issues which face young workers in the trade unions and at work.

I want to be at the Revolution Youth conference to discuss the wider issues involved in fighting for socialism.

The paper Revolution is very good — it supports the Labour Party and builds a militant wing in the Labour Party which challenges even the left bureaucrats.

# Come to the Revolution Youth Conference

ON THE WEEKEND of 19/20 December Revolution Youth is holding its second annual conference. Since its founding conference last year Revolution Youth has come a long way.

Revolution branches have been established in many parts of the country, bringing young workers and students into socialist politics for the first time.

Members of Revolution Youth have been in the forefront of Youth CND, the campaign against youth unemployment, the fight for solidarity with the struggle in El Salvador and the developing revolutions in Nicaragua and Grenada, the campaign for the rights of young women, and solidarity with workers' struggles.

Supporters of Revolution Youth have also been deeply involved in the fight to transform the Labour Party Young Socialists into a mass campaigning body.

The Revolution Youth conference will bring together several hundred young people to discuss the next steps in building a revolutionary youth movement.

The conference occurs at a particularly grave time for youth in Britain. Hundreds of thousands of school leavers are unable to get jobs — the result of the Tories' deliberate unemployment policies.

Internationally, the whole future of youth is

ultimately threatens to involve all young people in a nuclear catastrophe.

Giving youth a future doesn't just mean giving them a job, but giving them hope for a world in which the insanity of capitalism is destroyed.

Revolution Youth aims to train the next generation of revolutionary leaders who can begin this task.

## Revolution Youth Rally

**Friday 18 December**  
**Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq., London WC2 7.30pm**  
**Solidarity with the struggle against imperialism**

Speakers from the New Jewel Movement of Grenada, the El Salvador FDR/FMLN, the FSLN of Nicaragua, Peoples Democracy from Ireland, Young Socialist Alliance from the United States

*Tickets £1 (50p unwaged) from RY rally, PO Box 50, London N1, or on door.*

# Mexican Trotskyists' election battle

By Alan Ball in Mexico



Rosario Ibarra de Piedra at PRT rally with Peruvian revolutionary leader Hugo Blanco (second from left)

A PRESIDENTIAL campaign with a difference is under way in Mexico. Last month a euphoric 5,000-strong meeting launched the candidature of Rosario Ibarra de Piedra, renowned for her defence of Mexican political prisoners and women's rights.

The Mexican government, dominated for decades by the aptly-named Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), has called presidential elections for June 1982 to tart up its soiled 'democratic' image.

## Break

Living midway between Reagan's America and revolutionary Central America, the Mexican people are demanding, with louder and louder voices, a government which will break from the

grip of US banks and businesses and their Mexican parasites.

They are fighting a new land-owning class tied to US-dominated 'Agribusiness', and industrialists growing fat on oil profits.

Mexico's streets are lined with colour pictures of Miguel de La Madrid, the PRI's candidate.

Rosario represents Mexico's other face. She entered politics when her son was kidnapped by one of the seven illegal police forces working in the country, and her husband was captured and tor-

tured. Like the families of hundreds of poor Mexicans, she faced the iron fist in the PRI's velvet glove. She faced the agony of her son 'disappearing', the government denying all knowledge of his fate, not knowing if he was alive or dead.

Fighting to find him, she helped set up the committee for the defence of political prisoners, campaigning for the release of those known prisoners and for the presentation of the 'disappeared'.

## Reasons

Through this work she learned the reasons for the repression. She met peasant leaders' families whose relatives had been killed, kidnapped or tor-

tured by the landowners' private police for the 'crime' of occupying common land that was legally theirs. She met the father of a five year old girl who 'disappeared' at the age of two in response to his crime of setting up an independent trade union.

When the PRT

(Revolutionary Workers' Party, Mexican section of the Fourth International) approached her last June to stand in the elections, she agreed. She explained why to the meeting: 'We have to destroy this government of bankers, landlords and exploiters and build on its ashes a

government of the workers, the peasants and the poor of the cities.'

The PRT's campaign is intended to give voice to struggles against the PRI and its government. Solidarity messages poured in to the conference from peasants' organisations, trade unionists, and committees defending democratic rights.

## TV

The PRT's monthly television broadcasts call for such people to organise, to rely on their own actions rather than the procedures of a corrupt parliament, and to link up with the embattled peoples of Nicaragua, El

Salvador and Poland.

The campaign is having a major impact. It was front page news in most papers and the left wing daily 'Uno mas Uno' carried a two-page spread about Trotskyism written by PRT member Octavio Rodriguez. It is helping to unite the left. The Red flags of the PRT mingled at the meeting with the yellow flags of the MRP (Revolutionary Movement of the People) and the ULR (Union of Revolutionary Struggle.)

At long last the struggle of the Mexican people is again being given a voice. As Rosario promised: 'This campaign will shake Zapata in his grave.' Socialist Challenge wishes it the greatest possible success.

## Mexican support for Irish struggle

FIVE times in the last three months, Mexico's Committee for the Defence of Political Prisoners has led protests to the British Embassy about the treatment of Irish hunger strikers. Finally the Ambassador consented to debate on television representatives of the committee, including PRT leader Manuel Aguilar. The 45-minute programme was so popular it was rebroadcast. Not so the British Ambassador. A month later the British government withdrew him!

# International conference says -'hands off Grenada'

By Pat Kane in St Georges, Grenada

'THIS conference has injected our people with a new confidence, a new sense of courage, a much deeper understanding of what our own revolution is all about. It has shown us why we are united in this anti-imperialist struggle, why we are united to end poverty, oppression, and exploitation.'

This is how Maurice Bishop, revolutionary Grenada's Prime Minister described the impact here of the first International Conference of Solidarity with Grenada. The conference was a huge success, with 85 delegations representing 40 countries in attendance.

## Answer

The conference was called to answer the massive United States propaganda campaign aimed at isolating the Grenadian revolution. It was an opportunity to show delegates the achievement of this revolution.

The US slander machine has regularly attacked Grenada. The latest lie comes from the Council for Inter-American Security. The November issue of its influential journal *West Watch* claimed that 'the Grenadian government is holding 7,000 political prisoners in work farms, similar to the ones in Cuba'.

Political parties and trade unions from throughout the East Car-

ibbean, Europe and Latin America all attended. Black organisations of all descriptions were there from the USA.

Delegates heard reports from the various ministries of the revolutionary government. Selwyn Strachan, Minister of National Mobilisation, pointed out that

'Grenada is engaged in a war against corruption, arrogance, exploitation, the old colonial and bureaucratic ugliness. It is a war against fraud and authoritarianism. A war to blast all these old inequalities our people have inherited into the debris of history; in order to win the victory of completing a democratic transformation of all the processes of our own country.'

'For this we are mobilising in all our institutions, as well as creating new organs through which our new effervescent blood can flow!'

These new organisations include Parish Councils where local people attend to decide on all aspects of the revolution. They include new unions, like the agricultural union which has recruited over



two thousand members since the revolution.

Both the National Womens Organisation and the National Youth Organisation have had a spectacular growth over the last year. The NWO aimed for 5,000 members by December, they've recruited 6,467. The NYO's target was 7,000 by their first congress in December, and they've already reached 7,288.

Everywhere, young and old alike are joining the Militia to defend the revolution against possible imperialist invasion.

The loudest cheers in the conference were for revolutionary Cuba, Nicaragua, Vietnam and the freedom fighters of

Africa. Any attacks on these countries is viewed by the people of Grenada as an attack on themselves. In a country struggling against poverty, they managed to donate £30,000 to SWAPO of Namibia.

## Aid

Aid for Grenada is vital. The Labour Party, the engineering union (AUEW), the sheetmetal workers, and the journalists' union all sent telegrams of support from Britain.

Everything from school aids to photographic equipment is needed here. Just about



Grenadian workers march last May Day

everything you could imagine is in short supply. As the revolution marches forward, imperialism will ensure that economic pressure is applied by stopping supplies to the island.

Jeff Meckler and Reba Hanson, from the San

Francisco US-Grenada Friendship Society brought to Grenada a complete office system, including a duplicator, electro-stencil machine, paper and ink for a month, and 50 nurses' uniforms. They managed to get it all on the plane as part of

their luggage! Maurice Bishop closed the conference by saying that: 'The people of North America, and of Europe are not our enemies, the majority of those people are our friends. Our enemies are the fascists, our enemy is imperialism.'

# What Sir Geoffrey didn't say



By Geoff Bell  
**EVEN COMPARED** to the other specimens who sit on the government benches at Westminster, Sir Geoffrey Howe is a walking disaster area.

The very fact that he had to stand up in the Commons last Wednesday to announce a mini-budget showed that he got his sums wrong in his main budget delivered just over six months ago.

Howe didn't admit that last week, nor did he confess that once again the Tory government was announcing a budget of privilege in which the poor, the sick and working people would be made to pay for an economic crisis not of their making.

Sir Geoffrey preferred to disguise these intentions in parliamentary language, in evasions and in lies. So it is necessary to provide a guide to what Howe was really saying, and to mention a few facts which he preferred to avoid.

## Who?

'The outlook, in short, is for gradual recovery', declared Howe in his statement. 'Recovery' for who?

For Howe went on to admit that unemployment would continue to rise, that inflation would not reach the single figures by the end of the year which Thatcher had promised just six months ago, and that public sector workers would, if the Tories had their way, face cuts in real wages of at least six per cent in the coming year.

If this is a 'recovery', then what



easy target for cuts

the National Health Service', he said. This announcement came the day after the *Guardian* reported that the Tories were 'preparing to woo public opinion to agree to the abolition of the National Health Service as it stands today.'

## Contrast

The government were reported to be planning a series of moves to achieve this. One was to make the patient pay much more for treatment and services. On Wednesday, Howe continued the existing trend in that direction by increasing prescription charges by 30 per cent, minimum dental charges by over 300 per cent and charges for spectacles by 80 per cent.

No such rises were awarded by Howe when it came to student grants. These are to be kept to a four per cent

increase, eight per cent behind inflation. This will hit working class youth hardest. Richer families will be able to 'make up' the deficit in the form of parental contribution to grants.

Not that all that many people will have a chance to go to university anyway. The Tories are cutting the places available by 120,000.

## Growth

Disregarding such facts, Howe went on to maintain, 'We are planning to spend very substantial extra sums of money next year on social security.'

That's true enough. But the reason the Tories are spending more on social security is because of the rise of unemployment. Every unemployed person costs £4,380 a year, according to the latest Treasury figures.

That's the price of the Tories' deliberate unemployment policies. But rather than try and do something meaningful to cut the number of jobless, Sir Geoffrey announced that unemployment benefit will be cut by two per cent.

And it's not just the out of work who will be Howe's victims. He announced higher national insurance contributions to be paid for by employees, rather than the bosses. Howe said: 'It is moreover right that those in work should shoulder the additional costs.'

That might sound fair enough. After all, the money has to be found from somewhere to pay for the extra £300,000. Howe will be spending on unemployment benefits. But what the Chancellor did not mention is that there are some who could be classified as 'out of work' who are not being asked to 'shoulder additional costs'.

Who these are was revealed in figures recently issued by the Inland Revenue. They showed that for 1978-9, some 75,000 people received over £1bn a year from investments. This unearned income will not be affected by Sir Geoffrey's budget. This is hardly surprising as it is a fair bet that many of those 75,000 are among the Tories' most loyal supporters.

## Military

Finally, Sir Geoffrey announced, there will be an increase of £480m in military spending. This is approximately 1,500 times more than the increase in unemployment benefits. This money will go on the mounting cost of the Trident missile (latest estimate £7bn) and a salary increase for members of the armed services (not restricted to the four per cent rises of the public sector workers).

Such then was Sir Geoffrey's message. In TV interviews it was wrapped up in the usual clichés about the 'need for sacrifices' and 'belt-tightening'. But consider the money being spent on defence, on the untapped £1bn raked off by 75,000 investors, on the huge increases given to the military, the heads of nationalised industry and cabinet ministers, and it becomes obvious the 'sacrifices' are of a rather selective nature.

And that might just lead to some nasty, ultra-left person who doesn't believe in parliamentary democracy suggesting that the best place to tighten a belt is around the neck of the Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Howe.



A servant of the class into which he was born: Sir Geoffrey as a public school boy.

# Stop the missiles

## Stop Trident!

By Martin Meteyard

THE TORIES are meeting with stiff resistance to their plan to base four Trident nuclear submarines at Coulport in Scotland.

Widespread opposition is being mobilised by the Scottish Campaign Against Trident (SCAT), which held its second conference last Saturday. Among the actions it plans is a mass demonstration in Glasgow on Easter Sunday, 10 April.

The Trident project is expected to cost at least £8 billion of our money by the time it is completed. According to the government it is simply a replacement for the outdated Polaris system. In fact it is much more.

Unlike Polaris, Trident is a 'first strike' weapon. The latest Mark II version, which the government is likely to opt for, means that each sub would carry 16 D5 missiles, each in turn with 14 independently targettable warheads.

It could thus hit 224 separate targets, compared with the 16 for Polaris. Yet the government claims that this is not an increase in Britain's nuclear weapons at all, since the number of 'systems', or sub-

marines, will remain the same! Such is the phoney basis on which cold war statistics are assembled to show a Soviet advantage in nuclear weapons.

Of course all this is justified in the name of defending 'democracy'. But this argument goes down none too well with local people who have seen their demand for a public inquiry ignored by the government.

An inquiry 'would be too long drawn out', says the Navy chief at Coulport, Commodore George Vallings. 'We have got to get on with Trident.' Ah yes, because otherwise our democratic freedoms will be threatened by those nasty Russians.

It is now being suggested that the local authorities in Dumbarton district and Strathclyde region, who have already broken off all cooperation with the project, should organise their own public inquiry in the New Year. Support for this was urged at the SCAT conference by National Union of Public Employees delegate Norman Lockhart, as a way of getting out the facts about Trident to the widest possible audience in

the build-up to the Easter demo.

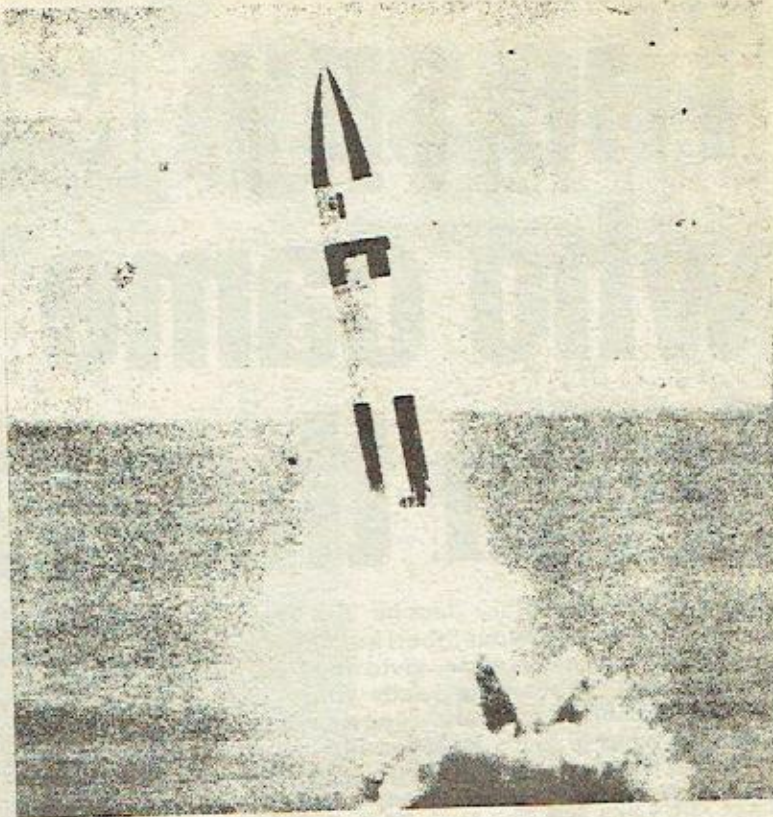
Lockhart also proposed that SCAT consider following this up later in the year with a Scottish Assembly against Trident, which would bring together as representative as possible a gathering of the vast opposition which exists to the government's plans.

Such public campaigning support was seen as essential for the direct action that will undoubtedly be needed to stop Trident when development of the site begins.

Organising in the trade unions to boycott all work on the project will be the key to this. Rolls-Royce shop steward Fred Parry announced that a special trade union conference against Trident will be held in February as a first step in mobilising labour movement support for the campaign.

The Tories have a fight on their hands over Trident. Its only justification is to back up Reagan in raising the nuclear stakes and bringing worldwide destruction nearer. And that is something in which the working people of Scotland have no interest whatsoever.

Further details of the campaign can be obtained from SCAT, Ground Floor, 146 Holland Street, Glasgow G2.



# Thompson faces zero option

By Brian Heron

ALMOST SINGLEHANDEDLY EP Thompson alerted Europe to the latest missile nuclear folly dreamt up by the Pentagon. In the wake of his courageous stand huge mass movements arose which are contesting the latest escalation of the war drive. They have already scored some impressive successes. The European movement, together with the wave of protest in the USA has thrown Reagan's regime into confusion. According to US commentators, the 'air in Washington is full of the sound of falling bricks', as Haig, Weinberger and Reagan fall out.

As the Geneva arms talks approached, important circles of ruling class opinion became alarmed by the pressure which the peace movement was putting on European governments. They came out for Reagan to offer the 'zero option' — no siting of Cruise and Pershing in exchange for withdrawal of the Soviet SS20s, SS4s and SS5s.

Thus, it was hoped, the West would be seen as the most committed to disarmament, when the Russians inevitably rejected the proposals.

In fact the zero option is nothing more than a simple-minded fraud, aimed at breaking the momentum of the peace movement. It consists of proposing the Russians dismantle all nuclear weapons aimed at Europe. In return the US will not plant Cruise, Pershing on European soil (Thank you very much!).

## Arsenal

While the zero option is to be ruthlessly applied to Russia, it is more liberal in its effects on the West's European arsenal. This arsenal includes nuclear submarines, bombers and missiles already stationed in Western Europe, and would remain untouched by Reagan's proposal. Thus the proposal amounts to massive nuclear superiority for NATO in Europe.

In the event, the European peace movement generally came out with flying colours. Leaders of the movement in Germany and CND in Britain attacked Reagan's humbug.

In Britain the Tories were naturally quick to welcome Reagan's proposal. John Nott, Britain's Secretary of Defence said 'Within minutes of the President's speech we heard... the 'applause we would expect.'

## Historic

Apologists from NATO fell over themselves to welcome 'this historic breakthrough'. These included the old man of peace himself: Michael Foot, who saw his and Healey's visit to Moscow, as having played a decisive role in this piece of history making.

Foot became quite breathless in his praise of Reagan. Would it be unkind to suggest that his sights were set on watering down demands in his own Party for unilateral disarmament?

In a curious and tetchy piece in the Guardian of November 30, EP Thompson replied to reports that he opposed the Reagan proposal. 'The response of the peace movement to such a change in tone from President Reagan must be positive; we must hold to our own unilateral positions, but we must say 'yes' to negotiations: 'Yes but more.'

## Analysis

Nowhere in his lengthy article is there any analysis of the Reagan proposal or the role of arms reduction negotiations. He points out the possible effects of the propaganda war now being conducted by the US and the USSR as dividing

the movement against the missiles into two counterposed camps, defending either the East or the West.

But he does not see the real and dangerous division of the movement, exemplified by the antics of Foot, between those who would place their faith in multilateralism and international negotiations, and those who see the need to fight their governments to a standstill and force them to discuss.

It is the attempt to dissolve unilateralism into multilateralism that is the main danger to the movement. What is the risk that the peace movement might be ideologically divided 'between the USSR and the USA?' This is highly unlikely.

## Crisis

The movement against the missiles is a result of a crisis of credibility in both camps, but also a relatively clear understanding that it is NATO and the West which is fuelling the war drive.

When Thompson says 'if there are enough nuclear weapons now in Europe to destroy the continent 30 times over, what does it matter if one side can do it 14 times and the other 16?' he confuses the issues. The fact that both sides are engaged in competition does not tell you what lies behind the contest.

The peace movement in quite right to ask the historical question 'what fuels this deadly race?' Knowing who are the aggressors, and their motives, tells us who is the main enemy, the target for our actions.

## Tracks

Thompson, on the other hand, proposes a two pronged strategy. Based on the 'fact' that both sides could blow us all to kingdom come, he proposes unilateralism...and multilateralism! 'One track; we push the nuclear powers... to reverse the arms drive, to negotiate, to reach reciprocal

agreements... But our second track remain unilateral.'

Nobody in their right mind can have a principled objection to negotiation per se. But to adopt them as half our strategy for disarmament would be equally foolish. Ever charleton and war monger and every specious wind bag in the world -- from the United Nation through to Thatcher and Reagan, through Michael Foot and the World Disarmament Campaign all recommend the same approach.

## SALT

In some cases this can be put down to naiveté. But in more thoughtful circles disarmament negotiations are a useful means of hoodwinking the mass movements.

Thus the much heralded 'SALT' negotiations were calmly conducted and announced to the world as a breakthrough arms control, just as the US had developed technology necessary to put many war heads on simple missile. Stocks of missiles were to be limited — but the number of heads was not discussed.

## Hope

In Britain, as in other countries, many sections of the anti-missile movement have learnt through bitter experience the dangerous role of international arms negotiation.

Thompson has foisted himself on the extreme right of the movement he did so much to inspire. Many times in the past have discovered today's leaders are inadequate to tomorrow's task. We hope, as the experiences of our movement develop that Thompson, and all those whose views he represents will come with us in compromisingly fighting for unilateral disarmament, without in the creating illusions that can place any hope in negotiations.



# The spy who came in from the cold

Letters letters LETTERS

National Union of Railwaymen  
INCORPORATING THE NATIONAL UNION OF ROAD TRANSPORT OPERATIVES

THE ARTICLE by Mary Jacobs 'Sid Weighell sends in his spy' (18 November) indicates to me that Miss Jacobs has a very vivid and inventive imagination. The article reads more like a scenario for an E. Litvinov trilogy than an account of what actually happened.

I am sure that Miss Jacobs is a very nice person but she should keep a tight hold on veracity before going into print. It is true that I called one lunch time at the bookshop in Upper Street for back copies of your paper, which I had been told contained references to the National Union of Railwaymen, but it was not true that I was sent by Mr Weighell.

It is also true that I later telephoned asking for a copy of the 'Rank & File' leaflet to which reference had been made in one of those articles as I was interested to read it for myself.

I did not merely claim to be a member of the National Union of Railwaymen working in London, as it is a statement of fact: I have worked for and been a member of the NUR for around forty years.

There was no reluctance on my part to answer Miss Jacobs' questions, but being modest I merely questioned the relevance of those questions to my request (which arose from my own genuine interest), which could have been answered by a simple Yes or No.

At no time did I attempt to hide my identity and although Miss Jacobs justified her questions by calling herself an investigative journalist, when I told her I worked at Unity House it was she who put the

phone down, not I. I made the comment to a colleague: 'So much for investigative journalism'.

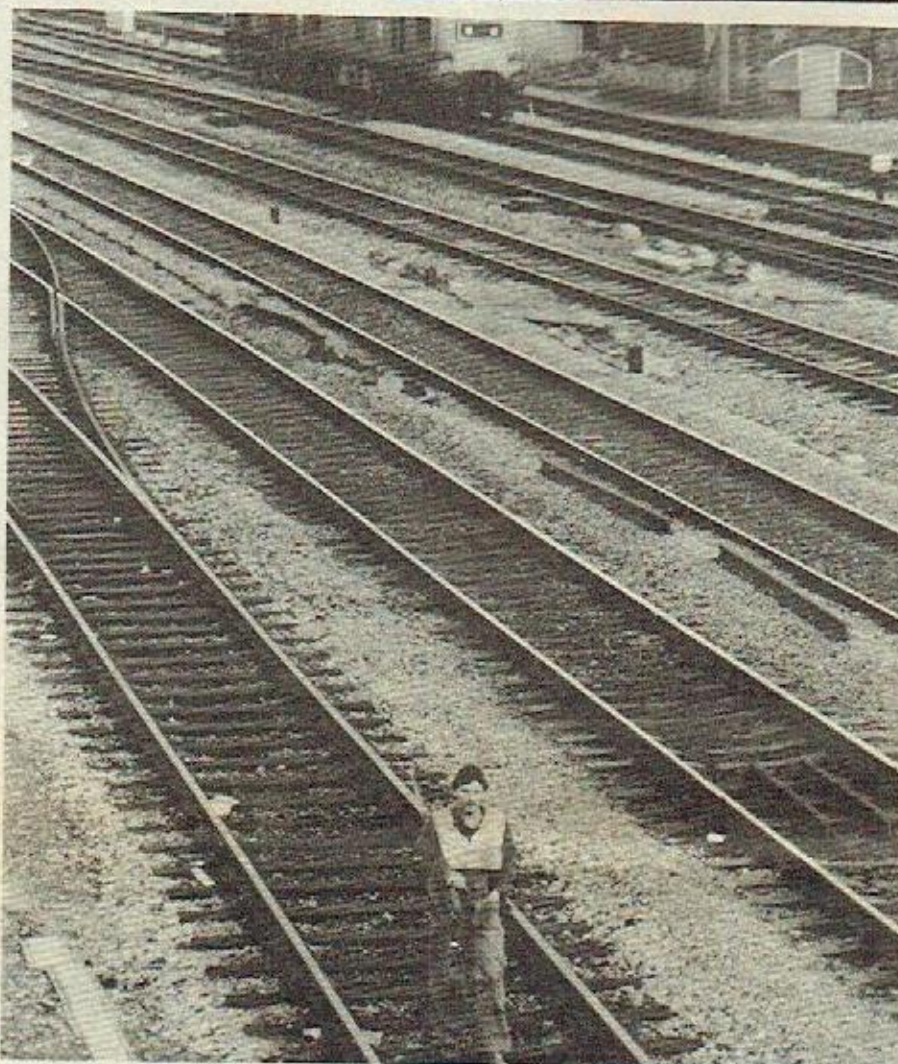
When I phoned again the following day, it was Miss Jacob's turn to be coy about her identity. I am only sorry she would not let me have a copy of the leaflet — perhaps it exists only in her imagination.

The statement that I said Mr Weighell might be interested in taking some action against your paper is a further misrepresentation: what I actually said was that if I were in Mr Weighell's position I would be seeking legal advice about the article; but, as I had already explained to Miss Jacobs, Mr. Weighell had not at that time seen the article and I could not speak for him.

I note that Miss Jacobs considers that buying a copy of the Socialist Challenge would be demeaning 'for the likes of me'; does she think the same about your other readers?

A C DUDLEY  
Organisation & Office Services Department, NUR

Mr Dudley at no time admitted that he worked at Unity House. Socialist Challenge found that out after the first phone call from him by our 'investigative' journalism — Mary Jacobs



## First steps of second wave

STEVE LONGMAN (18 Nov) makes a false assessment of this year's CND Conference. Rather than a 'faltering step', the conference represented 'the first steps of the second wave of CND.'

The conference revealed that the lessons of being active in a mass movement over the last year are being learned. The second wave is beginning to break from those who represent the mistakes made by the first wave of CND in the 1960's.

The Communist Party represented one wing at the conference with their strategy of building a liberal cross-class alliance, their reluctance to confront the Tory government by focussing on mass actions, and their adaptation to

multilateralism and the Labour Party and TUC leadership.

The thirty or so Socialist Challenge supporters most clearly represented the other wing. This wing was committed to mass actions, the building of a broad movement by extending the campaign into the labour movement and orienting to the most active layers, particularly the youth.

This was most clear in the discussion of the resolution from Greater Manchester CND, which called for the focus for 1982 to be an internationally coordinated day of action against Cruise, Pershing and the Neutron bomb, with mass demonstrations throughout Europe. Reagan and the US war drive has been clearly set back by the mass demonstrations of the last two months.

In order to carry on the first steps of the second wave we need to build on these successes — 1983 is looming closer.

It is this question of focussing on mass actions, of internationalising the campaign that makes most clear the need to extend the movement into mobilising the massive strength of the labour movement and beginning to organise the youth as the largest layer of activists through building a mass youth CND.

This year's CND conference began to move in that direction. Socialist Challenge and its supporters have a big responsibility in helping it continue.

I hope that the letters page can be opened up for a discussion about the CND conference and the tasks for 1982.

DICK WITHECOMBE,  
Oldham West CLP and  
Oldham CND

## CND conference and the Communist Party

IN YOUR report of the CND conference (18 November), your description of John Cox (the defeated candidate for chairperson) as a 'veteran Communist Party "peace" campaigner', and suggestion that Joan Ruddock's victory reflected 'the decline in the grip of the CP on the apparatus of the movement' are neither fair to John Cox nor accurate about CND.

John is no bogus 'peace' campaigner who would put

party interests before CND ones. Indeed the converse is nearer the case: he has made enemies in the CP by supporting CND's interests or policies where there has been a conflict.

As for the 'grip of the CP on the apparatus', this is easier to allege than to substantiate, as various right wing organisations have found when they have attempted to mount a smear campaign.

I can't speak for earlier days but, to the best of my knowledge, in the time I have been on National Council (since 1976), the CP have never had a majority of either Council or staff. Furthermore, CND has been refreshingly free of the sectarian, manipulative politics where groups compete to seize control of the organisation.

So why is Joan Ruddock chairperson? Many delegates must have found the choice

difficult because both she and John Cox are capable people, highly regarded in the campaign.

There was an anti-communist element at the conference, which the SWP bore the brunt of; had there been any candidate claiming IMG membership, I suspect that these too would have done poorly. The main reasons for Joan Ruddock's success were probably a vote in favour of a woman and a

'new face' rather than a vote against a communist apparatchik.

Incidentally, contrary to your report I did not speak in the debate on an international day of action. The two National Council members who spoke against the proposal were Dan Smith and Meg Beresford and, as far as I know, I am neither of these people.

Just for the record, I didn't agree with them either.  
ALASDAIR BEAL  
Leeds CND

FOR A WOMAN'S RIGHT to WORK



FOR A WOMAN'S RIGHT to WORK

Women in the front line

ELAINE CROSS from the Laurence Scott strike committee in Manchester and JOAN TAYLOR, another Scott's worker talked to Socialist Challenge recently about the role of women in the dispute and why they would support a Woman's Right to Work demonstration.

ELAINE: There are about 35 women in the dispute and all of them have played an exceptional role. On the pickets they always do their full six hours — no nipping off to the pub!

If it's on a Sunday they cook the dinner before they come out. If they don't have time and the husbands can't do it themselves — then they have to wait. They'll never miss a shift.

Women are slow at coming forward but when they're in the front line they're in.

And we've had to tell the men a few things. On the very first day we started — they thought I was just there for brewing up. So, at first, I did it. And then I blew up.

I said, 'Men have been on the moon and they can't even make themselves a cup of tea!' Now they do it all the time! After that they were fine.

At first, as well, they never asked me to go on delegations but after I took it up they were OK.

In fact they recognise the role of the women now. When the stewards go and speak they always point out what the women are doing in the dispute. You never hear our lads talking about the men in the LSE dispute like some people do — our lads wouldn't dare do that.

My union, TASS, are always boasting what they do for women. But there's three TASS women in this dispute and we've heard nothing from our officials. We've got to fight Boyd and Duffy to achieve anything.

I think women have as much right to a job as a man. It's no good saying women should stay at home and look after the kids — men have got kids as well — we don't go out and buy them in a super market!

I think the Woman's Right to Work march is important to point this out.

JOAN: These days there's so many women bringing up families on their own too and anyway — I think that if a woman wants to go out to work she should have the choice.

I'm divorced — but I've never wanted to stop at home. I want something to keep my mind active.

When they say women should stay at home, they only mean working class women — it's a pity Maggie Thatcher doesn't stay at home herself!

ELAINE: Maggie Thatcher's not a woman, she's a robot — you can't blame women for what she does.

The Festival for Women's Rights against Tory Attacks, held earlier this year, called upon the Labour Party and the TUC to organise a demonstration on a Woman's Right to Work.

The Labour Party has responded with the decision to organise a festival on 5 June 1982. The Action Committee which was formed around the original proposal intends to keep up the pressure for a demonstration.

Over the next months, Socialist Challenge will have a regular column with news, views, facts and debate about A Woman's Right to Work.

# One week in the 'propaganda war'

By Liz Curtis

THE RECENT hunger strike, and particularly the death of Bobby Sands MP, generated a massive amount of media coverage. For years people active in support of Irish freedom had complained of the almost total lack of coverage: now, suddenly, it came in a tidal wave. The sheer quantity perhaps disarmed many of the critics. But what of the quality of the coverage?

Like a lot of other people, I spent much of the hunger strike with my ears glued to London's commercial 'all news' radio station, LBC. Recently I listened to a tape, made by the local Radio Workshop, of all LBC's coverage of Bobby Sands' hunger strike during the week of 25 April to 3 May, immediately preceding his death.

The quality of this coverage, with its consistent bias — a bias shared with virtually all the mass media — goes some way towards explaining why the British public, unlike the rest of the world, remained so adamantly unsympathetic to the hunger strikers' cause.

LBC has what amounts to an obsession with 'what is happening'. Virtually all of the coverage consisted of a commentary on immediate events — a bit like the way horse races are reported — spiced with speculation about what *might* happen in the next day or two.

The concept of years — rather than days — as meaningful units of time appeared foreign to LBC. Events were presented like 'happenings' — instant, unrelated, without history. At no point during the entire week did LBC examine the background to the hunger strike, which of course stretched back into the early seventies.

Nor did they look at the various alternative courses of action open to the government, or consider the effects that Bobby Sands' death might have on political developments in the future.

The reporting centred on Bobby Sands' steadily worsening condition, on statements from British and Unionist politicians, and on an interminable commentary on the movements of the Pope's envoy, Father Magee, who visited Bobby Sands that week.

But even the reporting of immediate events was inadequate. Several events were never mentioned. While an LBC reporter did attend the funeral of an RUC man killed by the Irish National Liberation Army, there was no reference at all to the funeral of 15 year old Paul Whitters — attended by some 1,000 people — who had been killed by a plastic bullet fired by the RUC.

LBC never mentioned the protests in support of the hunger strikers in the South of Ireland, and ignored the calls by numerous international figures for the government to change its stance: that week these included 60



members of the Portuguese Parliament, the Socialist Group in the European Parliament, French Communist Party leader Georges Marchais and Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. Instead, the international concern was brushed aside with the recurring phrase, the 'IRA propaganda war'.

The speculation — a word that was used several times — was mainly about the possibility of large scale violence. Some of it was based on black propaganda: LBC, along with most of the media, swallowed whole the statement by Northern Ireland Secretary Humphrey Atkins that the IRA was planning to burn the nationalist Short Strand district of Belfast and blame it on the Loyalists. 'I think that most of the morning papers in London have gone on this story,' said the LBC reporter. Both *The Times* and *Guardian* reporters later cast doubt on it.

LBC's bias was very evident when it came to interviews. Of the eight interviews done in the North of Ireland, only one was with a person who supported the hunger strikers — this was Oliver Hughes, brother of hunger

striker Frankie Hughes. There were three interviews with Unionist MPs (Official Unionist leader Jim Molyneux, Unionist William Ross and Democratic Unionist leader Ian Paisley).

There was an interview with Andy Tyrre, leader of the Loyalist paramilitary Ulster Defence Association. Labour's Northern Ireland spokesperson Don Concannon was interviewed at a press conference. There was an almost inaudible interview with two women watching the funeral of an RUC man. Then there was an interview with two Belfast Catholic women whose views on the hunger strike remained undefined.

The interview with Tyrre was almost obsequious. It even included the question, 'How much do you think the tension is the result of the undoubted publicity campaign of the Provisionals over the past few days...?' The interview was done in the context of the UDA's mobilisation of 1,200 men on the streets — yet the fact that it is a paramilitary organisation was never mentioned. It also apparently escaped the

notice of LBC that there have been many calls — even from 'respectable' quarters such as the SDLP — for the banning of the UDA because of its suspected involvement in sectarian assassinations.

There were five interviews done in Britain, plus one parliamentary broadcast. Two of the interviews — the briefest — were with people demonstrating in support of the prisoners. All the other interviewees, and the parliamentary speaker, supported the government's position.

There were also two interviews with pro-prisoner activists in the USA. LBC put these firmly in the context of the 'propaganda war', the 'channelling of funds to the IRA', and 'well-organised pro-IRA elements who are keen to exploit the present unrest'.

While the British government's view of the hunger strike, as well as Loyalist 'fears' and demands for tighter security, were extensively reported, other points of view scarcely got a look in.

By this time — the last week of Bobby Sands' hunger strike — it was widely acknowledged that almost the

whole of the nationalist community in the North believed that the government should concede to the prisoners. Yet the LBC listener would never have known it. Even the views of the SDLP and leading Catholic clergymen went unmentioned.

The lack of interviews with Provisional Sinn Fein was particularly striking in view of the fact the LBC reporter several times says, 'I've just been talking to Provisional Sinn Fein and they say...' or 'Provisional Sinn Fein says...' Clearly there was no practical problem about seeing them.

LBC along with most of the media, generally referred to Bobby Sands as 'IRA hunger striker Bobby Sands': the fact that he was an MP was usually disregarded, and with it the significance of his position and the popular support for him.

We were several times informed that he was on a 'self-imposed fast' or involved in 'self-imposed starvation', a device that prevented any understanding of the issues underlying the hunger strike.

A constant theme of the reporting was the supposed 'IRA propaganda war'. This phrase, or variations on it, occurred in half of the week's bulletins. Descriptions of Bobby Sands' condition were usually accompanied by a comment from the reporter stressing that they came from Provisional Sinn Fein, who were engaged in a 'propaganda war'. The clear implication was that they were not to be trusted.

In contrast, the statements of the government, the Unionists and the UDA were not described as being part of a 'propaganda war'. This implied that they, unlike the Republicans, were to be taken seriously.

LBC's reporters, like the rest of the British media, never once challenged the concept of the 'IRA propaganda war'. They never described the much-vaunted 'IRA propaganda machine' nor compared it with its British counterparts.

Perhaps the only reporters to attempt such description was Neil Hickey of the American paper *TV Guide*, who told how Sinn Fein Press Officer Richard McAuley 'labours daily, with other volunteers, in a dingy, barricaded building on the decayed Falls Road... "Do you know the sum total of the famous Republican propaganda machine that everyone talks about?" He paused, and tapped his chest. "I'm it..."

The concept of the 'IRA propaganda war' was never recognised for what it was: a British propaganda device, designed to discredit and minimise the widespread support for the hunger strikers in the nationalist community and internationally.

If this one week's coverage was anything to go by, one might reasonably conclude that LBC was itself a participant in the 'propaganda war' — on the British government's side.

*The Local Radio Workshop taped the total output of the London local radio stations in the week 27 April to 3 May. The material described above is a small part of this. The Workshop will be publishing a report in the New Year.*

# Socialist Challenge

## 'Four weeks on strike for an extra hour on nights'

**TREVOR STACEY is a TGWU shop steward at Longbridge who was on the picket lines for four weeks. As he left last Friday's three-hour long meeting that voted by a margin of 46 to return to work, he spoke to Socialist Challenge:**

'They voted 750 against a return to work and 796 for a return to work. It's the closest vote I've ever come across. When the vote was taken it was those on permanent days, from the sub-assembly plant, the stores and the sewing room who were voting for the night shift to be increased by an extra hour.'

'That's why the vote was so stormy. It's ridiculous, we've been out for a month and we've got to go back for an extra hour on nights!'

'Us on the tracks, we're not prepared to work the extra hour. We've had a 38-hour agreement on nights since 1956 and now they want an extra

hour. They've offered us an extra £3.79 for it. We'll be the first shift hit by this extra hour. Our blokes aren't going to accept it. And as for those scabs that crossed the picket lines. When we branch them I'm going to recommend that their union cards are taken away from them.'

'The strike showed our members that if you stick it out you can fight dictators like Edwardes. The company thought they would try a new tactic last Monday by going over the heads of the shop stewards and the officials to try and break the dispute. When the gates were opened only 30 men turned up to work on the tracks.'

'I think AUEW officials had a hand in this betrayal. The 39-hour week was supposed to take people off the dole — this kind of deal will never cut the dole queues. I've never had so many blokes who want to leave the AUEW and join the TGWU.'

'Even if we got turned over, this strike shows we're not prepared to let this South African dictator dig our graves for us and kick us in them. When it comes to 7.15 on our night shift we will not work the extra hour.'



Trevor Stacey after last week's mass meeting at Longbridge

# Longbridge sell-out: new leadership needed

By a Longbridge shop steward

BY A narrow majority BL workers at Longbridge voted on Friday 4 December to end the strike over rest allowances. Our own works committee and union officials had snatched away the chance of our first victory over Michael Edwardes in four years of bitter struggle. They cobbled together a so-called 'compromise settlement' which is pretty unique even by the standards of previous BL sell-outs.

We were in the fourth week of our strike against Edwardes' attempts to finance the 39-hour week through cuts in our rest allowance.

We were in the strongest position to beat Edwardes since he sacked our convenor Derek 'Red Robbo' Robinson: supplies of the Metro were grinding to a halt, as were the engines for the Cowley plant, thanks to the picketing of the East Longbridge works which had begun five days

earlier.

Just as the myth of Edwardes' invincibility was crumbling, in came BL's seventh cavalry in the shape of the works committee and the union officials.

Earlier in the week Moss Evans, general secretary of the TGWU, met Edwardes and announced the idea of a four week 'cooling-off' period. And management attempted to 'throw open the gates' to try and stampede

the workers across the official picket line. Contrary to the national media reports of 700 strikers returning to work, only a derisory number of scabs broke the picket line.

In fact the picketing was so effective that management resorted to digging up the old transportation tunnels between the plants to avoid the picket lines! The pickets were slowly bringing Longbridge to a complete halt, which threatened to involve the Cowley workers in the dispute within days.

So much for the works committee's assurances that their skilful negotiating would do the job better than picketing!

The works committee finally cooked up a deal with local union fulltimers: Beadows of the

Leyland Cars  
LONGBRIDGE  
JOINT  
SHOP-STEWARDS

AUEW, Henderson of the sheetmetal workers, and Barker of the TGWU. For marginal increases in pay we were to have ten and a half per cent rest allowances time, and one hour extra to work on the night shift.

This 'deal' was unbelievable. We had mandated the works committee to defend twelve per cent allowances as 'sacrosanct', and we'd argued that our forty per cent increase in productivity over the last two years had more than paid for the 39-hour week.

But for the works committee to try to sell this to

us as a victory over Edwardes was just too much. Track workers in particular were angered to a point of fury and disgust.

Virtually all the shop stewards recommended a rejection of the deal which the works committee had not even had the guts to take to a stewards meeting before the hastily convened mass meeting last Friday.

Jack Adams, the convenor, the works committee, and the union officials, all made speeches to back their unanimous recommendation for acceptance, appealing to the conservatism of the

older and non-track workers.

The recommendation was carried by just forty odd votes from a mass meeting of 1,500 people. There was uproar after the vote. This was followed on Monday morning by a three hour dispute over those who had scabbed during the strike.

The joint shop stewards and more than seven hundred workers have received a lesson in leadership that they will never forget. The fight is now on to build a new leadership in the plant from stewards who wanted to fight on and who realise

that Edwardes can be beaten. That fight will need to be carried through to the works committee and the local and national union leaderships. The TGWU Broad Left in region five should lead this fight.

When Jack Adams claims that militant action is not enough, we will reply that it should be linked to socialist solutions to the Tory crisis and to the fight to build a campaigning stewards movement. That's the way to harness the strength of the working class to get rid of the Tories and Michael Edwardes once and for all.

# Socialist Challenge

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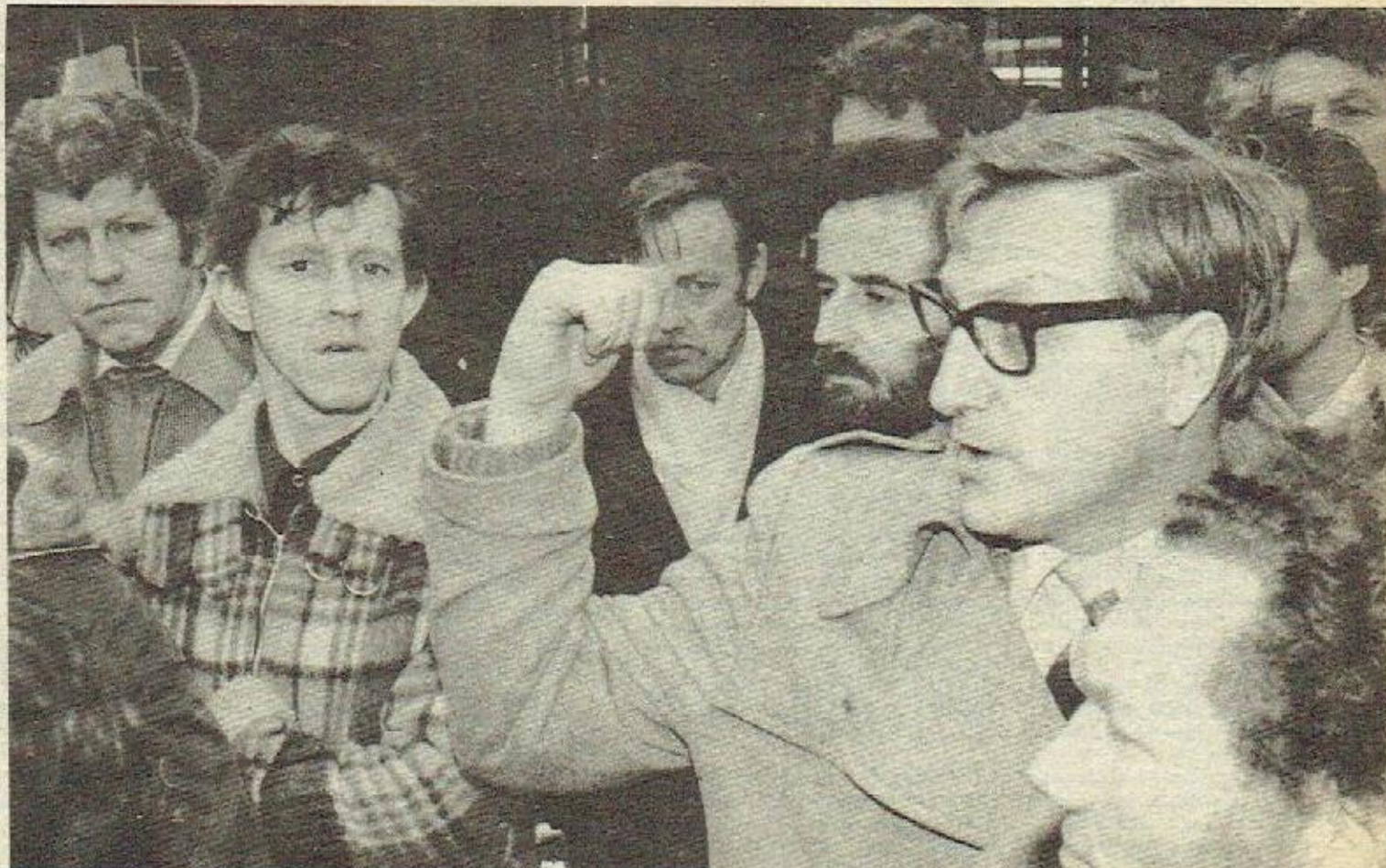
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Fury of the BL workers after the back to work vote

Photo: JOHN HARRIS