

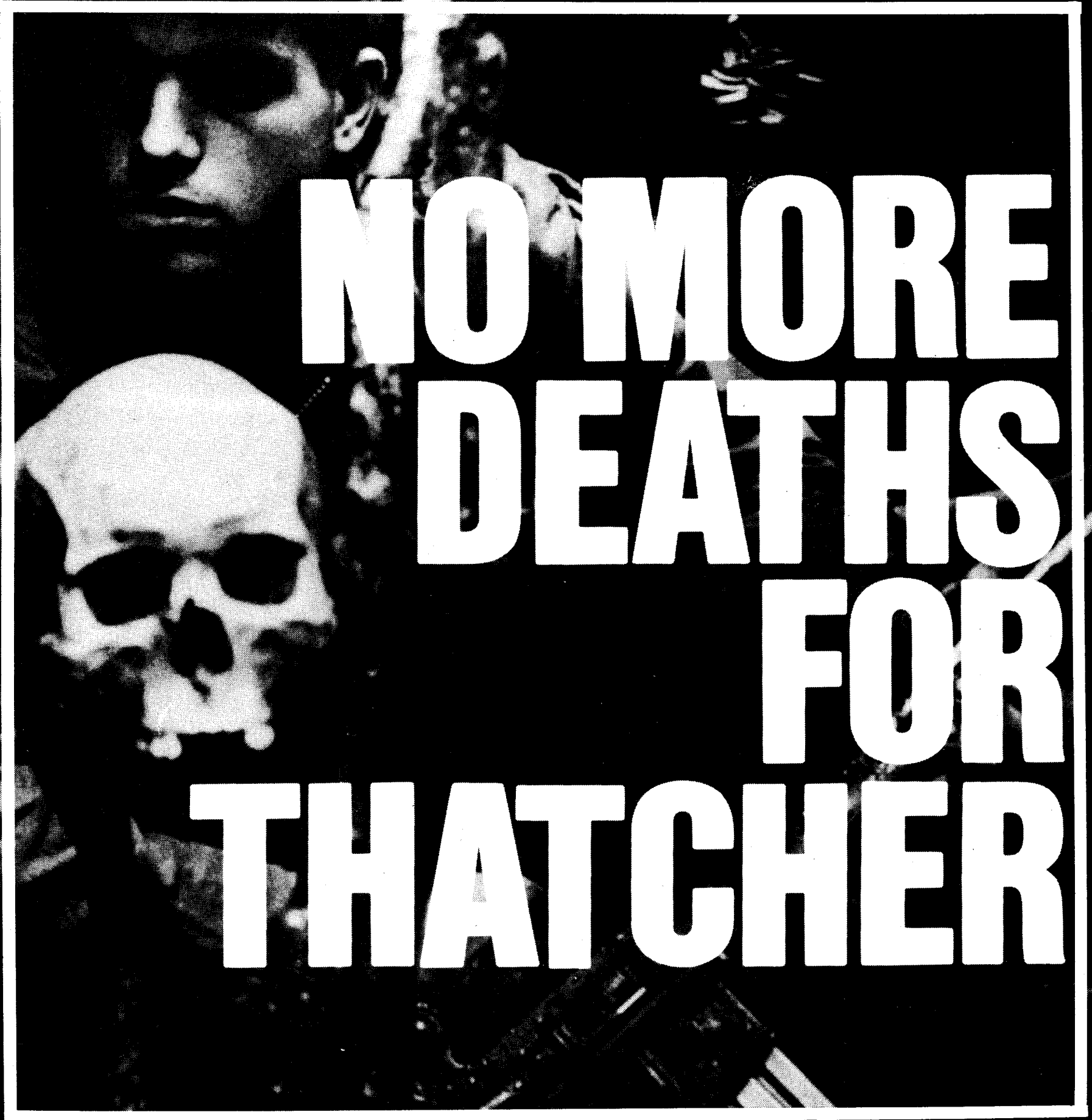
Socialist Challenge



GREET REAGAN

**CND MARCH
6 JUNE**

**US EMBASSY 7 JUNE
Grosvenor Square W1**



MARCH WITH CND 6 JUNE LONDON

How many deaths?

BRITISH IMPERIALISM has revealed itself in all its barbarism. Why, then, is the anti-war movement much smaller than many on the left would have expected?

Despite the encouraging turnout last Sunday in London, we should remember that 15,000 demonstrated in March against US imperialism's limited intervention in El Salvador. Why do only 10,000 come out when British imperialism is murdering hundreds?

The reason is not just that the left is chauvinist. The key problem is the confusion created by the fact that Galtieri is a military dictator. The confusion will be all the greater if Britain wins the first military round and Argentinian resistance can be made to appear the cause of violence.

In reply we have to explain the cause of wars, and place this at the centre of mobilising for 6 June

and this is why the mobilisation must go ahead in full whether or not Reagan comes.

If Britain wins, and stays on the islands, it will neither rid the world of dictators nor make the world safer: it will make further wars of intervention, further bloodshed, and further escalation, much more likely.

There will be no peace until Britain, America, and all imperialists have been removed from the seas. Nor will the peoples of Latin America be able to settle account with their dictators with our navy breathing down their necks.

Withdraw the fleet and recognise the Argentinian claim: these are the demands socialists should put forward on 6 June.

But there is a further arena of struggle: inside the Labour Party.

The Tories are acting out of desperation and weakness — not strength. They have taken a huge military gamble. There cannot possibly hang on to what they are now trying to take — which makes Foot's support doubly disgusting.

Who will pay the price for their disaster? If Labour had consistently fought the war, the government would fall the moment the untenability of their position became clear.

As it is, Foot threatens to make us pay the price.

Healey, Foot and Shore have shown their colours — supporters of imperialism pure and simple. It is on questions like this that fundamental political alignments are drawn up.

No one who supported this war should be supported for the

Labour NEC. Tony Benn was quite right to insist to Labour Liaison '82, that Judith Hart should be supported for the NEC on the sole criterion that she has opposed the war effort.

Others on the so-called 'far left' have failed the same test; in particular the *Militant* tendency whose class treachery in refusing to call for the withdrawal of the fleet is one of the bleakest episodes in the history of those who claim to be Trotskyists.

The Labour leadership have delivered tens of thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands of votes to the Tories over this question by lamely following Thatcher's line. At the Labour Party conference there must be a reckoning.

Socialist Challenge will make a bloc with anyone in the labour movement — including right

wingers and pacifists — who take action against this war. Pacifism can be no answer to the Malvinas 'problem' — there is likely to be more bloodshed in the future unless the islands are ceded to Argentina. But the pacifists, unlike some self-professed 'Marxists', have taken action against the war; all credit to them.

Socialist Challenge supporters and readers must relentlessly take forward the movement against the war. Now we are in a small minority; our allies are few although some central leaders of the Labour left are with us. But when the reckoning comes in the labour movement, there must be no let up. Thousands of Labour supporters can be won to our side. And Foot and his cronies can be branded for the class traitors they are.

Seafarers divided over war

'THEY ARE going to repossess in seas of blood what they will relinquish in drops of ink.' This was the verdict of George Cartwright, delegate to the National Union of Seamen's annual conference at Tenby which ended on Friday 21 May.

This sentiment was echoed by one of the union's sponsored MPs, John Prescott, who addressed delegates the day after they had passed a motion effectively supporting an invasion of the island.

'I am at odds with my union on this issue,' said Prescott who got an ovation for his speech against the war, calling for a ceasefire.

'The resolution was passed on a tide of emotion,' Cartwright told us. They backed Spruhan from the executive when he said that we should 'Get in and get them', because they were told our members' lives were at risk. But Spruhan showed a very shallow understanding of the politics of the matter. Afterwards when the press claimed it as a victory for Thatcher, they had to wheel out Kinnock to try and whitewash the decisions. He said the media had no right to claim it as backing for Thatcher: but the media were right.'

But the resolution was not at all an accurate reflection of seafarers' feelings. 'When McCluskey said that he would not stand

one tear for the Argentinians who died in the General Belgrano, even quite right wing delegates said this was disgraceful said Cartwright. 'It must be remembered also that fourteen of the 64 voting delegates are officers of the union; and of the other 50, 18 voted against the resolution.'

When delegates saw how the resolution was used by the press, a petition was circulated calling for a ceasefire and negotiations, which was signed by three quarters of the delegates.

'I wonder how the government would have reacted if the islanders had been black,' said one young delegate to conference. 'It is a hollow sham to say we are fighting fascism,' Cartwright said. 'If Galtieri goes they will sit cheek by jowl with the next general to come along.'

'There is no war fever amongst seamen. In Felixstowe where two boats were sent out, only thirty-one merchant seamen volunteered out of 670. It's the politics of the dole queue — and it's come to something when we have to have a bloody war to get a job.'



Revolution/Socialist Challenge: a class stand against war

Front benchers vote against Thatcher's war

'I COULDN'T have done anything else. I said from day one that the fleet should be brought back and my views haven't changed one jot,' explained Labour MP Tom Dalyell, who voted against the government in the Commons debate on the war and has now been removed from the front bench by Michael Foot.

Thirty three MPs voted against the government, including two other front benchers who have also been sacked — Andrew Faulds and John Tilley. A fourth MP, Gavin

Strang, has resigned from the front bench over the issue.

'The point is that we had to prove the House of Commons was not united behind the government,' Dalyell explained to Socialist Challenge. 'Nicholas Henderson has consistently used this as a justification for the adventure.'

Foot

But Michael Foot shows no sign of slackening his jingoism despite the growing storm in the party. Peter Shore even welcomed the invasion on ITV's *Weekend World*.



Foot: pacifist image finished

Healey and Foot are steering the Labour Party to disaster. With conference resolutions coming up for discussion at several Labour

Party branches, it is important to ensure that the Labour Party conference is used to hold them to account.

The fact that MPs

who have not previously been part of the left are prepared to take a stand on this issue is a clear sign that this can be done.

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

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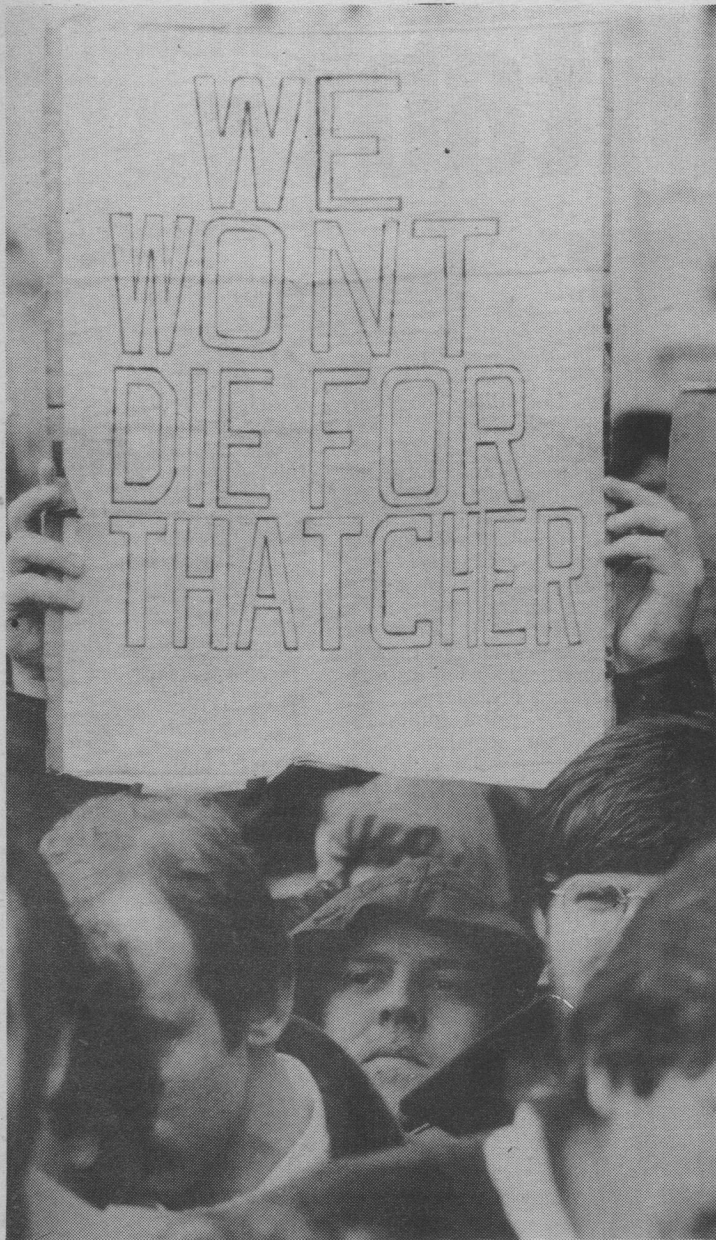
Age.....

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

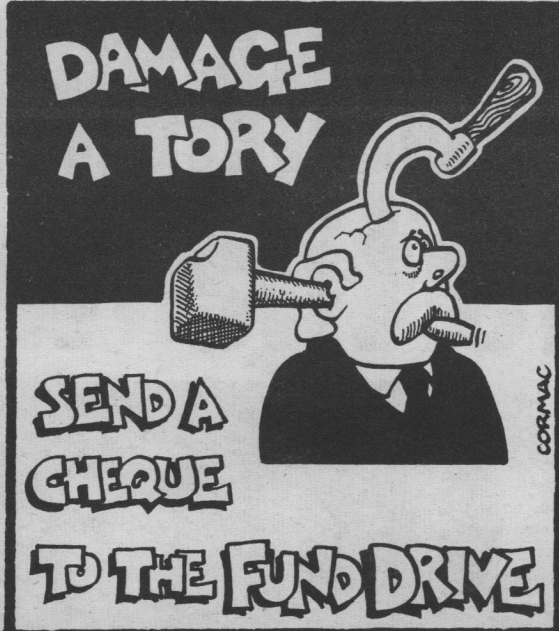
Send to: Socialist Challenge, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

Malvinas/Falklands

Socialist Challenge FUND DRIVE '82



... but already more than 600 have



Rafael Runco, Argentinian refugee, speaking at the London demonstration

Action against the war



An estimated 10,000 marched against war in London, and a further 5,000 up and down the country

DEMONSTRATIONS against the war took place all over Britain on Sunday. A march of 10,000 people went from Hyde Park to

Trafalgar Square to hear Tony Benn denounce Thatcher's war drive as the 'poison of nationalism'. He argued that the Tories

were using the war to divert attention from problems at home and that Thatcher was using the war 'for her own political purposes'.

Among the other speakers was the mother of one of the sailors on board HMS Sheffield when it sank. Representatives of several unions, together with Argentinian oppositionist Rafael Runco also spoke. Rafael Runco said that Thatcher was 'playing the game of the Argentinian dictatorship'.

500 people marched through Manchester to oppose the war. Speaking for

Greater Manchester CND, Socialist Challenge supporter Dick Withecombe denounced the war as one of 'hypocrisy, lies and bloodshed'. More than 2000 people marched in Edinburgh in a highly successful demonstration organised by Edinburgh Stop the War Committee.

Among the speakers were Andy Barr, chairman of the Scottish TUC, John Mulvey of North Edinburgh CLP, Judith Gray of YCND and Socialist Challenge supporter Kevin Holmes. At the same time, 500 people marched through Glasgow.

Wales Labour Party rejects Thatcher's line

AFTER heated debate and much back-room negotiation, the annual conference of the Wales Labour Party in Swansea on 22 May rejected further military intervention in the Falklands. The final resolution stated: 'in view of the landing of British

forces we in the Wales LP call for an immediate cease-fire and for the introduction of a UN peace keeping force to supervise the simultaneous withdrawal of British and Argentinian forces and for the UN to supervise a diplomatic settlement.'

A week's wages to save Socialist Challenge

By Steve Potter

THE CAMPAIGN to save Socialist Challenge has got off to a flying start! £1539 given in pledges and cash has meant that we are still here fighting against the Tories bloodbath in the South Atlantic and backing the health workers in Thatcher's 'other war'.

The need for a workers' press has never been more evident than since the start of the South Atlantic adventure. Let's look at how the bosses' press has covered the crisis.

● *The Sun*. From the very beginning Murdoch's rabid rag has been demanding death to defend imperialism's interests in the South Atlantic.

The headline 'Gotcha!' when the Belgrano sank with hundreds of its crew perishing, will go down as the most infamous response in the recent history of a grub-by profession.

● *The Mirror*. While holding its hands up in horror at the attempts of its rival to cash in on chauvinism to boost its circulation, the *Mirror* is frightened to death that its own brand of soggy reproach to Thatcher will lose them readers. So at the same time as violently attacking the *Sun*, it gets in on the act with photographs of 'Forces Favourites'.

● *The Daily Mail* and the *Daily Express* have both acted as the mouthpieces for the Neanderthal wing of the Tory Party egging on Thatcher and promising retribution for those Tories like Pym who look over their shoulders nervously at international reaction to a bloodbath.

● *The Daily Telegraph* and *Sunday Telegraph* have both acted as the mouth pieces for the military top brass. Peregrine Worsthorne has, without the slightest embarrassment, transformed himself from the Argentinian junta's chief apologist to another hero of the "hit 'em hard" school.

● *The Times*, while calling for negotiations, reveals itself to be Murdoch's other arm in its firm support for the actions of the government.

● *The Guardian* turned up a surprise in the shape of SDP champion Peter Jenkins' continuous opposition to the war. But for Jenkins the war in the South Atlantic is the product of the mistake of calling an emergency session of Parliament and the rash decisions taken in the heat of the moment. Jenkins will never explain that the reason that the Tories sent the battle fleet to the South Atlantic was not misplaced patriotic ardour, but the fact that whenever imperialism's interests are seriously threatened it will respond in the most determined way — whatever the cost in lives.

Where the millionaire press has either given full backing to the war or has sought to disguise its causes, the workers' press in Britain, however small its circulation, has convinced a growing number of people that this war is unjust and that action should be taken to stop it.

We can claim with justification that from the very beginning *Socialist Challenge* has played a leading role; never wavering in its denunciation of the sending of the fleet, its call for action and in its reflection of rank and file feeling about the war.

But it is at this time when *Socialist Challenge* faces the most serious threat yet to its existence. We face this threat from two fronts:

- The rent on our premises has just quadrupled
- Mounting debts have threatened our ability to pay our publication costs

Last week we launched a campaign for 'A Week's Wages to Save Socialist Challenge'. We are quite aware of the tremendous sacrifice we are asking from our readers and supporters. But we think that to keep the flame of revolutionary internationalism burning, that sacrifice is worth it.

Both journalists and business management workers on *Socialist Challenge* have helped to start the ball rolling by donating a week's wages to the paper. How about you?

Received this week	£2536
Total so far	£6073.14
Should be	8615.00
Shortfall	£2542.00

If you have any enquiries about the fund ring the editors at 01-359 8180 or the business manager on 01-359 8371.

Leadership of 'Militant' backs the war

By Alan Freeman

THE LEADERSHIP of the *Militant* tendency in the Labour Party has rejected the demand for British withdrawal from the South Atlantic and called on its readers not to build the growing mass movement against Thatcher's war.

Its position appears in a full page editorial article by Ted Grant in the 21 May edition of the paper, entitled 'Demand to withdraw is no answer'.

In the 13 May edition of *Socialist Challenge* we appealed to *Militant* to join the movement against Thatcher's military adventure.

'Such a demand is completely unrealistic and futile,' says Grant; his article, which spells out his reasons for this outrageous position, is a socialist endorsement for continuing the war. It is a model of what Lenin called 'socialism in words, and chauvinism in deeds'. Against such policies, which sent millions of workers to their deaths in the imperialist war of 1914, Lenin organised the Bolsheviks in Russia and the Third International in 1919.

Grant's first argument is that the Tories cannot be made to stop. 'No appeal to Thatcher in the most heartfelt terms about loss of life or the horrors of war would have any effect on the ruling class,' he says. This argument is both false and spurious.

It is false because workers can stop their imperialists making war and have done so in the past. In 1920 the TUC established 'Hands off Russia' committees which stopped Churchill's war of intervention in Russia. In 1956 the Labour Party organised mass rallies and demonstrations against the Suez war which played a major part in its ignominious end. And America's dirty war in Vietnam was stopped by the combination of Vietnamese military resistance with the mass anti-war movement to which this gave rise inside America.

The argument is spurious because it is not Grant's real reason for rejecting the demand for fleet withdrawal. If the only reason to reject it were

its impracticability, why does Grant not place it on his programme for a Labour government — which, he says, will bring peace?

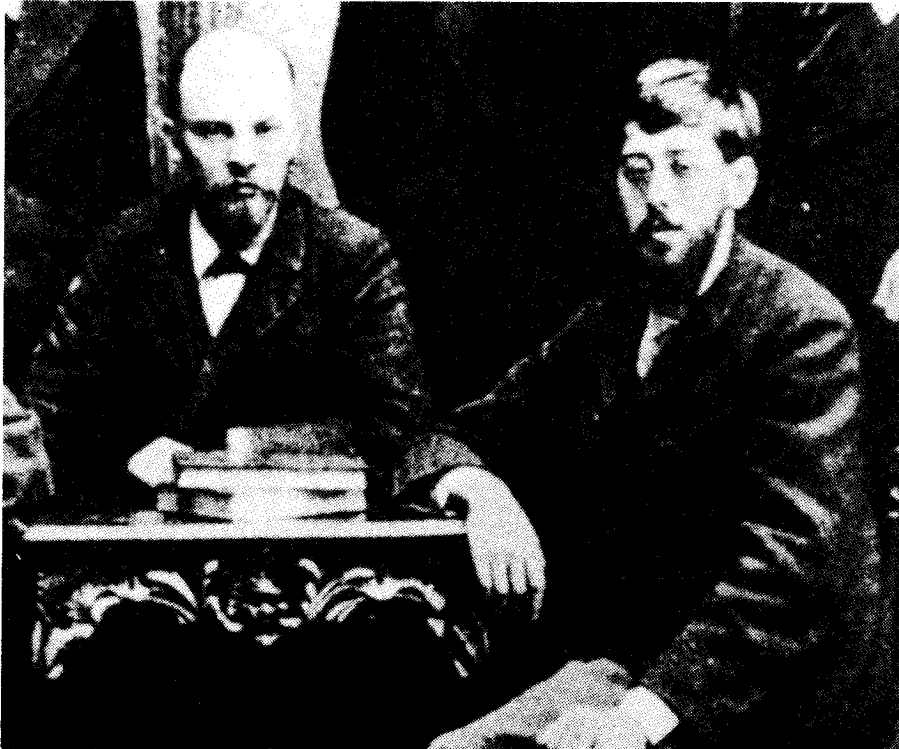
His actual justification is far more serious: now the task force is there, he says, it cannot be stopped because the working class support it.

One wonders, on this basis, why a socialist organisation is necessary; perhaps Ted Grant is having similar thoughts. 'Once the task force has been sent, the die is cast,' he says. 'The lefts, by putting forward a pacifist position, cannot gain the support of the working class.' He tells us, 'Marxists must not take a haughty, superior attitude to workers feelings.

With this extraordinary position, he puts *Militant* on the right of Andrew Faulds. At the very moment when thirty-three MPs vote against the government in the Commons in defiance of Michael Foot, *Militant's* leadership chooses to stab them — and itself — in the back. We ask you, comrades, where would your MPs have voted — with Foot, Thatcher or Benn?

'Sincere Labour Lefts have become more and more isolated on this question,' says the workers' hero, as ten thousand march through London against the war.

'Many will become silent and change their position,' he tells us as Tam Dalyell is cheered to the echo by 1000 marchers in Partick before he even starts speaking. 'Once hostilities take on a more intense character there will be a feeling among a big majority of the Labour Party and trade unions that there is no other course but to support the war, out of solidarity with the British workers in uniform, not for chauvinist reasons,' he pontificates as branch



Lenin and Martov, founders of Russian socialism. Lenin argued for class opposition to imperialist war. Martov's group disintegrated under the impact of World War I.

after branch of the Labour Party reacts with outrage to Foot's betrayal.

'The job of Marxists is not to be like the ultra-left sects on the fringes of the movement, beating their breasts and strutting around with lunatic slogans,' he informs us as Scargill puts the case for Argentinian sovereignty over the islands.

'Marxists, by explaining carefully their position, will gain greater and greater support for their ideas,' we are told. But what are these ideas? For or against what Thatcher is doing? 'Marxists have to explain,' says Grant, 'that the wringing of hands and pious declamations of "bring back the fleet" cannot change anything.'

No, comrade Grant. Marxists have to tell the truth; because the truth will out. This war will benefit no-one except Thatcher; and when workers realise they have been duped, that hundreds and perhaps thousands of lives have been wasted for greed and profit, there will be a reckoning. What will you tell them, Ted? That it was all worth while because *Militant* kept its nose clean? That it's better to die than be haughty?

Grant continues to propose his extraordinary solution of a 'socialist federation of Argentina,

Britain and the Falkland Islands'. Why not a socialist federation of Argentina, America and the Isle of Wight?

'The economies of Argentina and Britain are completely complementary,' he explains generously. Of course they bloody well are: because the people of Argentina have been held in virtual slavery by our imperialists for the past hundred and fifty years to ensure that they produce for the needs of the imperialist economies! Before any economic unity can be created between Argentina and Britain, the first step is to get our imperialists off their backs.

Militant's stand is a serious blow to the Labour left and the growing anti-war movement. At the very moment when serious opposition is taking shape, *Militant* has come off the fence on the wrong side.

The most damaging effects will be in the YS. Youth are not subject to the chauvinist illusions of older workers and have always been in the vanguard of anti-imperialist struggles. Youth built the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign in the 1960s; youth are in the forefront of CND and anti-Reagan demonstrations, and youth have the most to lose from this vicious imperialist war.

Militant, who have the leadership of the YS, threaten to miseducate a generation of Labour Party members on the most important of all class issues.

Militant will also weaken the Labour left, which has taken a stand against the war. It now possesses a clear basis on which to unite against Foot's disastrous leadership: rejection of his backing for Thatcher's war-mongering, and support for a positive policy of unilateral disarmament.

When the full extent of Foot's folly becomes clear there will be a massive demand for a reckoning inside the Labour Party: where will *Militant* stand, and where will the YS stand?

But it is particularly disastrous for trade unionists. Even now, rail workers and health workers are being accused of 'treachery' by papers such as the *Manchester Evening Post* for daring to strike while 'their' country is at war. What does *Militant* counsel them to say? That they are helping the war effort?

How should this betrayal be dealt with? First of all, the left must be absolutely clear: there should be no let-up whatsoever in the defence of *Militant* against the witch-hunt — despite the op-

position their positions will earn them. The left will never defend itself if it tries to pick and choose, or take factional advantages of errors by throwing some of its members to the wolves. Organizational measures such as expulsions will not deal with a political problem. *Militant's* stand on the war must be defeated in open political struggle.

The most important task for socialists is to mobilise the Young Socialists against this war and against the line of *Militant's* leadership.

YS branches should pass resolutions condemning Michael Foot's stand on the war, backing those MP's who voted against it in the Commons, affiliating to local ad-hoc committees and calling on the YS leadership to endorse this stand. They should write to *Socialist Youth*, *Militant* and *Labour Weekly* asking for their positions to be published in order that they may be debated out.

We call on all socialists in the YS, including *Militant* supporters, to join us in campaigning to commit the YS against the war.

The same considerations apply in the unions, where *Militant* readers are working alongside other

broad left activists on many issues. Broad lefts should not allow themselves to be deflected from building trade union opposition to the war; the issues should be openly discussed out and *Militant's* case, as well as the alternatives, should be published in union and broad left journals so that the membership can give its own verdict.

However, a particular duty falls on *Militant* readers and sellers. On such an issue, where the future of socialism and our class is at stake, blind loyalty to *Militant's* editorial board cannot transcend class loyalty.

We appeal to *Militant* readers to build the anti-war movement on a class basis; to raise the issue in *Militant* readers' meetings to persuade them to do likewise; and to write to *Militant* condemning its stand and demanding its reversal; and to launch a thoroughgoing discussion about the Marxist attitude to war, going back to the historical experiences of our class in the First World War and in anti-imperialist revolts.

Comrades of the *Militant* tendency; in the interests of your class, the time has come to call your leadership to order.

Hackney North LPYS opposes war

HACKNEY NORTH Labour Party Young Socialists has called for a public campaign for the withdrawal of the British Fleet. The following resolution was put to its 19 May meeting:

'This Party calls for the British fleet to be withdrawn from the South Atlantic and resolves to campaign publicly for withdrawal. We call on the NEC and the PLP to oppose the war and demand

withdrawal. This Party resolves to organise a public meeting in favour of withdrawal and invite other local labour movement organisations to support the meeting. We condemn Foot and Healey's support for the War.'

The resolution was passed overwhelmingly. An amendment was also passed calling for a mobilisation on 23 May under the slogans 'Stop the war; recall the fleet; kick out the Tories'.

Our boys

By Davy Jones
AREN'T OUR BOYS in the armed forces wonderful. Truly they are defending the principles of justice and freedom and self-determination. Except in Ireland, where they gun down innocent twelve-year-old girls on their way home from shopping.

That's the official verdict of the coroner, James Elliott, in Belfast last week on the death of Carole-Anne Kelly of the Twinbrook Estate.

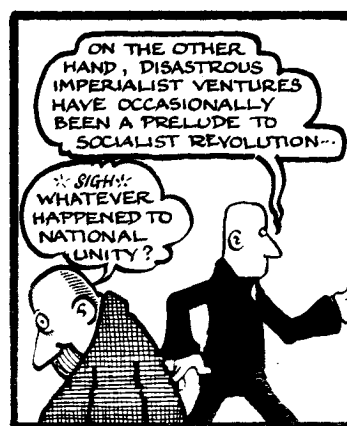
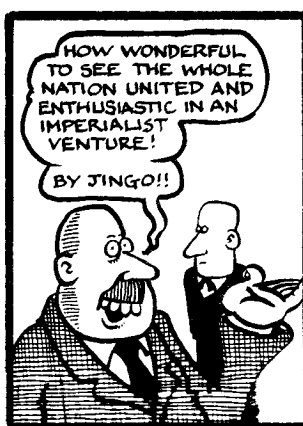
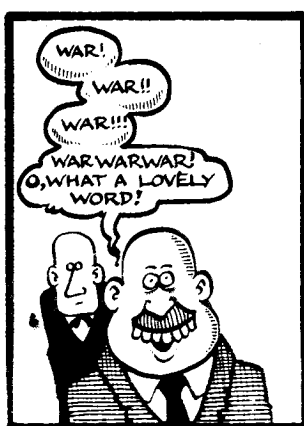
Carole-Anne was another victim of the British Army's plastic bullets, which have killed

at least 13 people since they were introduced into Northern Ireland to replace the 'dangerous' rubber bullets.

Last week too the European Parliament called for a ban on the use of plastic bullets by member states because of their appalling casualty record.

Needless to say the British government has made it clear that it will not abide by the ruling. After all they have already distributed more than 5000 baton rounds to British police force chiefs for use against riots this summer.

So next time you hear about the heroism of 'our lads in the Falklands', remember how they were trained - in murdering innocent twelve year olds on the streets of Belfast.



Stop Reagan the war-monger

By Davy Jones

PRESIDENT REAGAN has announced new plans for basing the deadly MX missiles in fixed silos in the US desert — in direct contravention of the SALT II arms agreement.

Under cover of the Falklands crisis the President has ordered the US Defence Department to evaluate the new 'dense pack' system which involves clustering 100 missiles in hardened silos in an area of 10 to 15 square miles.

The SALT II agreement which the USA agreed to abide by, specifically rules out the construction of 'additional fixed intercontinental ballistic missile launchers'. This flaunting of the SALT II voluntary agreement comes as Reagan has proposed to USSR President Brezhnev the preparation of further nuclear arms talks in the autumn.

Previous plans to site the MX missiles on moving platforms in a vast underground network of tunnels in the Utah and

Nevada deserts were abandoned when even war-monger Reagan balked at the projected cost of \$30 billion. Other fantastic schemes are also likely to be dropped, including building new aircraft capable of staying in the air for up to three days carrying the MX missiles.

Reagan's decision to ignore the SALT II agreement and to pursue the construction of the infamous MX missiles gives the lie to his claims to be interested in peace.

The mass movement against Reagan across Europe has one more reason for mobilising in the hundreds of thousands to stop the warmongers.

All out for 6 June in London, 5 June in Paris and Rome, 10 June in Bonn, and 12 June in the USA.



Manchester labour movement backs El Salvadorean rebels

By Redmond O'Neill

GREATER MANCHESTER's week of action against the warmongers Reagan and Thatcher from 16-22 May culminated in a Rock Against Reagan gig attended by over 300 people.

Manuel Bravo, a member of the FMLN/FDR of El Salvador diplomatic representation in Britain, summed up the prospects following the week of action with a call for all-out mobilisation against Reagan and Thatcher's wars — in the Malvinas, in Central America and at home against the British and American workers.

Over the week Manuel had visited 19 factories and spoken to dozens of shop stewards and convenors about the US government's plans for a new Vietnam in Central America. He spoke at nine public meetings and rallies in the area chairing a platform with assorted trade unionists, MPs and CND leaders. The week of action also involved daily film shows and a photographic exhibition of the struggle of the people of El Salvador.

Rally

An important result of the tour was the decision by fifteen shop stewards committees and three district committees of the AUEW to affiliate to the El Salvador Solidarity Campaign, locally and nationally. The response was tremendous. The Bury district committees of the AUEW will be following up the tour with a showing of the film 'El Salvador — Another Vietnam' at its next shop stewards quarterly.

At the final rally in Central Manchester speakers from the FMLN/FDR, the New Jewel Movement of Grenada and the local Reagan Reception Committee homed in on the urgent need for militant action against the Tory government's war with

Argentina. Manuel Bravo explained the crisis that this war has created for imperialism in Latin America, in particular that Reagan's support for Britain has virtually ruled out any short term possibility of using Argentinian troops against El Salvador. Already 300 Argentine military advisors have been withdrawn from Central America.

Jingoism

At the same time it was clear during the week of action that the mobilisation against Reagan and in solidarity with Central America has been affected by the impact of the Malvinas war and above all by the mainstream Labour Party leadership's abject support for jingoism.

At one factory, SEI Heywood, a discussion with the stewards committee rapidly moved on from El Salvador to discussion for and against war with Argentina. At many other factories the issue was raised and heated discussions ensued. Stewards reported that despite a wave of jingoism whipped up by the Fleet St press it is still possible to put the case against the war.

6 June

Overall it was clear that there is a significant minority opposed to the Malvinas war, especially at the level of the shop stewards committees. June 6 will inevitably be a march not only against nuclear weapons and Reagan's plans for a new Vietnam but also against Thatcher's war.



INTERNATIONAL

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Stop Reagan the war-monger

National CND Demo, Sun 6 June, 11am Belvedere Rd, London SE1.

Picket US embassy, Mon 7 June, 5.30 Grosvenor Square, London W1.

Festival of Peace and Freedom, Tues 8 June 11am-10pm, Central Hall, Westminster.

Glasgow march, Mon 7 June, 6pm Blythswood Square to Clyde St and festival at Kelvin Centre, Argyle St from 7.30pm.

North London 'Twelve hours against Reagan' festival, Sat 29 May 11am-11pm. includes debates, films, food at North London Poly, Holloway Rd.

Plus Rock Against Reagan gig at Pied Bull, The Angel from 8pm.

Lambeth Reagan Reception Committee rally, Fri 28 May 7pm at Lambeth Town Hall, Brixton.

Army reprisals in El Salvador

By Paul Lawson

REPORTS from El Salvador suggest that the army is beginning to take reprisals against peasants who did not vote in last March's phoney election. Aerial attacks have been carried out on villages, and many others have been abandoned by peasants who either boycotted the election or who were unable to vote because of the fighting.

The reports of reprisals against those who did not vote come as no surprise — all the reports at the time of the elections indicated that the relatively high turnout was precisely because of the fear of reprisals. Voting is compulsory in El Salvador under Article 145 of the transitional electoral law.

Britain was the only country to send observers to the elections. The report of the British observers — John Galsworthy, former British ambassador to Mexico and Professor Derek Bowett — was published on 7 May and is a complete whitewash of

the government's terror tactics in forcing the elections through.

According to their report the 'election was fair' and the armed forces were exemplary in 'abstaining from voting and providing the necessary protection for the elections to take place'. They conclude that the high turnout for the election was 'a decisive rejection of the left's call for a boycott of the election'.

In sending these observers Margaret Thatcher was acting out of a sure sense of inter-imperialist solidarity. Apart from being alone in

Western Europe in sending observers to sanction the phoney elections, Britain was only one of eight countries out of 68 to agree to send observers.

The British observers were carefully guarded and closeted in luxury hotels — well away from the fighting and the poverty-stricken shanty towns which surround the capital of San Salvador. Their knowledge of the overall situation is demonstrated in their reference to El Salvador's 'frontiers with Nicaragua' — in fact no such frontier exists.

Meanwhile the direction of the new government which emerged from the elections is becoming clear. The new President Alvaro Magana intends to suspend the limited land reform decreed by Christian Democratic President Duarte. Duarte's land reform did not challenge

the huge estates of the rich but gave share croppers the possibility of owning their own land.

Although rarely put into effect the land reform was hated by the middle class as a symptom of Duarte's alleged 'weakness' towards communism. In supporting Magana as the new president the United States insisted that the land reform should stay. Magana's decision to jettison the land reform is indicative of where the real power now lies — with the more reactionary sectors of the army and the extreme right wing in the assembly — led by Roberto D'Aubuisson, president of the assembly and leader of the fascist ARENA party.

Since the elections on 28 March there had been a relative lull in the fighting. But over the last week there has been a

resurgence of guerrilla activity, especially night-time raids and the collection of war taxes on the major highways.

The continuing campaign of solidarity with the people of El Salvador must highlight the solidarity between the imperialist gangsters Thatcher and Reagan. The report of the British observers is a scandal and a disgrace.

Only the blind and Thatcher's agents could fail to realise that thousands of Salvadoreans not only wanted to vote but were desperate to vote — to get their papers in order and their identity cards stamped. Those who didn't are now facing the tender mercies of the army and the national guard, who according to the British observers, behave in a 'commendable fashion'.

Druze Arabs resist colonisation

The Golan 'soviet'

From Ros Kaplan on the Golan Heights

HIGH on the slopes of Mount Hermon and the mountains of the Golan Heights in Israeli-occupied Syria, the Arab villages (about 13,000 people) are engaged in a heroic struggle against the annexation of their land, and the extension of Israeli civil law to their area.

The people are Syrians of the Druze Islamic sect. Their land has been occupied by Israel since 1967. Their struggle involves a complete general strike, a boycott of Israel and a refusal to accept Israeli civilian identity cards — in effect become Israeli citizens.

Since 1967 the Israeli government has made several unsuccessful attempts to 'persuade' or force the people of the Golan to accept Israeli

citizenship as part of their attempt to annex the Golan. The formal announcement of the annexation of the Heights last December came as no

shock.

The response was swift and dramatic. At a mass meeting of around 5,000 people representing the four villages a three-day general strike was declared and a letter sent to the UN secretary general. On 12 February a letter was sent to Israeli Premier Begin demanding a withdrawal of the annexation — and warning that a general strike would be declared if there was no response.

On 13 February the Israelis moved in quickly and arrested 4 Druze leaders from Majdal Shams, including three over the age of 70! They were sentenced to three months administrative detention, and on 13 May a further three months.

The Druze people added the demand of the release of the prisoners at another mass meeting attended by 3000 people.

'We are Syrian Arabs of the Druze religion — this is our home, our land and we will continue to strike for years if necessary' — everyone I talked to was resolute on this. The resistance is extremely organised and virtually unanimous — only about ten people have accepted Israeli identity cards and they have been ostracised by the rest of the community.

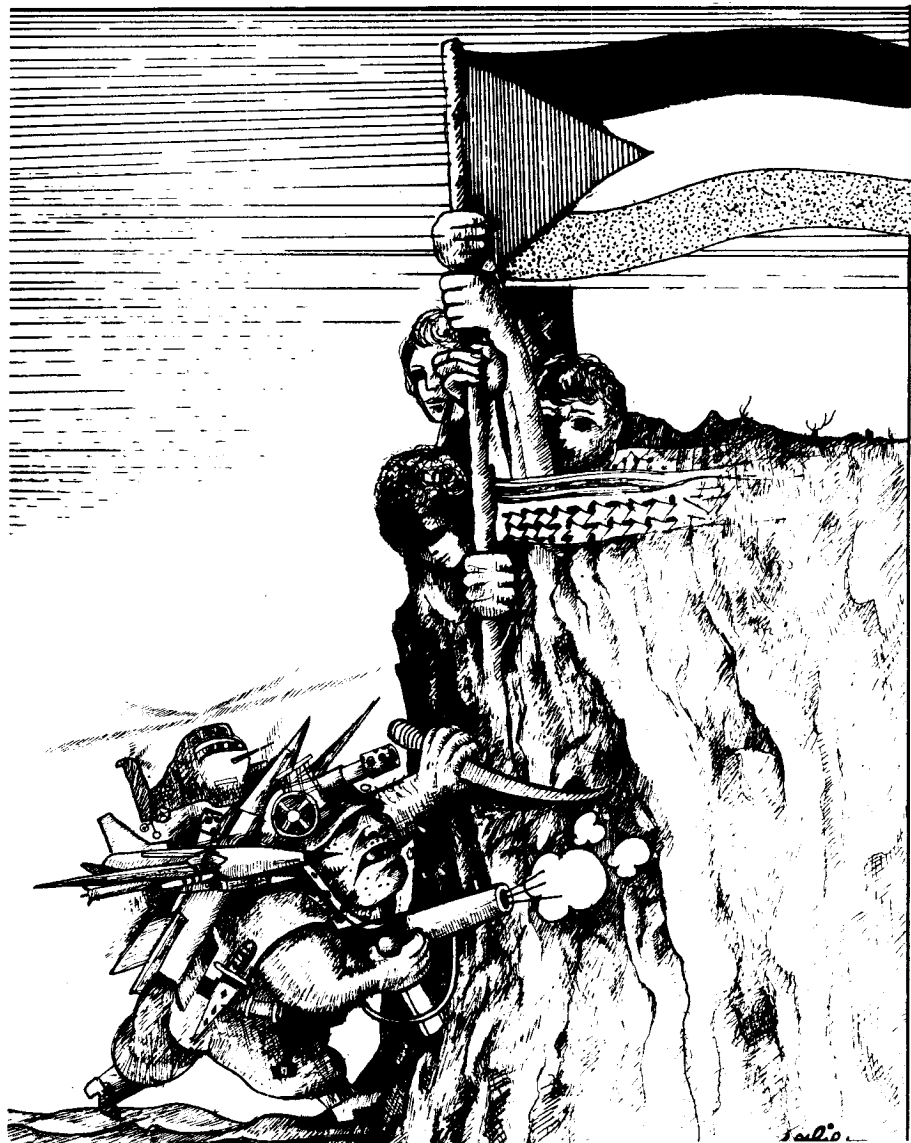
Ideas about how to

conduct the struggle are discussed informally, then at village meetings, and then by representative meetings of all the villages. Delegates to these meetings are rotated to ensure democratic control and there is no one group of 'leaders' for the Israelis to arrest and victimise.

The effects of the strike have been deep-going. All shops and schools are closed. The 2500 workers who work inside the 'Green Line' — the 1948 Israeli border — working at Israeli settlements, factories and construction sites in Qiryat Shmona and other towns refuse to go to work. Threats of sacking from Israeli employers have had no effect and the strike is seriously hitting Israeli businesses in the Golan, with the government offering compensation to factories.

Most of the Druze Arabs are farmers. Their main produce is apples which are sold to the Israelis in Tel Aviv (before the 1967 war the Golan apples went to Damascus).

Very little land expropriation has taken place in the four villages; nearly everyone owns some land and there is virtually no unemployment. These factors have given the community a solid



Peace Movement grows in Israel

By Ros Kaplan

AND WHAT of attitudes inside Israel to the Golan resistance? For the Zionist government it is one of confusion — the Druze people seem to be winning their struggle!

The Israeli annexation of a supposedly passive people, with its accompanying violence and repression, is seen by many Israelis as an unnecessary provocation.

In fact, the attitude of the majority of the Israelis towards the Druze is very different to that towards the Palestinians. A Golan Solidarity Committee has been set up comprising anti-Zionist and left-Zionist groups, including the Communist Party (Rakah).

Despite the arrests of people organising supplies for the Golan, the solidarity committee continues to organise support, including the sending of food and medical help.

Despite the 'trauma' of the handing back of Sinai to Egypt, and the determination of the government to annex all the other occupied territories, many Israelis have an impending sense of catastrophe.

They see no reason for military aggression, and are less prepared now than for many years to suffer casualties and economic hardship for the military adventures of the Begin government.

This doesn't mean, of course, that the state will be unable to mobilise people in the event of another war. But it does mean that the majority of Israelis will go into another war with a great deal more foot-dragging and scepticism than was the case in 1967 or 1973.

In a militarised country, geared to war and expansionism with the full mobilisation of the people, this is bad news and bodes ill for future stability.

Thus the tide is beginning to turn. The 'Peace Now' movement has been revived as a response to the failure of the Camp David agreement and the repression in the occupied territories. Today the 'Peace Now' movement gives open recognition to the Palestinian struggle — a big step forward on their simple 'peace' slogans of two years ago.

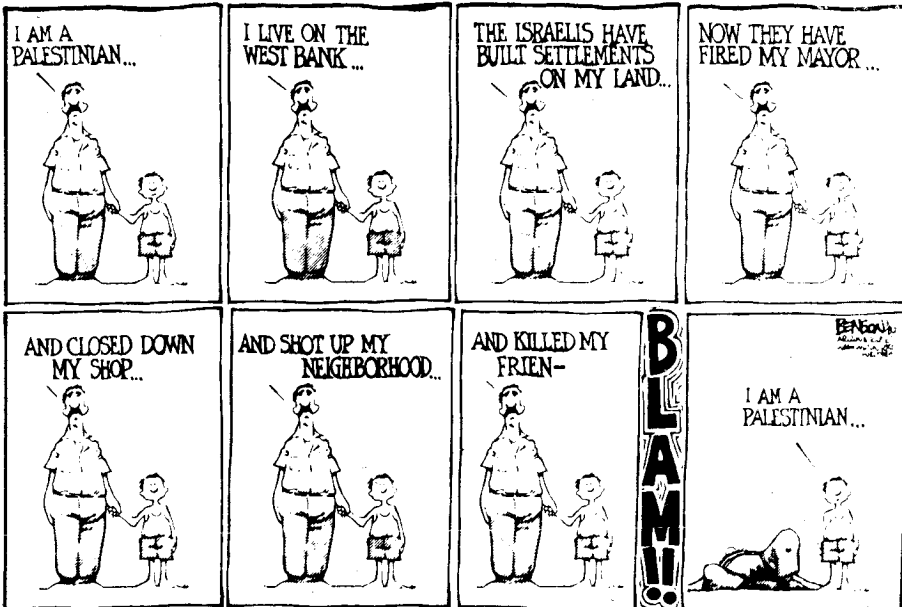
In large part this is the result of the pressure of the Bir Zeit/Solidarity group. Unprecedented in the history of Israel, this united front body including the CP, the anti-Zionist and the Zionist left organises around the slogans of 'down with the occupation, unconditional withdrawal from the occupied territories, dismantle all settlements and self-determination for both (ie. Palestinian and Jewish) peoples'.

There should be no illusions that this group has a massive impact on Israeli society. But it is both radicalising the 'Peace Now' movement and forging links in struggle between Israelis and Palestinians, united against Zionism.

For the first time in many years there are Israelis prepared to be beaten, tear-gassed and imprisoned in the joint struggle against the Zionist state.



A Druze village on Mount Hermon



basis for carrying out long term resistance.

They have gathered supplies of essential food to withstand a siege of at least a year. Since the beginning of the strike, workers who do not own land are being given plots

by farmers, and food is distributed according to need — with milk going only to children.

The Palestinians have begun to arrange collections of money to supply the besieged people of the Golan. On 24 February the Israelis made a pre-emptive strike to attempt to stop this, with military blockades being set up at the entrances of the villages.

Blockade

Supplies were stopped, Palestinian helpers arrested, no one allowed to enter or leave the area — including journalists. Although the blockade was physically lifted on 5 April it is still legally in effect. Anyone over 16 years of age found outside the villages without Israeli identity cards is arrested.

Israeli hospitals have been told not to admit anyone without an Israeli identity card. A woman shot in May by the army had to be taken to the hospital in Arab East Jerusalem four hours away before being treated.

Several violent clashes have taken place between the villagers and the Israeli army, especially during the period of the blockade. People I spoke to were insistent that 'we are against the Zionist government, not the Jews as people'. People told me that they realised that many of the soldiers coming into the villages had no choice in a conscripted army, and they respected them as people, even giving them hospitality.

Curfew

But once they showed signs of aggression, said the Druze people, they had no choice but to fight back. And this has been the case. The Druze resistance has been democratically organised, disciplined and, in the

main, peaceful. The clashes with the army have occurred when people have been forced to take identity cards.

On 31 March scores of army vehicles arrived in Majdal Shams and the military called a curfew. The curfew was ignored and scuffles broke out. General Drori, operational commander of the Northern Command ordered from a helicopter that the troops were not to shoot. The villagers then rushed the army, disarmed them and threw the guns back.

On 1 April four people were shot, including a ten-year-old boy and a 60-year-old man. At least 17 people required treatment for flesh wounds and injuries from severe beatings.

Haifa

On 2 April in the neighbouring village of Mas'ada (while 3000 troops were being positioned in Majdal Shams) the army took away the old identity cards and gave out new Israeli civilian cards. Residents flung them back and fights broke out. The army opened fire and people fell to the ground. Whenever given the new identity cards the people either burn them or rip them up.

The harassment and repression is continuing. Thirteen people are being held in Jalami prison in Haifa, under administrative detention — for three months without trial.

Many people have been given fines or even shorter periods of detention including 16 shepherds, two of whom were eight years old, who were given 7-day detention periods for allowing their animals to graze outside the permitted areas.

But in effect, everyone inside the area is now a political prisoner of the Israeli regime.

SHIPLEY METAL BOX

'A charter for victimisation'

140,000 ENGINEERS are already on the dole in the sprawling area of Shipley, Bradford and Leeds. Their industry has been ripped to shreds by Thatcher's monetarist madness, management incompetence and in part, the lack of a national fight by the engineering union the AUEW.

350 engineering workers at Metal Box, Shipley seized their plant which they have now occupied since 4 May to force the company to withdraw its compulsory redundancy notices to three shop stewards among a number of others. The bosses' move is seen as a direct threat to union organisation.

On the 22/23 May Frank Gorton, a shop steward at Metal Box, Hackney in East London and Toni Gorton visited the occupation and spoke to some of the activists. Here RICHARD LEE, works convenor, describes the issues and what the sit-in hopes to achieve. A mass meeting on Sunday 23 May voted overwhelmingly to continue the occupation.

METAL Box has been in Shipley since 1963. It's a major employer with about 600 people. In the past two years we've lost about 160 employees through redundancy. This is the first time that management have had a crack at compulsory redundancy.

In actual fact Metal Box's problems began when they entered into a cartel arrangement in America. Metal Box didn't anticipate the amount of investment that would be put into it from America and this resulted in an over capacity in the canning market.

However we are in machine-build and the market still exists for this. But the last two years we've been starved of work. There's been a deliberate policy of cutting Shipley down to size because we've been very strongly organised.

When all the Metal Box plants have been hit by job loss why has yours decided to fight back?

This lot of com-

pulsory redundancies have led everyone to think 'well enough's enough'. It's about time we resisted and fought back.

The thing that's changed us this time is that the redundancy exercise is a charter for victimisation.

We've been well organised and been the pace setter for pay wage negotiations and conditions.

It's this that's important for the company to break.

Do you think you were right in the first place to accept voluntary redundancies? The principle is the same ... it means jobs gone out of the industry.

We're trying as best we can to fight jobs loss and we recognise that even volunteers means job loss. Our argument has been that if a man wants to volunteer to give up his job and is daft enough to do so then we aren't going to argue or stop him. In fact we can't stop him.

The redundancy terms of the company are very

good, three and half weeks pay per year of employment which is far in excess of the state scheme. People very seriously consider taking high payments and selling their jobs.

We've got enough on defending the jobs of people who want to stay without arguing with people who want to go. But I accept that the trade union movement and ourselves are not saving jobs.

Do you think it's asking a lot for workers in the other Metal Box plants to take industrial action over Shipley when they haven't taken action over the job loss and factory closures on their own patch?

We have given pledges of support of industrial action to others. For example, the Crawley convenor was faced with the closure of the machine shop with 220 jobs to go.

We convened a special meeting in Lancashire and called the five factories in Metal Box Engineering together and took a decision that we would go on strike on behalf of Crawley.

That convenor turned around and said that if he went back to his members with that message that they'd hang him. They want the redundancy money.

The basic difference is that this is the first time anybody has shown a real willingness to fight off redundancy.



Richard Lee, works convenor and combine secretary. Metal Box is part of a large national and international corporation with some 56 factory

sites in Britain and operating in about 30 other countries.

What are you asking of the labour movement?

We're asking the Labour Party for both moral and financial support. We've been doing very well with this up to now.

We've arranged to have a lobby of the shareholders meeting. A number of labour controlled councils have shares in Metal Box, the GLC has something like 359,000. We're asking them to ask the questions for us or to

give us the proxy.

We've asked the Labour MPs to give us financial support and to ask questions in the House of Commons, especially about the South African connection.

It's at times like this that even the middle of the road political man suddenly realises that this big army of people are there and willing to give us a tremendous amount of help.

I think a lot of us have felt guilty about the way we've felt about groups like the Socialist Workers

Party. But its people like this you have to rely on and not just them but in the Labour Party. Without them we would have been really in the shtuck.

The company have tried to make SWP help into a political issue. The SWP has collected money, has given moral support and advice but the SWP has never been involved in-plant in the dispute.

Last week you picketed the Metal Box headquarters in Reading to

force the management back into talks. How did that go?

While we stood there eight brand new Cavaliers were delivered for the management car pool. Most of the directors rolled up in X registered Jaguars, dark green with a chauffeur driving. The building itself is like a hotel. In the out-buildings they've got saunas, swimming baths, tennis and squash courts.

You should have occupied that.

No I don't think so. It's just that you get the sense of these directors making decisions about the lives of people and they bear no consequences for them.

They're just lording it and all this has been achieved on revenue from the plants. And although you know that the company director, Denis Allport gave himself a 9 per cent rise to £67,000 a year it isn't until you see it that it really strikes you ... how disgusting it all is. We expect to meet with them this Thursday.



Denis Allport, chairperson of Metal Box inspecting plants in Jamaica and Trinidad. MB has investment in South Africa, Chile, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Singapore, Malaysia

Wives organise to support sit-in

WIVES and companions of the occupying workers at Metal Box are organising to discuss the problems that they are facing and how they can support the strike. MAVIS GILES, wife of Ray, a senior shop steward spoke to Socialist Challenge about why women should be involved.

Why do you think wives and companions should be involved in the occupation?

Gradually as the strike's progressed women have become a little isolated within the home facing the attendant problems that any strike brings.

The wives are at home, some with small children, with little money, problems with bills, not knowing whether they can claim on social security, difficulty finding out exactly how the strike is pro-

gressing and whether there's any moves with management.

Sometimes if their husbands are away they get the news from the radio or the press. So we felt that if we had a wives' action group we could get together to discuss problems that affect us as a group and individually. We can get the convenor to talk directly to the wives, bring us up to date and tell us how the strike committee sees what is happening.

Also we can find ways in which we can be involved in raising money and helping each other with practical problems like baby sitting.

Management are making noises about jobs being threatened as a direct result of this industrial action. The implication being that if the men don't stop the sit-in then they might lose everybody's jobs because the factory will close.

This can be quite frightening if you read this in the newspaper and you haven't had prior knowledge that this was an expected attack by management.

It's things like this that need to be discussed as a group with the officials of

the union.

Some of the people at the action committee were suggesting that the wives and girlfriends were not in support of the strike, that they wouldn't come to a meeting and that indeed some of the women were locking up their men to stop them from coming into the strike.

In the first place I'm not convinced a lot of the wives think like this. It seems that the wives who do take this kind of action against their husbands are the ones that people hear about. We don't hear too much about the ones who are giving quiet support.

I can appreciate that women are getting anxious

and miserable about the financial situation and that they might look at it in the short term.

Fortunately many of the wives see the issues as being much broader and the implications much wider.

The management will continually come back with more and more redundancies. They'll be able to pick off the representatives of the shop floor when and how they wish because they'll know they've broken off resistance.

They can eventually close the factory down if they want to because a management that has no opposition and no determination among the shop floor can just ride roughshod over people's jobs

and livelihoods.

This is why after 11 years of peaceful industrial relations the men have decided that they have got to make a stand because in the long run it will save jobs.

We need to stop redundancies and if we don't it

will mean far greater job losses. As there are no engineering jobs left in West Yorkshire there is nowhere else that the men can go for jobs so people will face years and years on the dole — and that will be a permanent financial problem.

What you can do

- A London tour is scheduled to begin on 1 June. Arrange meetings and opportunities to speak at factories and at labour movement events in the area. Please contact Frank Gorton, 01-254 9321 for information.
- Get resolutions of support and donations, using the official collection sheets.
- Metal Box plants exist in many areas of the country. Sell Socialist Challenge outside to tell the MB story and collect for the strike.
- Contact the Joint Shop Stewards Committee c/o A. Mackin, Treasurer, 14 Westcliffe Rd, Shipley, West Yorkshire, Tel 0274 59052.

Let the voice of the Argentinian opposition be heard

In all the publicity about the war one voice has been left unheard — that of the Argentinian opposition who have been suffering at the hands of the dictatorship. Socialist Challenge asked Rafael Runco, an Argentinian political refugee in Britain, to explain the reactions of the British media to the Argentinian opposition's point of view.

Shortly after becoming Prime Minister in 1979 Margaret Thatcher closed down the Latin American refugee programme, preventing anyone not already on the entry lists from getting in the country. Since then Thatcher has been busily selling arms to the junta but giving no material aid whatsoever to the Argentinians who want to come to this country.

Since the war began Argentinian oppositionists have not had their point of view heard. First, it has not been pointed out that the Argentinian people support the government's stand on the war but not on other questions. Second, important Argentinian oppositionists have not been allowed to come to this country to explain their views, like the Argentinian union federation, the CGT.

And the Nobel Peace Prize winner for 1980, Adolfo Perez Esquivel told the *Times*: "I am a trouble maker in the eyes of the Argentinian military government. I am also seen as a trouble maker by the British government which has refused me a visa to travel to London, apparently upset by my statements that as an Argentinian I share my people's claim to the islands."

Third, those oppositionists like myself who have been interviewed by the press have faced many problems. For example I was invited to be on the David Frost TV programme "The Falklands Special". There were British politicians, Argentinian politicians and linked up from Montevideo, islanders, relatives of British servicemen, and Argentinian oppositionists in the audience along with British people.

Frost asked people how many in the audience had originally supported sending the task force but now had changed their minds. There was a big majority of hands up. But this was totally missed out of the recording of the programme shown on TV!

Also the programme concentrated almost totally on discussing with reactionary Argentinian politicians in Montevideo and the likes of David Steel, David Owen and James Callaghan in this country. Then they said they were sorry but there was no time left to talk to the islanders or the Argentinian oppositionists — the very people the war is supposed to be about.

I was interviewed on LBC radio. It was broadcast at 8.45am but my whole explanation of the feelings of the Argentinian people about the islands was left out. They only played the part where I said we were for a peaceful solution.

And ITN interviewed me twice. The first was never broadcast at all. The second time there was a very long interview where I explained the Argentinian point of view. They only played the part where I said that I personally had been well treated by the Home Office. Taken out of context the quote was a complete distortion of my views.

The Argentinians are very disappointed with the establishment media here in Britain and the way they have presented the conflict. We would like to have explained the real feelings of the Argentinians about the war. We have always supported a peaceful settlement of the dispute. We have put no confidence in Galtieri, who is not suddenly seen as patriotic, but if the British imperialist aggression continues everyone will fight for national independence even if this means fighting alongside the dictatorship.

But we will not forget that once this conflict is over we will continue our struggle against the Argentinian armed forces.

Next week: a longer interview with Rafael Runco about the state of the opposition in Argentina.

ONE HUNDRED YEARS

How Britain and the U

By Will Reissner

IN THE current conflict between the Argentinian and British governments over the Malvinas Islands, the hypocritical commentary in the big business media focuses on the fact that Argentina is now ruled by a military dictatorship while Britain has a parliamentary democracy.

This obscures a much more fundamental difference between the two countries — that Argentina is a semi-colonial country while Britain is one of the major imperialist powers in the world.

Decisive control over Argentina's economy is not in the hands of Argentinians, but in the hands of the capitalist investors from abroad. This fact explains both how the Argentinian economy has developed and how it has been misdeveloped.

Argentina is one of the most highly developed, and one of the most industrialised of the semicolonial countries. But comparisons between semicolonial Argentina and imperialist Canada show the limitations of industrial development in the semicolonial world.

Argentina and Canada have many similarities. Both were settled overwhelmingly by Europeans. Both are important producers of grain and livestock. Both export large amounts of food and raw materials. Both have educated and skilled workforces. Both are largely urban.

But the following chart on this page shows the tremendous difference in their levels of economic development. The reason for the gap between the two countries is explained by the principal difference between them: Argentinian economic development has been deformed and distorted by the predominant role that foreign capital has played in the development of industry, and by the fundamental influence that imperialist companies exert on the Argentinian state.

Argentina's economic development has been largely determined by an alliance between Argentinian landowners and imperialism. The landowners, who raise grain and livestock on huge estates (*estancias*), have traditionally been content to export their produce and import industrial products, which are generally cheaper and better made than domestic production.

Their power rests on the staggering concentration in landownership in Argentina. Only two-tenths of 1 per cent of the landowners control 65 per cent of the country's acreage and employ 50 per cent of the agricultural labour! Two land companies alone own as much land as the total areas of Belgium and Switzerland put together.

While 160,000 farmers cultivate 1.5 million hectares, the 2,100 largest landowners cultivate 53.5 million hectares. Two out of every three farmers do not own the land they work.

While in absolute terms Argentina's agricultural exports are enormous, its agriculture is inefficient by advanced capitalist standards, being based on minimal cultivation of huge tracts. According to 1964 and 1966 figures compiled by the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA), Argentinian farmers used 19 times fewer tractors per arable acre than their British counterparts, and 140 times less fertilizer than West German farmers.

The fact that Argentinian exports are overwhelmingly agricultural make it particularly vulnerable to shifts in



Juan Peron, unable to break out of the imperialist economic stranglehold

the world market.

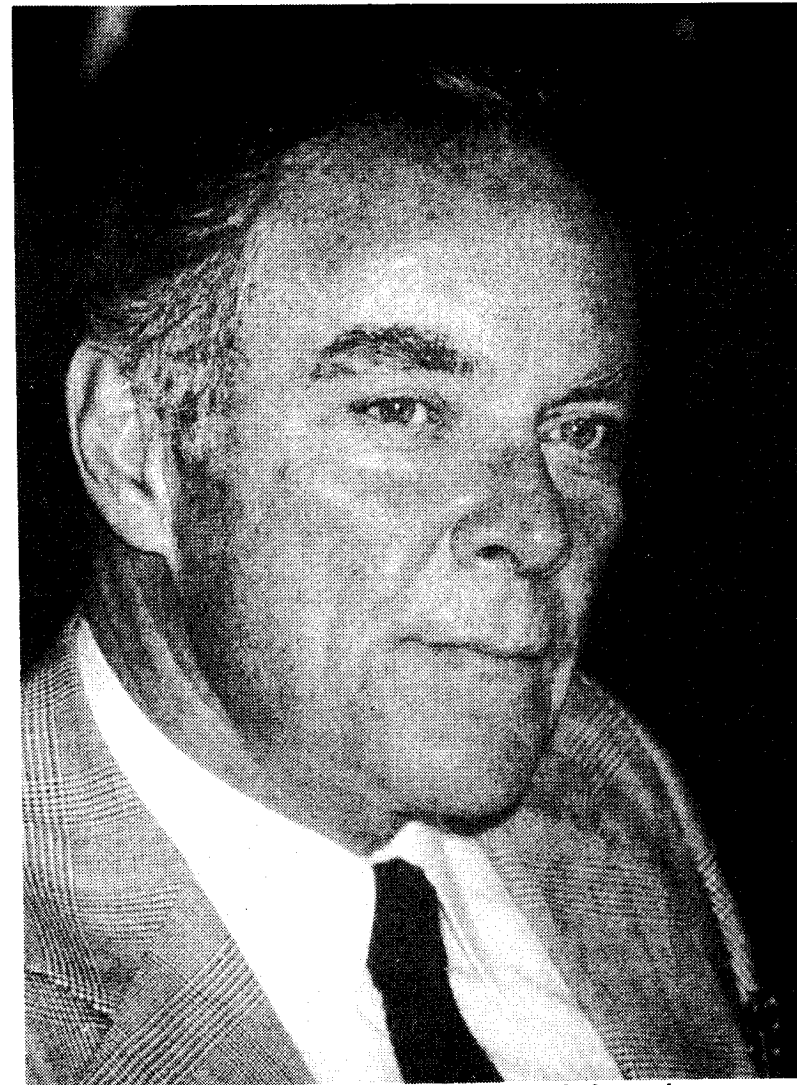
While the large landowners are mainly Argentinian, imperialist investment became the dominant factor in Argentinian industrial development in the third quarter of the 19th century. That investment, largely from Britain until the 1940s, was initially concentrated in railroads and the meat export trade.

But investments in the railroad system were made to further the interests of British capital rather than the internal needs of the Argentinian economy. Lines were laid out in a fan pattern, to move exports from the interior to the port of Buenos Aires, and to move imports from Buenos

Aires to the interior. No grid was built to facilitate internal trade and communication between the cities and regions of Argentina itself.

The second major focus of early imperialist investment was in the meat-packing industry. The development of refrigerator ships in 1876 made it possible for the first time to transport large amounts of Argentinian beef to European markets, and by 1890 a fleet of 278 refrigerator ships was constantly moving between Buenos Aires and Britain.

For all intents and purposes, Argentina had become a British colony by the turn of the century. Fully



Al Haig, archetype US imperialist, backed Britain against dependent Argentina over the Malvinas/Falklands



Not everyone supports the war

80 per cent of all foreign investment in the country came from Britain, British influence permeated aspects of Argentinian life.

By the 1930s, British capital controlled three-quarters of the road mileage, most of the urban transit systems and utilities, much of the meat-packing industry, and had stakes in other industries as well. Capitalists from other countries had a substantial presence in Argentina.

During the 1930s and 1940s there was considerable development in consumer-oriented 'import substitution' industries in Argentina. Despite the world-wide capitalist depression, markets for Argentinian exports in Western Europe shrank, leaving the country with less money to purchase manufactured goods abroad. When markets for Argentinian agriculture picked up with the break of the Second World War, Argentina was still unable to purchase industrial goods due to the conversion of European industry to war production.

Population.....	
% Urban.....	
Gross Domestic Product.....	
Imports.....	
Exports.....	
Electricity produced (kilowatt hrs).....	
Crude steel produced (metric tons).....	
Autos in use.....	
Autos manufactured.....	
Trucks manufactured.....	
Rail freight (net ton miles).....	
Telephones.....	
Beef production (metric tons).....	
% 5- to 19-year olds in school.....	
Infant mortality (per 1,000 live births).....	

OF COLONIAL EXPLOITATION

SA 'underdeveloped Argentina



inst Argentina



Crying for Argentina, by the military

In 1954, a study of the 100 most important companies functioning in Argentina, found that at least 89 were controlled by or closely connected with foreign capital.

Another study in the 1960s examined the country's largest companies, as defined by sales, and found that half of the total sales volume went to foreign-owned firms, one-third to state-owned firms, and only one-sixth to private companies owned by Argentinian capitalists.

The trend toward imperialist purchases or existing Argentinian industries is continuing. Of the 50 large state enterprises that the Argentinian government turned over to private control between 1963 and 1968, 29 passed into the hands of US corporations.

The evolution of the Argentinian automobile industry illustrates the growing control of imperialism. In 1960, 21 automobile companies were functioning in Argentina, of which only 4 had majority foreign ownership. The remainder were either entirely or majority Argentinian owned, and operated under license from imperialist firms. In 1963, locally owned auto firms still accounted for more than 50 per cent of total production.

Leaving aside the fact that all the locally-owned companies were already tied to imperialist corporations through licensing agreements, these figures show that there was still significant Argentinian participation in the industry in the early 1960s.

Today the story is totally different. The Argentinian producers have folded or been bought out and the remaining five automobile companies are all foreign owned.

In a study of the Argentinian auto industry, British scholar Rhys Jenkins points out that the imperialists take far more capital out of the country than they invest in it. He reports that: 'Between 1958 and 1964, that is, the period during which most of the foreign investment in the automotive industry was made, the inflow of \$33m into the industry was exceeded by the outflow of dividend payments that amounted to \$52.3m.'

Jenkins adds that the situation got even worse in the late 1960s and early 1970s when annual payments of dividends and royalties to foreign owners exceeded the total new foreign capital invested over a six-year period.'

This pattern is not unique. In fact it is the norm. Contrary to the myth

expounded by generations of pro-imperialist economists and politicians, foreign investment does not result in an inflow of capital to the semicolonial world and does not necessarily result in the creation of new industrial capacity.

A study of the United States Department of Commerce shows that between 1950 and 1965, US private investment in Latin America totalled \$3.8bn, while in those same years the flow of profits from Latin America to the United States totalled \$11.3bn.

In addition, most 'foreign' investment does not bring new capital into the semicolonial countries from the imperialist countries. According to a US Department of Commerce study, 96 per cent of US foreign investment in Latin America is actually raised in Latin America.

The United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America points out that: 'The growing tendency of foreign investors in recent years to purchase all or part of industrial enterprises that are already operating in Latin America, far from providing a stimulus to industrial activities in the region, entails an increasing outflow of financial resources, without the creation of new production capacity to justify it.'

This pattern — imperialist investors borrowing Argentinian capital to purchase Argentinian industrial plants and sending the profits out of Argentina — has another pernicious impact besides the export of capital from the country. It also establishes Argentinian industry as a branch office operation, in which imperialist firms satisfy the local internal market through their own local production rather than through imports. But all research, development, technical innovation, engineering, and the like is carried out in the 'home' office.

The degree of imperialist control over Argentina's industrial production has had a big impact on the relationship of class forces within the country. As Argentinian economist Gustavo Polit notes: 'Since its birth Argentinian industry has been centralised in a few hands, inextricably intertwined with the landholders and foreign capital.' As a result, the degree of concentration of ownership and production is higher than in the advanced capitalist countries, which developed in a more organic and rounded manner.

Argentinian corporations were

huge from the start. As Polit shows, they 'emerged in the economic arena of Argentina as fully developed offspring of large foreign enterprises.'

Already by 1936, still in the early stages of Argentinian industrial development, 47 individual factories (one-tenth of 1 per cent of the total) employed 15 per cent of all workers — a degree of concentration that was 10 times higher than in the United States at the same time. By 1954, the 69 largest establishments alone were responsible for 20 per cent of the value of production.

The Argentinian working class, therefore, was from its beginnings concentrated in large factories, which are the most conducive arena for the development of working-class consciousness and organisation. As a result, the Argentinian working class has traditionally been one of the most class-conscious and militant in the capitalist world.

This huge, powerful working class confronts a stunted Argentinian capitalist class. In face of competition from huge foreign corporations, most Argentine capitalists are content to play the role of junior partner to imperialist firms, or avoid industrial investments totally.

The Argentinian capitalist asks himself, says Polit: 'Why should millions be invested in such items as blast furnaces if a much smaller capital investment will bring high and immediate profits when invested in land, elegant buildings, the stock market, or textile enterprises?'

This stunted and deformed Argentinian capitalist class finds itself sandwiched between two giants — the Argentinian workers and the imperialists. Unable to control and contain the working class on its own, it must rely on brute force by the military to keep the workers in check, and it turns over the reins of government to representatives of imperialism.

In 1970 and 1971 James Petras and Thomas Cook carried out interviews with the top executives of the 150 largest corporations and industrial associations in Argentina. They found that 55.4 per cent of the top executives of foreign owned corporations have held Argentinian government posts as cabinet ministers, cabinet advisers, or ministerial subsecretaries. But only 19.7 per cent of the top executives of Argentinian owned companies had held similar posts.

Today Argentina is in the midst of a terrible economic crisis characterised by years of triple-digit inflation, a rising wave of bankruptcies and bank collapses, unemployment that is officially 10 per cent but is thought to be nearly double that figure in reality, and a dizzying fall in the living standards of Argentinian working people.

The military, which has ruled since 1976, has no solution to the economic crisis. In 1981, five different officers occupied the presidential palace. One after another was swept out by the deepening depression.

Today Argentina faces the dead end of semicolonial development. Because of the penetration of imperialist investment, Argentina sends massive amounts of capital to the imperialist centers in the form of remitted profits, and then has to turn around and borrow that same capital from British, US, European and Japanese banks to finance infrastructural development. Argentina's foreign debt now stands at more than \$35bn.

The Argentinian working class, in its millions, with its fighting traditions, is the only force capable of breaking the hold of imperialist capital on Argentina and taking charge of the country's destiny.

From *Intercontinental Press*

INTERNATIONAL VIEWPOINT

24 May 1982

ISSUE No 7

FOR A REAGAN-FREE EUROPE

EUROPEAN WORKERS AND YOUTH SAY "JOBS NOT BOMBS!"

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Argentina	Canada
27,300,000	23,940,000
72%	75.5%
\$61.5 billion	\$245.8 billion
\$6.7 billion	\$62.6 billion
\$7.8 billion	\$67.5 billion
29.05 billion	335.71 billion
3.2 million	16.1 million
2.03 million	9.02 million
135,000	1.14 million
45,480	610,800
10.37 billion	215.35 billion
2.6 million	14.5 million
3.19 million	1.06 million
59%	76%
59.0	12.4

Marley lives!

BOB MARLEY died one year ago. But his legend and influence remain just as powerful in death as during his life. Here we re-print the tribute we published when he died by PAUL GILROY.

DESPITE the fact that his militant music has helped many a stuffy social find its feet and start dancing, there will be many on the left who will balk at considering Bob Marley as more than a 'pop star'.

Any socialist who fails to see the relevance of the autonomous black politics of which Marley was part should be warned by the media coverage of his death.

This went to ridiculous extremes to prove that his music and purposes were unrelated to politics and nothing to do with revolution.

Radio 4 informed us that *Get up, stand up* was a 'spiritual plea', while the ATV tribute

revolution, whose flames were felt throughout Africa, West Europe and the

shot for his pains, and he left Jamaica.

His commitment and priorities can be gauged from the fact that the *Survival* album, which marked his return to music, was more resolutely outspoken than ever, turning his own experience at the hands of the assassins into a symbol for the divide-and-rule tactics of the capitalism that he despised. Millions of black people in the world who

Rather that abandon white youth forever to the swelling ranks of the British Movement, we must realise how many young people found something of their own in the language and symbols of Rastafari which Marley made famous.

White young people flocked to see him perform and bayed 'stand up for your rights' back at the stage in their cup final atmosphere.

This relationship flowered briefly in the cooperation of black and white which marked the early days of Rock Against Racism and prepared the ground for the short-lived but important 'two-tone' craze.

Marley's influence powered over all this and the connections he fought to reveal will be harder to uncover the next time anti-racism becomes fashionable.

Of course, his rise to international stardom was only possible once the leisure industry woke up to the vast profits to be made from

He accepted the constraints of commodity stardom as the price of access to larger numbers of people who could make his vision of the internationalisation of Rastafari a reality.

Irony

The move away from root reggae towards pop, which started with *Natty Dread* — his first album after the original Wailers broke up — should be understood as a strategic ploy to open up black America to the political culture of reggae and Rastafari.

It is sad irony that he should have fallen ill just as Stevie Wonder's *Master Blaster* seemed to have made this conquest likely.

Don't be fooled into thinking that Bob Marley was a mystic just because he spoke a language of class struggle which you

find difficult to translate.

reggae. He spanned political and cultural traditions, and the differential effects of his political intervention in the metropolis and third world present a precise picture of the configurations of imperialism.

Third World records in Africa and Latin America demanded new products and the domestic 'rock scene' had grown stale under the deadweight of the Eric Claptons.

feel capitalist domination through racial oppression have taken up Marley's new Garveyism and used it in their struggles.

But they were not his only constituency. He had a knack of presenting a black experience undiluted in such a way that universal, general and class-based interpretations were also possible.

He invited anti-racism while servicing black liberation. The calculated ambiguities of a song about political violence in Jamaica made it relevant to England in a different way:

'They don't want to see us live together, All they want us to do is keep killing one another'

The impact of Afro-Caribbean culture in general and reggae in particular on the lives and politics of white working class youth in this country is too often overlooked.

Americas.

Marley preached a relentless anti-imperialist doctrine. Built on Dread Pan-Africanism, but unswerving from a commitment to the righteousness of the oppressed whatever the Babylon system sucked the blood of the sufferers, Marley's understanding of Babylon was to prove all too powerful, and far more materialist than metaphysical.

Direct intervention in Jamaican politics on behalf of Michael Manley's People National Party got Marley

explained that *Crazy Baldhead* carried a 'mystic message of peace and reconciliation'.

These views were a predictable insult to a man whose political influence continues to guide the political struggles of a generation reared on his instruction, 'Don't forget your history, control your destiny'.

Babylon

Bob Marley was not a 'protest singer' who drew attention to struggles of which he was not part. He was a committed artist whose works were indivisible from the struggles they expressed.

His powerful words are evidence of his political intentions, and their political effects elevated him above the shallow pop culture which he evaded while alive, but which has attempted to claim him in death.

When Island Records released *The Wailers' Catch a Fire* in a cigarette lighter cover in 1973, they sparked a political and cultural



His music and political achievements are the best obituary. Listen to *Burning and Looting* and remember him serenading Zimbabwe into independence.

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Sponsored by the Joint Committee for the Welfare of Immigrants and the Law Centre Federation. Details and booking forms please write to: Jamal Hasan, Camden Community Law Centre, 146 Kentish Town Rd, London NW1 or ring 01-485 6672.

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Cuban foreign policy

Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, vice president of the Cuban Council of Ministers, is now on an official visit to Paris. A central figure in Havana, he is responsible for coordinating Cuba's foreign and economic policy. As 'number three' in the regime after Fidel and Raul

Castro, his visit goes beyond the mill bi-lateral French-Cuban relations. It is part of a new series of Cuban diplomatic initiatives.

Jean-Pierre Beauvais, editor of the French revolutionary paper *Rouge*, assesses the new moves.



'WE are entering a crucial period for the future of our revolution. For more than twenty years, Washington's aggressive attitude to us has never slackened. From the Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961, to the economic blockade, the list of attempts to isolate or destroy us is long. Imperialism has never accepted the Cuban people's decision to adopt the social system of its choice. But, with the triumph of the Nicaraguan revolution and the successes of the Salvadorean people, this hostility has surpassed itself. Last October, military action seemed imminent.'

The speaker was still adolescent when Fidel Castro entered Havana in 1959. A cadre of the Cuban Communist Party and a member of its Central Committee, he is one of those today contributing to the elaboration of Cuban foreign policy.

'Tension has slackened off since,' he adds, 'but we would be irresponsible if we did not prepare for the worst. This is why our entire people is mobilised and in military training to repel any aggressor. We prefer negotiation to confrontation. But it is not our choice.'

Imperialist aggression, mobilisation, revolutionary rise in Central America, negotiation: These are the key words around which the Cuban leadership's foreign policy is now developing.

First, a popular mobilisation, deeper and more widespread than we have been used to during this revolution. An internationalist mobilisation, solidarising with the struggle of the Central American revolutionaries, Cuba is living through the daily experiences of Nicaragua, Guatemala, El Salvador. There is not a workplace assembly nor a meeting of the Committees for the Defence of the Revolution where the situation there is not discussed.

Combat

'Our future is at stake here as in Central America,' explained a Cuban Minister recently. 'Their struggle is ours,' say the placards and posters, often clumsily designed, which can be seen on the walls of the workshops and offices. It is an internationalist mobilisation, but it is also in defence of the revolution: of the workers' state and its gains.

The decision to constitute 'territorial militias' taken at the end of 1980 and ratified by the Communist Party's 2nd Congress, has received wide support. Tens of thousands of workers have set up 'detachments' in the workplaces, devoted much of their holidays to military training and collected money for their own arms.

In Havana, each CDR has set up 'evacuation committees' house by house, street by street. Exercises are held regularly and everyone knows what to do in case of attack. Those who have lived through the most dramatic moments of the 'missile crisis' of 1962 seem unanimous in thinking that this mobilisation is at least as big.

sector which reacts to problems and events 'in a mechanical fashion, with repeses that seem to have been well prepared in advance by pseudo-ideologues blinded with their anti-communism.'

Washington is meeting 'problems' right now. Internal problems which the Cuban leaders follow from close up — and international problems.

Particularly disturbing for them is the combination of economic crisis without apparent solution, accelerated rearmament and — regionally — the military escalation in El Salvador and Central America. In their view this escalation, if it continues, can only lead to a geographical escalation.

More generally, in an international context marked by numerous explosive local situations — from Southern Africa

to the Middle East, for example — they think that any imperialist adventure will very quickly draw them in even if they are not initially involved.

The evolution of the crisis in the Malvinas/Falklands shows this fear is not unjustified.

The Cuban leadership's fears and worries cannot be dissociated from their growing concern with the 'accumulation of the socialist camp's problems'. This is a subject which no Cuban official will discuss openly, but from 'friendly and informal' exchanges and 'small phrases' the indications are growing.

The chronic difficulties of the Soviet economy, the massive indebtedness of most of the 'socialist countries' disturbs the Cubans: what will the long term effects be on the

aid — still vital — which Russia gives the Cuban economy?

Moscow's entrenchment in Afghanistan worries them too. 'The Russian losses are heavy: they will have to fight there for years,' was a comment we heard delivered in a critical tone.

But above all it is Poland that concerns them.

On this there is an official position. It is a position which has been long-awaited and remains very discreet. It insists on the fact that the present situation is 'above all the product of the incorrect application of the principles of Marxism-Leninism' but, in essence, it remains — without any equivocation — a position of support for Jaruzelski.

But many questions are being asked by those who, through their jobs, have access to other information than that put out by the Russian Tass news agency, reproduced liberally by *Prensa Latina* and the whole Cuban press.

'One cannot build socialism with the majority of the people against you,' commented a high functionary in the Ministry of Foreign Relations. Another, an old friend of Fidel's, recalled that 'I was convinced that if the Soviet military had intervened in Poland, the Yankees would have intervened directly afterwards. In spite of everything, Jaruzelski is the lesser evil.'

Around these questions there is, obviously, a discussion at the heart of the Cuban leadership. This is a strictly internal discussion and its limits are obvious: any major divergence with the Soviet Union — whose massive aid

and military support have been determining factors in the survival of the revolution in the face of imperialist aggression — is a priori excluded.

'To the extent that we are pursuing the same historical objectives... there is and will be a broad coincidence between Soviet foreign policy and Cuba's,' writes Carlos Rafael Rodriguez in an important article published in the first edition of *Cuba Socialista*, the new theoretical review of the Cuban Communist Party.

These limits having been established, a further point can be affirmed which is commented on as soon as international questions are discussed: the Cuban revolution 'must not only have an independent foreign policy, it must have its own policy,' to use Rodriguez's formula in the article already quoted.

This is the first time that this theme has occupied such a position and the first time it has been so clearly enunciated since the 1970s, that is, since Soviet influence began to weigh so heavily on the revolution.

'Although Cuba is disposed to subordinate its national interests permanently to those of socialism as a universal aspiration, this does not and cannot mean that our foreign policy, with its own objectives, can be subordinated to the policies of other socialist states,' writes Rodriguez.

It would be wrong to see only rhetoric in these arguments. On such vital questions as Central America or relations with Washington, and on many others, Cuban desire to develop 'its own policy' is more and more perceptible.



Fidel Castro and Mexico's President Lopez Portillo

politicisation and enthusiasm of large sections of the people, and of the links which involve the Castroist leadership with the masses.

'We are calm and well-prepared no matter what type of confrontation awaits us,' Carlos Rafael Rodriguez recently told a French press agency. The Cuban leaders are convinced that the risk of military aggression against their island is greater than at any time since the 1960s.

They fear this not only as a response to the revolution in Central America. They fear, deep down, an adventure by the Reagan administration. In their eyes this is 'the most conservative, the most aggressive, the most reactionary and the most dangerous' sector of the American bourgeoisie. It is a



Raul Castro and Kosygin in Mexico

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Rape and sexual violence

RAPE and violence against women are the most extreme forms of degradation of women in our society. Such acts are not one off occurrences performed by mad men — they reflect women's position in society and the family. Twenty five per cent of all violent crime takes the form of sexual or domestic attacks on women in the home. Forty seven per cent of rapes are committed by people known to the victim and only a few are known to be mentally disturbed.

JUDITH ARKWRIGHT replies to the debate that has taken place recently in the pages of Socialist Challenge.

Violence toward women stems from the fact that women are trapped in a subordinate position inside the family — subordinate because women are materially dependent on men within the family. They are the provider of domestic services not supplied by the state.

The only possibility of putting a stop to this treatment of women is not by having tougher sentences or punishment for rapists but through changing a society which is based on coercion in every sphere of life and establishing a society where free social and sexual relations exist.

In this context we can point out some important achievements of post capitalist governments in beginning to challenge the overall position of women in society and therefore changing attitudes and treatment of women. In Russia in the early days of the revolution, for example, the most advanced programme in the world before or since was introduced for women. Free abortion, civil marriage and the right to work was enshrined in the constitution and began to be enacted.

Family

In Cuba today, a topic of debate in many of the letters, there are free nurseries, abortion is totally legal as long as the woman wants it, children born outside wedlock are considered equal, thus challenging the norm of marriage and monogamy.

In addition there is no advertising in Cuba. Thus women's bodies cannot be used to sell commodities — an important factor in encouraging sexist attitudes in capitalist countries. There is a mass women's movement involving eighty per cent of women and continually taking up the fight for women's demands and challenging 'machismo'.

No one would claim that such societies can get rid of rape and sexual violence overnight. Even in a country like Cuba this is not the case. But such problems are nothing like the scale of social problems which could be found in an advanced capitalist country.

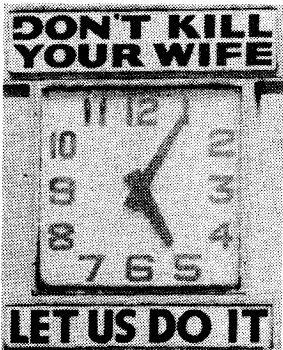
Ultimately, however, a complete alternative to the family form will be necessary to change attitudes to women. Without that they cannot be fully free and independent, cannot play a full role in social

production, cannot play a full role in public life and will continue to be subordinate to men.

Women will not achieve full equality until this is overcome and an alternative to the family and domestic labour is developed.

Attitudes toward women which generate hostility, sexual objectification or violence can change as part of this process.

The fight against violence against women however, cannot be postponed until 'we



achieve socialism' — it has to be taken up as part of the fight for socialism along with other demands.

Women against Rape for example, have just launched a campaign for rape to be recognised within marriage which they intend to take into the women's and labour movement. The fact that rape within marriage is not recognised shows how women are regarded as men's property to be sexually abused and exploited at will. The capitalist state endorsed this because it wants to ensure women's role as reproducers and child rearers, not as sexual beings with their own rights.

Demands

We should demand an end to police and judges' harassment. We should call for balanced jury composition and for automatic compensation for rape victims without having to go through a separate claims court. We should demand council funded centres which are free from state control.

Such demands do not imply any reliance on the state and in fact show up the role of the state in perpetuating violence to women; but these demands can be used to stimulate the self activity of women to fight for their needs. A struggle by women around this and all the demands for our liberation will show quite clearly that we will have nothing to do with the 'law and order' brigade and their proposals for combatting rape which centre on the 'crime and punishment' of the individual man.

Such people do not have the interests of women at heart when they demand stiffer sentences or hanging.

What would women gain from this? Nothing. In fact quite the opposite — any strengthening of the state apparatus weakens women's fight since it is precisely the same parliament, the same courts, the same institutions which attack women's rights — to work, to fertility control and so on.

Our emphasis as socialists should be on campaigns which benefit women. We should take these demands up within the labour movement — pointing out how questions like cuts in public transport affects women especially, demanding that unions negotiate on behalf of women members by demanding provisions of alarms, self defence lessons in worktime and schools, better street lighting, for safe, cheap transport, for union meetings to be at suitable times for women and so on. In addition unions should draw up codes of conduct in relation to sexual harassment.

Collective

The fight for women's liberation as a whole begins to challenge the perception which men have of women and forces them to treat women with respect and as equal beings. This type of strategy takes the emphasis away from the individual man and the individual woman and towards a collective response. This is not a matter of letting men off the hook. Such anti-woman and anti-working class activity is repulsive to our movement and we defend the right of women to organise against such actions.

The increase in violence against women is a product of the social and economic crisis of our society. The liberation of women rests in fighting this system and in the construction of a women's movement and a labour movement strong enough and confident enough to fight back on all fronts.

Self defence is no offence — unlike the adverts in Sunday's colour magazines.

PORNOGRAPHY

From outrage to action

By Valerie Coultas

I wonder how many Socialist Challenge readers have ever seen a slide show about hard porn? If you're female it would shock you to see some of the images of women that are portrayed in hard porn magazines. For some men it would be a shock too. The Swindon Women's Liberation Festival recently showed a slideshow about pornography and male violence put together by an American Women's Group. The effect on the all-female audience was a dramatic one. Stunned silence and a general feeling of discomfort greeted the end of the show.

Starting off with the poster advertising the Rolling Stones Album 'Black and Blue', where a 'glamorous' woman is tied up having been supposedly beaten 'black and blue' by the Rolling Stones and, according to the caption, loving it, the written commentary explains how women in Los Angeles forced the advertising company to withdraw this hoarding from public view. The slide show illustrates how fine the line is between respectable advertising and hard porn.

A slide is shown from a porn magazine where a woman's legs are spread open in the air, no other part of her body is in view. A man stands above her with a huge drill. Another slide comes on the screen. The image is similar but this time, once again, the magazine is 'respectable'!

The most vivid and horrific slides are those that take women's bodies as pieces of meat to its literal conclusion. In one slide a woman is placed on a plate of rice, her bottom in the air, her body covered with sauce. She looks just like a piece of chicken. In another we see a mincer 'grinding' a woman's body. The woman's head (of course) and the top of her body have gone through the grinder; only her bottom and legs are left waving in the air to titillate the male viewer. The final slide caps them all. It is a 'snuff' picture, a woman is being tortured to death, her nipples are being torn off by a male torturer.

Outrage and anger against the male sex as a whole is the natural response to a slide show designed to 'sensationalise' the issue of male violence. Many women —

simply one of anger at a world that encourages men to view woman in this way but also a gnawing anger at the bias in the slideshow itself.

The atmosphere that the film created in the room was one of a feminist seance, where we sat and fed our anger at the male sex in general. A slide had been shown where a boss leaned over his desk and was forcing his female employee to strip. It had nothing to say about the power of the man, as a boss, over his female employees.

When it referred to 'snuff' films it said



A woman's body to advertise men's clothes

like myself — in the audience had never been exposed to such vile images of their own sex before. But my reaction was not

nothing about the bloated, degenerate capitalists and their hangers on who provide the wherewithal to finance these sadistic trips

into foreign parts to trick women to their deaths. It said nothing of the profits of the firms that advertise the records, churn out the porn magazines, the large wage packets promised to the women who can get far more for taking their clothes off than they ever will as factory workers, hairdresser, schoolteacher or even top secretary.

It is far too simple to allow outrage at men in general to determine the position that women should take against pornography. Of course it is vile. Of course it is degrading. Of course we should oppose it and take individual men up for condoning it and consuming it as they do in their thousands every day of their lives. But when it comes to action against it we have to attack the source, not the manifestation, of the problem.

Millions

We have to attack the class system that encourages and tolerates women's inferiority — in the home and at work. We have to point the finger at the firms and multinationals that make millions out of the porn industry and ensure that a future Labour government takes control of these industries, using their profits for things people really need.

We have to demand that all women are given the right to live independent lives by having the educational and work opportunities, the family planning and welfare facilities, that will ensure that no woman is forced to sell her body either in marriage or for any other reason. These are the ways we move from outrage to action.

Feminists have accused socialists of being sex-blind in the past. When discussing pornography the modern women's movement has to avoid being class-blind.

BRADFORD 12 Police deny knowledge of fascist threat

By Paul Hutchinson

THE PROSECUTION case continued throughout the fourth week of the Bradford 12 trial. Tariq Ali, defending himself, and other defence counsel, cross examined the police officers involved in his detention and subsequent arrest.

Tariq Ali was 'invited' to the police station by Det Insp Windle. Windle described what immediately followed at the police station as a 'natter' about Ali's political views. Ali put it to the officer that it was 'a heavy political interrogation'. Windle denied Ali's contention that he was also interrogated about the whole state of apartheid in South Africa.

Ali later wrote a statement when interviewed by Det Insp Sidebottom and Det Sgt Huntingdon. It admitted involvement in making petrol bombs but in terms of the need to resist fascist and racist attacks. It pointed to events in Southall and the Deptford fire. In this context Ali's statement said they took 'the news that coachloads of skinheads were coming to Bradford very seriously'. Sidebottom obviously didn't.

Mike Mansfield, counsel for Tarlochan Gata-Aura produced copies of the *News of the World* dated 12 and 19 July 1981 (Sidebottom had said he took this paper regularly). The 12 July issue had an article on the National Front recruiting gangs of skinheads to attack black communities. An article the following week was on Southall and organised fascist violence. Sidebottom said he hadn't read these articles.

With last week's proceedings also came the admission that Special Branch officers were present when several of the defendants were picked up. Det Insp Windle when cross examined in relation to the arrest of Giovanni Singh, admitted the presence of a Special Branch officer when they went to his house and said that the Special Branch were interested in links

between disturbances in Bradford and riots in other areas of the country.

Police maltreatment of the defendants was also alleged by the defence. Tariq Ali said that he was thrown into a cell with a British Movement skinhead and that three police officers had laughed at this. Sidebottom denied any knowledge. Counsel for Saeed Hussein, Helena Kennedy, put it to Det Const Porter that her client had been hit round the head three times. Porter denied this.

Det Sgt Morley denied threatening Ishaq Kazi with being charged with a conspiracy to murder a policeman if he didn't give them more information. But he did admit that he had told Ishaq 'I'll give you credit at court for not going along with them (the other defendants) if you tell me everything'.

Morley said that he had not been implying that Ishaq would get a lighter sentence. The defence case will start sometime during the fifth week of the trial.

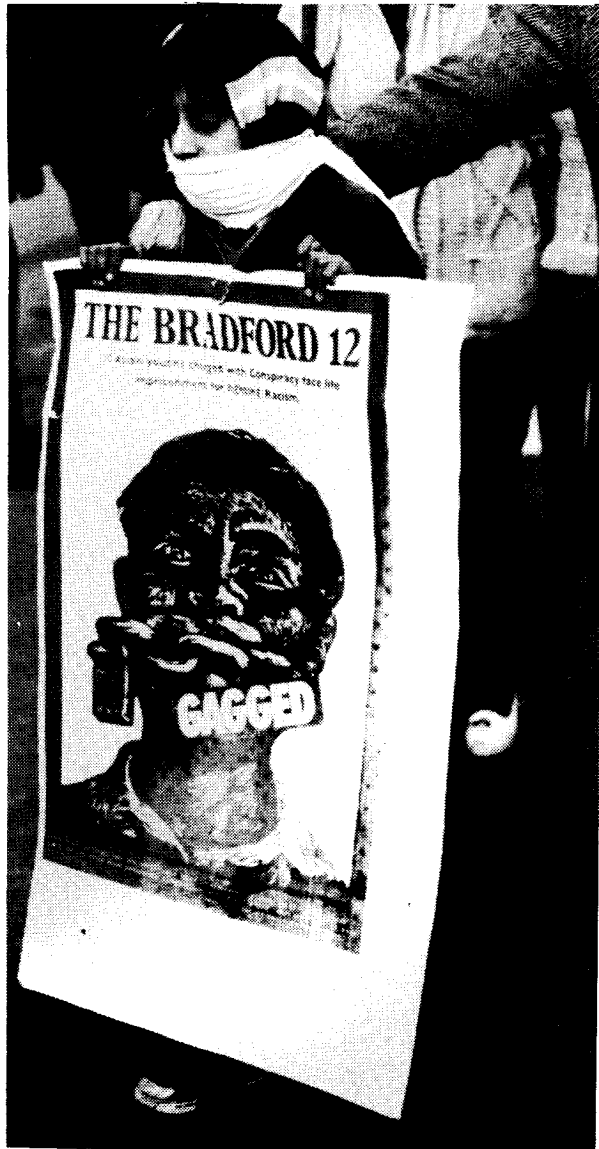


Photo: ANDREW POTHECARY

Witch-hunt call from Wales Labour Party

By Helen Slyomovics, Cardiff North delegate to Wales LP conference

A BLOW against democracy and for the right inside the Labour Party was struck at Wales Labour Party conference last week. Resolutions were passed which called for an inquiry into various groups in the party and for the proscribing of the *Militant* Tendency and the expulsion of Trotskyists.

The vote on these resolutions went against the Wales Labour Party executive's recommendation to support a composite resolution which called for democratic reselection and an end to the witch-hunt.

Right wing MP for Swansea West, Alan Williams, claimed that the left had started the witch-hunt with their demands of reselection of MPs. Such pathetic arguments, which confuses reselection and expulsion, showed the

contempt in which party democracy is held by the right wing. It was the right wing-led union, General and Municipal Workers, which initiated these blatant attacks on the left — backed by the engineering union.

Unfortunately the transport union abstained on all these resolutions — and allowed the right to win. George Wright, general secretary of the Wales TGWU (as well as of the Wales TUC), claimed that to do otherwise would have 'split' the union delegation. Yet opposition to the witch-hunt is part of the TGWU's national policy.

An abstention meant in fact a vote for the right and cannot go unanswered. Derek Gregory, regional secretary of the public employees' union, NUPE, which opposed the witch-hunt argued, 'Yes we need party unity but on the basis of implementation of democratically decided policies. Otherwise conferences are made a mockery of and we need a party leadership which supports party policy. Labour cabinets have departed from these policies in the past and there has been infiltration from the right for many years, such as Shirley Williams and Reg Prentice.'

This hypocrisy of the right was highlighted by



Wales National Union of Mineworkers opposed the witch-hunt in the Labour Party, unlike the TGWU

Dave Warren, Swansea LPYS, who pointed to Labour Solidarity, an organised tendency of the right wing in the party and who call for the expulsion of the *Militant* tendency.

As Derek Gregory continued, 'I don't support the *Militant* tendency. I think some of their arguments are infantile.

But I defend absolutely their right to put their arguments forward in this party.' Now the decisions of the Wales Labour Party threatens that right more than ever. The role of the TGWU shows the need to continue to take up all opposition to bans and proscriptions and to take that fight right into the heart of the unions.

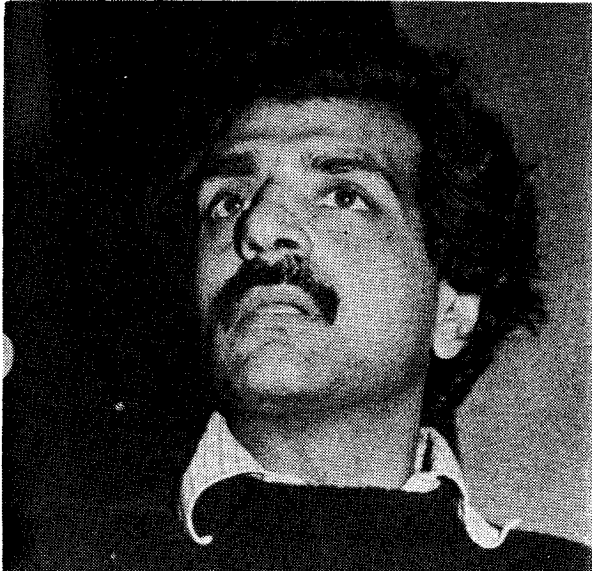
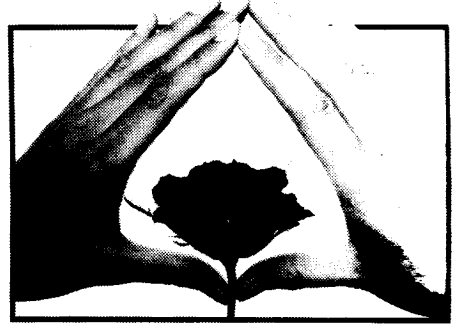


Photo: PETE GRANT (Socialist Challenge)

Stop press: Tariq Ali has just received his membership card. At the time of writing Eric Heffer is about to visit Hornsey Labour Party. The decisions of the Wales Labour Party will not aid the fight that is looming inside the party.

WOMEN'S FESTIVAL



Saturday 5 June

Battersea Park, London from noon

Rally ★ Music ★ Forums ★ Stalls
Theatre ★ Children's Events
Refreshments ★ Crèche available ★



WOMEN'S RIGHTS TO JOBS & EQUALITY

THE 5 JUNE demonstration and rally for a woman's right to work promises to be a massive event for women's rights.

In MANCHESTER, the Labour Party are organising space in trains and in at least one factory a coach has been organised by the union. Ferranti assembly worker Laura Mitchell explained, 'Over the last two years Ferrantis have put 2000 workers, mainly women, out of work.'

In the Holligwood plant, divisions between men and women have benefited the management; the men in the toolroom wouldn't fight redundancies in the assembly section (mainly women). Then when it was their turn, the women didn't feel inclined to defend the men's jobs.

Ferranti's now takes no women apprentices but they don't prioritise women — that is, they don't have a policy of positive discrimination. I think the union should fight for a guaranteed percentage every year.

We're looking forward to the festival — it's a step in the right direction. But the Labour Party should campaign in places like ours and find out what women want.'

In BRISTOL, the predominantly female workforce at the Famous Names factory, are hoping to get their union to organise a coach as well so that they can come down and get support for their strike against low pay. They'll be speaking at a public meeting in Newport to build for the day's events.

Every major city will see women pouring down to London on 5 June with coaches also coming from as far away as Glasgow and Edinburgh. Public meetings held in the last week in Leicester, Ealing, Camden, Lambeth have attracted fifty to a hundred women from trade unions and Labour Parties. And there's more to come in Manchester, Newcastle, Southwark.

Women are organising to protest against this Tory government's policies. Make sure you're there too!

Women journalists

I THINK I have been misrepresented in the interview with Tessa van Gelderen which appears in your issue of 6 May, 1982.

She asked me how many women journalists there were on *Tribune* and I replied as follows: 'We normally have only one and a half journalists. We've had about 20 applications and there's a number of very well qualified people among them. I regret to say that there are only two women among them.' This reply did not appear in the published interview.

You may not have been satisfied with my answer but I do think that in something which purports to be a verbatim transcript you ought not to have omitted it.

CHRIS MULLIN
Editor, *Tribune*

Apologies to Chris Mullin if he thought I misrepresented him. As a journalist, he must know it is impossible to include everything in what was an hour's interview. But *Tribune* is to become a 'forum for the great upsurge among women' then the journal has to think serious about appointing women journalists. The debate on 'positive action' should be taken up in the pages of *Tribune*.

Tessa van Gelderen

Tories take on transport workers

Railworkers in fighting mood

By R Brooks, NUR guard

THE National Union of Railwaymen's executive has given British Rail a deadline of 7 June to begin the annual pay talks. National strike action is threatened if BRB fail to meet this date.

The Board has said that it will not discuss pay with any of the three rail unions until the train drivers' union ASLEF agrees to flexible rostering, and the NUR to the 'one-man operation' of trains on the St Pancras to Bedford line. It also wants the NUR to withdraw its opposition to the closures of the railway workshops at Horwich, Shildon and the rundown of Swindon.

Brighton

Ian Williams, NEC member and guard, made this announcement to the 258 delegates at the guards and shunters grades conference in Brighton last weekend. The conference was in a fighting mood right from its start when it was reported that the general secretary, Sydney Weighell, had attempted to rule out of order 15 of the 48 resolutions submitted, including all those against flexible rostering and 'one-man operation' of trains. The president of conference said that the executive committee of conference totally opposed this attempt to break down the autonomy of the grades conferences, and the resolutions were taken.

John Marks, from Kings Cross No 1 branch spoke against the conference executive's decision not to call a special conference to discuss flexible rostering. The secretary, Geoff Hensby, Paddington No 1

branch, said that the grades conference had no power to overturn the decisions of the NEC, and for that reason, and also lack of time, the executive decided against it.

Questions of union democracy and the lack of any consultation between the NEC and the branches and grades conferences were taken up throughout the conference. Russell Tuck, deputy assistant general secretary in his address to conference said, 'No executive officer can ignore the decisions of this conference', but delegates drew attention to the fact that the Conference Liaison Committee which recommends the decisions to the NEC only met twice in the past year. Conference passed resolutions year after year which were not acted on by the NEC.

Flexible

The support for ASLEF's stand was illustrated not only in the unanimous resolutions against flexible rostering and for all future negotiations to be on the basis of a fixed guaranteed day, but by the loud shouts from delegates when Tuck blamed the bad response among NUR members to flexible rostering on the ASLEF dispute.

Delegates begged to differ and said that flexible rostering had been introduced to pay for the 39 hour week at no cost to management, and that it was a 'productivity' deal which

Horwich workshop: solidarity grows

By Hazel MacPherson

REFLECTING the growth of solidarity amongst railworkers, Dennis Green, deputy convenor of the works committee at Horwich workshop addressed the NUR guards and shunters grades conference in Brighton last Saturday.

Conference had just passed resolutions opposing two aspects of BR's plans to run down the rail industry — flexible rostering and one person operation of trains. Dennis explained that a key aspect of this plan is the privatisation of the more profitable sections of the industry.

Horwich works has one of the most sophisticated and expensive foundry plants in Europe. Money has been poured into it over the last few years and after the closure, BR intend to privatise it at a later date.

Dennis went on to explain the human cost of the workshop closures. 'They will destroy the communities of Horwich and Shildon, turning them into industrial wastelands', he said.

The apprentice training centre which had 691 applications for 31 jobs last year is to be closed along with the works. 'This industry has to stand up now, because if we don't, there won't be an industry left,' he said.

Delegates had already been told about BR's refusal to open pay discussions. As Dennis said, 'The struggle we are faced with today is your struggle tomorrow'.

Conference responded by collecting a magnificent £103.50 for the workshop action fund.

Messages of support and donations to Action Committee, Stan Davis, 51 Fernhead Ave, Horwich, Lancs.

was bound to lead to job losses.

As a delegate from Waterloo and Clapham branch said, 'If management try to implement it at Waterloo they will meet with industrial action'.

The conference showed very clearly that the fight over flexible rostering and against job losses will be part of the struggle this year to defend the railways — jobs and services.



The train drivers' union, ASLEF, led by Ray Buckton (above) has unanimously rejected McCarthy's proposals on flexible rostering. This, together with reaffirmation of the union's commitment to the keeping the guaranteed eight-hour day, sets the stage for another confrontation with the Rail Board and the Tories.

MAY 1982



HORWICH LOCO WORKS NEEDS YOUR HELP Campaign Bulletin

Issued by Horwich Loco Joint Action Committee

HORWICH LOCO THE WAR AT HOME

On the 15th April, 1982 the Government via British Rail announced the proposed closing off of a large part of the British Rail industry. Horwich Loco and Shildon Loco in County Durham were to be axed. This announcement is nothing short of a declaration of war against the Town of Horwich and the Rail industry in general, and we the workers are determined to wage a battle to save the works and jobs of Horwich and Shildon.

By Kay Bastin

'FLOAT OF ANGER' is how the local press dubbed a float in Horwich carnival in Lancashire last weekend. The float, all in black, portrayed workers performing different tasks all being axed by an axeman. It was produced by workers at British Rail's local workshop, protesting at plans to close it down.

Links have been made with the local community, including schools, and the local labour movement, including trades councils and the Labour Party. The workers petitioning and leafletting has now spread from Bolton and Wigan to broaden support.

They recognise that

this is a national fight and are intending to participate in Tuesday's London lobby. They are planning further national action including a marathon run to London next month linking up with other rail workers. The emphasis is on unity between all rail workers and other industrial unions particularly the Triple Alliance. Both other alliance unions — steel and coal — have given their support.

Ron Hardman, assistant secretary of the Horwich workshop NUR branch spoke to Socialist Challenge

'Last year everybody put their hands up against the

closure of the Ashford workshop, but because there wasn't a nationally coordinated political campaign half of the members of that workshop soon opted for voluntary redundancy. Now we see more attacks on rail — flexible rostering, privatisation, etc — and the workshop closures are the key issue of the fight.

'The power is at the base of the unions. We must push forward for national action amongst all our workers. It's not enough to call out the signalmen and shipping (Sealink). We want all out. It's the same in the workshops: we won't accept any redundancies. It's one out, all out, and we're all staying put.'

THINGS THEY SAY

Based on the 12 week out-turn the requirements had been made for...

Danger signals for London Transport

By Martin Eady, vice president LT District Council

'In reply to a recent question in the House of Commons, Mrs Thatcher said that London Transport's fares were too high and she hoped the Select Committee on Transport would look at proposals to separate London Transport from the Greater London Council.'

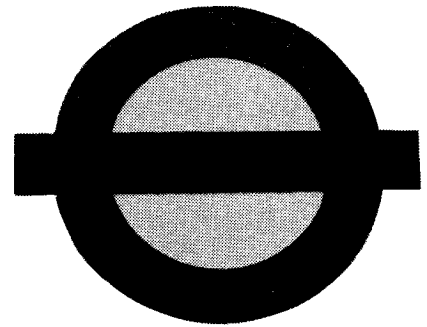
'The Transport Secretary (David Howell) told a meeting of Conservative party workers that after a year in office the Labour-controlled Greater London Council had failed to produce a workable transport policy. Instead, he said, it had produced record high fares and general confusion.'

LT News 7 May 1982

For sheer unbridled hypocrisy these two statements are hard to beat. The Law Lords ruled against the Labour GLC's cheap fares policy, and the Tories opposed Douglas Jay's bill in Parliament to reverse that ruling.

But they set the alarm bells ringing for London Transport passengers and workers. The Tories aim to achieve a reduction in fares by slashing services and decimating the workforce, and they are prepared to take direct control of London Transport from the GLC in order to do it.

The stage has already been set by the announcement of 680 bus engineering staff redundancies, plus 65 apprentices who will have no jobs



when they finish training in August. Management slowed recruitment to a trickle immediately after the Law Lords' judgment. Hence any shortage due to natural wastage will not result in redundancies on the operating side (drivers, conductors, guards and so on). But the total numbers will fall: the bus operating establishment by 2707 and rail operating by, as yet, an unspecified number.

Cuts already made in bus schedules mean large numbers of staff taken off rosters and put on 'spare' lists, to be used as a pool, redirected by management to fill gaps left by retirement, holidays and illness.

All these job losses will mean a drastic cutback in an already run down public service. On the buses, London Transport wants to take 860 of its 5000 buses off the road. The scheduled level of service would fall from 201 million to 172 million miles a year. A number of routes would be withdrawn or shortened, leaving 20 more miles of road without any bus service at all. A fur-

ther 16 routes would become one-person operated.

On the underground, there is a proposed reduction in peak hour trains on most lines. This means rush hour frequencies increasing from 8 to 10 minutes. 6 branch lines and 13 stations are under threat of complete closure.

The response of the trade union leaders has not been encouraging. They plan to link the campaign with our pay claim, believing that workers will not otherwise take action. Already a 5 per cent offer has been rejected.

The dangers of this approach were well illustrated in the steel strike of 1980, which ended in partial victory on the pay claim and losing the jobs/closures battle.

The one-hour strike organised on the buses on 10 May was poorly organised, uneven in effect and most important, was not coordinated with the underground.

The unions will have to do better than this if we are to defeat the attack on jobs and services.

SOUTH WALES MINERS' CONFERENCE

Action needed from TUC on Tebbit Bill

By Barry Wilkins in Cardiff

TWO ISSUES dominated the recent annual conference in Porthcawl of the South Wales miners: the fight against the Tebbit Bill and the struggle for jobs in the pits. Above all there was a strong consciousness of the responsibility of the NUM to play a leading role in the battles against Thatcher.

Emlyn Williams, president of the South Wales NUM, set a militant mood in his opening address.

'We have no intention of going the way of the workers in British Leyland or British Steel. The resistance of February 1981 was a shadow compared with how we will protect our jobs in the immediate future.'

Williams urged the lodge leaderships not to take the militancy of their members for granted.

Leadership at all levels must strive constantly for the NUM to be involved 'in every issue which concerns its members — education, health, social security, employment, war and peace, freedom and oppression. The miner whose horizon is the pit is a thing of the past,' he declared.

Williams gave Arthur Scargill, new president of the NUM 'a gentle word of warning'. Scargill must not lose touch with rank and file miners and their aspirations.

'We want an open leadership with no wheeling and dealing with Prime Ministers and national coalboard chairmen behind the scenes. Arthur, we want you to continue with your campaigning spirit.'

Emlyn Williams also moved the executive council resolution on the Tebbit Bill. This declared immediate support for any union attacked and called upon the TUC to initiate a 'strategy of total opposition based on deeds not words'.

Williams explained that his Bill is designed to soften up trade unions for further attacks. 'If it goes through pit closures would be a cake walk'.

He attacked the TUC's docile response and indicated that the £1m fighting fund will be used as 'a bonanza for barristers'.

He warned 'if this is the thinking of the TUC we can't rely on them as friends in this struggle. The miners must say 'take one of us on and you take us all on.'

Ray Laurence of Celynen South Lodge moved a resolution demanding the replacement of all workers leaving the pits. He explained that an overtime ban had been imposed at his pit to try to create more jobs.

Gilbert Evan of Coedely explained that the NCB planned to close pits by slow run-down and starvation of investment and recruitment.

Alan Baker of Oakdale Lodge outlined the NCB's plan to close Britannia pit and move the workers to Oakdale. Tom Bowden of Britannia Lodge won applause for his declaration 'we're not going to Oakdale we're staying where we are.'

Tyrone O'Sullivan of Tower Lodge urged an immediate area overtime ban arguing that 'nothing is so important as jobs and recruitment — unless we have work we can't fight for anything.'

Emlyn Williams, giving executive support for the resolution said that Scargill had met the South Wales NCB management and told them 'he would fight on pit closures as being the cardinal issue in South Wales.'

Williams added that the executive would consider an area overtime ban if they failed to make progress with the NCB over recruitment.

The area executive resolution on wages moved by vice-president Des Duffield demands £120 a week



Des Duffield

minimum for surface workers with differential for other grades to be paid on a salary basis.

'The only advances we have obtained are after we have shown a preparedness to fight,' said Duffield, warning that industrial action would be needed to win this claim.

Ray Laurence argued that an overtime ban would win support for industrial action. The miners at Celynen South now regretted voting against industrial action in January on the wage claim because after their overtime ban they could see how low their basic wages really were.

Conference carried a resolution moved by Tyrone O'Sullivan opposing all witch-hunts in the Labour Party and calling for the return of a Labour government 'founded on socialist policies.'

Tyrone argued that because the right have had their policies rejected by the party 'they are prepared to wreck the party and then blame the left.' He insisted that socialist policies would win strong support provided that the party unites around them.



Pit closures to be fought

Kigass strike continues

By Stuart Sleath

ROLLS-ROYCE workers in Coventry and Bristol are blacking a Kigass aircraft component used in the Pegasus engines of the Harrier jets in Britain's South Atlantic task force.

The action, in support of the eight-week-old strike by women AUEW members at Kigass plants in Leamington Spa and Warwick over union recognition, has been described as 'unforgivable' by Coventry South-West Tory MP John Butcher. He also said that no dispute at this time can merit this particular kind of action, and added: 'I would suspect that General Galtierie is laughing all over his face.'

But AUEW convener at Rolls-Royce, Phil Higgs, claims that the management at Kigass have the

same attitude to trade union rights as the Argentinian junta.

Soon after the decision to black Kigass work had been announced a breakthrough in the dispute was achieved when the management agreed to meet union officials for the first time.

Kigass managing director Arthur Wardman stated that he is prepared to concede union recognition at the Leamington plant if the workers agree to a long list of conditions. These include: no talking, no raffles or collections except for the Save the Children Fund, a rota

system to use the canteen, and an understanding that engineering employers' federation rates of pay would not be implemented before June 1984.

After the meeting, AUEW district president Mel Griffin said union recognition is not being offered at the Warwick plant (named Abex). He said: 'There is no way we are going to accept conditions for Kigass and sell the 22 workers at Abex down the line. 80 are out, and 80 are going back with full trade union recognition.'

Mass pickets are every Saturday, 5.30 am at Warwick, and 7.30 am at Leamington. Send donations and messages of support to Mrs E. Stanford, 77 St. Helens Rd., Leamington Spa, Warwickshire.

Miners back nurses

By Barry Wilkins in Cardiff

THE ANNUAL conference of the South Wales miners meeting in Porthcawl last week passed an emergency resolution in support of health service workers. They recommended that there should be a one-day strike throughout the whole coalfield at a date to be agreed with the health service unions.

The resolution supported by the miners' area

leadership was moved by Tyrone O'Sullivan from Tower Lodge. Ivor

England, who seconded the motion from Maerdy Lodge, emphasised that this struggle is a basic class issue and compared the treatment of health service workers with the rises given to MPs, judges and 'parasite company directors'.

Delegate after delegate came to the rostrum to speak of the special importance of the National Health service to the miners and their appreciation of the job done by health service workers.

Gilbert Bevan from Coedely Lodge summed up the feelings of many delegates when he said 'an

attack on the health service workers is an attack on the NUM'.

Emlyn Williams, President of the South Wales NUM emphasised the need for the miners to support not only nurses, but all health workers, and he pledged that the South Wales NUM would insist on a big demonstration on their one day strike.

If the Wales TUC don't co-ordinate support for the health service workers, he warned that miners would take the lead.

'We won't be constitutionalised out of action', said Williams.

VOLCANOES & HURRICANES

Revolution in Central America and the Caribbean

For a Reagan-free Caribbean

THE PEOPLE are like volcanoes: no one sets fire to them, they explode alone. And Central America is a volcanic region. Fidel Castro, July 1980

Defence of the revolutions in Cuba, Grenada and Nicaragua and support for the revolutions in progress throughout the region are the twin themes of this new pamphlet.

Published this month by Socialist Challenge supporters in East London it provides up to date, factual information and is an invaluable introduction to politics in this area.

16 pages: 3 colour cover, 30p a single copy plus 12½p postage. Bulk rates available on request. No sale or return.

Also a singularly beautiful new badge! For a Reagan-free Caribbean in yellow, red and black. 20p each plus 12½p postage. 15p each for orders over ten.

Order both from East London Socialist Challenge c/o PO Box 36, 136 Kingsland High St, London E8.

Other badges can be ordered as well, please specify: 1. Jobs not Bombs 2. I won't die for Thatcher: Stop Cruise Missiles.

Make cheques payable to: Hackney Book Group

Wandsworth: Fight against privatisation goes on

UNDAUNTED by the unexpected Tory victory in the local elections in Wandsworth — courtesy of the Falklands crisis — Wandsworth council workers have continued industrial action against the Tories and their plan to put refuse collection out to private tender.

The Tories have decided to put the boot in. Tory councillor Heaster has threatened to sack by last Monday anyone taking industrial action. Nonetheless the manual workers voted to defy

these threats and continue their five week strike action.

Delegates at the NUPE and General and Municipal Workers Unions conference this weekend are arguing for national support for the Wandsworth workers and against the threat of privatisation nationally.

The TUC has been called on by the NUPE conference to boycott Pritchard's the private company now carrying out refuse collection and street cleaning in Wand-

sworth. But the fight has been hampered by the decision of NALGO nationally to withdraw official support — thus forcing the local branch to withdraw from the dispute.

The manual workers decision to continue the industrial action during the election campaign has proved correct, despite the criticism of some local Labour Party members. To have held off in the hope of a Labour victory would have meant defeat without a shot being fired.

ASTMS in conference

MUCH PUBLICITY was given in the national press to the row that broke out at the conference of the Association of Scientific, Technical, and Managerial Staff last week. The union executive was under attack for mishandling the finances and causing a big deficit in the union's funds.

But far more important were the motions that were passed on the Falklands/Malvinas and on nuclear disarmament. Conference voted overwhelmingly for an immediate ceasefire in the South Atlantic. Despite the large majori-

ty, some very reactionary views were put forward and it was the strong support from the executive which eventually won the day.

ASTMS has previously taken positions in opposition to nuclear weapons and in support of CND. This year, conference built on that commitment. With virtually no one against, delegates voted to put specific effort into the need to convert the present economy from one that produces arms to one that produces socially useful com-

modities. Conference called for the union to initiate a world wide conference on peace and disarmament with the trade unionists of the Soviet Union, the United States, Japan and Europe.

The rest of the conference reaffirmed past positions including opposition to Tebbit by breaking the law if necessary. There was support for the existing strikes taking place inside the health service although as a 'junior partner' in the NHS unions it did not discuss extending that action.

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Your Bank

Name of Account to be debited

Account Number

Our Bank..... Socialist Challenge
Co-operative Bank Ltd
110 Leaman St, London E1 8HQ 1

Account No 70267802

Sorting Code..... 08-03-08

Amount to be paid..... Monthly

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

Signed.....

Socialist Challenge

Rotherham miners strike for nurses

OVER 2,000 miners from four pits in the Rotherham area took strike action in support of the health workers day of action on 19 May. The stoppage came after nurses leafleted the day shifts and addressed mass meetings at Maltby, Dinnington, Thurcroft, and Silverwood collieries. Clive Turnbull spoke to KEVIN BARRON, Yorkshire NUM delegate from Maltby.

At Rotherham Trades Council on Tuesday night we had a report from local nurses about their fight for 12 per cent. They told us that they would like to visit pits and factories to get support. So I invited them to come to Maltby on Wednesday morning.

We organised a meeting in the canteen for them to put their case. While they were addressing the meeting management called the police to have them removed from the premises, which really got everyone's backs up — although the police left before the meeting ended.

The support for the nurses was 100 per cent, all 300 men present voted to stop work for the day. But they didn't all just leave and go home, 30 odd went with the nurses to help with picketing and with support elsewhere.

Following our meeting

NACODS, (National Association of Colliery Overmen, Deputies and Shotfired), also met and decided to come out.

Both the afternoon and day shifts followed suit and took strike action.

The strong backing for the health workers in this present dispute follows on from their struggle in 1974, when we also came out on strike in support.

We understand the position that the nurses are in. Our industry has been subjected to cash limits by this government. The nurses are having a settlement forced on them, which would mean just 69p per week extra in some cases. So much for the Tories not having a pay policy, and allowing free bargaining. So the health workers have got all our sympathy and support, as we know they can't engage in all-out action.

Ealing catches public eye

By Eve Turner, TGWU shop steward at St Bernards Hospital (psychiatric wing of the Ealing Hospital)

'IF WE achieve nothing else we have caught the public's imagination' said Keith, a NUPE steward, as literally hundreds of cars and lorries tooted their horns in support of the COHSE and NUPE picket outside Ealing Hospital's general wing.

Support for the strike was broad and enthusiastic with nurses, porters, cooks and cleaners all joining together on the line.

Ambulances though still operating were only doing emergencies and local TGWU bus workers refused to take buses into the hospital. The picture in St Bernards (Ealing's psychiatric wing) was not so bright.

Although NUPE was solid and the craft unions — engineers, electricians, construction — came out in support for two hours, COHSE and TGWU members were thwarted by non-existent leadership with both branch secretaries crossing the picket line.

Despite this workers from both central sterile supplies department and nurses still came out. It is almost certain that there will be tremendous support for the next stoppage on 27 May.

strike action.

Immediately after the shop stewards from the Royal Infirmary, the biggest hospital in Edinburgh, met and arranged for strike action to start on Thursday morning, when 60 pickets brought out NUPE and COHSE members on all out strike.

Once this news reached the City Hospital on Thursday afternoon shop stewards called out their members. The same day workers from every section at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital struck against management withholding their wages and on Friday this strike was transformed into all out action for the 12 per cent by NUPE and COHSE members.

Other hospitals are expected to follow the lead of these three who are united in a joint strike committee composed of stewards representing each hospital. The joint strike committee is coordinating delegations to other hospitals, fundraising and negotiations with management at a district level.

Lothian joint strike ctte, c/o Edinburgh District Trades Council, Picardy Place, 031-556 3006.



Smash the public sector pay norm

Pay the health workers

By Jude Arkwright

THE ANGER and frustration of public sector workers came to a head at the National Union of Public Employees annual conference when delegates unanimously called for all out action from 4 June in support of the 12 per cent pay claim. Indefinite action is already under way in many areas of the country. The next day-long stoppage on 27 May will undoubtedly receive even greater support than did the last. But the urgent question now is to press for all out action from all the unions in the NHS.

The lead for this has already been given by NUPE and COHSE members at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital who have gone on all out strike

for the 12 per cent. They have set up a joint strike committee with other hospitals in the city, and are working to spread the dispute.

Birmingham hospital workers speak out

PAUL Scott (GMWU) is a team cleaner at St Chad's Hospital Birmingham. Richard Jesson (NUPE) is a porter at the same hospital. Val Coultas spoke to them on the picket line.

Paul: 'I'm getting £48 take home for a 40 hour week at the moment and that's with bonus. We can get double time on Sundays but that's been cut. I'd make £2 out of the 4 per cent offer, 70p after stoppages.'

'All the ancillary staff in the hospitals are out today, all the unions in the health service are supporting it. The nurses are working to rule.'

Audrey stepped in: 'I

Such joint committees help to overcome the divisions between the unions at a national level. The one day actions on 27 May, 4 and 8 June should be used to campaign for this united action.

Already other sectors have indicated their support for health workers and a fighting lead from NHS workers can build on this. Miners in South Wales are being balloted for strike action and those in Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire as well as transport workers and engineers have pledged support.

The example of Chesterfield Trades Council who called support action from all unions during the

one-day action last week should be taken up and down the country. The fight of the health workers could become the first big challenge to the Tory government and their pay policy. Other sectors of the labour movement must recognise that a decent wage for the health workers is an essential part of defending the NHS from further attacks. An all out strike in the health service will spearhead the fight against the Tories' cuts and wage policy.

All militants in the labour movement should be working for maximum support for the health-workers including donations, delegations to picket lines as well as strike action.

services going. If oxygen is needed or emergency drugs it will be delivered.

'We've got to stand together now to improve the health service — they're making that many cutbacks — that's what we've got to fight. I think everybody's got a right to work. I don't see any distinction between men and women.'

'I don't think they should have sent the task force to the Falklands in the first place, it's a total waste of money. None of us here voted for Margaret Thatcher in the first place. There's no Conservatives on the picket line ...!'

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