

Socialist Challenge

Genocide in Lebanon

'The Israelis call it "mopping up". We call it genocide.' This was how PLO representative Nabil Ramlawi summed up Israel's barbarous onslaught.

'We intend to destroy the PLO's nerve centre,' said chief of staff Rafael Eitan. But only mass murder can pacify the spirit of a population fighting for its homeland. Zionism has turned full circle: it now seeks a 'final solution' in the virtual destruction of the Palestinians.

This carnage is far worse than demanded by purely military objectives. 15,000 civilians are now dead and more than half a million homeless. Palestinian areas in both camps and cities have been bombed indiscriminately. Anti-personnel cluster bombs have rained down on the poor suburbs.

The Palestinian quarter in Beirut is surrounded and the Israelis are demanding the surrender of the PLO's top ten leaders.

But the PLO has made clear it will fight. 'So long as Israeli forces remain on Lebanese territory and directed against the Palestinian and Lebanese people, we assert our right to self-defence,' said Nabil Ramlawi.

The slaughter of Palestinians in Beirut — there are a quarter of a million of them — is being turned by the Israelis into the most bloody massacre the Middle East has known.

Let no one now doubt Zionism's expansionist and racist character. The 'security' of the Zionist state can be built only on blood and misery without end.

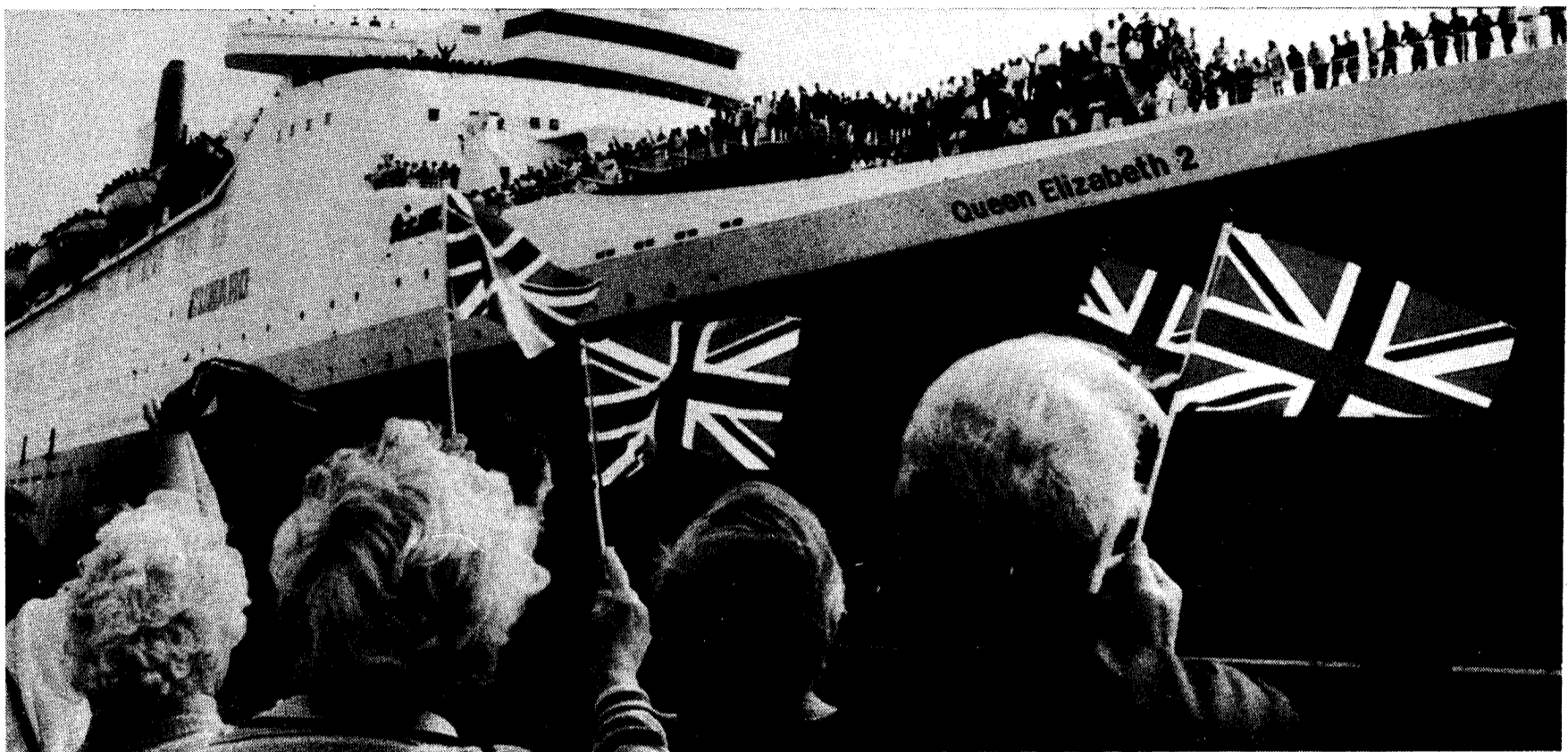
The Israeli aim is to hand complete control to the Maronite Christians, the richest section of the population. They see Jordan as the place the Palestinians 'belong' — and where they hope to control them. The aim is thus to drive the Palestinians out of Lebanon and deliberately turn them into refugees, redrawing the map of Lebanon.

The United States knew perfectly well the invasion was coming. It vetoed the United Nations resolution calling for withdrawal. The Israelis have US backing even if their barbarism is embarrassing for a while. Israel remains imperialism's agent in the region.

Francis Pym's criticism of the invasion is meaningless and hypocritical — squeezed from him by Britain's desire to retain its tattered relations with the Arab states, and because Tory aggression in the South Atlantic would have been left without a stitch of moral cover, had the British publicly backed Reagan.

But the gesture commits the Tories to nothing. There will be no break-off in relations with Reagan or Israel — and you can bet any sum you like there will be no task forces steaming across the Mediterranean.

The Israeli army may have inflicted a heavy defeat. But 3.5 million Palestinians cannot be wiped out, and they will not go away: they cannot, for the Israeli state has deprived them of their home. The resistance will continue until the forces of Zionism and imperialism, which have brought this carnage, are swept away.



NOT OUR VICTORY

The Argentine surrender of the Malvinas-Falklands is no victory for working people — either here, in Argentina or in the rest of the world.

The taking of Port Stanley is a victory only for our enemies — Thatcher, the bosses, colonialism and imperialism.

Hundreds of British soldiers have been killed — so many that they won't tell us the real figure. Thousands of our brother Argentine workers in uniform have been slaughtered and maimed. The £1m-a-day cost of the war and the now inevitable increase in defence spending, will all have

to be borne by working people. Thatcher will take this victory as an endorsement of her government policies as a whole and as a green light to double the punishment to which we have so far been subjected.

What socialist worth their salt could fail to be filled with loathing at the gloating, baying and cheering of Tory MP's?

Yet the despicable Michael Foot continued his whimpering backing for Thatcher. He offered 'great congratulations' to the British armed forces — 'and also the Prime Minister'.

What interests have working people in the colonial repossession of Argentine islands 8000 miles away? The sheep rearing on the islands will still give profits to Coalite, yet the costs of maintaining a heavy garrison will be borne by us.

The potential oil reserves under the sea will give workers no benefits. North sea oil has gone alongside 4m unemployed. In this case, the oil companies will get richer and the biggest cut in our standard of living since the thirties. We will be faced with the stepping up of the attacks on our rights and living

standards.

We have no interest in the victory of our profit oriented system. Such victories will lead to a further turning of the screw here. They will be used to increase the subjection of exploited and oppressed peoples in Argentina and the rest of the world.

The war is not over in the South Atlantic. Argentina will continue to fight for its just claim. The war is not over at home. That is why we say:

Troops out of the Malvinas now! Down with Thatcher.

Editorial

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Malvinas Falklands

Britain's Vietnam?

Thatcher's victory in expelling Argentina once again from the Malvinas-Falklands is potentially the biggest set-back for the British working class since Thatcher came into office.

Fortunately, all the evidence points to the likely continuation of the Argentine challenge to British possession of their territory. The pressure of the Argentine workers and peasants on the junta is intense.

Britain's military invasion has altered the political face of Latin America. No longer can Argentina play the counter-revolutionary proxy role Washington had in mind for it. Instead of sending its troops to invade Nicaragua, it now finds itself in the position of having to send 7000 tons of wheat to help flood-damaged Nicaraguan economy.

For Britain to make its victory on the islands into a permanent one it will have to impose its political and economic will on the Argentine mainland.

Yet Argentine workers are now in a better position to impose their own demands than before. British and US imperialism are in a worse position to impose their own will in Buenos Aires.

This is even more the case given the hostility to Britain and the US aroused in the rest of the continent.

So the longer term consequences still augur badly for Thatcher. As with Israeli Zionism, every expansion leads to more problems.

The only real option the Tories now have is for a permanent and strong garrison on the islands. Moreover, this whole adventure has put Thatcher more in hock to Reagan. He will demand a *quid pro quo* in terms of more British involvement in Washington's war in Central America. This will be especially the case because of the failure of the proxy option.

The real prospect now is for the Malvinas-Falklands to turn into a British Vietnam, with Britain getting more and more pulled into the mire. This is especially true with the Michael Foot leadership of the Labour movement having kow towed to every bellicose twitch of Thatcher's nose.

Politics will not now revert to what they were before. It will not 'go around' this new British involvement in Latin and Central America. The opposition to Thatcher and Foot which has developed in the unions and Labour Party must press on. It must continue to demand the immediate withdrawal of Britain occupying force. And it must link this to a fight against Thatcher's policies here.

In all this we need to remember that those, like Michael Foot, that helped give Thatcher victory abroad, will do the same in the war at home. They have to be removed.

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Labour Party

Labour left: no retreat

By Tessa van Gelderen

WHEN Michael Foot won the leadership of the Labour Party in 1980, he carried the illusions of the left with him.

The decision of the Parliamentary Labour Party to go for Foot was a pre-emptive move designed to conciliate the overwhelming sentiment from the base that there should be no more Callaghan-Healey governments. His victory strengthened this movement which by now had extended deep into the unions. It reached its peak with Tony Benn's challenge for deputy leader against Healey — and coming within a whisker of winning.

Since that time, the left has been in retreat. It goes to conference this year with no clear focus for fighting the Foot leadership. Indeed, it has so far refused to pose such a task clearly.

Yet everyone now knows through the experience of the Malvinas-Falklands crisis that Foot is simply a spokesperson for the right wing.

Benn has let it be known that he is unwilling to challenge Foot at this conference. His concern that a decrease in his vote over last year would show a weakening of the left is unfounded. Standing for leadership on a platform against Foot's role in the witch-hunt and the

Malvinas debacle would strengthen the base of the left.

Labour Liaison '82, set up to be the main vehicle to fight inside the party, has had its potential eroded by refusing to organise and act as a campaigning left leadership — especially over the war. The right is now in a stronger position to take the initiative against the left as a whole. The refusal of the left to organise root and branch across the party and in the unions further strengthens the right which is marshalling its forces.

It is openly demanding *Militant's* head, as sacrificial victim on whom the responsibility of the electoral collapse of

Labour has officially devolved. The right has made Foot an offer he can't refuse: lead the witch-hunt or make way for someone who will.

But the right wing's argument that Benn is responsible for electoral disaster looks more and more fatuous as Labour's credibility nose dives over the Malvinas-Falklands war. The opinion polls now give Michael Foot only nine per cent of popular support.

On policy, the strength of working class opinion in support of the left gains of recent years — on unilateralism, opposition to the Common Market and opposition to incomes policy — will not allow success for the right on this terrain at Blackpool.

The right is applying the salami tactic. Lop off the militant activists layer by layer and cow the rest into submission. The *Militant* inquiry is one example, as are the attacks on Pat Wall, Peter Tatchell and Tariq Ali.

The right wing union leaders like Terry Duffy of the engineers and Sid Weighell of the railworkers are using the

Militant scare to force a left capitulation at the new 'Bishop's Stortford' meeting at the beginning of next month.

But there is no reason for such retreat. There has been an upsurge in workers struggles in recent months. The health workers, supported by important sections of industrial workers, have taken on the fight against the government's pay limits. Many militants are determined to challenge the Tories' new employment laws through such solidarity action.

A new mood has been engendered by the train drivers' victory which has in its turn laid the basis for the rest of the railworkers to go on the offensive. The miners are threatening to take action against closure. Occupations and strikes are continually breaking out. The tide threatens to turn.

Youth

For the left to succeed it has to reach out to these struggles. The potential for building mass opposition to the war in the

South Atlantic was shown by the 250,000, mainly young people, who turned out against nuclear weapons on 6 June, despite the intense jingoism. The left has to build that movement — and itself — in the youth.

Today even the existence of the Young Socialists is under threat. It cannot be left to *Militant* to build the LPYS from the growing mass campaigns and struggles against the Tories.

Maintaining a truce in the Labour Party cannot go hand in hand with fighting Thatcher's wars at home and abroad. That truce, in any case, has never existed as far as the right were concerned. Weighell's attack on Benn indicates that. But the disassociation of 15 members of the 25 strong NUR executive from Weighell also shows that the heat is on these right wing leaders.

The right wing is leading the Labour Party to catastrophe. An offensive by the left, far from being 'disruptive' is the best way to turn the tide of electoral defeat.



... but not in the Labour Party, Tony Benn. Now is the time to fight

HEALTHWORKERS

'All out strike will win our pay'

Lobbying the TUC

Angry health workers lobbied the TUC Health Services committee on 9 June. Over 200 turned up from as far afield as Edinburgh and Sheffield to demand all out strike action. 'One day strikes have had their say, all out strike will win our pay,' was the feeling of those present.

Kay Bastin a striker from North Manchester General Hospital, told Socialist Challenge that 8 people forced their way in because they were prevented from lobbying their representatives. 'The committee walked out and refused to speak to us but eventually, despite the efforts of the TUC bouncers, Len Murray was forced to come and meet us.'

The delegates to the lobby had prepared a statement: 'Having supported and worked for the TUC call for token action, the time has come to follow the lead of the NUPE conference and the Edinburgh hospitals to escalate the

action to an all-out indefinite strike. ... More token days or prolonged stoppages will simply divide and demoralise the members ... We have to show we're prepared to go all out on our own behalf before we can continue to expect real solidarity from other organised workers ... what we expect from you is a lead.'

As two ancillary workers from North Manchester hospital put it: 'We should all come out together because we want a fair deal for everyone, no matter what the grade.' But the TUC's answer to these women and thousands more was to call a one day strike on 23 June.

Mansfield

Hundreds of hospital workers were joined by miners and water workers on a demonstration through Mansfield, Notts. Mrs Elliott, a worker from Mansfield General Hospital, told Socialist Challenge: 'I'm the

bread winner, we can't live on the money we get. One day strikes are not enough.' Pickets were out in force all day.

Edinburgh

The official strike of NUPE workers at Edinburgh Royal Infirmary is over. At a meeting on 10 June, they voted to return to work from 13 June by a narrow majority of 78 to 69. The decision to call off the strike was influenced by a number of factors. NUPE full time official Ron Curran addressed the strikers but failed to put forward any suggestions on how to develop the strike against the 4 per cent pay offer. He failed to answer calls for all-out national action.

NUPE had failed to work out effective accident and emergency cover — if that had been done many more people would have joined the strike. Moreover, the strike was also undermined by the

threats of the health authorities to take laundry to Shotts prison, after no emergency provision had been made for laundry.

Laundry workers were given £7.50 an hour to clear the three-week backlog, after threats from the authorities to permanently close the hospital laundry.

West Midlands

500 health workers attended a rally in Birmingham on 8 June. Socialist Challenge spoke to some of the militants:

Geoff (NUPE): 'The 4 per cent offer has united us. There's a new determination to fight for a living wage. The Tories are using the dole queues to try and intimidate us. We need support from the rest of the labour movement and we hope they follow Arthur Scargill's lead.'

Pat (NALGO): 'We're attempting to keep unnecessary 'luxury non-medical deliv-

eries out — like the wine for the senior administration and the medical staffs dining rooms!'

Richard (NUPE shop steward): 'We are sticking out for a 12 per cent rise. The 24 hour strikes will continue and they will be on more days. We're glad of the support from the other trade unionists. We've had people giving up a day's wages to join us on our picket line.'

Northern Ireland

Health workers were in a militant mood last Tuesday week. In Belfast they marched from the Royal Victoria Hospital to the city centre where they were joined by a delegation of 40 De Lorean car workers. They had taken time off from their occupation to support the health workers unions.

Reports compiled by Bob Smith, Graham Topley, Kay Bastin, Andy Miller, Anita Richards, Neil Cruickshank and Duncan Smith.

Stop the missiles

Millions against Reagan

AN ENORMOUS ONE MILLION PEOPLE packed New York's Central Park and mid-Manhattan area last Saturday in a ten hour protest against nuclear weapons. This brought the number of people in Western Europe and the USA who have demonstrated in the last week against nuclear weapons to a staggering total of two million. The marches coincided with President Reagan's visit to Europe and the United Nations Second Special Session on Disarmament in New York.

Some 400,000 marched in Bonn, West Germany against Reagan last Thursday, 300,000 in Rome and 250,000 in London the previous weekend, as well as smaller marches in Paris, Dublin, Copenhagen and Antwerp. There was also a march of some 10,000 people against Reagan in Tokyo on 12 June.

The US march was the biggest since the famous 1963 Civil Rights Freedom March and the largest disarmament gathering in the nation's history. Its success far surpassed the expectations of the organisers — the June 12 Rally Committee — an umbrella group of peace campaigns, trade

unionists, religious and political groups.

Coretta Scott King, widow of Martin Luther King, told the protestors: 'We have come here in numbers so large that the message must go through to the White House and Capital Hill.'

Weapons

The movement against nuclear weapons in the US has grown rapidly into a major political issue, with many establishment politicians nationally and locally now backing a so-called 'freeze' on expansion of the present nuclear stockpile.

But the movement also encompasses those who see the links between US nuclear strategy and the wars in Central America and Reagan's budget cuts



in social spending.

At the rally outside the UN building at the start of the march there was a speaker from the El Salvadorean FDR, and every other speaker throughout the day who mentioned El Salvador met rapturous applause. 'Jobs not Bombs —

Fund Human Needs' was another popular slogan on the march echoed by speakers from the Black movement to the marchers. Among other speakers and performers at the rally were Isobel Letelier, widow of the former Chilean minister under Allende, Helen

Caldicott from Physicians for Social Responsibility who have exposed Reagan's plans for providing hospital beds for victims of European nuclear war, Orson Welles, Bruce Springsteen, Carly Simon, Linda Ronstadt, James Taylor, Pete Seeger and Peter,

Paul and Mary.

Many international delegations to the march and the UN disarmament session faced US government harassment. A group of Japanese activists were barred from the country altogether, and other Communist and left

wingers such as British CP vice-chairwoman Pat Milligan were only allowed into the US after international protests against political discrimination.

The American Trotskyists of the Socialist Workers Party reported selling some 6000 copies of their newspaper *The Militant*, and raised slogans on the march calling for 'Not a man, not a cent for Washington's War', 'US out of Central America, Israel out of Lebanon', and 'Stop the War Against Nicaragua, El Salvador, Cuba and Grenada'.

Impact

The size of the demonstration left a few people unmoved, most of them in the US government. Defence Secretary Caspar Weinberger told reporters that the demonstrations were wrong: 'The protest will have no impact on government policy.'

US political commentators are not so sure. Reagan's massive increase in the arms budget by \$43 billion to over \$258 billion is putting enormous pressure on his overall budget plans. With unemployment now over 10 million and industrial production in decline by more than ten per cent between July 1981 and February 1982 the US economy is under severe strain.

The weekend demonstration was a timely reminder to Reagan that opposition to his war mongering in Central America and his policy of 'Bombs not Jobs or Social Services' threaten to reduce his popularity to an all time low for a US President.

Yanks Against Reagan is a newly formed group of US citizens in the UK and Ireland opposed to Reagan's policies. It is holding a meeting on Sunday 20 June at 1pm at 7 Carlisle Street, London W1. For more info ring Mike on 01-734 8839.

Reagan plans 'a long march for freedom'

By Davy Jones

READERS may have been forgiven for turning off the telly when President Reagan gave his historic address to the Houses of Parliament last week. But if you did, you missed a treat: a rare glimpse at the evangelical mission of saving the world from 'Marxist evil' that forms the core of Reagan's policies.

He summed up his project which 'will long outlive our own generation' as follows: 'A plan and a hope for the long term, the march of freedom and democracy which will leave Marxism-Leninism in the ash-heap of history', and 'a crusade for freedom that will engage the faith and fortitude of the next generation.'

The theme of his speech was that the so-called 'Communist world' was in growing crisis as people strove for Western values and freedoms. And he urged the West to stop being shy about these ideals: 'Let us be shy no longer, let us tell the world that a new age is not only possible but probable.'

The crises in Poland, El Salvador and the Falklands were all used to back up Reagan's argument. In fact of course they all prove the opposite.

Contrary to his claims about the elections in El Salvador proving the

people's desire for 'Western freedom', recent reports have shown that there was gigantic fraud in the elections, fully endorsed by the Reagan administration. Professor Thomas Sheahan from Chicago claims that less than half the 1½ million claimed votes were actually cast.

Death

The elections brought to power the leader of the fascist death squads, Roberto D'Aubuisson, while the left wing parties who control a quarter of country in liberated zones were unable to stand candidates for fear of immediate death at the hands of the death squads and the army, backed by US firepower in a country owned lock stock and barrel by the US imperialists. A fine example of democracy to inspire the world.

The Falklands crisis too is an example of im-



So much in common ... so much to talk about

perialist power politics. Both the US and British governments backed the Argentinian government's ruthless suppression of human rights with huge arms supplies and cutting

back on the number of political refugees from Argentina allowed into their countries.

The Falkland Islanders were denied nationality rights in Britain and left at

the mercy of the Coalite company that owns the islands.

It was no threat to human rights or concern for democracy that led Britain to war with Argen-

tina, its former ally. It was defence of Britain and world imperialism's interests to rule the world without challenge by a semi-colonial country like Argentina.

And in Poland the massive workers' explosion against their Stalinist rulers was in no way a struggle for the return of capitalism and imperialist domination of Poland. Solidarnosc stood for workers' self-management, not capitalist exploitation. It was a living example of the possibility of a third way between capitalism and Stalinism: genuine workers' socialist democracy.

War

The biggest threat to the freedom of the peoples of the world is the mighty imperialist war machine of US imperialism, whose controller is none other than Ronald Reagan. From Israel to El Salvador, from Turkey to Chile and South Africa it supports the most brutal and barbaric dictatorships that slavishly defend its imperialist interests.

The new Cold War ideology of Reagan and Thatcher, his most faithful ally in the West, is a dangerous and populist response to the growing unease among millions of people in the West about the war mongering policies of their rulers.

Has Militant broken from Marxism?

MILITANT HAS produced a pamphlet attempting to defend its scandalously social chauvinist position towards Britain's war against Argentina. 'Falklands Crisis: a socialist answer' written by their most prominent spokesperson, Ted Grant, has the merit of bringing to the surface all of Militant's contradictions, confusions and reactionary assumptions, writes Brian Grogan.

Ted Grant ends his pamphlet with a rather preposterous boast: 'We are the only section of the Labour movement which has a clear understanding, first, of war in general and the war over the Falklands in particular and, second, of how to approach the working class and other exploited strata and win them to Marxism in the event of war.'

This pamphlet proves the exact opposite of this claim. What is its purpose? To apply a 'clear understanding' of how to fight Thatcher's war? Not a bit of it. Its nearly 10,000 words are dedicated to showing why the 'demand for the "withdrawal of the fleet" ... is a meaningless pacifist gesture'. All comrade Grant's arguments are an attempt to justify Militant supporters fighting those who are attempting to build a movement to force a withdrawal of the British fleet.

Absurd

The main argument in the pamphlet marks an advance of sorts on Militant's initial position. Up until now Militant has argued that nothing workers can do will make Thatcher withdraw the fleet. Now the argument is advanced that for the fleet to be withdrawn 'a general strike would be required, and not only a general strike, but also an insurrection'. Grant then points out that a general strike leading to an insurrection is not on at the present time in Britain. Therefore, he concludes, the call for the withdrawal of the fleet is 'meaningless' and 'absurd'.

This grotesque form of argumentation has its infamous forebears. The Second International was, before World War I, committed to an international general strike in the event of war. When war was declared in 1914, these betrayers declared that because a general strike 'wasn't on the agenda', then they should not oppose the war. Comrade Grant knows this history as well as the rest of us.

The whole breakthrough made by Lenin and then the life-work of Leon Trotsky — to whose politics Militant claims to be loyal — was to oppose the erection of such a brick wall between minimum and maximum demands; against reducing socialist policies to rhetoric whose only purpose was to cover support for their own rulers.

Let's look how this

childish ultimatum would work out on other issues. How can we end

Comrade Grant inadvertently gives two different sorts of answers to his question 'how could the demand for the fleet to be withdrawn be accomplished?' Towards the end of his pamphlet he observes, 'without the support of the trade union and Labour leaders it would be impossible to go to war'. Quite right. But shouldn't any Marxist

fleet? Then we have been given a second road by comrade Grant, short of a general strike leading to an insurrection for withdrawing the fleet!

But the problem is worse for comrade Grant. In reality, without turning the tide against Thatcher's war, the prospect of winning the election of a Labour government committed to socialist policies is ruled out. Moreover, if we can't force the Labour leaders to break with Thatcher over war policy, how can we help to commit them to socialist policies? As comrade Grant himself points out: war is simply politics by other means.

on the grounds that everyone doesn't agree with your analysis; that Benn and Scargill don't join Militant.

Militant's position boils down to a refusal to fight the sentiment that exists amongst the mass of workers.

degree of economic development are not by themselves indices of imperialism. The world is not simply divided between capitalist states and workers states, but also between imperialist and dependent countries. It is not enough to examine the class relations within a country, but also the relations between countries.

Control of the Argentine economy is not in the hands of Argentinians, but in the hands of foreign investors. Most of the top companies are foreign owned. There is a net outflow of capital, resulting in Argentina having the second largest national debt in the world at \$36bn. It exports primarily food, consumer goods and raw materials and imports capital goods and patents. It is a semi-colonial country (not a colonial one as Grant assumes our characterisation to be).

Assumes

To assume that places like Taiwan, South Korea, Brazil, Mexico, Argentina and similar semi-colonial countries had broken from dependency on imperialism would not only fail to appreciate the deep crises which these countries are now experiencing despite all the confident claims of imperialist propagandists. But it would also signify that imperialism could still play a progressive role — consigning much of Lenin and Trotsky to the scrap heap.

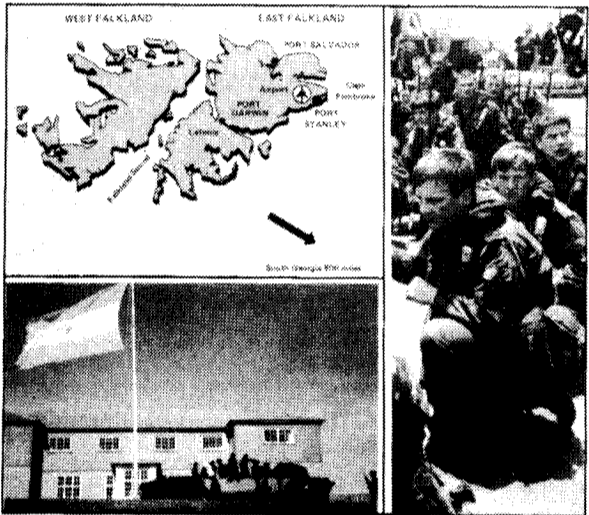
To make this judgment on such superficial criteria as that Buenos Aires has a stock exchange is totally unserious. Does this make Hong Kong or Singapore imperialist countries?

But here again, this argument is not even taken seriously by the author himself. In one part he states, 'had there been a colony of 100,000 Argentinians, a case for colonial oppression could have been made out'. But why? If Argentina is an imperialist country then it wouldn't change one jot our defeatist position no matter how many people were on the islands. The fate of 'little Belgium' or any other imperialist country facing German aggression in the Second World War, didn't alter our attitude of defeatism.

But the point works the other way round. It doesn't matter whether there is one single Argentine on the Malvinas-Falklands, in so far as the Argentine people experience British occupation as oppression it becomes part of their fight for self determination. This we defend unconditionally.

Militant claims to stand on the side of British and Argentine workers. In reality it is beginning to stand against the interests of both. It is time to call Militant leaders to order.

Falklands Crisis A SOCIALIST ANSWER



15p A MILITANT PAMPHLET

Appeal

However, not only does comrade Grant fail to put forward demands to mobilise the class against the war, he actually makes proposals to reverse the steps which some left leaders have taken against Thatcher.

The actions of Arthur Scargill and Tony Benn should be opposed because: 'the pacifist opposition of the Labour left is not opposition to the class which wages the war'.

But, does Benn and Scargill's appeal to withdraw the fleet make it easier or more difficult to win militant workers to an understanding of the need for hostility 'to the class which wages the war'? This is the judgment which has to be made not simply dark mutterings that 'such an opposition can play into the hands of the imperialists'. The gutter press regalling of Benn and Scargill as 'traitors' should give a hint to comrade Grant about the present dynamic of the actions of these lefts.

Actions to demand the withdrawal of the fleet are wholly progressive at the present time. It is then the duty of Marxists to ally with any forces — whatever their motives and overall understanding. It is empty-headed childishness to refuse common action

unemployment? Only through a general strike leading to an insurrection. But, we all agree such a thing is not presently on the cards. Are we then to assume that it is useless to fight against unemployment?

It is not useless to fight for partial demands. A call to withdraw the fleet is not the same as a demand such as 'end all wars'. There are conditions well short of a 'general strike leading to an insurrection' which could force the withdrawal of the fleet.

tendency worth its salt then be dedicating its efforts to forcing the Labour leaders to break from support to Thatcher's war?

To this task, comrade Grant counterposes the call 'for a general election now, as a way of bringing down the Tories and returning the Labour Party to power with a socialist programme.'

We are entitled to ask: would the election of a Labour government committed to socialist policies be able to withdraw the

	Argentina	Canada
Population.....	27,300,000	23,940,000
% Urban.....	72%	75.5%
Gross Domestic Product	\$61.5 billion	\$245.8 billion
Imports.....	\$6.7 billion	\$62.6 billion
Exports.....	\$7.8 billion	\$67.5 billion
Electricity produced (kilowatt hrs).....	29.05 billion	335.71 billion
Crude steel produced (metric tons).....	3.2 million	16.1 million
Autos in use.....	2.03 million	9.02 million
Autos manufactured.....	135,000	1.14 million
Trucks manufactured.....	45,480	610,800
Rail freight (net ton = km)	10.37 billion	215.35 billion
Telephones.....	2.6 million	14.5 million
Beef production (metric tons).....	3.19 million	1.06 million
% 5- to 19-year olds in school.....	59%	76%
Infant mortality (per 1,000 live births).....	59.0	12.4

Some revealing comparisons between Canada — an imperialist country — and Argentina — a semi-colonial one



Thatcher viewed as the aggressor throughout the whole of Latin America

If this reasoning was applied consistently, then Militant would never even engage in strike action. Let alone more general political and social movements. Neither we nor Militant told workers not to prepare recently for action in solidarity with the railway engineers because it was Sid Weighell who was threatening to call such action. We nonetheless knew that Weighell's call was mainly attempting to regain some lost credibility over his backing for flexible rostering. We applied that understanding at another level, not as a reason for opposing the strike call. The same method applies to those making a call for the withdrawal of the fleet.

In reality, it is none of these arguments which guide Militant's policies. They have been simply thought up after the event to justify a decision taken on other grounds. The real determinant of Militant's policies is summed up by Ted Grant's little phrase 'such demands could get no echo from the mass of workers'. In reality,

In fact comrade Grant goes so far as to suggest that such, in reality jingoistic, sentiment might very well be progressive. Almost unbelievably he declares, 'If necessary, British workers and the Marxists will be willing to wage the war against the Argentine junta'.

Thatcher's war is not against the junta. It is against the Argentine workers. A similar war prosecuted by a Labour government or even a 'Marxist' one would similarly be against the Argentine workers. Comrade Grant falls into this confusion because he thinks that this is a war like World War II. In order to make sense of such an analogy, though, Grant has to argue that Argentina is an imperialist power and that 'the junta's claim to the Falklands is purely an imperialist aim'.

It is true that Argentina is one of the most developed countries in Latin America. But from this fact it by no means follows that Argentina is imperialist. Urbanisation, capitalist relations in the countryside and a certain

TRADITIONALLY the last night in Blackpool at union conference is the time for a good night out. But over 80 delegates and observers from the post office engineers' (POEU) conference crammed into a hall to hear an Argentinian refugee, Rafael Runco, speak at a Broad Left fringe meeting.

Rafael outlined the historical relationship of Britain and Argentina clearly in terms of imperialism; and the feelings of the Argentinian people towards Britain's occupation of the Falklands/Malvinas Islands.

He explained how Galtieri had gone into the islands as a diversion from the internal crisis, thinking that Thatcher, being a sympathetic regime would understand why, and wouldn't react too strongly. But he had miscalculated, because Thatcher too needed a diversion. Galtieri also miscalculated with regard to the US response.

Argentina is America's staunchest ally in Latin America and a cornerstone of US policy to defeat Latin American revolutionary movements. A meeting between Costa Mendez and the American Ambassador gave the junta to believe that the US would remain neutral in any conflict.

At first the Argentinian people had been confused about the war but after the sinking of the Belgrano they had become clear that Britain was an enemy, and they now support the war to regain the Malvinas while still organising against the junta.

The sentiments of the people are summed up, he said, by the Mothers of May square — mothers of disappeared people, who demonstrate daily outside Government House. Their placards say: 'The Malvinas are Argentinian, but so are the disappeared people.'

The war has created a new political situation within Argentina. The junta, trying to mobilise

popular support had to concede certain freedoms. The CGT union has become more active and is organising meetings in the factories supporting the occupation of the Malvinas, but emphasising the CGT opposition to the junta.

Since the war started leading members of the CGT have been touring Europe to meet workers' representatives to explain the case of the Argentinian workers. They visited many countries but waited three weeks for a reply from the British TUC before they finally gave up the idea of being able to meet the British labour movement.

Rafael gave clear examples of how the British media as well as the Argentinian distort the news, for example the coverage of a huge Peronist demonstration claimed that the people were shouting: 'The Malvinas belong to Argentina and Argentina belongs to the Malvinas', but Rafael could hear that they were really shouting: 'The Malvinas belong to Argentina and the people belong to Peron.'

Refugee

Rafael then explained his position as a refugee in Britain. He is now working for the Human Rights Commission on Argentina, an organisation whose work has been made that much more difficult by the Tory government's decision to end the refugee programme for people opposed to the junta.

People at the meeting were very sympathetic and wanted to know how to help. As Jock Campbell, chairman of the Broad Left, said, it's a pity we

Broad left in P.O. opposes Thatcher's war

By Ian Willer and Marcella Fitzgerald



Fifth infantry brigade landing on Malvinas-Falklands

only get together with these other trade unionists when our countries are at war, even though we know they've been in trouble for years.

Pat Ryan, secretary of

the London Met South branch, compared the situation to that in Ireland; that the islands are Argentinian and that there would only be no more wars when every

country had the land that was rightfully theirs.

All in all it was a very good meeting and several people expressed interest in inviting Rafael to speak at their branches.

Stop Labour's support for Thatcher's war, says new committee

A PUBLIC meeting on Saturday 19 June will launch a new committee to campaign in the labour movement for a policy of withdrawal from the South Atlantic. The new body will fight for the Labour Party's next conference to oppose any permanent garrison on the Malvinas and will defend those MPs who voted against the war.

The new group is called the Labour Committee for Withdrawal from the South Atlantic, and its sponsors, all in a personal capacity, include Reg Race MP, Ken Livingstone, Valerie Wise, Peter Tatchell, Chris Mullin and individuals from the editorial boards of London Labour Briefing, Socialist Challenge and Socialist Organiser. Its declaration, for which wide sponsorship is being sought, reads as follows:

We, the undersigned, come together to establish the 'Labour Committee for withdrawal from the South Atlantic.' The aims of this committee shall be:

- To campaign in the Labour Party and affiliated organisations for a policy of complete military withdrawal by Britain from the South Atlantic. We defend those Labour MPs who voted against the Tory

government's war policy. We totally oppose the stand taken by the leadership of the Parliamentary Labour Party, identifying it with the jingoistic line adopted by the Thatcher government.

- To oppose the stationing or maintenance by Britain of a military garrison in the Falklands and the closer military and political ties with the reactionary Chilean regime which such a measure would require.

To these ends:

- We shall issue the above as a statement to the Labour and trade union press, and circularise national briefings defending our aims throughout the movement
- We shall mobilise support for resolutions on the above lines coming before conference this year
- We shall seek the sup-

port and sponsorship of leading individuals and organisations of our movement for this policy

- We shall work towards building forums which debate out the main lines of a socialist foreign policy for our movement.

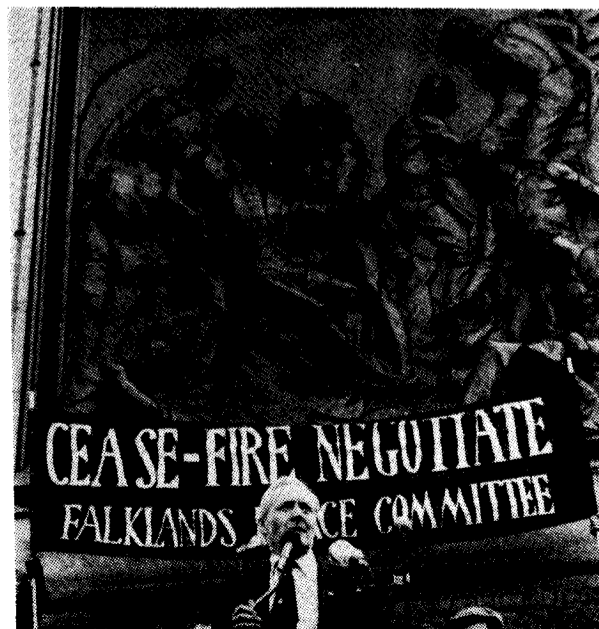
Socialist Challenge asks its readers to support this important new initiative by:

- Sending motions up to the Labour Party conference in support of its positions
 - Organising to secure sponsors from the Labour Party and trade unions
 - Organising local labour movement debates and public meetings involving Labour Party and trade union activists, to campaign for a policy of withdrawal and discuss out the basis of a socialist foreign policy.
- Please inform Socialist Challenge of motions

Britain out of the South Atlantic

Lunchtime meeting with Ken Livingstone, Valerie Wise, Peter Tatchell

County Hall, 1.00 pm Saturday 19 June during 'Running London Our Way' conference organised by London Labour Briefing at County Hall



Tony Benn addressing anti-war rally

passed and of new sponsors. The address for correspondence of the new

committee is c/o Briefing, 23 Leghorn Rd, London NW10.

Socialist Challenge FUND DRIVE '82

A week's wages for Socialist Challenge!

By Steve Cannon

AFTER CELEBRATING the fact that over one and three quarter million took the streets in the USA and Western Europe last week against the war drive the next steps have to be considered.

The massed ranks of the anti-war movement can be a mighty force to stop not only the nuclear rearmament of the imperialist powers but also against the bloody wars being fought by those governments and their proxies in the South Atlantic, Lebanon and Central America.

This is where the socialist press comes in. *Socialist Challenge* in Britain, *Rouge* in France, *Was Tun* in West Germany, *Militant* in the USA, *Bandiera Rossa* in Italy, *Internationales* in Sweden, *Klassekampen* in Denmark and dozens of our sister papers around the world seek to harness this mighty movement to stop the imperialist war drive in its tracks.

But like our sister papers and unlike the press of the imperialists we rely totally on the support of our readers.

This support has been critical in the last four weeks. We explained last month that mounting debts and the quadrupling of our rent threatened our very existence as a weekly paper.

Your response was immediate. In the last month over £7000 has come in response to our 'Week's Wages for Socialist Challenge' appeal.

Your support has been shown in other ways too. Like the contingents of *Socialist Challenge* supporters on the CND demonstration on 6 June, at the picket of the US Embassy the next day, the support for the Women's Right to Work March.

But please don't let this support flag. We are a long way from our target of making sure of the stabilisation of the newspaper and of our editorial offices. We have received many pledges and IOUs in addition to the £7000 cash. Now is the time to redeem them!

Please let us be able to report that we have crossed the £9000 next week. And let's keep our link in the internationalist press chain strong!

Rush all monies to: Week's Wages Campaign, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

This week's cumulative total area by area is:

Area	This week	Last week
West London	674.00	598.00
East London	533.00	493.00
North London	465.00	415.00
South London	400.00	310.00
Brent	1140.00	888.00
Birmingham and W. Midlands	637.00	637.00
Manchester and North West	907.55	837.55
S. Wales	625.00	625.00
South West	217.00	167.00
Oxford	180.00	105.00
Scotland	411.30	278.80
North East	205.00	205.00
Yorks	250.00	250.00
E. Midlands	270.00	270.00
Individuals	770.00	770.00
Total	7684.85	6849.00

The war hasn't ended
Demonstrate 27 June
Against Britain's occupation of the
Malvinas-Falklands
Assemble 2pm Hyde Park
march to Trafalgar Square
Called by Ad hoc committee
against the war



Bradford 12 trial nears conclusion

By Paul Hutchinson

'The whole case amounts to nothing more than a political prosecution. It is aimed at my political views.' This point was put to the jury by Tariq Ali when he summed up in his own defence at the end of the Bradford 12 case last week.

He claimed that when he arrived at the police station the police had carried out 'a real political interrogation before anything else'.

Paul Kennedy summed up for the prosecution the previous Friday relying largely on voluntary statements defendants had made in police custody. Deriding the 'self defence'

argument he stated that the jury might conclude that the number of racist attacks on Asians in Bradford was 'not disproportionate' to their numbers in the city.

Starting the summing up for the defence, Mike Mansfield showed how the police investigation from the start had been biased by their view that the petrol bombers must have been intended for 'copy cat' riots in Bradford.

For example, the police made no attempt to check Tarlochan Gata-auras' evidence that the 4th Idea bookshop in Bradford received warning of a possible fascist attack on the city from Daly's bookshop.

Mansfield argued that self-defence against such an attack was a 'fundamental right' and a 'matter of common law'.

Mansfield repeated defence argument supported by two explosive experts that petrol bombs were not explosives at all.

He finished with a quote from a book by Malcolm X taken from one of the defendant's houses: 'I believe that we should defend ourselves by any means necessary against racist attacks.'

Paddy O'Connor, counsel for Masood Malik, was told by the judge to stop making 'political speeches' after he pointed out how racism derived from Britain's colonial past — and that victims of racist violence were expected to rely 'on the very people and state that had pushed them into second class citizenship when they arrived here.'

Concluding the defence case, Helena Ken-

edy said: 'If this was never a political trial beforehand, it became one when Paul Kennedy asked the jury what kind of society they wanted to live in. A not guilty verdict would be a declaration of the society you want to live in — a society free from racist violence or fear.'

Summing up the case, Judge Beaumont brushed such arguments aside. He said it was a 'clear criminal case'. He said that self-defence was 'perhaps the central issue in the case' and the law 'required that the means be reasonable and in proportion to the circumstances'. The jury retired to consider the verdict on Tuesday morning. There will be a picket of Armley jail Leeds on Saturday 19 June at 12 noon if any of the defendants are convicted.

The tragedy of the Palestinians

By Ros Kaplan

Suppose someone came along and asked you to voluntarily leave your home, job and whichever part of Britain you lived in to go to France or Belgium — to become homeless, unemployed and suffer all the misery that goes with being a refugee. Your first reaction would probably be what the hell are they talking about and what a stupid question. On realising they weren't joking, your disbelief would turn to anger, fear and panic and you would probably fight back. But suppose you lost?

So imagine what the Palestinians felt like when it became painfully clear to them that the Zionist Yishuv (community) in Palestine, pre-1948, was working towards creating an exclusive Zionist state where there would be no place for them. They fought back against this colonisation and British rule in the Palestinian Rebellion and General Strike of 1936-39.

few miles away from their old homes, now bulldozed or inhabited by an Israeli family.

In 1978 a play was shown on Israeli TV called Khirbet Hiza. It was based on a fictitious Palestinian village in 1948. It showed the village being attacked by the Haganah army and the villagers being loaded onto trucks, later to be thrown across the border. The play caused a scandal!

The Zionists prepared Plan Dalet which consisted of 13 military operations aimed at capturing the land allocated to the Arabs and to empty the Jewish area of its Arab inhabitants.

Not all the operations succeeded. But the Zionists gained control of 3 major Arab coastal cities (Haifa, Jaffa and Acre) and the two main cities in Eastern Galilee (Safed and Tiberias) thus cutting off supply centres to the countryside.

Terror was used deliberately — mass killings and rape were common. In the massacre of Deir Yassin around 300 people were brutally murdered — this was the tactic to persuade male heads of families to put family and honour before



Over 5,000 Palestinians were killed and the resistance brutally smashed by the British aided by Zionist militias.

By the end of the second world war thousands of Jewish victims of the Nazi holocaust were making their way to Palestine. The Palestinians had to pay for the crimes of the West.

In Europe and America, the question of setting up a Jewish state and getting the Arabs to move out to make way for it appeared quite 'reasonable'. In 1944 the National Executive of the British Labour Party declared: 'Let the Arabs be encouraged to move out, as the Jews move in.'

Million

They certainly were encouraged! During the Israeli-Palestinian war of 1948 nearly one million Palestinians 'fled' the country and the Zionist state of Israel was founded on 15 May. Jordan annexed the West Bank and Egypt grabbed Gaza. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians found themselves refugees throughout the Arab world — but mostly concentrated in Gaza, the West Bank, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon.

Within the 1948 borders of Israel, people today are still refugees, sometimes living only a

Generations of Israelis and we in the West had been told that the Palestinians left of their own 'free will' that the Arab liberation army had ordered mass evacuation. According to Chaim Weizmann, first president of Israel, the flight of the Palestinians was a 'miraculous simplification'. Few questioned the fact that it takes more than 'encouragement' to persuade nearly one million people to give up everything for the squalor of refugee camps.

Why did so many Palestinians flee? For similar reasons to those of the thousands in Lebanon trying to seek refuge in Beirut today — they were attacked!

The casualties suffered by the Palestinians in the 1936-39 Rebellion was a decisive factor in their 1948 defeat. Their strength was greatly weakened and they were up against a superior military force.

The Zionists steadily built up their arms. The Haganah army, the Jewish settlement police and several Zionist paramilitary organisations were trained by the British and by one Brit, in particular, Orde Wingate.

In November 1947 the United Nations proposed the Partition Plan which divided Palestine into a Jewish state and an Arab one.

patriotism (the Arab code of war — no harm to women, children and the old no longer applied).

Fighters

The majority of villagers were poorly armed and lacked leadership. The only organised Palestinian military force was the Jaysh al-Jihad, with no more than 5,000 fighters.

The other force was the Arab liberation army sent in by the Arab states to defend the Palestinians. Badly trained and with no intention of arming and organising the villagers (in some cases they actually took arms away from the Palestinians!) their so called defence was a fiasco.

With no leadership, antiquated arms, attacks and a campaign of terror against them, the Palestinians either fled or were dumped in truckloads into the neighbouring Arab states.

This is what the Palestinians call the 'Disaster'. This is why they are in Lebanon today. The majority believed they would be able to go back to their homes — but they are still waiting and still suffering from Zionist aggression in the worst assault the Palestinians have faced in recent years — the Israeli invasion of Lebanon.

LPYS to hold black youth conference

By Anil Sen
South London Revolution supporter

ONE YEAR after the youth rebellions, Asian and West Indian youths, as well as representatives from the Labour Party, trade unions and LPYS branches will attend a two day national conference in July to discuss the fight against racism. The conference will be split into three main sessions: a) a film and a discussion on the 'Third World Crisis', b) a session on fighting discrimination c) workshops on police harassment, employment, education, the problems of women and the trade unions and the Labour Party.

The conference is a big step forward. Previously the LPYS has not seriously campaigned in struggle with black people. Revolution Youth supporters attending the conference will raise a number of questions to ensure that the LPYS gives consistent support to the struggle of black people.

The most important question facing youth today is the war drive. The Tories are spending millions of pounds on the bosses' war in the South Atlantic and yet they continue to make massive cuts in social services and refuse to pay the health workers.

The Tories say that they are fighting to 'preserve democratic rights' against a military junta. But the real reason for the fighting is the attempt to maintain the interests of the British bosses in the semi-colonial countries.

But the LPYS, which is led by the Militant tendency, has not come out against Thatcher's war drive. Revolution Youth are therefore fighting to reverse the LPYS's stand on this question.

A good start would be to call for the immediate withdrawal of the British army and navy from the South Atlantic, and to

campaign to commit the labour movement to this demand.

Another important question facing black youth is the fight against discrimination.

Revolution Youth fights for an end to discrimination in employment and education, and we are in solidarity with black workers who are struggling to be involved in unions. In practice, positive action means setting a quota for the number of black workers and women employed in particular jobs — and fighting to ensure that black workers are not the

first to be made redundant.

Revolution Youth opposes the line of the Militant leadership which simply says that positive discrimination divides the working class — and that the working class can overcome these problems by overthrowing capitalism! But the working class is already divided!

Precisely for this reason, black workers have to organise in caucuses in the trade unions and under their own leadership they will be best able to struggle for their demands.



INTERVIEW WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PLO IN LONDON

'120,000 Israeli troops in Lebanon'



And the revolt of the Palestinians over the past few months has shown the Israelis that they cannot achieve any of their objectives without destroying the PLO.

They used the disagreements between the Arab states and they thought that they could attack the Palestinians on their own with a massive Israeli force.

If the armed Palestinian resistance suffers a decisive defeat during this attack do you think this will have a very demoralising effect on the whole Palestinian nation?

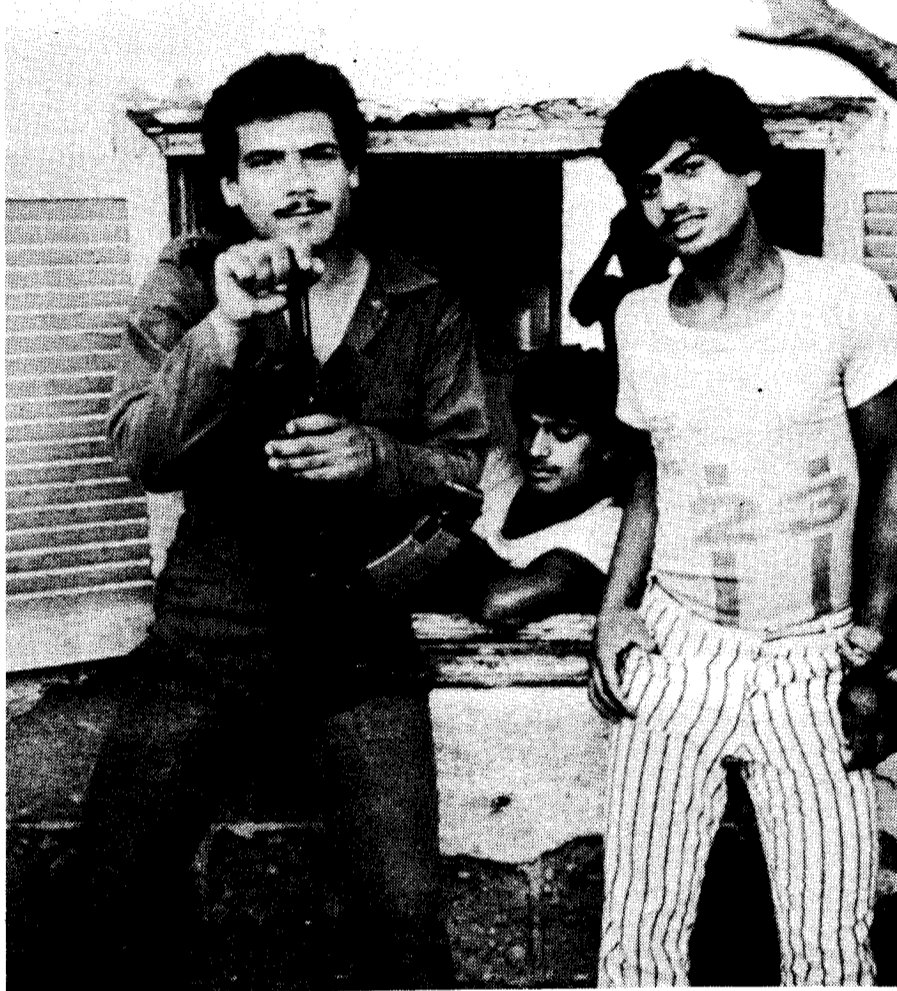
Before we answer, we must point out that the character of the press coverage of the conflict in Britain. From the beginning of the war they have taken the Israeli point of view and swallowed their propaganda.

The actual course of the fighting is very different to the way it is portrayed in the press and TV here.

At the moment there are 120,000 Israeli troops in Lebanon, as against only 20,000 on the first day. The degree of resistance by the joint forces has surprised them greatly — the joint forces of the Palestinian revolution and the Lebanese National Movement.

Our information is that hundreds of Israeli tanks and troops carriers have been destroyed, that they have lost over 1000 soldiers dead.

They have not been able to control any of the major cities in Lebanon. The only decisive military loss for us is their capture



1000 marched to Israeli embassy on Saturday

What is the reason for the Israeli attack at this time?

The immediate reason is to try to destroy the Palestinian forces in Lebanon. In the occupied territories the Zionists have discovered that the Palestinians support the PLO as the sole representatives of the Palestinian people. They have been trying during the past few months to find other representatives, especially on the West Bank, who would collaborate with them — a very small minority.

All the democratically elected mayors on the West Bank who supported the PLO have been dismissed from their posts.

of Beaufort Castle. The Israelis have tried to enter Sidon, Tyre and even Beirut in the last few days but their attempts have not been completely successful.

The present fighting is a turning point in the history of the Middle East, and we are sure that in the next few days the tone in the British media will be changed.

As usual, the Israelis when they attack the Palestinians have in their minds that the fighting will be finished within 24 hours. But today is the seventh day of the fighting which is still going on.

Will the Israeli army be able to occupy 20 or 30 miles north of the present border?

As Chairman Arafat has said, we want to keep the period of the war going as long as possible. We will not stop this war so long as there is a single Israeli soldier in Lebanon.

We believe that the days of their Christian ally in the South, Major Haddad are numbered.

What is the attitude of the United States? They have appealed for a cease fire.

You must remember that only a day before the Israeli attack President Reagan said that the West had to work hard to defeat

'terrorism' — which is the name they give to the PLO and all national liberation movements.

They haven't really changed their position. They know exactly what the position is in Lebanon.

The weapons the Israeli army uses are usually American weapons — including some of their most sophisticated like the F-16 fighter plane.

The Israeli government is claiming that the Syrian SAM-6 missiles in the Bekaa valley have been destroyed. Do you have any information about this claim?

At the moment there is fierce fighting between the Syrians and the Israelis in the Bekaa valley. It's noticeable that the Syrians have been giving figures for their own losses and those of the Israelis, but the Israelis just put forward figures for Syrian losses.

Our information is that there are still Syrian SAM-6 missiles in the area and the fighting is still continuing.

Syrian air raids have managed to cut some of the lines of communication and supplies to the Israeli army as well as inflicting heavy casualties.

Yesterday the Israelis dropped leaflets on

Beirut warning Syrian soldiers and other fighters to get out because they were going to take the city. Do you think they seriously intend to fight a major battle to take Beirut?

Nobody can be certain about the ultimate objectives of the Israeli attack. It was certainly decided after they got the green light from US imperialism.

Yesterday there was a conflict between Begin and his military high command and the latter have declared that they do not wish to take Beirut.

This is due to their calculation that it will be a very costly operation. But as yet nobody knows how far they are prepared to push their troops.

Another important factor will be how much resistance the Syrian troops can show in the Bekaa valley, because if the Israelis take it, it will be easier for them to enter Beirut.

But on balance we think that it will be too costly for them to try to capture Beirut.

But do the Syrians intend to put up a fight, or are they just fighting to cover their retreat without any intention of a serious battle?

We have to distinguish between the decision of the

Palestinians to fight the Israelis and that of the Syrians. Our decision was instant while the decision that Syria makes has to consider many political factors.

They did not decide to enter the war until it was clear that the aims of the Israelis went far beyond the attempt to push the Palestinians back 40 kilometers from the border.

But we didn't doubt the sincerity of the Syrian army in wanting to fight the Israelis.

What was the relationship between the Syrian army and the Palestinians and LNM before the Israeli invasion?

Nobody can justify the interference of the Syrian army in Lebanon in 1976. Neither the Lebanese National Movement nor the PLO supported the intervention of the so-called Arab 'peace keeping force'.

But since then the alliance between the Syrians, the Lebanese National Movement and the Palestinians has come into existence and there was an agreement about how to distribute the forces, what were the duties of each and how each has to control its own areas.

So although the Syrians entered Lebanon as a hostile force to the Lebanese National Movement and the Palestinians, the situation has changed to one of alliance.

The Syrian army is of course a real army, with tanks and MIGs and so forth. Our armies are guerrilla armies so our military thinking is very different.

Our position was always to continually engage the Israeli army in a guerrilla war, whereas the Syrians wanted to build up their army and their equipment to choose a favourable time for a frontal clash with Israel.

These different approaches have raised points of conflict between the two leaderships. But these can be overcome when it is a question of confronting an Israeli invasion.

How do you assess the outcome of the fighting so far?

Our information is that the Israelis have killed and wounded about 10,000 people — but a large majority of these are civilians.

We haven't lost any military position of importance except Beaufort Castle — which incidentally was defended only by about 40 guerrillas and not the 2000 that people in Britain have talked about. The Israelis used gas bombs to flush them out.

Our style of war is that of guerrilla warfare, it's not really about defending territory or land. So whatever the military successes of the Israeli invasion they won't stop our struggle.

What is the ultimate goal of the PLO?

No comprehensive and lasting peace can be achieved without the establishment of a democratic secular Palestine, in which all Palestinians, Jews, Christians and Muslims can live together, with equal duties and equal rights. This is the progressive solution to the conflict.

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2 can afford it

JOHN Nott, Secretary of State for Defence stated that: 'We have made no estimates of costs (in the Malvinas). We are concerned with the success of the operation.'

Contrast this with Kenneth Clarke, the Tory Minister of Health's position: 'The cost of the (health) union demands is £700m in England this year which is more than the country can afford in its present economic position.'

These are Tory priorities. While Thatcher pours shiploads of lives and money into the Malvinas adventure at an estimated rate of £1m an hour, poverty line health workers are expected to take a wage cut to finance their dirty war.

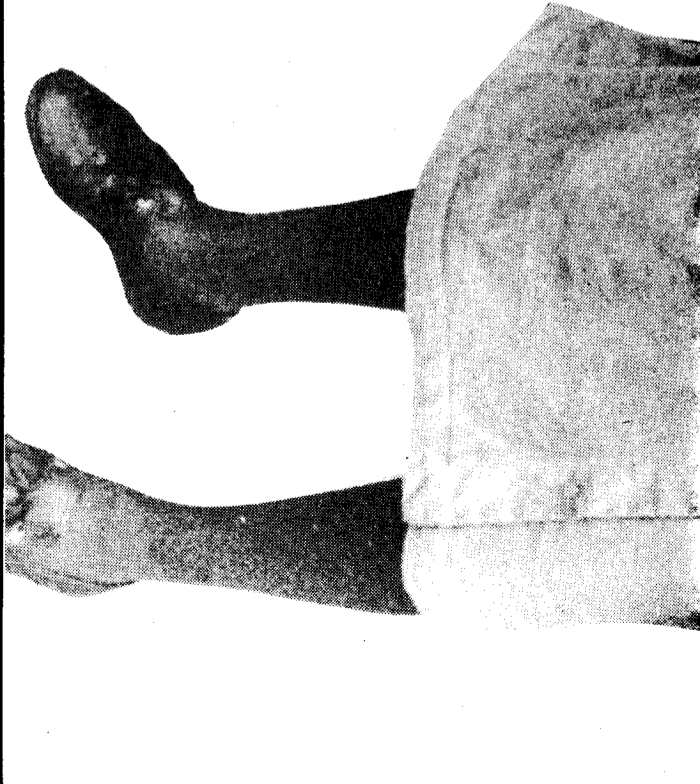
We say no. We say bring the fleet home and pay the health workers. We say jobs and decent living standards not bombs and war. These are *our* priorities and these *are* worth fighting for.

5 Positive action for women and black workers

THE backbone of the NHS is women and black workers. Successive governments have used this to pay health workers less than in comparable jobs in private industry.

By using racism, underplaying women's need to work, trading on the strong sense of duty and responsibility that these workers feel for their jobs, governments have led them into a situation which can't go on any longer. Enough is enough.

We say give the rate for the job. No penalties for race or sex. Far from it. The government should be leading the way to make up for decades of discrimination against women and black people — the least it can do is pay a living wage. Back the health workers — pay the 12 per cent!



FOUR STEPS TO VICTORY

1 All out national strike

SOCIALIST Challenge is sponsored by the International Marxist Group and has supporters in the Labour Party and in many trade unions including the health unions. This broadsheet for use at work, on picketlines, in schools was prepared by Toni Gorton. If you are interested in its ideas please contact Socialist Challenge c/o PO Box 50, London N1 2XP or phone 01-359 8169.

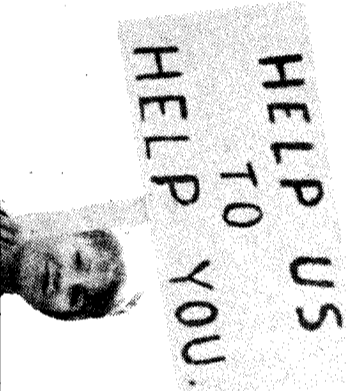
READERS are urged to give health workers support in the following ways:

- join the picket lines and offer practical help
- make regular collections in your workplace
- discuss solidarity actions in workplaces
- get resolutions of support through union and Labour Party branches
- send delegations to picket lines
- organise public meetings to enable the health workers to explain their case

2 Unity of health workers

NEVER before have health unions been so united, including even the Royal College of Nurses. The main obstacle to uniting health workers in order to *win* is the union leaderships. Only NUPHE so far has taken the step of calling for all-out action and this was rejected by the other unions in the TUC Health Service Committee.

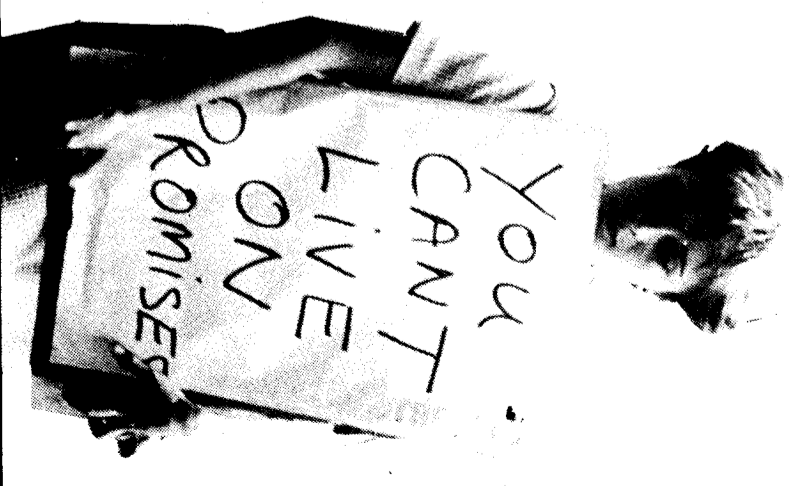
It is essential now to build joint union committees to organise the rank and file against the weakness and hesitation of the officials. The union leaderships must be forced into a united fight for the 12 per cent claim. Any efforts to take the claim to arbitration must be repelled. All health workers have ever had from arbitration is inadequate percentage awards, differentiated according to grade.



4 Labour and the TUC must lead the way

VITAL to creating labour movement unity and solidarity is the leadership of the Labour Party and the TUC. They should be called on *now* to organise a national demonstration in support of the 12 per cent as soon as possible. They must defend the actions of the miners and other workers who are defying the 1980 Employment Act by secondary picketing.

MPs and TUC officials should follow the example of the Transport Union executive which came down en bloc to the picket line on 8 June. This is the sort of support that's needed along with mobilisation of the ranks of the labour movement behind the health workers.



3 Labour movement solidarity

ON 8 June 60,000 Yorkshire miners brought their coalfields to a virtual standstill in support of the NHS and its staff. Steel workers in Sheffield, council workers and train drivers in London, water workers in Essex, seafarers in Liverpool and more miners in Lancashire also came out in sympathy.

Bringing industrial muscle to the side of the health workers will hit the Tories where it hurts, disrupting essential services like power and transport, reducing profits in the nationalised industries, but mostly by building up a powerful anti-Tory movement united in action.

The chief weaknesses of the NHS unions have been their lack of strategic or economic importance to the state in the short term. Despite the size of the workforce — over one and a quarter million — its fragmented nature has made its struggles partial and lacking in impact.

The solidarity of the big industrial unions will be decisive in winning this fight. All effort should go into building on the tremendous actions already taken by the miners and other workers.



THE D.H.S.'S REVISED ANNOUNCEMENT TO WORKERS TO DENY TO THE LAST ROUND OF N.H.S. CUTS...

A Socialist Challenge broadsheet

FIVE REASONS TO BACK THE HEALTH WORKERS

1 It's our health service

'THE importance of our support was brought home to me when I demonstrated at the Caerphilly miners' hospital. This was founded by miners when our forefathers fought for proper hospital care. We don't want to be served by workers in these hospitals who live on slave wages.'

This statement from Dai Davies, a miner at Penrhwiweber pit and a member of the South Wales Area Executive of the miners' union sums up the attitude of working people to the long struggle for a decent health care system and the workers who maintain it.

It was Labour that brought in the NHS and it's the labour movement that must defend it. The Tories are trying to run it down and sell it off. Working people have to fight them.

If we want to see what a health service run for profits and not for people is like we just have to look at the USA. Recently the British press told the story of a badly burned man who was turned away by 40 US hospitals because he hadn't medical insurance to cover the bills. He died.

While accusing the unions of greed Thatcher and her government bleed the NHS dry to fill the coffers of the pharmaceutical companies, the private medical schemes like BUPA and contract supply companies.

The Tories have raised prescription charges, national insurance contributions, closed hospitals, reduced facilities for geriatric, psychiatric, and chronically ill care. Over half a million people are at this moment waiting for operations.

And people are dying needlessly. According to a report issued in December, 97 children died waiting for bone marrow transplants in one hospital alone because doctors are limited to 25 operations a year through lack of cash.

Working people deserve better than this. We can't afford to buy our health care privately and even if we could the principle of health care accessible to all must be defended.

2 No 3 wage cuts

THE health service unions are asking for 12 per cent. The Tories have offered four per cent and after pressure some staff are being offered six per cent. Some like the junior technicians are being offered *nothing at all!*

But in 1980 NHS staff settled for only six per cent, far less than the rate of inflation. If they settle for the same amount this year they will have taken a real cut in wages of 15 per cent in the last two years.

Why should they? The money is there. The job they do is necessary and important.

Thatcher wants to use the health service to prepare another round of wage cuts for the public sector and to set the pace for the private sector as well. The Tories are using mass unemployment to frighten the workforce into accepting a wage cut.

By winning the full 12 per cent the health workers could seriously challenge the Tory government's attempts to make the working class bear the brunt of the economic crisis. We say let the bosses bear the burden — they caused it.

3 Support 4 the low paid

OVER 400,000 NHS workers earn less than £82 a week, the government's own poverty line for a married person with two children.

Tory priorities give giant handshakes to their people in high places while health workers have to scratch for every penny to eke out an existence. In May this year High Court judges were awarded pay rises over twice as large as the annual pay packet of most health workers.

In Tory Britain, the top fifty company directors are getting a record total of £6.6m in wages! The super fat cat, R Giordano of British Oxygen, got a 76 per cent pay rise this year bringing him up to an annual pay of £477,100! On top of this he also gets special tax concessions and it's probably not his only job.

NURSES DOctors



SUPPORT
NURSES

Where you can buy Socialist Challenge

Scotland

ABERDEEN: SC available at Boomtown books, King St. For more info ring Bill 896 284.
EDINBURGH: SC sold Thur 4.15-5.15pm Bus Station, St. Andrews Square and bottom of Waverly steps 4.30-5.30; Sat 11.30-2pm East End, Princes St. Also available from 1st May Books, or Better Books, Forrest Rd. More info on local activity from SC c/o Box 6, 1st May Bookshop, Candlemaker Row.
GLASGOW: SC sales every Thur/Fri 4.30-5.30pm at Central Station. Also available at Barretts, Byres Rd; Clyde Books, High St; Glasgow Bookshop Collective, Cresswell Lane; Hope Street Book Centre.
HAMILTON: SC sale every Sat 1-5pm outside Safeway, shopping centre. For more info contact John Ford, 53 Elliot Crescent, Hamilton or Paul Youngson, 18 Forrest Crescent, Hamilton.

Wales

BANGOR: Sat 10-12 town centre.
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SWANSEA: SC sales outside Co-op, Oxford St, 11am-1pm, Saturdays.

England

BATH: SC on sale at 1985 Books, London Road, and Saturdays 2pm-3pm outside the Roman Baths. Phone 20298 for more details.
BIRKENHEAD: SC on sale at Labour Club, Cleveland St, Thur nights; in precinct outside Littlewoods, Sat 11-12.
BIRMINGHAM: SC on sale at The Ramp, Fri 4.30-5.40, Sat 10-4. For more info phone 643-5904.
BOLSOVER: Cross Keys, every Fri 8-9pm, Bluebell 9-10.
BRADFORD: SC at Fourth Idea Bookshop, 14 Southgate.
BRISTOL: SC on sale 11-1, 'Hole in Ground', Haymarket. More info Box 2, c/o Fulmarks, 110 Cheltenham Rd, Montpelier, Bristol 6.
BURNLEY: SC on sale every Sat morning 11.30-1pm St James St.
COVENTRY: SC available from Wedge Bookshop.
HEMEL HEMPSTEAD: SC sales in Time Square, Sat 10.30-1.30pm.
HUDDERSFIELD: SC sold Sat 11am-1pm, The Piazza. SC also available at Peaceworks.
LEEDS: Sat 11-1 at Lands Lane Pedestrian Precinct and 10.30-12.00 at Headingley Arndale Centre. Corner Bookshop, Woodhouse Lane.
LIVERPOOL: SC on sale from News from Nowhere, Whitechapel and Progressive Books, Berry St.
MANCHESTER: SC sold 11-1pm Sat at OLDHAM outside the Yorkshire Bank, High St; at BURY in the shopping precinct and at Metro Books; at BOLTON in the town centre; and in MANCHESTER at Gorton and Droylesden markets 11am-12.30 Sats and at Grassroots and Percivals Bookshop. Tel: 061-236 4905 for further info.

Bookshops

BANGOR: Rainbows, Holyhead Road, Upper Bangor, Gwynedd.
BRADFORD: Fourth Idea Bookshop, 14 Sandgate.
BRIGHTON: The Public House, Little Preston St.
BRISTOL: Fulmarks, 110 Cheltenham Rd, Bristol 6.
BIRMINGHAM: Other Bookshop, 137 Digbeth, Birmingham.
DURHAM: Durham City Co-op Bookshop, 85a New Elvet.
ILFORD: South Essex Bookshop, 335 Ley Street.
MILTON KEYNES: Oakleaf Books, 109 Church Street, Wolverton.
OXFORD: EOA Books, 34 Cowley Rd.
LEICESTER: Blackthorn Books, 70 High St, Leicester, and V Karia, 53A London Rd, Leicester.
LIVERPOOL: News from Nowhere, 100 Whitechapel, Liverpool L1
LONDON: Central Books, 37 Grays

Order from SC, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

What's Left

RATES for What's Left: 6p per word or £4 per col inch. Deadline: noon Sat prior to publication. Payment in advance. Phone 01-369 8180.

Pay the Health workers badges available at 25p each
Orders for 10 or more badges — 20p each
Orders for 100 or more — 15p each
 Cheques payable to 'Cardinal Enterprises' and sent to 'Badges' PO Box 50 London N1. Why not get your trade union or Labour Party branch to order some?

Socialist Challenge Events

London Transport fraction: Sun 27 June 11-3, national centre.

Brant Socialist Challenge/Briefing discussion on 'Revolutionaries and the Labour Party' Wednesday 7 July, 7.30pm Anson Hall, Anson Rd, NW2. **Speaker from London Labour Briefing Graham Bash, editor plus Socialist Challenge speaker**

Pay the Health Workers

MANSFIELD: Fri 3-4pm, Stockwell Gate, Sat 10.30-12 Westgate. Four Seasons Shopping Centre Sat 10.30-12.
NEWCASTLE: SC on sale every Sat 11-1pm outside Fenwicks. Also available at Days of Hope bookshop, Westgate Rd. Every Friday outside Newcastle University between 1-2 and outside Newcastle Polytechnic between 12-1 every Monday.
NOTTINGHAM: SC sold every Sat 12-1pm Slab Square. For info phone 863916.
OLDHAM: SC sold every Saturday outside Yorkshire Bank, High Street. For more information about local activities. Tel. 061-682 5151.
OXFORD: SC sold Fri 12-2pm outside Kings Arms and every Sat 10.30-12.30pm in Cornmarket.
SHEFFIELD: SC on sale Thursday, Pond St, 4.30-6pm; Saturday, Fargate 10.30-12.30pm.
SOUTHAMPTON: SC on sale Sat 10am-12 noon at Above Bar Post Office (Shopping Precinct).
STAFFORD: SC on Sale Market Sq Sat lunch-time.
STOCKPORT: SC sold every Saturday, 1pm, Mersey Way. Can be delivered weekly: phone 483 8909 (evening), 236 4905 (day).
SWINDON: SC on sale 11-1 every Sat, Regent St (Brunel Centre).
TEESSIDE: SC on sale Sat lunchtime in the Cleveland Centre, and in Newfars, Linthorpe Road, Middlesbrough, and outside Woolworths on Stockton High Street.
WOLVERHAMPTON: SC sales on Thur/Fri at Poly Students Union from noon-2pm and British Rail 4.30-6pm; and Saturday near Beatties, town centre from 11am-2pm.
YORK: on sale every Thursday, dole office Clifford Street, 9.30-11; University Vanburgh College 12-2; Saturday at Coney Street 11-1.

London

BRENT: SC sold Willesden Junction Thur 4.30pm.
EALING: SC sold Thur, Ealing Broadway tube, 5-6pm.
ENFIELD: SC at Nelsons newsagents, London Rd, Enfield Town.
HACKNEY: SC on sale on estates throughout Hackney, at public meetings, and local factories. Contact us c/o PO Box 36, 136 Kingsland High St, London E8 2NF or phone Megan or John at 359 8288.
HILLINGDON: SC sold Fri, 4.30-5.30 at Uxbridge tube station; Sat 11.30-12.30 in shopping precinct, Uxbridge.
HOUSLOW: SC sold outside Houslow East tube, every Wed 5.15-6.15pm.
ISLINGTON: Every Fri, 8.15-9am at Holloway Road tube and Highbury tube.
KILBURN: SC sales every Sat, 10am in Kilburn Square, and Thursday 8.30am at Queens Park tube.
LAMBETH: SC sold Thur and Fri evenings and Thur mornings outside Brixton tube.
NEWHAM: SC sold Sat 11am to noon, Queen's Rd Mkt, Upton Park.
PADDINGTON: SC sold at Portobello Rd market Sat at noon.
WEMBLEY: SC sales Fri 6.45am at North Wembley BR Station.
 Inn Rd; Colletts, Charing Cross Rd; WC2; Paperback Books, Brixton and Charlotte St; Kilburn Bookshop, Kilburn High Road, NW6; The Bookplace, Peckham High St, SE15; Books Plus, Lewisham; Balham Food Co-op; Housmans, 5 Caledonian Rd, N1; Compendium, Camden Town NW1; Owl, Kentish Town; New Beacon, Seven Sisters Rd, N4; The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper St, N1; Bookmarks, Seven Sisters Rd, N4; Centreprise, 126 Kingsland High St, E8; Dillons, QMC, Page One, E15; The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper St, N1; Reading Matters, Wood Green next to Sainsbury's; Village Books, Streatham; Tethic Books, Clapham; Paperback Centre, Brixton; Oval tube kiosk; Shakti Books, 46 High St, Southall.
NOTTINGHAM: Mushroom Books, Heathcote St, Hockley.
SOUTHAMPTON: October Books, Onslow Road.
YORK: Community Books, Walmgate.

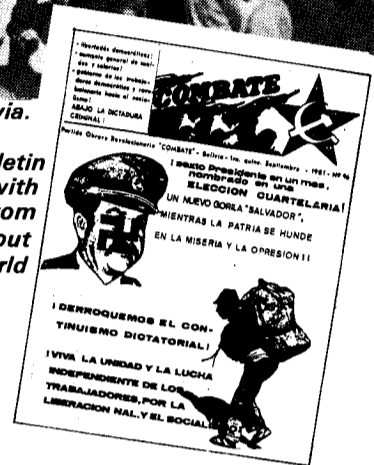


The POR's banner at a May Day demonstration in Bolivia. Last May it appeared despite fierce repression.

Bolivia - new prospects

Clandestine weekly bulletin produced by the POR, with financial assistance from revolutionaries throughout the world

Interview with Bolivian revolutionary



LAST MONTH the Bolivian dictatorship of General Torillo announced an amnesty for all charges with crimes against the state. In two years Bolivia has seen six military coups. But the people — particularly the copper miners — have fought back and forced the military to retreat.

At the heart of this struggle has been the POR (Revolutionary Workers' Party, Bolivian section of the Fourth International) Hugo Moscoso, one of its leaders, escaped the country recently after having been jailed by the military. Steve Potter spoke to him about his party's history and its current appeal for assistance.

NEWS OF Trotsky's death at a Stalinist

assassin's hands convinced Moscoso to join the POR in 1940. His party has since been at the centre of working class struggle in Bolivia.

The POR was the first Latin American section of the Fourth International, its admission being approved after a delegation visited Trotsky in Mexico in 1938. Its first step towards becoming a workers' party was for its militants to seek jobs in the mines and live in miners' areas. It paid off. The fourth national miners' union conference, held in 1946, was won to the POR's views and adopted one of the most famous documents of Latin American revolutionary Marxism — the 'Thesis of Pulacayo'.

'The document was an application of the theory of permanent revolution to Bolivia,' says Moscoso. 'The advanced political thinking of the miners, which was mainly due to the POR's presence, meant that they played a vanguard role in mass struggle.'

The Bolivian working

class's political consciousness has been the only shield against 30 years of continuous repression. 'Many times, the military dictatorships proclaimed the destruction of the workers' movement and the Trotskyists in particular,' says Moscoso. 'Our party was among the most repressed. Ever since the '40s our leaders and militants have been arrested, held in concentration camps and forced into exile.'

'We knew the jails and repressive methods of the mining and landlord oligarchy before 1952, and then in the 12 years of the bourgeois nationalist government of the MNR you could say that our homes were our jails. And finally in the last 18 years of military dictatorship we've been hit very hard. Many leaders and militants have died in the struggle but our party continues on its feet.'

The POR has continued to produce books and a regular newspaper even in clandestinity. The base it enjoys was evident

on 1 May this year where, according to Moscoso, 'ours was the only left party with its own banners and posters in demonstrations of 70,000 in La Paz and 40,000 in Cochabamba.'

After two years of terror directed at the workers' movement, resistance has faced the dictatorship to proclaim an 'opening', to annul the laws dissolving the trade unions and parties, and promise elections. The aim is to head off an explosion of discontent. But Moscoso thinks it will stimulate the struggles of the masses even further.

'Thousands and thousands of combative trade union and political cadres will return to the country, many of whom used their exile as a revolutionary school. I think the immediate future will not see a downturn. It will see an upturn in struggle.'

According to Moscoso great gains are possible in the development of a mass revolutionary party. But because of repression, funds for waging the struggle are difficult to obtain.

The grinding poverty of the miners among whom they work prevents them meeting all the demands placed on the POR.

Relatively insignificant amounts of money, by metropolitan standards, can have dramatic effects in a country like Bolivia.

An organiser working in the mines costs £7 per week. One issue of the newspaper costs £50; a book can be produced for £80; a local headquarters bought for £400.

Recognising the possibilities for building a party in Bolivia the Fourth International has launched an appeal for funds for the POR from its sections and sympathisers for £12,000.

So far £7500 has been raised with £500 coming from Britain.

The Fourth International and the POR appeal to their British supporters to contribute towards the fund, at a time when so much can be achieved.

All monies and cheques to: Bolivia Appeal/Socialist Challenge, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP

Mexico — women's committees back revolutionary Presidential candidate

by Fernando Zamora

For the first time in Mexican history, women are organising as women in an independent participation in the electoral arena.

Rosario Ibarra de Piedra, presidential candidate of the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (PRT — Revolutionary Workers Party), Mexican section of the Fourth International is not just the first woman candidate for the presidency of the republic. Her campaign is the first campaign which openly identifies with and supports and popularises the activities and demands of the women's liberation movement.

On 14 March, hundreds of women packed the Cine Regis in Mexico City to constitute the Front of Women's Committees in support of Rosario Ibarra.

Present in the presidium were, among others, representatives of women telephone and automobile workers; women's campaign support committees from various cities and peasant communities in the interior of the country; representatives of the Committee of Relatives of Political Prisoners, 'Missing Persons' and Political Exiles of Guadalajara, as well as other revolutionary organisations. The PRT is the only party in the country which has elected women to its national executive committee.

In addition, greetings were received from groups of Indian women; the Frente Campesino Independiente (Independent Peasants Front) of Sonora, an important and combative peasant organisation; various local women's committees in support of Rosario Ibarra; and from committees of telephone operators in support of the campaign.

Susana Vidales, representing the Provisional Committee of the Women's Front pointed out that: 'The committees to support Rosario Ibarra have been established not only because of our country, the candidacy of a woman for president of the

Republic ... represents a way of confronting the view that women should stay at home or in the best of cases stick to "women's issues" ... (but above all) because of what is behind the candidacy of Rosario, what it represents ...'

Rosario Ibarra was the final speaker. 'Companeras and companeros' she said, 'today the code of the three loyalties still exists: obedience to the father, obedience to the husband, and obedience to the brother or son. My own life, companeras and companeros, has revolved around the existence of three men — I was the daughter of Ibarra, later the wife of doctor Piedra, and later, I was the mother of Jesus Piedra. (Jesus was 'disappeared' by Mexican paramilitaries)

'None of these three affiliations — so to speak — bothers me, none of them disgraces me ... But when companeras and companeros, I start being Rosario the woman, Rosario by myself? When I began to struggle,



Rosario Ibarra de Piedra

when I began to transform myself through the struggle ... Then I started to become Rosario the woman.

'The capitalists' she said later on, 'the exploiters, our enemies, encourage some incorrect things. It is convenient for them that women's liberation is conceived of in a certain, special way. They want people to understand that

women continue to be subordinated and men continue to have their feet on our necks, as they say.

'They are interested in saying that women seek liberation in order to do everything that men do in an unjust political system. These are lies, women aren't interested in this! We don't want to be filthy like the men of the capitalist class, like the men of the bourgeoisie of the country! We want actions that support equal rights for women, but we don't want to be equal to the corrupt men of this country or of this world.'

The plan of action includes meetings of the women's committees in the course of the campaign, conferences on the situation of working women, rallies in plazas and public market places in the provinces, a central rally in Mexico City and a wind-up press conference of women candidates and women's committees on the development of the campaign scheduled for June 18.

Britain—still a colonial power?

WE MUST reply to Mark Smith's misrepresentation (13 May) of our views on the Falklands crisis. He denies our contention that UK's post-war policy of 'rapid de-colonisation' has been in the interest of British capital. He says 'Britain has been forced to capitulate in the face of big independence movements.' This is a one sided view.

Unfortunately, Comrade Smith and Socialist Challenge still operate with a pre-war model of 'British Imperialism's' mode of operation (ie control through territorial domination rather than as a surrogate for US capital), in practice this leads them to the mistaken view that UK capital has material interests at stake in the Falklands that are worth going to war about. Hence our comrades end up giving support to the Junta's invasion.

Importantly, the new framework of UK foreign policy was moulded by the outcome of World War II. Mark Smith could do well to read D Irving's 'The War between the Generals', which conclusively shows that the US prolonged the war by eight months. Why?

Because as General Marshall said to Eisenhower at the time, 'Take your time Ike, the United States leadership of the western world must be consolidated on the basis of the break up of the British Empire so that our business boys back home

have got something to expand into'.

The intelligent UK politicians of the 1945 period quickly adapted to the new world pecking order. Hence when Britain involved itself in wars against independence movements in Kenya and Rhodesia for example, they were not wars to defend the British Empire against independence; on the contrary every perceptive politician realised the absurdity of such a policy, but were wars to make sure that the form of the post colonial state established corresponded to the interests of western capital. Indeed the British were so eager to dump the 'Rhodesian problem' they couldn't be bothered even to go this far!

As for the assertion that 'we are in favour of the Task Force re-occupying the islands', this is just not true. The main point is this: for both the Argentine and British bourgeoisie there is nothing to be gained from either having or not the Falklands. The war has more to do with political climates in each country. The Fleet should be withdrawn to base.

Finally comrade Smith tells us, 'A defeat for Argentina will only lead to a strengthening of the fascist Juntas' hold over the population'. Is this serious? Did a defeat for the Tsar in the first war, or for Mussolini in 1943, strengthen reactionary and fascist domination? Would a military defeat for Franco in 1937 have strengthened Falangism?

JIM JOHNSTONE and ARTHUR MOWATT Manchester



Letters letters Letters Letter: letters LETTERS

I AGREE with Mark Smith's reply to Arthur Mowatt (29 April), when he points out that all Britain's colonies had to fight for their freedom.

But I think Mark misses Arthur's (wrong) point; that by emphasising British territorial claims SC is 'mechanistically plucking out formulas from a bygone age.'

This deserves a reply because it echoes Tony Benn who, quoting Dean Acheson, says Britain has lost its empire and become a colony.

Arthur is factually wrong. He says 'Britain's foreign policy since 1945, excepting the Suez aberration, has been one of rapid decolonisation.' Some rapidly! After thirty five years it has armed forces patrolling four out of five oceans.

The Dutch, and to a lesser extent the French, were forced to relinquish possessions by America after the war, but Britain was not. It was given a 'sphere of influence'. Its armed forces give it a world military role, which differentiates it from all other imperialist powers except the USA. Why else should Britain 'reply to Argentine aggression' and not, say, Sweden?

Arthur should not confuse nominal independence, creating a client state, with loss of territorial control. Nor should he confuse a transfer of hegemony with 'decolonisation'. When a revolution turfed Britain out of 'independent' Iran in 1953, the UK lost ter-

ritorial control as surely as the USA gained it when installed the Shah.

Arthur hasn't understood that territorial ambitions are forced on imperialist powers although they prefer neocolonial relations. In the postwar boom, with an overseas investment in the metropolitan countries, and American leadership of imperialism, a period of formal decolonisation was possible.

But in general imperialism cannot avoid territorial conflicts because of its monopoly character and because it cannot resolve serious inter-imperialist conflicts, or head off revolutions and nationalist revolts, by other means.

If territorial involvement is a thing of the past, how does Arthur explain the 'anachronism' of Vietnam? Of the Bay of Pigs? Of the buildup to an intervention in Central America today?

Now, with the collapse of the postwar boom, the rise of colonial revolution, a new wave of investment in the dependent countries, and the decline of British/American world leadership, we are entering a new period of territorial conflicts, open counter-revolutionary wars and interventions in spite of imperialism's 'preference for the 'human way' of doing things.

Arthur has only to turn on his television to discover that it is he, Benn and Dean Acheson whose understanding of the roots of war has been bypassed by history.

ALAN FREEMAN SE London

NO-ONE OWNS THE ISLANDS

BEFORE taking sides in any debate, it is necessary to get your facts right.

I am not questioning whether the Argentinians who wrote to the Times believed they were telling the truth. Unfortunately, the history taught in Argentina seems to be more like mythology.

The Falklands/Malouines/Malvinas were discovered by a Briton (John Davis) in 1592, and were first called the Falkland Islands about 1745. The first settlement was in 1764, and that was by the French, who named the islands 'Isles Malouines,' after St Malo, the British taking possession of West Falkland in the following year. So France has a prior claim to Argentina's, but France backs Britain's claim.

In 1766-70 the Spanish bought out the French and forcibly ejected the British. They renamed the Islands 'Islas Malvinas.' Was this aggression justified because it hap-

pened 212 years ago? I really do not understand this kind of argument.

I have never bothered to argue that England really belongs to the Welsh. I have always regarded the quarrel over 'who got there first?' as rather childish. We should consider what is best for the inhabitants now, and fascism is not good for anybody. I think you are quite wrong to believe that any good can come of handing over a defenceless population to a fascist state, in the eventual negotiations.

Unlike you, I would not call rebellion against repression 'aggressive.' It is defensive, resistant, even if violent.

I agree with Tony Benn that the Falklands never belonged to us. No country belongs to the workers, and I personally have never owned a square yard of land anywhere.

KATHLEEN JONES Shrewsbury

Get together

AS an activist within my own branch (Tameside) of the SWP, as a supporter of the Reagan Reception Committee, I totally support any possibility of a fusion between the SWP and the IMG.

I find it sad that fundamental disagreements over our position within the Soviet Union, and our

differences on the Labour party and entrism, should continue to foster an attitude of sectarianism.

Frankly, both Socialist Worker and Socialist Challenge are excellent papers, and we agree on such issues as the Malvinas, El Salvador, CND and opposition to the Tories.

There has to be a way to encourage dialogue and debate among ourselves which is not only healthy, but imperative to the future of the left.

The enemy, after all, is Thatcher.

ALEX WARNER Tameside



Unity in action at the Socialist Challenge/Socialist Workers football match on Friday 11 June. Suspension of sectarian hostilities took place at the invitation of the SW printshop team who also lent SC three players. The result was a 3-3 draw.

WRITE TO US!

Think of this page as a noticeboard for your comments, criticisms, or even congratulations. Be brief, to leave space for others — maximum 400 words. Write to: Letters, Socialist Challenge, 328 Upper St, London N1 2XP. (tel 01-359 8180/9)

No comment

From the Irish Press: 29 May

HERE IN full is a letter from Shirley Williams to somebody who wrote to her enquiring where she and the SDP stood regarding the PTA (Prevention of Terrorism Act). The letter is dated 8 May.

'Thank you for your recent letter. I'm afraid that you have the advantage of me because I don't know what the PTA is and therefore I can't say whether we oppose it or favour it. Perhaps you would be good enough to enlighten me.'

Incidentally, Shirley was a member of the Liberal Party which introduced the PTA in 1974.

Spanish plotters get lenient sentences

By Frank McBride

THE ARMED FORCES still rule Spain. Proof, if any was needed, comes in the paltry sentences handed out to most of the recent coup d'état conspirators.

The court martial's decision has angered not only the vast majority of the population but also the 'official' rulers, the politicians including the conservative premier Calvo Sotelo. They are understandably upset that the Civil Guards who burst into the Parliament, blasting off at the artwork and keeping them cowering behind their seats all night, were either not brought to trial or found not guilty.

But no one is very surprised by the decision, except apparently these politicians, the Socialist, the Communist and Conservative UDC parties, who had all previously declared their confidence in military justice.

Even the thirty years for Tejero and Milans del Bosch (the judges asked the government to reduce it to twenty) can be considered mild. After all, they did plan to remove all democratic rights from 37 million Spaniards for an indefinite time, and undoubtedly to imprison and execute an unspecified number.

And there's no doubt that in their confinement they will continue to enjoy the fine cuisine and freedom to pursue their literary careers that they have up till now. It's a sentence far removed from the summary executions of Republican officers who attempted a coup in 1930 or the Basque nationalist prisoners of today who receive up to 70 years.

The trial itself revealed little that was not already known. There was conflict between General Armada and the rest. Armada was

the general who was sent unknowingly to negotiate an end to the coup he had helped plan.

But Armada then backed out of the original plan and wanted to form a government headed by himself or civilians. Tejero would have nothing to do with it. To make matters worse, at the trial Armada denied any part in the plot. He got off with only six years but is condemned to ignominy in anybody's version of history.

Orders

How many more were involved, who financed it and how close the coup came to success as the phone lines buzzed all night between the country's military commanders, are all matters that did not and probably will never come to light.

The long three months of the trial were mostly taken up with the defence lawyers arguing not that their clients did not commit 'military rebellion' but that it might not have been a bad idea after all.

Their clients were only 'obeying orders' or believe

ed they were acting in accordance with the King's wishes. (None of them remembered that it is illegal to obey an unconstitutional order, nor did they attempt to find out the King's wishes for themselves.) That excuse did not work for Milans del Bosch or Tejero who spent the night disobeying direct orders from the King, hence the 30 years.

It was a cynical line of defence. One lawyer who had spent a morning protesting his clients' innocence told a journalist 'Well of course my client was in the coup — so was I'.

The standard pro-coup propaganda they gave out was that the situation in Spain was worse than in 1936, with tendencies to separatism, economic chaos and declining moral values.

But really outstanding was Tejero's lawyer who gave the courtroom a history lesson departing from the undeniable truth that all established orders owe their existence to violent movements in the past. There were many cases of Spanish Kings supporting a coup against constitutions they had sworn to support, he said.



It's the real thing ...

'None of us present can accept that Franco was unscrupulous because one day he went against the established regime when Spain was on the edge of the abyss,' he declared. And indeed none of the officers judging Tejero

would have been there had it not been for that very rebellion of Franco's in 1936.

But unfortunately it seems unlikely that Spain's chief workers' parties, the socialists and the communists, will draw the cor-

rect lessons from this latest piece of history.

The patent absurdity of a 'democracy' whose existence depends on the whim of the King to support or not any coup attempt, does not seem to occur to them. And with

the imprisonment of the most headstrong fascist in the armed forces they believe that this democracy is strengthened, forgetting that should the established order be really threatened, the army will again take to the streets.

Class struggle on the rise in Sri Lanka

By Upali Cooray

THE TWO DAY STRIKE of 600,000 plantation workers — numerically the most important and the most oppressed section of the Sri Lankan working class — on 13 and 14 May put paid to the myth, often propagated by reformist trade union leaders, that after the July 1980 defeat of the Sri Lankan workers, they would take years to recover. This strike is one of a series of developments in recent months that have shattered the carefully built up image of the present Sri Lankan regime as a stable and a reliable ally of the imperialists.

Corruption, scandals involving senior ministers, hyper-inflation, and the continuing resilience of the oppressed workers, peasants, students, and Tamil people have rocked the regime of Mr J R Jayawardene.

The much-publicised economic upturn in the last three years, primarily due to the increase in imports and the consequent growth of the service sector, has now come to a halt. The government is facing a serious financial crisis.

The costs of its prestige construction projects like the Mahaweli irrigation scheme have doubled or tripled.

It is no longer able to borrow from the institutions like the International Monetary Fund to bridge this shortfall and is increasingly compelled to borrow at extremely high interest rates from commercial credit institutions.

In order to bridge the ever-increasing budget deficit, the government of Sri Lanka has resorted to printing new money. Not surprisingly these

measures have pushed up the inflation rates to 50 per cent.

The cost of living has more than doubled in the last four years and the real wages of all workers and those on fixed incomes have fallen.

The worst affected are the plantation workers who have no other source of income to supplement their very meagre wages, and are still paid on a daily basis.

In order to repay the massive foreign loans they have contracted, the government has begun to lease vast tracts of land to multinational companies such as Nestlé, the Guthrie Corporation, British-American Tobacco etc.

Since this would inevitably involve the eviction of landless peasants who have 'illegally' occupied government land, the peasants have begun to organise. The attempts to permit the US Navy to set up a 'rest and recreation centre' in Trincomalee has also provoked wide protests.

The attempts to scrap



the long established free education system and replace it with one which would restore privileges of the rich, met with a very broad campaign of protest from all sections of the society. Students organised pickets and strikes, and the government was forced to retreat on this issue.

Meanwhile the repression in the north continues unabated. Using the draconian 'Prevention of Terrorism Act' young Tamils are being arrested, held incommunicado and tortured.

Victims

At the recent trial of Kuttimani, the barbaric methods of torture used by the Sri Lankan Army and police were vividly described by the victims.

The most recent arrest under this law has been a student leader at Jaffna University and this has provoked student protests.

The fact that plantation workers of the Jathila

Sevaka Sangamay (the UNP union) joined the May strike in their thousands shows the depth of dissatisfaction of the overwhelming majority of people with this regime.

A few months earlier 16,000 port workers in Colombo, of whom over 10,000 were members of the JSS went on strike and smashed the JSS office.

Workers everywhere feel the need for rank and file unity and the need to form links and party barriers. The militant workers of the Ja-ela industrial district who have grasped the importance of this sentiment have organised a workers solidarity movement linking 24 factories in the area.

The UNP, faced with increasing unpopularity and rising combativity of the workers is seeking to refurbish its image by purging some of its more notorious members. But here too the options are limited for President Jayawardene.

A purge threatens to

widen the gulf among the various factions in his own party. The government faces elections next year and its chances are not very good.

The opposition bourgeois party of Mrs Bandaranaike has gained ground and the ex-Trotskyist LSSP is seeking to put together yet another popular front government with her.

As yet there is no organisation in the working class movement that could become a credible alternative to the bourgeois parties.

The old reformist left is incapable of constructing such an alternative. But the elements of a new revolutionary movement has begun to emerge.

The most combative elements of the July 1980 strike have begun to coalesce and work together with the militant Revolutionary Marxist Party (Sri Lankan section of the Fourth International).



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SNP Left in tatters

By Murdo Ritchie

ON Saturday 5 June, the Scottish National Party at its annual conference in Ayr voted by 308 votes against 188 to ban all factions and groups within the party. It called on them to disband within 3 months. The vote divided the SNP: members of the left-wing '79 group staged a walk-out, and the traditionalists were moved 'to scenes of glee, gloating and nastiness.' SNP Chairperson Gordon Wilson, who moved the motion, threatened to resign if it was not carried.

The SNP has been in serious trouble since its electoral failure in the 1979 general election when its number of MPs fell from 11 to 2. The problem for the SNP, was correctly assessed in an editorial of the *Glasgow Herald*: 'Too often in the past the SNP has chosen to behave as if

it was not locatable in a spectrum but on an oscilloscope, flickering on one side to the other.'

The '79 group was formed in response to the party's decline. It has been led by Jim Sillars, ex-Labour MP who left to create his own now defunct Scottish Labour

Party, with other SNP left-wingers such as Stephen Maxwell and Margo MacDonald.

The group hoped to win control of the party and steer it leftwards into the labour movement by using such tactics as civil disobedience, support for unilateral nuclear disarmament and campaigning to pull Scotland out of NATO. The aim was for the SNP to be seen as a credible alternative to the Labour Party.

All this was a threat to the traditionalist 'heather and haggis brigade' of the SNP such as Winnie Ewing, Gordon Wilson, Robert MacIntyre and Gordon Murray, who



Ron Wyllie: albatross around his neck

formed the Campaign for Nationalism in Scotland several months ago. The CNS was formed solely to counter growing left-wing influence in the party and barely disguised its hostility to the labour movement. It was the CNS who



Gordon Wilson: making threats

were behind the motion in Ayr.

The ban on organising will severely limit the left but the effect on the SNP right will be minimal. The right-wing militant nationalist Siol Nan

Gaidheal is excluded from the ban as it claims to be only a 'cultural organisation.'

The left has several limited options: they can work 'underground' in the party, they can form a Scottish Labour Party Mark II although this is unlikely. Another option will be to form its own 'cultural' organisations as the right does. Some may take up the offer of the former Chairperson of the Labour Party in Scotland, George Galloway, and join the Labour Party.

But the effect on the SNP itself will be catastrophic as Ron Wyllie the party's candidate in the forthcoming Coatbridge

and Airdrie by-election put it: 'People like Winnie Ewing, Dr Robert MacIntyre and Gordon Murray stand accused of dividing the party. They have put an albatross around my neck.'

Jim Sillars pin-pointed the main political problems of this decision: 'The trade union members of the SNP who were poised on a strategy of rapprochement with the active trade union movement have received a very severe blow. Our shop stewards are profoundly saddened because it is an historical fact that if they were to make any headway they must have left-wing credibility.'

Labour Women's Conference Labour leaders wrong on war

By Jude Arkwright

At a Labour women's conference twice the size of last year's delegates voted to call for the withdrawal of the British fleet in the South Atlantic and to condemn the Labour leadership for not opposing the war.

The conference, meeting at Newcastle's City Hall last weekend, went on to:

- * vote for British withdrawal from NATO
- * support the struggle of the workers in Poland and El Salvador
- * back overwhelmingly a motion supporting the health workers' claim
- * endorse, against a majority of the platform, the Labour Party Young Socialists campaign on youth unemployment.

The size of the conference, its militancy and its demand that women's voice be heard inside the Labour Party reflected the increasing involvement of women in women's sections, women's councils and in the trade unions.

Policy successes were scored against a section of the platform that tried to create a witch-hunt atmosphere against the left and in particular the *Militant* tendency.

The conference confirmed that women are in the leadership of the fight for socialist policies and campaigning action inside the Labour Party and labour movement. Conference voted accordingly to give women a more effective voice in the party.



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Eject

A motion was passed demanding that five resolutions should go automatically from the women's conference to Labour Party conference, again against the majority view of the platform. In addition delegates voted for direct election from the women's conference to the NEC of the Labour Party,



Women protesting at last year's Labour Party conference that they make policy not tea

and that the women's conference should be allowed to elect its own national committee.

Sharp divisions between constituency delegates and trade union

delegates on many of the points on the conference agenda revealed the need to step up the campaign for socialist policies in the trade unions.

Hilary Astor, a

delegate from Hillingdon women's section, pointed out that the trade unions were in the fore of fighting for positive action for jobs and that this needed to be reflected centrally in the

Labour Party too. Likewise only if the trade unions could be won to support the constitutional changes proposed by the conference could they be won in the Labour Party.

A similar point was made by Hazel MacPherson, a delegate from the National Union of Railwaymen, speaking in a personal capacity, at a Socialist Challenge fringe meeting. An audience of over 30 delegates heard Hazel say that the fight for positive discrimination inside the Labour Party had to be part of a strategy for action of the mass of women.

Controversy

But undoubtedly the most controversial decision of the conference was its sharp opposition to the support given by the Labour leaders to the Tories' war drive. Valerie Coultas (Handsworth), seconding the successful resolution, took up the arguments of those who denounced the resolution for dividing the party. 'The real treachery', she said, 'is not of those who oppose the war, but those Labour leaders like Michael Foot who have betrayed the labour movement in his support for British imperialist interests.'

Increasingly the fight to make women's voices heard and effective within the labour movement will involve a fight against the right wing of the labour movement and its policies.

As Mauritius election swings left Diego Garcia: Britain's 'forgotten Falklands'

By Tony Southall

IN A WEEK when the international news was dominated by events in the Middle East and the Southern Atlantic, the result of a general election in the tiny Indian Ocean island of Mauritius was lost for the media.

Socialists should not be similarly disoriented. The ruling bourgeois coalition of Sir Seewasagur Rangooram was swept from power by a landslide victory for the Mouvement Militant Mauricien (MMM) which took 60 out of 62 elected seats in a parliament of 70.

The MMM calls for a 'zone of peace' in the Indian Ocean. The tiny atoll of Diego Garcia, twelve

hundred miles to the north, was detached from Mauritius by agreement with the British before independence in 1968. It remains under British sovereignty but was handed over to the US military.

It is now the central strategic base for US Indian Ocean operations overseeing its interests in the Persian Gulf, Red Sea and Southern Africa.

Meantime its twelve

hundred former inhabitants still live in shanty settlements in Port Louis, the Mauritian capital, to which they were deported.

British socialists should raise the call to restore Diego Garcia to Mauritius, contrasting the treatment of these islanders with those in the Falklands.

The MMM originated in the early 1970s in a period of intense class struggle that culminated in the 1973 general strike. It has a close relationship with the GWF (General Workers Federation) in a

country where the working class is an absolute majority.

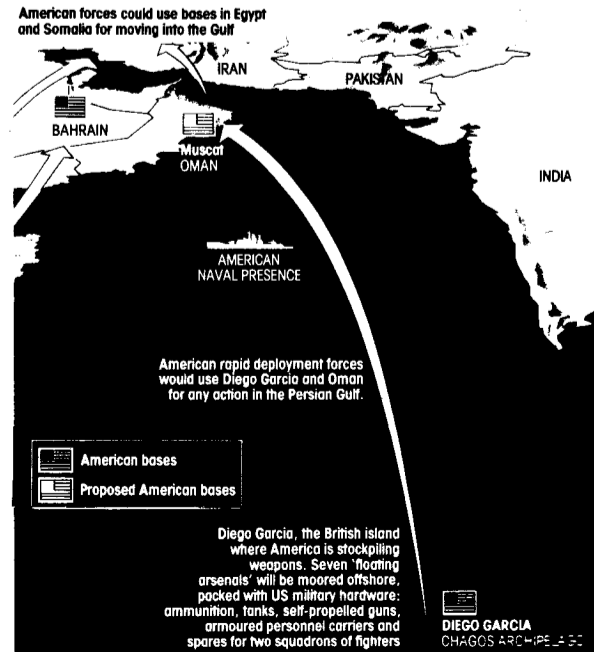
The economic crisis was decisive in galvanising its support. The price of sugar, accounting for more than ninety per cent of exports, dropped from £360 per ton in November 1980 to £147 in 1982. Unemployment is at least 30 per cent.

A 1979 World Bank loan imposed a wage freeze, cuts in subsidies on rice and flour and the introduction of fees for education and health services.

The programme of the MMM has however moved

considerably to the right since 1973. Its best known leader Paul Berenger now quotes the Mitterrand government as an example, advocating worker participation, a national enterprise board etc.

Where economic wealth is effectively controlled by the owners of eight vast plantations such measures can never begin to improve standards for the working class. The new government will stand or fall by its willingness to challenge the decisive controllers of the island's economy at home and abroad.



'We need the support of British miners'

STEFAN PALKA is a 31-year-old electrician at the Manifest-Lipcowy pit in Upper Silesia which employs some 9000 miners. At different times he was chair and deputy chair of Solidarnosc in the Silesia region. He has been in the West since November 1981, as an official guest of the French trade unions. He is currently touring the pits in Britain, and meeting various regional bodies of the National Union of Mineworkers. He was interviewed by **ANDY MILLER** after the recent Nottinghamshire miners' gala.

What was the role of the official trade union?

It wasn't a real trade union. It didn't defend the members. In fact the official trade union defended the interests of the Stalinist bureaucracy against pressure from the workers. You found very often that the union bureaucrats would sign redundancy slips for people the managers wanted to get rid of. They did this without batting an eyelid.

How did the 1980 strike wave start in Silesia?

The first strike started at Manifest-Lipcowy. I was elected chairperson of the strike committee and an inter-factory committee was formed. There were very many delegations from the government. It was very difficult to reach an agreement. For instance workers wanted their demands broadcast so that the people in Gdansk would know what they were doing. The authorities wouldn't agree to this for a long time.

In many points the Jastrzebie agreement was much stronger than those in the Gdansk agreement. For instance the miners stated very strongly that Saturdays should be free for everybody. Other points called for improvements in the economy and the lifting of privileges for the police, security forces and party bosses.

Could you describe the atmosphere at Manifest-Lipcowy?

It was very tense. We knew from the very beginning that we were going to stick it out. At the moment they took over the mine, the miners became the true owners of the mine and despite many provocations the workers took great care of the machinery.

After taking over we sang the 'Internationale', 'The Red Flag', as well as the national anthem and Polish revolutionary songs. We sang the 'Internationale' because at that moment we wanted to take back from the bureaucrats what they had taken from the workers. In this song we were all united.

What was the background of the Solidarnosc activists?

Mostly they were young and new to this kind of activity. Though there were people who had formerly been involved in struggles. Quite simply young people

are more radical, more decisive. They have less to lose, they don't have families. They were more willing to get involved.

Could you say something about union democracy in Solidarnosc?

Of course democracy was very strong in Solidarnosc. Democracy was the guarantee that the union did not become bureaucratized. The

miners resisted with such determination after martial law at Wujek and other mines?

Due to the nature of their work miners are decisive and courageous. It's also due to the high level of political consciousness of the Polish workers. The workers knew what they were fighting for. They are very conscious of what is going on.

So what are conditions like in the mines now?

Since martial law conditions in the mine have become very oppressive. Most of the large factories and enterprises especially the coal mines have been militarised. The directors are now military commissars and they decide about everything.

What has happened to the relatives of those

of the regulations but also by fatigue among the workers because the system of pay was so engineered that the workers could barely afford to take sick leave. As for the working week the system that operated was the traditional three shift system with six days work and a free Sunday. But more and more of the free Sundays were lost and miners were forced to work on them too.

In the West many workers are confused when they see Solidarnosc being praised by people like Reagan and Thatcher.

Indeed, it is strange, this support for Solidarnosc. They are doing it for their own ends. I think they want to divide their own workers from Polish workers, because what interest did Reagan have in making his whole show of

the direct threat of intervention from the Kremlin sending in its tanks, we need them to mobilise in our support through strikes or protests so that the bosses don't get a chance to join hands with Stalinism.

The image that was put over in the television coverage was that Solidarnosc is very religious and very nationalist.

Solidarnosc is Solidarnosc. Its external picture is the creation of the media. For example the unveiling of the monument in Poznan to those who were killed in 1956. The celebra-

tions lasted a whole day and were very powerful. A lot of strong statements were made and there was a big demonstration. The media only showed the Mass and the bishops going by. And this was shown in the mass media here too. Of course people in Poland are religious but this is something separate. The Church tried to influence discussions within Solidarnosc but the workers did not follow them.

What would you say to the accusations in the February Yorkshire Miner that Solidarnosc was harbouring

elements that had as much to do with socialism as Margaret Thatcher?

I would like to put a question to the journalist who wrote this. Would he call the struggle for workers' self-government, for workers' control, for workers' rights in a country where these rights should belong to the workers a return to capitalism? It sounds like something from a Polish newspaper.

Could you sum up what Solidarnosc stands for as you see it?

The Polish revolution.

South Wales miners gala — Scargill promises tough leadership

By Barry Wilkins

LAST Saturday in Cardiff several thousand miners and their families celebrated their annual gala. Emlyn Williams, president of the South Wales miners, opened the rally by congratulating the dockers for taking strike action against the Tebbit Bill on 10 June, the TUC's 'union day'. 'This will be the first of many' he said, 'Let's take on Tebbit as a united trade union movement.'

Guest speaker Arthur Scargill, president of the miners' union, gave a militant speech in which he repeated the promises and policies of his election campaign. Again he committed himself to fighting for a four day week with no loss of pay, opposition to all pit closures except on grounds of exhaustion, and for miners to be paid on a salaried basis. He repeated his argument that a four day week would lead to the creation of fifty thousand new jobs in the industry.

But he also proposed a new policy which goes further than his election campaign: 'The union should demand that the National Coal Board must create 30 new pits, six of them in South Wales.' This statement was enthusiastically received and will raise still further miners' expectations of Scargill's leadership of their union.

Scargill warned that the government and the NCB still have a hit list of pits for closure. The flash-point would be Snowdown colliery in Kent, he said, and promised full support to keep it open. He asked miners to be ready for industrial action and said: 'We cannot lose against the Board if our action is immediate and total.'

Warm applause greeted Scargill's demand that there should be an immediate ceasefire in the Falklands, with the withdrawal of the Task Force and a negotiated settlement. 'Britain is trying to defend one of the last vestiges of British imperialism' he argued.

Des Dufield, vice president of the South Wales miners, appealed to all workers in South Wales to support the health workers. He also linked this struggle to the fight

against Tebbit: 'We must destroy the Tebbit law through industrial action, and we pledge our full support to any other workers who are attacked.'

But he warned that the Tories are relying on some trade union leaders being 'paper tigers' and opposing Tebbit only in words: 'Yes, there are some paper tigers leading our movement. But if the Tories attack the miners, or our friends in other unions, we will show them we are not paper tigers. We'll make the industrial action of 1972 and 1974 look like a Sunday School outing.'

Finally Dufield gave support to the struggle of the Polish workers, and condemned the Tory pretence of support as hypocritical.

Stefan Palka, Polish miner and Solidarnosc leader from the Silesian coalfield is speaking at miners' meetings during his tour of the South Wales coalfields. The South Wales miners' executive has decided to meet Palka, and this new level of interest of the leadership in the struggle of Polish workers against military repression should be warmly welcomed.

Foot shocks Notts miners' gala

By Andy Miller

MINERS, health workers and Labour Party members united on the Nottinghamshire miners' gala on Saturday 12 June. The rally was addressed by train drivers' leader Ray Buckton, and Michael Foot.

With the possibility of a confrontation over the closure of Snowdown colliery in mind Buckton pledged ASLEF's continuing support for the miners, and promised that his union would 'stand by the nurses and health workers.'

Michael Foot said that the lesson to be learned from the war in the South Atlantic was that the UN needed to be 'strengthened'. He also said that the

tragedy of the war was that British soldiers and sailors were being killed by weapons sold to Argentina by British arms makers.

This was met by shouts of 'By a Labour government when Foot turned round and claimed that the last Labour government had stopped the sale of arms to Chile, Argentina and El Salvador.

Foot also hailed the

militancy of the miners and defeat of the Tories in February last year: 'All of us in the House of Commons and everywhere else have much to learn from the miners' victory.'

Yes indeed — that mass extra-parliamentary action is the only way to defeat the Tories!

The demonstration was given the sad news of the collapse of the Notts Area General Secretary and national executive member, Joe Whelan. Socialist Challenge would like to wish him a speedy recovery.



'Stand by the nurses' train drivers' leader Ray Buckton told last weekend's Notts Miners' gala

who have been killed or interned?

Their situation is very bad. Workers' self-help committees have been set up. Solidarnosc members in the West are calling for the adoption of internees and their families.

What conditions did Polish miners face before Solidarnosc in terms of health and safety at work?

In effect health and safety regulations existed only on paper. A lot of accidents were caused by the neglect

support for Solidarnosc when a few months earlier he had the air traffic controllers arrested.

Why should British workers back Solidarnosc, and what can British miners do to help?

First, in the name of international workers' solidarity. Second, if the Polish revolution is suppressed and crushed their struggle will be that much weaker. The miners' help is very important. At the moment when there are preparations going ahead for a general strike and there is

LONDON TRANSPORT NUR workers unite to fight job loss

By Patrick Siddall, London Transport NUR

LONDON Transport workers face a renewed attack on two fronts after the setback of the fares farce. Following the doubling of fares last March the iron logic of Tory policy has resulted in passenger traffic slumping and transport workers being asked to pay the price in job cuts and a pay offer under half the current level of inflation.

The only answer to this is for National Union of Railwaymen members in London Transport to join with NUR members in British Rail for an all out strike.

The bosses now say that 240,000 fewer passengers are using the tubes every day, a drop of 12 per cent, since March. This is 20,000 more than was predicted.

On the original estimate they proposed 500 jobs to go from train crews alone. Now it's certain that LT is planning to shut down seven tube stations with cuts in booking office and station staff.

In addition they want to:

- cut train services from Monday 21 June
- cut bus mileage, some sections of bus routes and bus maintenance staff

Bus cuts will put 2,707 bus crew workers on the dole, take 850 busses off the road and lose over 600 jobs from the workshops.

In response to this the transport union, TGWU,

is planning lightning two hour bus strikes probably to take place in the evening rush hours. The National Union of Railwaymen mass meeting being held on 16 June to discuss 'wages and economies' is a big step forward. The union leaders are at last linking the two issues. London Transport management is developing its policies in line with those of the Tories. These involve:

- wrenching LT from the control of the democratically elected GLC
- using cash limits to cripple the service it offers
- destroying the LT monopoly by opening the doors to private cowboys to operate 'express-type' services

None of this is possible without smashing union resistance. To do this the Labour GLC has appointed its very own Michael Edwardes to LT. His name is Dr Keith Bright and his main claim to fame is stripping over 2000 jobs out of Huntley Palmer Foods.

Bonuses

London Transport workers are being asked to make sacrifices to keep LT afloat and keep their jobs 'secure'. LT's personnel manager John Cameron spelled it out recently: 'The clear message at all pay negotiations ... is that co-operation in reducing costs can secure jobs.'

The first step to getting the unions to agree to the restructuring of LT is the offer of possible bonuses on top of this year's five per cent wages offer.

At first the bonuses may look like 'something for nothing' but LT will come back for more 'measures to secure jobs' many of which parallel plans for British Rail.

LT propose:

- one person operated trains and buses throughout the 'combine'.
- Dispense with train crews altogether. For example trains on the Victoria line now are fully automated and the driver only remains because of union insistence.
- eradicate all barrier staff by installing automatic barriers throughout the tube system.
- eradicate all booking office staff through automatic fares collection — trials start soon at Vauxhall station.
- reduce station staff to a foreperson, one or two rail workers and get cleaning contracted out to private firms.

Both British Rail and London Transport workers face the same offer, the same prospect of jobs cuts and the same Tory government. But the reaction of the union leaderships organised in the London Transport Joint Trade Union Defence Committee (which groups the TGWU Central Bus Committee and the NUR LT District Council) has not been to organise action and instead to blame each other for 'lack of co-operation'.

This is what's called for now:

- reject the first installment of LT's package: reject the new timetables, the five per cent with bonuses
- take all out strike action from 28 June alongside the BR workers.
- NUR Broad Left must organise against a sell out by Sid Weighell, general secretary of the NUR. Its steering committee should be convened immediately.
- recall the Joint Delegate Conference
- Labour GLC should support the call for all-out action and instruct the LT executive to unconditionally withdraw all cuts and pay the 12 per cent increase.

Telecom workers get pay cut

By Dave Ward and Chris Mullin, POEU delegates

THE post office engineering union at its annual conference last week agreed to an ultimatum from its national executive to accept a pay cut for its 120,000 members.

The settlement, at half the rate of inflation, means that from 1 July workers are to get 6.75 per cent on the basic rate and a productivity payment of 1.25 per cent from 1 January.

But for some grades,

including apprentices it means a cut of 5.25 per cent and newly recruited labourers will face a cut of 14 per cent in present pay rates.

The NEC gave delegates an ultimatum not an offer. The message was if you don't accept this kick in the teeth you'll get the sledge hammer — 4.5 per cent. The NEC followed the lead of George Jefferson, Chairperson of British Telecoms who said

earlier this year 'it will be extremely difficult to justify a pay increase'. This is despite reports that BT expects profits of £500m this year!

What is needed now is a union leadership that will fight management not follow it; a campaigning leadership that will reflect the mood of Telecoms workers who now are facing wage and job cuts with little prospect of a fightback.

Get the facts!

300 sold at POEU national conference

BRIAN Stanley, general secretary of the Post Office engineers, may say there's no plan to cut jobs — but he'd better think again. This new pamphlet spells it out. British Telecom's bosses are cooking up new plans for redundancy and cuts.

After the success of breaking the Post Office monopoly on telecommunications and inflicting wage cuts on the workforce the next real threat is the second Telecom's Bill the Tories are pushing through this autumn. This Bill will enable them to sell off 51 per cent of British Telecom's assets which is worth over £10bn.

Meanwhile the POEU executive plays at being better managers than the real ones, sitting on standards boards, promoting efficiency, downplaying the threat of Project Mercury.

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Victory at Kigass

By Tony Wheeler

UNION recognition and sole negotiating rights have been conceded by Kigass management at its Leamington and Warwick plants.

The ten-week strike for union recognition at Kigass by about one hundred women out of the 140 workforce is over. At a mass meeting on Friday the strikers voted to accept the agreement put to them by the negotiating group. Management withdrew all their conditions for a return

to work and agreed to the strikers' demands. These included recognition of the AUEW, the granting of sole negotiating rights, and no victimisation of the strikers.

The workforce return with £60 for a 39-hour week — an increase of £8 per week for one hour less — five and a half weeks holiday per year and proper canteen facilities.

The women will return to work next Tuesday united and confident to face the task of unionising the rest of the workforce.

Northern Trade Union Labour Left Founding Meeting

Saturday 26 June
10.30am — 4.00pm

Foster Building Sunderland Polytechnic
Chester Road

Further information from J Upton, 7 Waterford,
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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



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Photo: JOHN HARRIS

Dockers led the way in opposition to the anti-trade union laws of Tabbitt when they stopped work in their thousands to join the TUC's 10 June 'Union Day'. Pictured here is the march through Liverpool. Dockers brought work to a standstill in Cardiff, Newport, Swansea, Ayr, Kings Lynn, Hull and Felixstowe.

Socialist Challenge

SUPPORT THE HEALTHWORKERS

ALL OUT 23 JUNE!

THE NEXT health workers day of action called for Wednesday 23 June promises to turn into a massive show of working class solidarity against the Tory government.

The overwhelmingly just claim of the health workers for a 12 per cent rise in pay has cut right through the cant of Tory ministers and struck a deep chord in the hearts of working people.

The miners have again pledged strike action in support and dockers, gas, water and steel workers and others are also poised for action. Over 150,000 workers downed tools for the health workers on the 9 June day of action. 23 June promises to be two or three times as big.

Such action is not only a blow on behalf of the health workers, its a direct challenge to the Tories and their attempts to smash the unions.

Their 1980 Employment Act and Tebbit's new law due to come into effect in the autumn sets out to stop precisely the kind of solidarity action we've been seeing.

By tying the unions up in knots, by threatening them with enormous penalties the Tories aim to stop broad labour movement mobilisation in support of individual groups of workers.

Arthur Scargill, president of the National Union of Miners, answers the Tory threat this way: 'The best way to oppose the government's trade union legislation is to support the campaign for higher pay'.

The TUC has taken no lead at all in stopping the Tebbit Bill, its 'Union Day' on 10 June may have seen eight million leaflets distributed describing the Bill but this is not the type of action that's called for.

Only industrial action will stop the Tories as some of the more left wing union leaderships such as the miners have recognised.

TUC nervousness about the implications of the growing support for the healthworkers is shown by their response to the request by the health unions to call on all affiliated unions to take industrial action on 23 June. This was interpreted as a call for a one-day general strike, an interpretation which Len Murray hotly disputed.

Rodney Bickerstaffe, due to take over from Alan Fisher as general secretary of NUPE the public employees union said that the health strike is, in part, a political one, it aims to overturn government pay policy.

So join the picket lines, join the demonstrations on 23 June. Health workers are prepared to tour workplaces calling for support — so why not invite them to visit yours? Thatcher can be forced to retreat on the health workers pay limit but more importantly her whole policy can be defeated — if its all out on 23 June.



Photo: PETE GRANT (Socialist Challenge)

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Weighell gets slapped down National rail strike called

By R Reid and R Brookes, NUR

IN A dramatic confrontation the executive of the railway workers' union voted for all-out national strike on 28 June against the wishes of their general secretary Sid Weighell.

Weighell responded by appealing to the British Rail Board to up its offer of 3.1 per cent on the basic rate to prevent the strike and by saying that the executive decision didn't bar him from continuing negotiations.

But all the signs point to a ball that isn't going to stop rolling as ASLEF, the train drivers' union, joins the NUR strike and approaches are made to the clerical rail union, TSSA, as well as the steel and miners' unions who along with the NUR make up the Triple Alliance.

The executive's decision was forced by the wide-ranging nature of the attacks being made on the jobs and living standards of railworkers. British

measures — all of which would result in thousands of jobs down the spout.

The executive's stand reflects the growing militancy of railworkers as demonstrated at their recent grades conferences which voted 229 votes to 29 against BR's offer.

While a decisive lead has been given which has the overwhelming support of the membership, a considerable section of the NUR is sceptical about the executive's ability to carry it through. They are wary of a re-run of last year when the strike action was called off at the last minute and a pay deal accepted which had productivity strings.

But twice within a week the executive has slapped Sid Weighell down. Fifteen of its members wrote to the *Guardian* newspaper con-

demning Weighell for his attack on Tony Benn and the left of the Labour Party.

The threat of taking on all three rail unions together plus the miners and the power workers may be too much for the British Rail Board. The ball rests with them.

Meanwhile railworkers and their supporters need to prepare for action now. The District Councils of the NUR are meeting this weekend to draw up strike plans. The NUR and ASLEF have agreed to meet to co-ordinate action. Joint strike committees involving all grades such as is already underway in East London should be set up.

Speakers should be organised to go to local

labour movement bodies including other unions, Constituency Labour Parties and Trades Councils.

The labour movement should be brought onto the picket lines, with mass delegations from the Labour Parties and the trade unions. Labour MPs and local councillors should be called on to offer support and facilities to the rail workers.

The month of July promises to be a month of industrial showdown with the Tories and the labour movement should organise to defend all workers at the sharp end of the struggle.

Socialist Challenge will be vital in telling the rail story, so up your order now and set up your sales teams at the depots.