

Socialist Challenge

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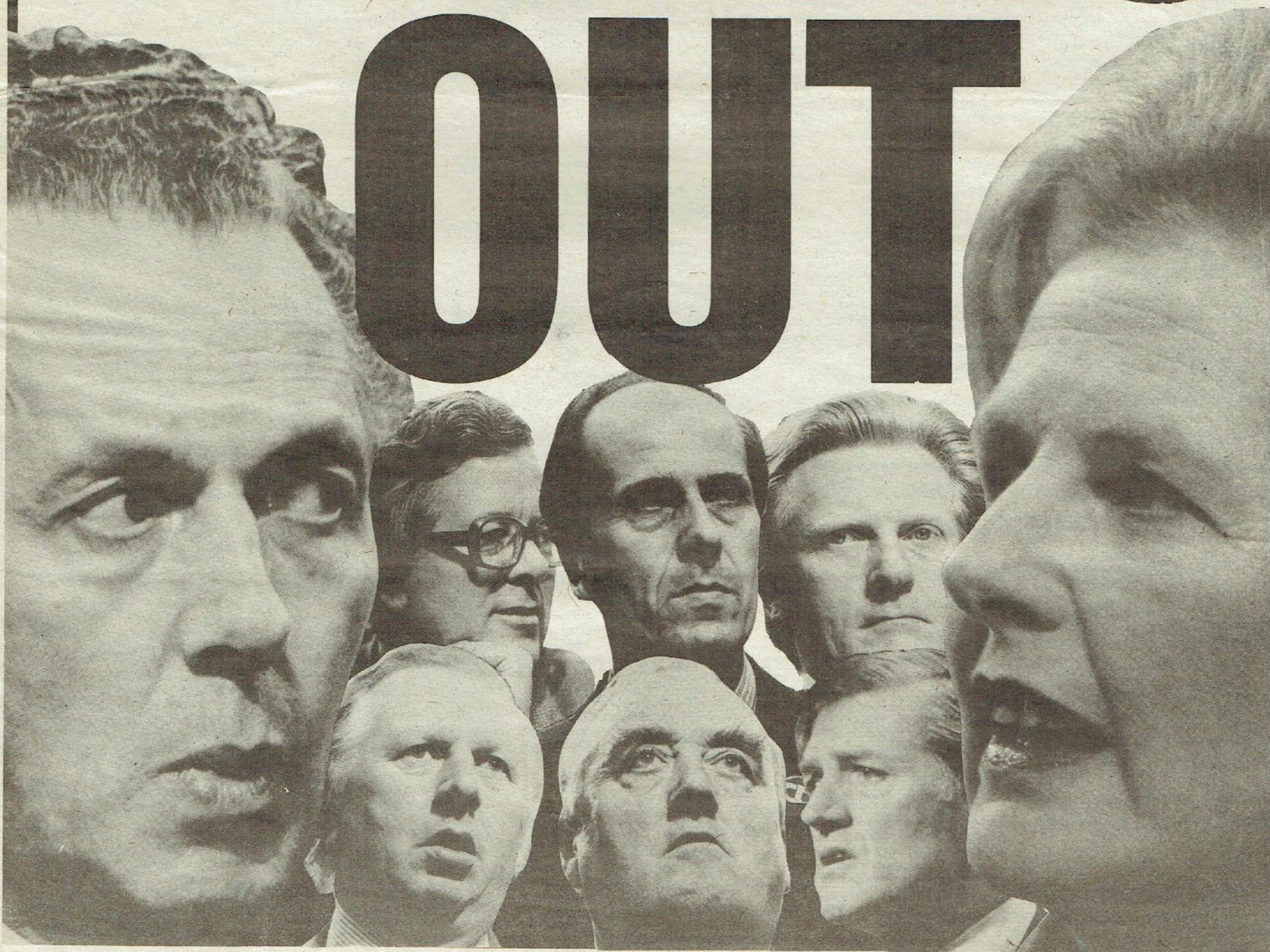
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TORIES OUT



Socialist League decides on perspectives for 1983

By Steve Roberts

THE CONFERENCE of the British section of the Fourth International took place on 18-21 December in London. Delegates decided to put all their efforts into backing mass action against unemployment and for unilateral disarmament as the best way of securing a Labour victory and kicking out the Thatcher government. Conference also decided to change the name of the organisation from the International Marxist Group to the Socialist League.

Present at the conference were over 400 delegates and guests from the British and international labour movement. Delegates heard greetings from Swedish, American, Mexican and Hong Kong supporters of the Fourth International as well as the leadership of the International United Secretariat.

Five months of discussion preceded the conference. The organisation is proud of its reputation for democratic internal functioning and sees the formation of tendencies organised around different points of view in this period as a natural and healthy development.

Contrast

Fourth Internationalists contrast this method of functioning with that of the bureaucratised communist and social democratic parties who refuse to allow the right of tendency. Instead these parties conduct expulsions or witch-hunts such as that being carried out against supporters of the Militant newspaper in the British Labour Party.

The principle of democratic centralism therefore entails complete freedom of discussion; however it also demands that once decisions have been taken by majority vote that they are carried out by all members.

Hence for the British section of the Fourth International its national conference is sovereign, subject only to decisions taken by the world congress of the Fourth International.

By a small overall majority the conference adopted the following major points of policy;

- * to campaign against the war-drive of Reagan and Thatcher; in particular through building the present movement for unilateral disarmament and supporting those fighting against imperialist intervention in Central America and the Caribbean
- * to campaign for the release of all the heroic Polish fighters imprisoned by the present regime
- * to build mass action around the slogan 'jobs not bombs' as the best way to kick out the Tories and gain a Labour victory
- * to work in the labour movement to oppose witch-hunts and defend the progressive policies of the TUC, Labour Party and Labour Party Young Socialists congresses being junked by the right wing leaders
- * to support the fight of women in the labour movement for an effective say at all levels of the labour movement and for policies like affirmative action for jobs and a woman's right to choose
- * to help build Revolution Youth, the youth organisation in solidarity with the Fourth International in Britain
- * to be in favour of unity with other far left organisations in Britain which have broadly the same approach as our own, such the Workers Socialist League
- * to strengthen our links with the Fourth International and particularly with its Irish section, Peoples Democracy.

The reporter speaking for the majority of the outgoing Central Committee summed up the political situation faced by the organisation in the following way:

'The world today is dominated by the rise of world revolution and the workers struggles on the one side and the unleashing of a brutal imperialist counter-offensive against that struggle on the other. The economic crisis of capitalism is assuming catastrophic proportions and combines with the advance of world revolution since 1968 to fuel a deep-going crisis of bourgeois rule and Stalinism.'

'The most advanced points of this sharpening class struggle have been the revolutionary struggles in Central America and Poland. These combine



Socialist League conference decided to campaign for a Labour election victory through mass action on jobs and nuclear disarmament.

with the rise of the mass anti-nuclear weapons movements in the imperialist heartlands and the struggle for class independence in the semi-colonial countries to bring to the fore the unity of the world revolution in the struggle against the capitalist class and all of its allies — particularly the bureaucrats of Moscow and Peking.

'In Britain the period since the election of Thatcher has been one of partial defeats and political set-backs for the working class, but with the basic organisations of the working class remaining intact and being capable of launching tremendous battles, like the health-workers strike, against the capitalist offensive.'

Benn

'Within the labour movement the development of the Bennite current and the political offensive of the right wing of the labour bureaucracy against it represents the deepest political polarisation of the British labour movement for fifty years. We are at the beginning of a historical crisis of British labourism.'

'The decisive task of revolu-

tionary Marxists is to shake off all sectarian prejudices and *participate* in the coming political battles that will shape the future of the British working class movement.'

New

'For this new methods of work are necessary. Workers and youth today increasingly look to the Labour Party and its left wing for political solutions to the crisis of British society. For this reason a revolutionary socialist newspaper is needed within the Labour Party to give a voice and political direction to their struggles.'

The attitude of the Socialist League towards the Labour Party is that it would like to be able to affiliate to it in the same way as the Co-operative Party and Fabian Society can. But it believes that in the current climate of the witch-hunt against socialists that this would be rejected by the Labour Party.

The Socialist League therefore organises separately from the Labour Party; membership is open to all who accept the objectives and organisational principles of the Socialist

League and who are prepared to actively realise them.

While the Labour Party today dominates all questions of working class politics the conference recognised that decisive political issues in the party would be resolved in the trade unions through the block vote. The trade unions remain the fundamental organisations of the working class, despite the toll wrought by unemployment.

The conference was therefore happy to record a rise in the proportion of its membership in such decisive unions as transport, rail, engineering, electrical and telecommunications. Over 26 percent of its members are in the industrial unions, five percent in manual unions such as NUPE and COHSE and 15 percent are looking for industrial jobs.

Within the unions the Socialist League works to support the day-to-day fights against the employers and the Tories while at the same time building reform currents within the unions to introduce the type of principles of workers democracy espoused by the militants of Solidarnosc in the building of their mass trade union.

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Kinneil a setback in fight to save jobs

By Pat Hickey

THE MINERS of Kinneil Colliery start the new year disappointed at the failure of the Scottish miners delegate conference to support their fight to prevent the closure of their pit.

Kinneil, will now be closed leaving behind about 50m tonnes of coal that the NCB claim is unsuitable to mine because of 'geological faults'.

On 19 December, 250 Kinneil miners had voted unanimously to strike against the closure plan, and had started a campaign to keep the pit open. The delegate conference decision not to support Kinneil stops a united fight against the NCB's plans for massive rundown of pits over the next five years.

The main blame for the failure to defend Kinneil lies in the hesitancy of the leaders' response to the NCB. Scottish miners

voted 69 per cent in favour of a fight to save jobs in the recent ballot, but Mick McGahey failed to build on that vote to take on the Coal Board.

Since the U-Turn forced on them by the South Wales miners in the spring of 1981 the Coal Board has adopted a strategy of taking on the pits one by one, and trying to isolate them claiming they are 'uneconomic'. They will try to avoid the issue of redundancies by offering transfers as they have done at Kinneil.

But closures or partial closures as at Snowdown will inevitably mean large-scale redundancies. If the Coal Board win the viability

argument then miners will be in the same situation as the steel workers, whose decimated industry is one of the main outlets for the mines. The NCB is trying a softening-up process, before they go to town.

Now the NUM executive must give a national lead. The South Wales NUM has given notice of strike action on 17 January if a commitment to invest in their coal-field is not given by the NCB. Kent area is determined to strike if the Board goes ahead with the threat to partially close Snowdown. They said they would support Kinneil if asked for by Kinneil. The response of the NUM leadership has been totally inadequate.

Mick McGahey put the onus for bringing out

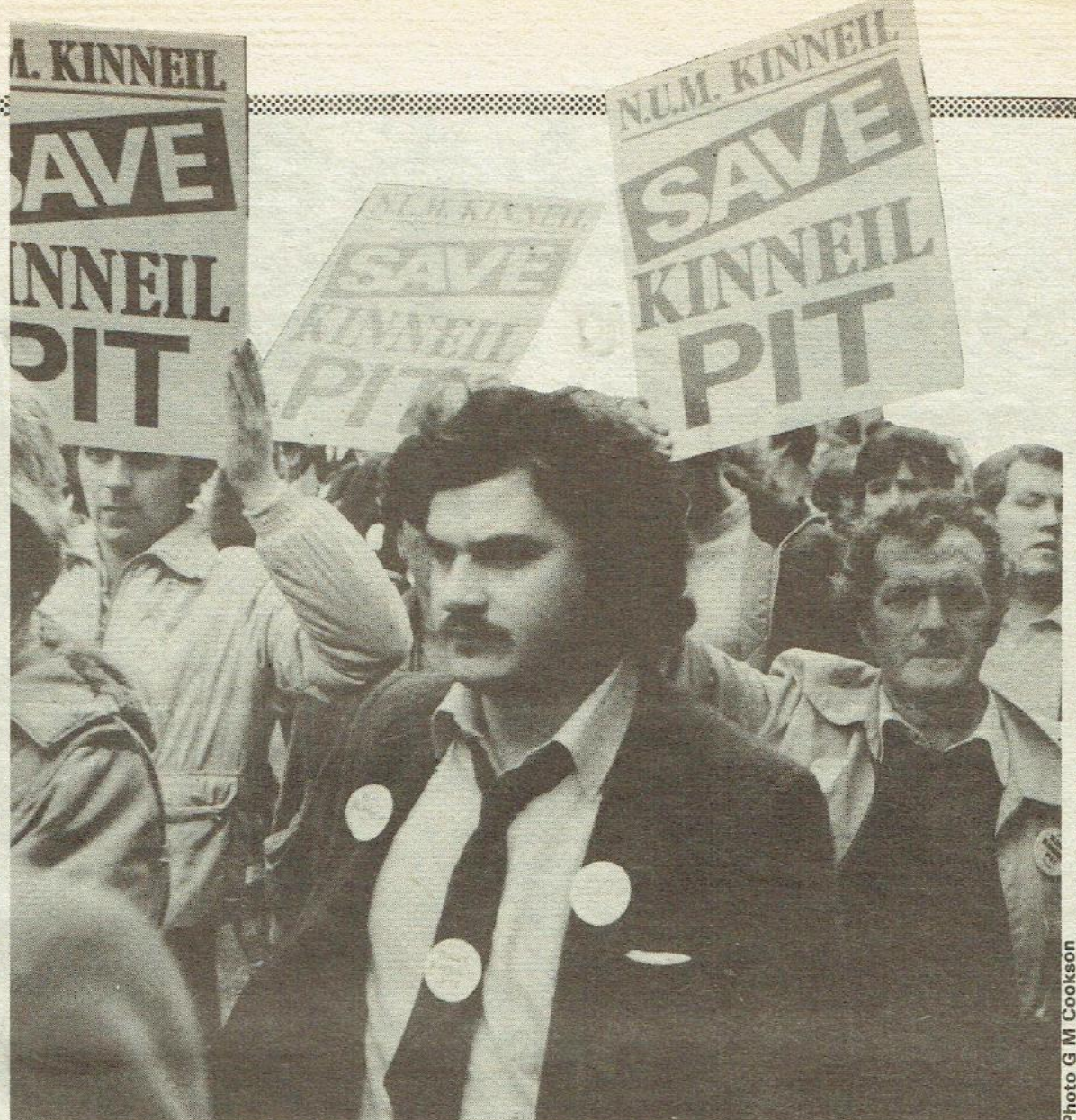


Photo G M Cookson

Kinneil miners let down

Scotland on the Kinneil workers. While pledging 'full support' for Kinneil and saying that there would be a stoppage 'of the whole Scottish coalfield if asked for by Kinneil', he did not call for official action in Scotland.

miners at other pits were uncertain what the official response was going to be, and some crossed the Kinneil picket lines. The right was able to build on this confusion to swing the delegate conference against action.

Now the NCB will turn its attention to other Scottish pits which are also

'uneconomic' as a result of the recession. The next test will be in South Wales, if the money is not provided for investment. Miners cannot afford any further hesitancy. The call for action needs to be loud and clear. And it will have to be fought for.

Part of that fight will be to halt the run-down in

steel, where another 5,000 jobs are to go on top of the 10,000 already announced.

The line of 'action if necessary' to defend jobs put by the Scottish Triple Alliance is not enough. Action is not only necessary and vital and that means right now.

Health dispute sold out — now defend the NHS

By Jeff King

THE BIGGEST challenge on the pay front that the Tory government faced last year, without doubt goes to the health workers' dispute.

For almost seven months this dispute dragged out. It involved one million workers in the NHS alone. It got solidarity from millions of other workers, including miners, dockers, electricians and from workers in the public sector.

Yet, despite the tremendous solidarity it evoked, it did not win. Thatcher and the Tory cabinet were able to ride the storm of protest and direct action that welled up from health workers; their colleagues in other jobs and industries, and the sympathy that undoubtedly existed in the general public which was reflected even in sections of the capitalist press.

The labour movement is entitled to an accounting and explanation of what went wrong. Why did this popularly backed struggle peter out? The blame can hardly be laid at the door of the health workers themselves. They responded to every call made by their leaders.

Even the Royal College of Nurses, a professional organisation which has a 'no strike' clause in its constitution, twice voted to reject the government's pay offer. The second rejection got more votes against, and a bigger majority, than the first rejection.

Workers do not take strike action lightly, yet the lowly-paid health workers time and time lost money through days of action, or by self-imposed

levies which financed regular picket lines outside the hospitals. Other workers, levied themselves money to help finance the dispute and on days like the 22 September, well over two million of them struck work in support of the claim.

This magnificent display of action and solidarity was not just about wages. Of course the health workers were fed up with providing such an essential service for lousy wages. Of course other workers were indignant that people who cared for the sick and the infirm should receive the pittance that most of them do.

But what really lay at the root of the dispute was that the health workers in particular, and the working class in general, recognised that this Tory government intends to dismantle the NHS. The Tory monetarists are bitterly opposed to the idea of a free and comprehensive health service for all.

That is why they intended to defeat the claim. They were out to teach the health workers and anyone else who cared to notice, that they, the Tory government, would decide the

future of the NHS, and that there was nothing the working class could do to stop them.

For the Tories this was class war. Unfortunately the leaders of the health service unions and the TUC health committee never got the message. They do not believe in class war — that's just for those way out marxists — it does not fit our parliamentary system. They put their faith in public opinion and on their ability to persuade the government of the reasonableness of their case, and adherence to the rules.

But Thatcher was not listening. She and her fellow Tories played by the rules. But they were rules they had made and that meant Spanswick, Murray and the rest of the union bureaucracy were left high and dry. The Days of Action they called were not meant to be springboards to extend the dispute and bring the government to its knees. They were just means of putting pressure on the government to get it back round the negotiating table.

The effect of this on the Tories was negligible. The government knew it had nothing to fear from these timid bureaucrats. But it did have an effect on the dispute. Gradually the morale of the health workers and their supporters began to drain. After seven months they were no further forward as

a result of the policies of the TUC health committee. Slowly, but surely, the dispute wound towards its end.

We have said before, and we say it again, that this places the NHS in greater jeopardy than ever before. Emboldened by their victory the Tories will now press ahead for big cuts and will start handing out whole areas of the NHS to private companies.

This must not be allowed to go unchallenged. Inside the health service, the shop stewards' committees much be strengthened, and where they still do not exist they must be built. Every attack by the Tories on local services must be resisted by joint action of the unions and the Labour Parties.

Inside the TUC a fight must begin to remove the rotten leadership of the health committee — the price of its abysmal failure must be the sack for its members. Inside the Labour Party, the left wing must make it clear that they will support every action taken to defend the NHS and that they want to build an alliance with the left inside the unions to defend the NHS, and defeat the right-wing betrayers.

If these measures are taken the defeat can be reversed, and the solidarity we saw last summer and autumn can be re-created and put to a more useful and victorious end.

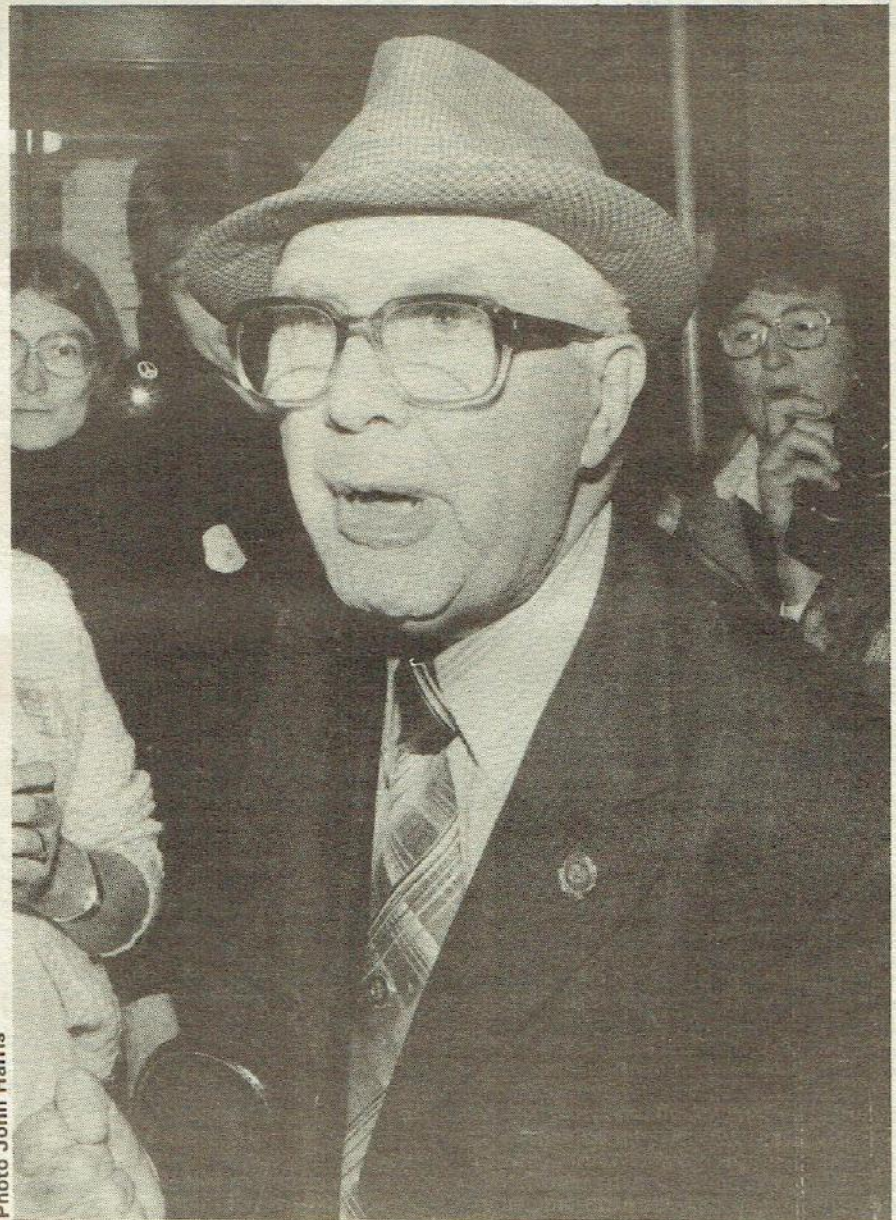


Photo John Harris

Spanswick never gave a lead



Several thousand people surrounded the US F-111 nuclear base at Upper Heyford on 26 December. Meanwhile, women at Greenham Common were keeping up the struggle by invading the missile site (see back page).

Civil defence offensive

By Alan Ryan

CONSCRIPTION! That's the Tory answer to the nuclear free zone councils.

Last year the government was forced to call off its 'Civil Defence' exercise — code named 'Hard Rock', because of the refusal of the nuclear free zone councils to participate. Under the existing legislation the government cannot force councils to take part.

Announcing the calling off of 'Hard Rock', Tory Home Secretary Willie Whitelaw stated that he would bring in new legislation to force councils to take part.

Towards the end of last year the Home Office circulated its proposals. They included:

- powers for the Home Secretary to order councils to take part in Civil Defence exercises.
- powers to conscript local authority employees to take part in exercises.
- requirements to force local authorities to build and equip bunkers.
- powers to force councils to organise and train civil defence volunteers and involve voluntary bodies.

In addition a quarter of the cost of building and equipping the bunker

would have to be borne out of the rates. Councils refusing to carry out the plans are likely to have commissioners put in to carry out the plans and be charged for the cost. Employees refusing to take part in the plans are liable to prosecution ...

Civil defence is an essential part of the Tory government's plans for retaining control not just in the event of a nuclear war, but also in the case of civil unrest. Just how important can be seen from the scale of their proposals which can, and must be fought.

They will be coming before parliament in the spring. The executive of NALGO is already examining the proposals, they must be prepared to call action and they must link up with the nuclear free councils and the other sectors of the labour movement, to smash this bill.

It is vital that the government doesn't slip it through while anti-nuclear activists have their attention focussed on the struggle against Cruise and Trident.

Thatcherism and military spending

By Alan Jones

WHEN THE Malvinas war broke out it showed that despite its historical decline, British imperialism is very far from being a spent force on a world scale. Its military capacity remains formidable.

It has nuclear weapons, it owns the second most powerful imperialist navy in the world, and continues to spend a higher proportion of its economy on military expenditure than any other major imperialist country except for the United States. (See Table 1)

NATO CALCULATIONS OF THE PROPORTION OF GDP ALLOCATED TO MILITARY EXPENDITURE (December 1980)

	%
United States	5.5
Britain	5.2
West Germany	4.2
France	4.0
Belgium	3.3
Holland	3.3
Canada	1.8

(Source: Joyce, *The War Machine*, Hamlyn, London 1981 p30)

These figures however represent nothing new. It is indeed one of the more absurd myths of British reformism that Britain is somehow a 'peace-loving' nation. On the contrary Britain is historically the most heavily armed and warlike of all capitalist states. That it was primarily a naval, and only intermittently a land based, military power should not be allowed to obscure this. On the contrary its military strength was historically the cutting edge of British capitalism.

Until well into the latter part of the eighteenth century no non-military unit of production could remotely compare in size and complexity to the naval dockyards. The technological level of military naval forces which already by the beginning of the eighteenth century could wage world wars with France, made Napoleon's or Frederick the Great's armies appear as the primitive instruments they indeed were in comparison.

Similarly right up to the First World War the need to maintain a 'two power navy' — that is a fleet capable of waging a simultaneous war with the next two largest naval powers combined — determined the essential military deployment, geographical expansion, and many of the economic priorities of the British state.

After the First World War such considerations as maintaining domination of the Mediterranean, and with it control of the sea routes to India, determined much British foreign policy.

The decision to attempt to achieve control of the oil of the Arab east,

with all the implications for the nature of the British economy, was in large part, given the technology of the period, dictated by the need to achieve fuel supplies for the fleet.

As regards the post-war period it can indeed be argued that it was the dominance of military considerations which determined the scope of the entire post-war crisis of the economy — although of course the driving economic forces were the entire British imperialist system which the military apparatus was constructed to defend.

The mechanism of this was the famous 'Stop-Go' deflationary cycle, dictated by the Balance of Payments 'crisis' which prevented any sustained growth of the domestic economy.

What is not generally realised however is that there never was any Balance of Payments problems as regards the private sector of the economy. Only in two periods in its history has British capitalism suffered a balance of payments deficit in its private sector once invisible earnings are taken into account. These were in 1846-50 and in 1931-38.

Even in this latter period however British imperialism was in general able to extract sufficient tribute to finance its state sector outlays. India for

example during the 1930s paid £200m a year for the privilege of being administered by Britain. During the period of the post-war 'Stop-Go' cycle British capitalism achieved almost continuous private sector balance of payments surpluses.

From 1952, which may be taken as the end of post-war reconstruction, until 1969, after which a new policy was inaugurated by Heath, only twice was there a balance of payments deficit in the private sector.

Sums

These were the relatively small sums of £77m in 1955 and £78m in 1964. Indeed the accumulated surplus in this period, after deducting capital account outflows for foreign investment, was £6,600m.

The balance of payments crises were in fact wholly and solely accounted for by foreign expenditure of the British state which was centred on its military apparatus. The dominance of these military considerations can be most readily seen by making a comparison to other imperialist states.

As late as 1963 British military commitments abroad included 60,000 people in Singapore and Hong-Kong, 20,000 in the Mediterranean, and 7,000 in the Persian gulf in addi-

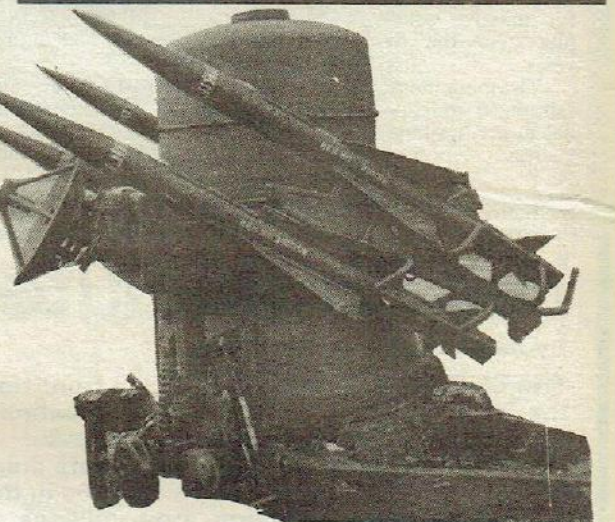
tion to the Rhine army. Overseas expenditure accounted for approximately half of the military budget at that time of £2,000m.

Apart from the United States, and after the enforced French withdrawals from Indochina and Algeria, no other imperialist state possessed anything like such an international military apparatus.

The consequences of this for the balance of payments, and therefore for the domestic economy, were clear. In 1966 Japan and West Germany had surpluses on state international expenditure of \$315m and \$339m respectively. France has an insignificant deficit of \$1m. Britain in contrast had a deficit of \$1288m largely accounted for by the military commitments already noted.

The United States, with a far wider international military presence and at that time heavily engaged in the war in Vietnam, had an international deficit on state expenditure of \$6,385m.

In order to judge the relative weights of this international military spending however the respective size of the economies must be considered. The US economy in 1966 was seven times the size of the British but its state foreign expenditure deficit only five times the size. In short up until the late 1960s British government



deficits abroad, essentially occasioned by the military expenditure, were the largest in relation to the economy of any country in the world.

In order to see the effects of this dominance of the foreign military apparatus we need simply note that the 1950s and 1960s were of course those of the 'economic miracles' of West Germany and Japan and, after the withdrawal from Algeria, of the revival of France.

If, for example, in 1966, West Germany had had the same outflow on government expenditure as Britain then its actual £92m balance of payments surplus would have been transformed into a deficit of £598m.

In the case of Japan the balance of payments surplus in the same year would have become a deficit of £300m. Evidently with these deficits the Japanese and West German economies would have had to be brought grinding to a halt by deflation in the way that the British repeatedly was.

Finally, in addition to the constant subordination of the British domestic economy to these military expenditures, certain of these were also crucial in their timing. It is scarcely possible to exaggerate for example the consequences of the Korean war for the post-

World War II British capitalist economy.

It was already severely hit by the general international economic consequences of the war. The rapid world war materials price increases severely hit the British Terms of Trade. British export prices rose by only 26 percent between December 1949 and June 1951, while import prices rose by 59 percent, and raw material prices by 115 percent.

The balance of payments suffered a negative swing of £700m from a surplus of £300m in 1950 to a deficit of £400m in 1951. Furthermore the key engineering sectors were in direct conflict between exports and armaments production.

To finance the war effort the Labour government hit directly at investment by totally suspending 'initial allowances' on new plant machinery and buildings. This removed directly £170m from allowances for investment — with of course far greater indirect effects.

This shows just how totally the British domestic economy was sacrificed to its overseas military commitments and the international economic orientation these were designed to safeguard. And how Labour was dutifully prepared to play its role in keeping to maintain Britain's imperialist role.

Interview with Salvador Cayetano Carpio, FMLN Commander

Reprinted — slightly edited — from the El Salvador news bulletin no 18, January 1983. Available from ESSC, 29 Islington Park Street, London N1, tel 01-359 2270.

The Salvadorean regime has been trying to convince international opinion that the guerrilla has been annihilated, and yet the FMLN has just launched a strong offensive in several of the country's provinces. Would you explain how this situation has been achieved?

At the beginning of 1981 our revolution underwent a qualitative advance and our war entered what we term the phase of increasingly intense military and insurrectional battles for the seizure of power. This is a whole phase, a whole stage. The enemy has tried to misrepresent this, saying that we had begun a 'final offensive'.

Following the January 1981 Offensive the Reagan government and the Pentagon implemented a policy that aimed to destroy the Salvadorean revolutionary movement within two or three months. This was a total failure in spite of the Reagan government's provision of enormous military aid at every level to enable its puppet army to achieve this strategic objective.

During the course of 1981 the army, with the support of Pentagon advisers, launched no less than 46 major military offensives, each involving between one and six thousand soldiers. Some of our zones had to resist ten or twelve of these offensives, which they call 'cleaning-up operations'. These operations besides aiming to destroy the guerrilla also have the objective of eliminating the civilian population.

And the reality is that tens of thousands of women and children have died under their bombs, from gases and from the bacteriological

weapons that the enemy has been using against our liberated zones.

By the end of last year the army had trebled its numbers of combat troops from a force of 11,500 it has climbed to 34,000. Nevertheless the great majority of these troops have had to be stationed in fixed positions, with the result that the army's mobile forces have become small and very ineffective. By the end of last year their new mobile brigade, the 'Atlacl' brigade, had lost one third of its troops as casualties.

After successfully resisting the enemy offensive, when and how did the FMLN take the initiative in military actions?

December 1981 was the month when the FMLN took the initiative away from the army. The forces that make up the FMLN had been improving their co-ordination, both between each other and in terms of timing. This was increasing the attrition against the enemy, especially in the first three months of this year when the army's troops were at the same time suffering acute demoralisation because the strategy for destroying the guerrilla was not working. Quite the reverse, our forces were improving, acquiring the structure of a revolutionary army.

In the first three months of 1982 we attacked fixed enemy positions in various places: from San Fernando and San Ignacio in Chaletenango province to Perquin and San Fernando in Morazan province... This destruction of small enemy positions meant that our forces had improved their operational ability, annihilating increasing-

ly greater numbers of enemy soldiers and capturing larger quantities of armaments.

Our forces are fighting with the rifles we have captured from the enemy. In all honesty we can say that our principle source of arms, our sole supplier at this stage, is the Reagan government. We are fighting with M16 and G3 rifles, with North American mortars, that they sent to the puppet government. Every month we make a balance of our actions and of the number of arms captured from the enemy and it is now never less than one hundred arms, including some mortars, machine-guns of various calibres and 57mm and 90mm cannons.

By December 1981 the improvement of co-ordination and the experience of a whole year's fighting produced a qualitative improvement in our troops. At the end of 1981 our fighters had acquired a much greater military ability. Our leaders, from platoon commanders upwards, had been gaining greater skill in manoeuvres, more skill in directing troops and a better understanding of battlefield tactics.

While at the same time the North American government was announcing that the Salvadorean army had been perfected...

In the first months of 1982 the government repaired the Atlacl brigade, and formed the Atonal brigade, while the Ramon Belloso brigade was trained in the United States. Reagan's military aid also modernised the navy and the communications system, provided the army with greater air power including Huey helicopters which are designed for airlifting troops. The debut of the three mobile brigades took place in June.

On 28 May, supported by several infantry regiments, the three mobile brigades began an operation in Chaletenango province. The FMLN counter-attacked, besieging San Fernando and Perquin in Morazan and forcing the redeployment of the three brigades to this province.

At the same time the Honduran army occupied territory inside El Salvador in the area of Perquin and attacked southward in two pincers. The main attack by the Salvadorean regime's mobile forces was launched northwards up the highway.

The FMLN's response was such that during June, in the actions we realised in Chalatenango, Guazapa, San Salvador, Usulután, Morazan and in some areas of San Miguel province, we captured more than 250 arms and inflicted 500 casualties on the enemy army, principally in the US trained brigades.

Instead of achieving the turning point of the war, which for months the Reagan administration had been hoping to achieve, all that they managed was to lose an enormous number of arms and soldiers above all from their elite mobile brigades, while the revolutionary forces improved their operational ability.

Colonel Castillo, the Vice-Minister of Defence, was also captured during these operations. At the end of June the situation in the army was one of demoralisation, desertions, confusion and disagreements, which was reflected in the regime's internal policy.

Since then the revolutionary

forces, whose co-ordination at a national level has been constantly improving, have been increasingly taking the initiative leading up to these attacks in October.

What is the fighting ability of the FMLN?

The FMLN, all of the forces that compose it, all of its members, all of its fighters, have improved qualitatively. At the moment we are entering a stage of greater combat mobility and a level of accumulation of forces that enables us to strike hard. Last year we could only dream of annihilating a company of troops in transit, and yet in June this year we destroyed a company travelling to reinforce Perquin and San Fernando. We captured 43 soldiers and many arms in an ambush that was brilliantly executed.

Currently we have achieved a level of firepower and a sufficient number of revolutionary troops to destroy enemy companies that are defending heavily fortified positions. On 10 October, in less than 24 hours, the comrades annihilated an enemy company in El Jicaro while simultaneously a force of 25 National Guard and 30 paramilitaries, all heavily armed, was attacked in Las Vueltas. The comrades destroyed one and a half companies.



What is the significance of the capture of these positions?

The capture of El Jicaro and Las Vueltas is very important because it extends the territory controlled by the revolutionary forces right up to the gates of the provincial capitals and also deprives the enemy of two strategic positions.

The puppet army, directed by imperialism, continues insisting that it will 'destroy the guerrilla' but now they are saying 'within two years'. With this aim they are employing new tactics to improve their operational scope: more mobility and more air transport.

Within a few days the Reagan government is going to provide them with over 20 warplanes; eight Huey helicopters, six Cessna 43 aircraft that can carry 56 soldiers and use improvised airstrips, as well as reconnaissance aircraft. They have trained pilots in the US Southern Command base in Panama to use napalm, and at present the Salvadorean airforce has many bombs of this type. The US has already sent gunboats that three weeks ago were used in operations on the coasts of Usulután and San Vicente provinces.

Despite all of this our forces and

our people are proving that they have sufficient strength not only to resist the present levels of US intervention but to defeat it.

Despite the enormous aid of imperialism we know that the puppet army is being worn down. We are confident that our people are building some truly powerful forces. Forces that are going to be able to make a strategic advance in the military and insurrectional sense, that imperialism will be unable to defeat and that will enable our people to achieve their liberation, democracy and a just peace.

And if the US intervenes directly?

We know that in the final instance imperialism could do the insane and invade El Salvador, as they did in Vietnam when their puppets could no longer hold back the people. Imperialism is also creating the conditions to attack the Sandinista popular revolution. Honduras is being converted into a base for aggression in Central America.

But at the same time we know that our war is not an isolated phenomenon. The popular liberation war in El Salvador is part of a process of revolutionary struggle involving all of the Central American peoples. This is a huge movement with a very different quality to a few years ago.

The Nicaraguan revolution has been a turning point in the history of Central America and imperialism cannot any longer contain this popular struggle for liberation, independence, sovereignty and democracy.

How do you see the possibility of negotiation between the regime and the revolutionary forces in El Salvador?

We are sincere when we say that our war has to end with a political settlement, because every war ends in this way. Every negotiation must be based on the satisfaction of our people's basic interests.

They are not defeating us. We are little by little, step by step, defeating the imperialist manoeuvres in the political and military fields. And we are winning this war. I am not saying that we have already won, but that as it develops conditions are being created — conditions that are increasingly more favourable — to turn the balance of forces in favour of the people and their political and military forces. Of this we are certain, and this is the reason for Reagan's desperation.

But we are immersed in a Central American process, and we know that Reagan has a plan for the whole region. We know that Reagan's policy is to regionalise his aggression. In this framework our revolutionary struggle — and all of the Central American peoples can be absolutely confident of this — will perform its role with honour in the framework of our modest and hard-working peoples who desire their freedom and independence.

The Salvadorean people with their heroism, aided by the struggles of the other peoples, will achieve their freedom. The events of recent days reaffirm the will, the commitment and the hope that this will happen soon.

Central American solidarity news

• LABOUR MOVEMENT conference on El Salvador to be held 14 May at County Hall, South Bank London. The conference is intended to provide information and education on the background to the present struggles in El Salvador.

It will also provide guidelines for effective and practical solidarity by labour movement bodies and workplaces.

Speakers will include leading trade unionist Alan Sapper, Judith Hart MP, Salvador Moncada, senior FDR/FMLN representative in London and Jenny Pearce, author of 'Under the Eagle'.

Information from El Salvador Solidarity Campaign, 29 Islington Park St., London N1. Tel: 01-359 2270.

• NICARAGUA SOLIDARITY Campaign Annual General Meeting. This will be held in conjunction with the El Salvador AGM on Saturday and Sunday, 22 and 23 January at the Catholic Chaplaincy, Queens Rd., Clifton, Bristol.

Formal business will be dealt with separately but there will be a number of joint workshops. Building of the labour movement conference on El Salvador will be high on the agenda.

For further information write to El Salvador Solidarity Campaign as above or Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign, 20-21 Crompton Terrace, London N1. Tel: 01-226 6747.

• BENEFIT CONCERT for the Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign to be held on 13 February at the Shaftesbury Theatre, Shaftesbury Avenue, London, to raise funds for the adult education programmes being carried out in the isolated Atlantic coast region of Nicaragua.

The benefit will also help publicise the true situation that Nicaragua finds itself in today.

The line-up of artistes who have agreed to appear (for free) is not yet finalised but includes so far: Alexei Sayle, Rik Mayall, Alfred Monina, Maggie Steed, Pauline Melville, Benjamin Zephaniah, Ken Cranham, French and Saunders, Ben Elton, Emma Thompson and others.

It is also hoped that a leading member of the FSLN or the Nicaraguan government will also speak.

1982: Year of the Slump

A recession is when the guy next door loses his job. A depression is when you lose yours.
President Truman

THIRTY-SEVEN years ago a new era began. The Labour Party, backed by twelve million voters, won a 154-seat majority with mandate to build a new world on the ashes of fascism and war.

Its goals were modest. The 1942 party conference summed them up:

We must organise now:
to provide full employment
to rebuild a better Britain
to provide social services to secure adequate health, nutrition and care in old age, for everybody
to provide full educational opportunities for all

Hardly the socialist millenium: yet it gave working people something they never had before. It gave them freedom from fear of disease, war and joblessness; freedom from want and deprivation. It gave birth to an enduring myth, on which the Labour Party has survived from that day: the myth of 1945.

The myth had three parts. First, that the new order would last. Second, that it could be won without strife, through the vote alone. Third, that Labour could survive forever as 'the party that brought you 1945.'

1982 has killed all three parts of this myth.

The new order hasn't lasted: it's ending now. Unemployment has topped four million and it isn't going to fall. The Tories think tank wants to wind up free health and schooling or good; the Cabinet says it cannot pay the nurses £700m but spent twice that sum on a senseless war, for an island it can't even make fit for penguins; and the USA is getting ready to fight a European nuclear war from Britain.

Strife hasn't ended: under four successive governments, including two Labour, the country has become an industrial battlefield.

And Labour hasn't survived. From 47.8 percent of the vote in 1945, its share of the poll has steadily declined until now, with Thatcher's assault at its height, it is in the low thirties: worse than any major European workers' party.

Thatcher wants to cash in on this failure. She is getting ready for an election: if she wins, it will finish the Labour Party as we know it. If she loses, all the signs point to an SDP-Labour coalition unless the labour movement mobilises from now on to prevent it. And if we prevent a coalition and secure Labour victory, the result will turn the Labour Party upside down.

Changes on this scale signal something new in politics — among other things, we believe, the break-up of the postwar Labour tradition.

What will replace it? How should socialists react? In the coming months we shall devote space to the important questions of strategy raised by the current crisis of the British political system and the Labour Party. In this article ALAN REEMAN asks what lay behind the 1945 policies and whether socialists should still support them in 1983.



Rothers and their servants in the labour movement. Lord Rothemere with Herbert Morrison.

THE MYTH of 'Labour's tradition' is the second most potent in British politics after the 'British way of life'. It is also the spearhead of the Labour right wing's counter-offensive. When John Spellars was asked why he won in Northfields, he said 'because we are going back to the party's traditions.'

What tradition? Surely not that of 1917 when Philip Snowden called for soviets? Or 1924 when Labour formed a minority government while the Communists were still in the party? Nor, to be fair to comrade Spellars, can he mean the tradition of Ramsay MacDonald's betrayal, or the thirteen years of Tory rule after 1951. No: if Spellars means anything intelligible, he means the 'official version' of 1945; 1945 as the Labour voter sees it.

It is easy to pour scorn on Labour's 1945 policies, but for one fact: they worked. For twenty-five years, as far as millions of working people were concerned, daily life brilliantly confirmed what moderate Labour politicians claimed. People had jobs, schools, hospitals, social security — and they were convinced that the Labour Party was responsible.

It is impossible to communicate with the Labour voters that Spellars wants to mobilise against the left without understanding this. The generation which grew up under the welfare state firmly believes it was Labour's creation.

Something else has to be done: we have to separate the goals of the 1945 government from its methods.

The demands for jobs, social security, the welfare state and freedom from war are working class demands; our demands. The capitalist system cannot durably grant them. Our difference with Labour's leaders is not that we want socialism instead of these demands. What we say is that socialism is the only way to get them.

The myth of 1945 persists because for twenty-five years, give or take a prescription charge or two, working people were granted these demands without socialism. Our difference with Labour's leaders is about how you explain this fact.

Did the Tories oppose the Welfare State?

Above all we disagree with the most basic myth of all: the idea that the ruling class opposed Labour's programme. The official tradition has it that the Tories opposed the Welfare State, and that the Welfare State was therefore won by the act of voting Labour.

Many things flow from this idea. First, that the vote itself was what brought change — instead of the fifteen years of gigantic social upheaval that went before it. Second, that the same change can be won again by voting Labour and without extra-parliamentary struggle. Thirdly, that the chief enemy which working people must defeat to win more reform is the Tory Party, and that everything — including the struggle against Labour's own right wing leaders — should be sacrificed to this end.

Why is the idea so strong? One reason is that Britain was the only major European country to suffer neither occupation nor fascism. The British working class never had their organisations smashed up by a desperate ruling class. Indeed, trade union strength doubled during the war. Britain was the only European country in which the rate of exploitation fell after the war. It was therefore

easy to mistake the Tories' parliamentary mutterings for real opposition.

Above all, however, Britain was virtually the only industrial country where the new policies — which were applied throughout the West — were introduced by a working class party governing on its own. In Italy and France the Communists were part of coalitions. In Germany it took years to rebuild the socialist party. In America there was no socialist party.

In Britain the welfare state was seen as the achievement of modern social democracy. In the rest of the world people saw things as they really were, and understood that modern social democracy was an achievement of the welfare state.

Yet the facts were around at the time to refute Labourism's claim; for the ruling class not only tolerated the new policies, but devised them.

The policy which underlay it all — state spending to soften the effects of slumps — was the brainchild of the famous British bourgeois economist John Maynard Keynes, a senior Treasury advisor throughout the war.

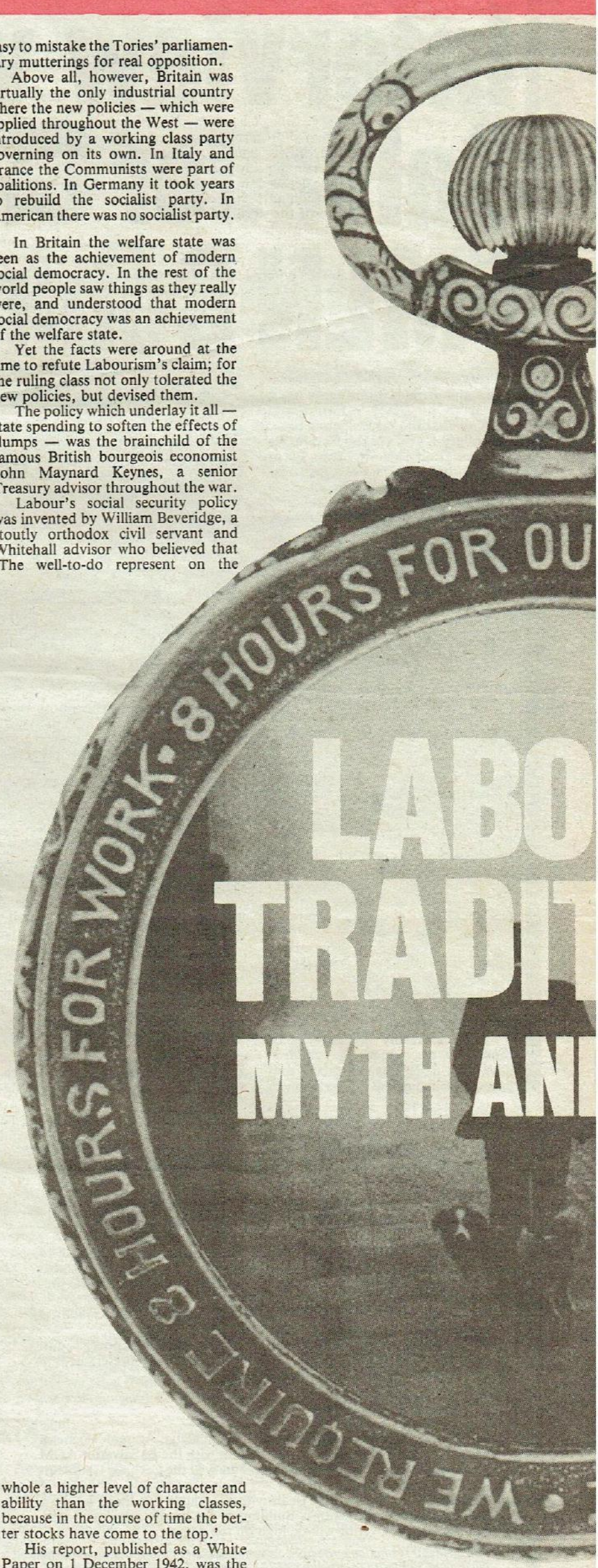
Labour's social security policy was invented by William Beveridge, a stoutly orthodox civil servant and Whitehall advisor who believed that 'The well-to-do represent on the

whole a higher level of character and ability than the working classes, because in the course of time the better stocks have come to the top.'

His report, published as a White Paper on 1 December 1942, was the foundation of everything Labour did. It declared that 'Want is only one of five giants on the road of reconstruction ... The others are Disease, Ignorance, Squalor and Idleness.' It got Keynes' benediction and a promise that it would cost only £100m per year. Cheap at the price.

Did the ruling class want it? Working people did not think so: wartime intelligence from ten out of eleven regions recorded 'very real anxiety that the plan will not

materialise because of vested interests: particularly mentioned are the Insurance Companies, the BMA (The doctors' organisation) and big business. It is felt among the rank and file that even if these powerful interests do not jointly succeed in completely wrecking it, they will hotly contest every inch of the ground, the final plan will therefore be so mutilated that the benefits ultimately



in favour of it. Among employers, only 16 percent thought they would gain: but *seventy-three* percent were in favour of it. In the 'upper income' bracket the figures were 29 and 76.

The ruling classes understood that despite short-term losses they might suffer, it was *politically* necessary — and economically possible. The shock of the depression, and fear of a social explosion after the war, convinced them of the need for a fundamental shift in capitalist strategy.

This was why Labour was allowed to carry out its programme. It committed Churchill himself to broadcast in 1943 in favour of 'national compulsory insurance for all classes for all purposes from the cradle to the grave,' and declare that 'there must be no unemployed after the war, for we cannot have a band of drones in our midst, whether they come from the ancient aristocracy or the modern plutocracy or the ordinary type of pub-crawler.'

In a speech which would make Keith Joseph blush with shame he called for the state to work in partnership with industry 'to exercise a balancing influence upon development which can be turned on or off as circumstances require,' and argued that 'there is a broadening field for

to introduce socialism was Winston Churchill.

Labour's leaders were lukewarm

The persistent myth that the Tories were against reform and Labour in favour was even more remarkable when we look at the attitudes of Labour's own leaders.

Bevin used to lecture MPs on his dislike of children's allowances and workpeople's compensation, and said 'he saw no reason for disturbing the private practices of doctors.' Indeed many influential Labour ministers including Bevin, Hugh Dalton and Herbert Morrison, were in favour of continuing the coalition after the war. Morrison even proposed that all three parties should go to the polls pledged to reform the coalition *after* the election!

Inside the coalition, nearly all the postwar reconstruction policies were hammered out in joint discussion in the Cabinet and the 'Reconstruction Priorities Committee'. The White Paper on Employment Policy of May 1944, to take one example, set a mildly Keynesian framework and was commended by Churchill as 'bold, able, and worthy of full support'; it was accompanied by the National Health Service White Paper of February 1944, the Butler Education Act of August and the September publication of social insurance proposals. All these were jointly agreed.

Five year run

But this very fact tells us why Labour was allowed into office and given a five-year run. The ruling classes of Britain *could* have stopped Labour taking office. They could have fiddled the election as they did in 1918 by going to the polls before the soldiers could vote. Even after losing the election, they could have brought Labour down with a run on the pound, forcing a split in its ranks and perhaps reconstituting the coalition.

But if they had done so they would have driven along the road to open, sharp confrontation with the only working class in Europe which had grown in strength from the war, when another option was open. The second option was to use the Labour leaders themselves as the second string to their bow. When the chips were down, they knew they could trust the Ministers and trade union leaders who had spent four years in the wartime coalition with them, and who knew exactly how far they would be allowed to go without damaging capitalist interests.

Above all this was possible because Britain, as a victorious power, retained an option for financing the welfare state which the war closed definitively for Germany, Japan, Italy and even for the occupied powers such as France and Holland. Britain could use the Empire to pay for its state spending.

On this they got the Labour leaders support in full measure. In October 1944 after the Germans left Greece, Churchill sent in the army to suppress the Communist-dominated resistance.

Block vote

The Commons easily defeated a censure motion with the official Labour opposition abstaining and only 24 Labour MPs voting against the government. The trade union block vote then carried the day for the parliamentary Labour Party at the December Labour Party conference. Bevin explained: 'These steps that have been taken in Greece are not the decisions of Winston Churchill. They are the decisions of the Cabinet ... The British Empire cannot abandon its position in the Mediterranean. On the settlement of these countries much of the peace of the future world depends.'

True, there were some hotheads around. The candidate from Pudsey, Major Denis Healey, told the 1945 conference that 'The upper classes in every country are selfish, depraved



'The Soviet level' in occupied Glyn-Neath colliery in General Strike. The ruling class, terrified by the prospect of 1920's type of chaos and confrontation being repeated after World War II opted for the Welfare State.

and decadent ... they look to the British Army and the British people to protect them against the just wrath of the people who have been fighting underground against them for the past four years. There is a very great danger, unless we are very careful, that we shall find ourselves running with the Red Flag in front of the armoured car of Tory imperialism and counter-revolution.'

But at the time Atlee replaced Churchill at the Potsdam postwar international conference, American secretary of State James Byrnes was moved to remark that he 'could not discern any change in policy whatsoever.'

Abandoned

Elsewhere we shall assess how and why the economic policies which the ruling class backed in 1945 have been abandoned by Thatcher. But the outlines of the present crisis are already clear in the arrangement entered into in 1945.

In 1945 the policies of the Labour Party were not only acceptable to the ruling class but, by and large, were devised by the ruling class and promoted by the ruling class. To the extent to which Labour's policies went further than the capitalists wanted, they trusted Labour because its leadership was committed lock, stock and barrel to defend capital's essential interests and — above all — its overseas interests.

Thirty-seven years later, none of these conditions hold. The policies of full employment and free social services are the direct object of ruling class attack. They are *not* acceptable to the ruling class. The overseas interests of British capital — particularly the special relationship with America, NATO, and the Common Market — are at loggerheads with Labour's policies of unilateral disarmament and withdrawal from the

EEC. Labour's leadership — above all while its left wing is intact — is *not* trusted by the ruling class.

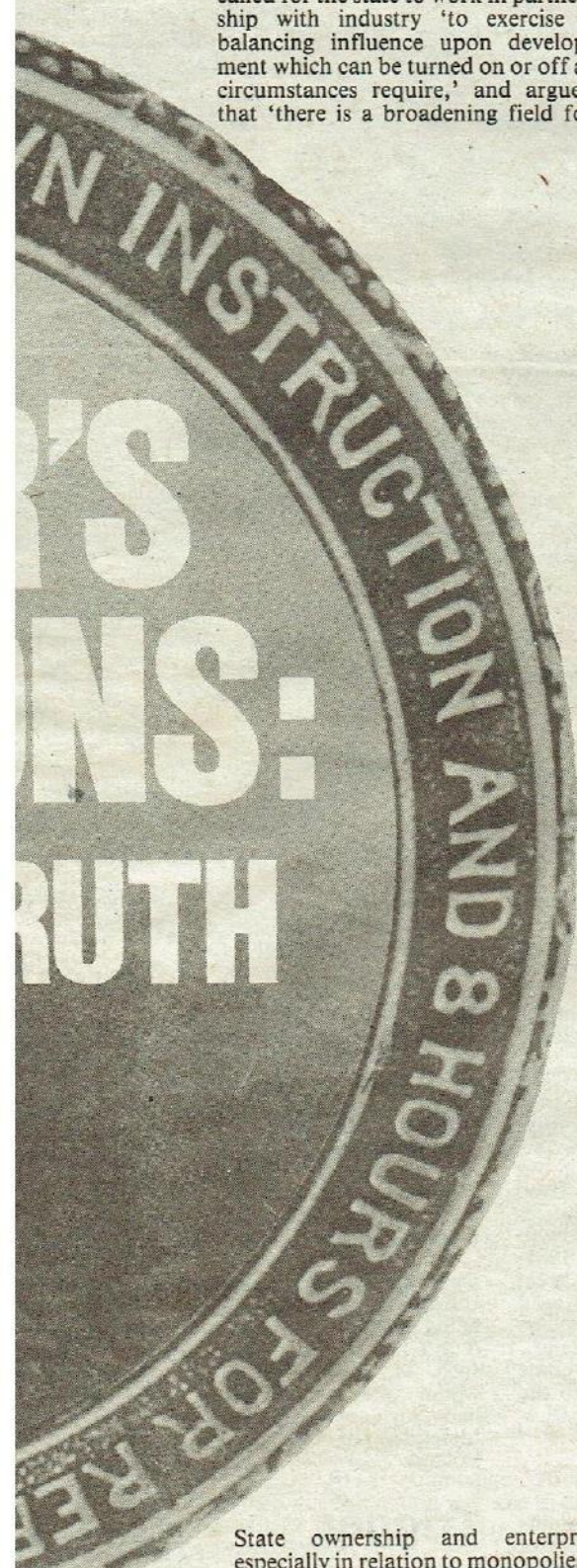
Yet the Tories face a problem. Millions of working people *do* support the goals of 1945, and do want the Labour Party to carry on defending them. They still want jobs. They still want houses, health care and schooling. They still want freedom from war. They still think they are entitled to them. And they still possess the organisations to fight for these things, if they are mobilised.

There are two immediate conclusions. First of all, the Tories' greatest hope lies, not in their own strength but in Labour's weakness. It is the failure of Labour's leaders to mobilise for what working people want, in the futile belief that they can take office by promoting what the wealthy want, that is advancing Thatcher's election hopes. Therefore our greatest hope lies in breaking with one part of the tradition of 1945 — the part that involves compromise with the wealthy — and defending another part — championing the demands of working people.

Break

Secondly, however, a complete and radical break in method is called for. With the ruling class divided around tactics, and either neutral towards a Labour victory or even in support of it, Labour could coast into office and rule without serious trouble. With the ruling class bitterly against it there is *no prospect* of winning reform through the election of a Labour government unless working class extraparliamentary action comes to the fore.

Reform through the ballot box alone is a thing of the past — part of the bankrupt myth of 1945 which should be dropped once and for all. The Labour Party, one way or the other, can never be the same again.



State ownership and enterprise, especially in relation to monopolies of all kinds.'

Just to make sure his audience understood his commitment to welfare he explained that 'there is no finer investment than putting milk into babies'. A far cry from milk-snatcher Thatcher.

The Tory Lord Boothby went even further. 'Nothing is more certain than that this war will mark the transition from monopoly capitalism to socialism,' he told Lloyd George as early as 1939, 'by that I mean that the ultimate control of all basic monopolistic industries, of money, and of credit, will pass definitely and finally into the hands of the state.' He went on to explain that the best man

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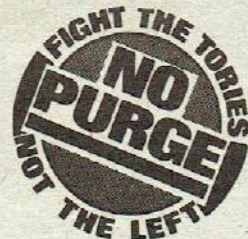
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BATH: SC on sale at 1985 Books, London Road, and Saturdays 2pm-3pm outside the Roman Baths. Phone 20298 for more details.
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Socialist Challenge/Revolution

New Years Banquet

Saturday 15 January
 7-10.30

Vale Rd Community Centre, Vale Rd, Mansfield Woodhouse, Notts.

£3.50 (£2.50 unwaged)

Speakers from the national Union of Miners and the El Salvador Solidarity Campaign.

Three course meal and singers

For tickets write to 1A Park St Mansfield Woodhouse, Notts.

What is Trotskyism?



Imperialism and the Soviet Union

By John Ross



Stalin with Roosevelt at the Yalta conference.

ON 22 JUNE 1941 Hitler's Germany invaded the Soviet Union. It was the real start of the real Second World War. The part we are told about, the war in the West, the 'Battle of Britain', 'Dunkirk', and so on was a mere side show. Hitler had stated from the beginning that his real enemy was the Soviet Union. From 1941 on never less than two thirds, and usually three quarters, of the Nazi armies were in the East.

By the time the British and Americans landed in Normandy in June 1944 Hitler had already lost the war. In the battle of Stalingrad, from August 1942 to January 1943, the core of the German army had been crushed.

In the battle of Kursk in July to August 1943 — the largest tank battle fought in history — the last German counter-offensive in the East was destroyed. When the 'allies' landed in France it was not to defeat Hitler but to make sure that the Soviet armies did not overturn fascism in the whole of Europe.

The costs of this struggle to the Soviet Union were however almost incalculable. Twenty million people were killed. The economy had suffered shattering blows.

Nor was this the first time something like this had happened. From 1918 onwards almost every single major 'Western' power, and Japan as well, had intervened in Russia. Until that time the Russian revolution of 1917 had passed with tiny losses. But foreign intervention in the USSR transformed the revolution into the most

terrible civil war in the twentieth century.

Somewhere between ten and twenty million people died in the struggle to drive out the foreign armies and their Russian supporters.

But why should imperialism twice vent such incredible attacks on the USSR? According to the explanation of the governments of Britain, the United States, France etc, their aim was to 'protect' liberty.

Rather

It might be remarked that it is a rather funny way to do that by killing thirty to forty million people! Its rather like the American general during the Vietnam war who explained that in order to save the city of Hue it has been necessary to destroy it!

What is more the imperialist countries of the west have never cared a fig leaf about the 'liberty' of the people in either the Soviet Union or Eastern Europe. To see that consider the extremely in-

teresting new explanations which came out in December in the American international magazine *Newsweek*. It has been known for years that the United States government knew in advance of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. But they said not one word to warn the Czech people.

But what about Poland? Reagan expressed his terrible shock at the imposition of martial law in Poland in December 1981. He announced a great crusade for liberty and demanded that everyone 'let Poland be Poland'. But did what happen come as any big surprise to the US government?

Step

Newsweek explains how the United States government knew in advance from satellites and internal Polish and Soviet sources every single step of Jaruzelski's and the Kremlin's plans. First the US knew that in spite its threats the Soviet leadership was not yet technically prepared for an invasion. According to US knowledge, 'Without Polish help, the Russians would have needed 40 divisions to invade. Having only 27 divisions ready for action, the Soviets had to wait.'

The United States however knew soon after September 1941 that Jaruzelski planned to impose martial law. In ex-

plaining in detail how United States intelligence in Poland worked prior to martial law *Newsweek* admits 'In September, Polish authorities sent the order for a military crackdown — along with leaflets proclaiming martial law — to the Soviet Union to be printed... when the operation order and the leaflets arrived back in Poland, the colonel (a US informer in the Polish army) sent them to the CIA.'

But as the US government knew weeks in advance that martial law was going to be imposed why didn't it warn the people such as Solidarity with whom they supposedly had such sympathy as 'defenders of liberty' in Poland.

Trigger

As *Newsweek* somewhat 'naively' puts it, 'Had Solidarity been warned that its next challenge would trigger a crackdown, union leaders might have had time to go underground.' More to the point that Polish people would have been forewarned to resist.

Newsweek gives us a heart rending explanation of the US government decision. 'Any warning specific enough to get Solidarity's attention would have risked the colonel's life.' By now I hope I don't have to point out that if you believe that was the US government's

motive then you'll believe anything.

Threats

What in fact Czechoslovakia and Poland reveal is what is capitalism's real objection to the Soviet Union. It has never opposed or fought against the Soviet leadership's real crimes. The United States, as we have seen, refused any warning to the Czech or Polish people concerning the threats to them.

During the 1930s a veritable industry of reformist intellectuals wrote glowing books about Stalin — comparing favourably his 'practicality' compared to the 'anarchy' of the period under Lenin and Trotsky. The United States entered into one of its closest relations ever with the Soviet leadership, the period 'detente' immediately following the invasion of Czechoslovakia.

The real objection which capitalism has to the Soviet Union was well summed up by the historian AJP Taylor. He said that since the revolution in Russia there were many crimes that had been carried out by the regime of Stalin. But these could be forgiven by the West. The crime which they never forgave was that, 'In Russia there are no landlords and no capitalists'.

Needs challenge

LAURA Moorehead's review of Angela Davis's book 'Women, Race and Class' (SC no 272) needs challenging. What Laura objects to is that Davis appears to 'counterpose the fight for women's rights to the struggle for black rights and the struggle of working people' implying 'conflicting interests'. And even im-

plying 'that the struggle for women's equality can be advanced at the expense of blacks and working people'. Also that the book 'leaves us nowhere to go'.

Davis doesn't 'imply' conflicting interests in her history of women's suffrage and the black struggle. She gives us actual examples.

The lessons are clear, in alliances between oppressed groups the most oppressed

can never subordinate their struggle to that of a relatively more privileged group.

The fault lay with the leadership of the suffrage movement seeking alliances with the ruling class, as Laura explained. But in criticising Davis, Laura surely must agree with her that '... working class women and black women were fundamentally linked to their men by the class exploitation and racist oppression which did not discriminate between the sexes. While their men's sexist behaviour definitely needed to be challenged, the real enemy — their common enemy — was the boss, the capitalist, or whoever was responsible for the miserable wages and unbearable working conditions and for racist and sexist discrimination on the job' (p142).

So is Davis 'ignoring or downplaying the struggle for the interests of the most oppressed women'? I can't see it. Her view of women's struggle is flawed by reliance upon the Communist Party (USA)

for her approach.

But I believe Davis is saying the adoption of racist positions by a section of the women's suffrage movement was an evil that held back the victory of all women and black people.

Severe

Finally, does the book leave nowhere to go? A little severe this. The discussion on the socialisation of housework is surely useful, and the refutation of the 'wages for housework' position by an examination of black domestic workers is novel, to me at least.

I can't help feeling that Laura's review conceals an unpreparedness to face the fact that the ability of the ruling class to subvert sections of the progressive movement is expressed through reactionary organisation among women, blacks and workers.

STEPHEN BELL
Roath, Cardiff

Depo Provera

A NUMBER of groups concerned with women and health have formed an ad hoc committee to oppose a long-term license for the contraceptive injection Depo Provera.

We are seriously concerned that side effects of Depo Provera are being shrugged off as unimportant, that women are being pressured to accept it after childbirth and rubella vaccinations, or are given it without their knowledge. Further, we are concerned that the available research on the drug was not done independently and is being interpreted to 'prove' the drug is safe; we do not believe that proof actually exists.

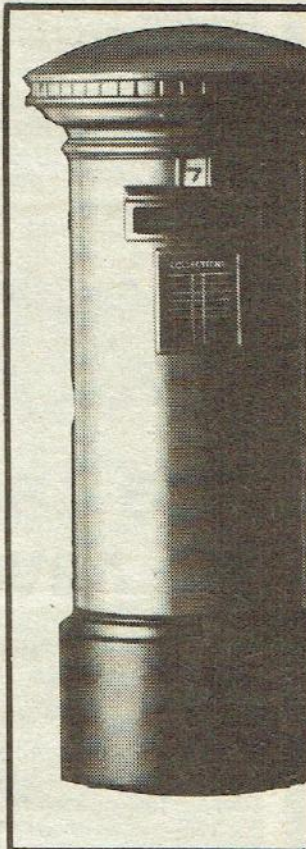
We are seeking information or any personal experience women have had of Depo Provera or information from health workers on uses of the drug. We need to collect this information before 15 March 1983 to present to the public hearing on the drug which begins on 25 April. The British licensing authority has refused a long term license to Depo Provera and the manufacturers are contesting that decision. We hope to work alongside any other organisations who intend to oppose a long term license.

A long term license would mean that Depo Provera would become available

alongside other contraceptives as a first-choice method. We anticipate that a heavy advertising campaign by the drug company would encourage doctors to recommend the drug to women as an 'easy' choice (easy for the doctor, too) when other contraceptive methods might do just as well or even better. Our first meeting therefore decided we could only support a short term license (ie, one 3-month injection only) with added restrictions on its use, eg, an informed consent procedure and follow-up on all women using it.

Because a small number of women find themselves unable to use other methods, we feel we cannot support a ban on Depo Provera. However, with a short-term license, Depo Provera would still be available to those women, as it is at the moment, and with added safeguards we hope abuses can be reduced to a minimum.

We have serious doubts about the safety of all hormonal contraception. Depo Provera is merely one in a long line of methods now being tested which disrupts a woman's cycle to prevent pregnancy. We believe that if these drugs are allowed to come on the market unquestioned, future research on safer methods which do not affect women's health will never be done. The manufacturers of Depo Provera have a great deal of profit to lose because women are question-



ing the need for it; we believe women have a great deal to gain.

Please contact the Co-ordinating Group on Depo Provera c/o 374 Grays Inn Road, London WC1X 8BB. Tel: 01-278 0153



Its time

By Tam Early

The Deadly Dust it takes its toll
My chest is drawing tighter
I've been reduced to a poor old soul
And my pay poke's getting lighter
I cough and wheeze where e'er I go
And my spittle it is black
But if I take a few days off
I am threatened with the sack
It used to be the coal board
That would tell us not to shirk
But now they've got the union
For to do their dirty work
While they hob nob with the manager
And drink their cups of tea
Discussing other methods
How to quieten you and me
But where are the men like AG Cooke
Who would fight them tooth and nail
And didn't care a button
If they locked him up in jail
He would fight on every issue
That affected you and me
This was a man they could not bribe
With money or with tea
Well friends you ask the question
Just what can be done
To put these people in their place
Without a Tommy gun
So lets look to men like Moffat
And Scargill for a lead
And Collins and McGahey
For to beat this rotten breed
And pull us from the crisis
Which is a sad affair
And tell the Lords and Admirals
To get down and dig their share
So rally round ye miner lads
Its time to make a stand
To show them that the miner
Is the Finest in the land
And get behind your leaders
And I'm sure they'll do you proud
And wrap this Tory party,
In that shirt we call a shroud.

Tam Early is a 66 year old miner who used to work the Fife and Kent coalfields. His poem sounds best when recited after a bottle of Scotch and in a Scottish accent.

Ireland ... new initiatives needed

THE recent hysteria of the Tory press and the majority of MPs over the GLC's invitation to Sinn Fein reinforces a climate in which rational discussion of the Irish tragedy is almost impossible. Even to question Britain's presence in Ireland is represented as encouraging terrorism.

The same methods are deployed on the issue of nuclear disarmament. But here the existence of CND, a mass extra-parliamentary movement, has made a significant difference to the Tories' ability to do this. After all, the left is expressing what is demonstrably a popular point of view.

Without a similar movement on the Irish question, it is relatively easy for the government to isolate and marginalise its critics. The events of the last few months should convince us that some new initiatives are needed to develop a broader popular opposition to the government's Irish policy. Everybody on the left must give this serious thought.

PETER HAIN
London

Grenadan women hold congress

By Delia Smallman and Roger Roberts in Grenada

THE ROLE of women in revolutionary Grenada was the focal point of an historic congress of the National Women's Organisation held in Grenada at the beginning of December. Delegates from Grenada, Carriacou and Petit Martinique and representatives of 31 countries from the Caribbean, the Americas and Europe discussed the struggle for women's liberation.

Before the 13 March 1979 revolution, the National Women's Organisation stood at 60 members, today it has about 6,500. For the congress, the NWO groups scattered throughout the parishes of the island, discussed a major document on women at their weekly meetings and put forward suggestions and ideas.

A Ministry of Womens Affairs was set up in August 1982 which is the official channel through which women's interests can be expressed and the NWO's recommendations put forward.

It is the first such ministry in the whole of the English speaking Caribbean.

Already the revolution has benefitted women in several ways. The most important government decree was the abolition of 'sexual favours for work

which was rife in the days of Eric Gairy, the former dictator.

The Peoples Revolutionary Government declared that women were to receive equal pay for equal work in any occupation and has introduced a Maternity Leave Law which has proved enormously beneficial.

As well women are fully involved in the defence of the revolution, both in the militia and the Peoples Revolutionary Army.

Jobs

Women are also very involved in education programmes, such as the Centre for Popular Education as teachers and as students and increasingly in training programmes such as the new agricultural school at La Sagesse.

Finally the general reduction in unemployment has especially helped

Bangladeshi social worker fights back

By Bob Smith

THE RESULT of a determined fight against the racist Nationality Act by a Bangladesh-born social worker in order to stay in Britain will be known in the next few days.

Muhammad Idrish came to Britain in 1976 to study at Bristol University. He now works at Dr Barnardo's in West Bromwich near Birmingham.

He married an English woman and their marriage lasted over two years, but within a few weeks of their separation Home Office officials began proceedings to deport him.

On 10 December local ethnic groups and labour movement activists picketed the official hearing at the Adjudicators Office in Yardley gaining useful publicity about the case which is now scheduled for an indefinite date in the new year to allow adequate time for consideration.

Muhammad Idrish says about his situation: 'My marriage lasted more than two years and my wife is not seeking a divorce. The Home Office minister Timothy Raison, could have ruled in my favour but chose the other course.

'In an 'open court' hearing I am sure I could have proved my worth to stay ... I have never been a liability on the state.

women. The figures speak for themselves. In 1979 there was 70 percent unemployment and in 1982 — 17 percent.

Other policies have indirectly helped Grenadan women. For example free milk is provided, a comprehensive house repair programme, free medical/dental care, free primary/secondary education, assistance with books and uniforms for needy schoolchildren.

All this has been achieved in less than four years and the PRG is still

'The Home Office puts its victims in the position of having to prove their rights and establish the true facts; that is the 'natural justice' the British ruling class are so fond of boasting they apply.

'Increasingly the Home Office immigration laws are being used to intimidate Asian and other minority groups in Britain.

'These laws and the new code of practise make race relations much more difficult. They are unjust and discriminatory and must be stopped.

'In my spare-time community work, I have done much to further race relations in the inner city and know the damage these laws will cause.

'A campaign around

injustices of this type — under the Nationality Act — will continue in the West Midlands even if my case is defeated.

'Every ethnic minority has potential victims, the defence campaign will open up to support other cases as they appear, we must build a national network. My supporters in Bristol are already active.

'The demonstration to be staged by the Campaign against Racist Laws on 27 March will provide an excellent platform to explain the issues and possibilities of this and other defence campaigns.

Requests for information, messages of support and donations can be sent to Bob Cooper, 6 Radnor Rd, Handsworth, Birmingham 19. Tel 021-551 1846 or Graham Reid, 62 Bedminster Parade, Bristol 3. Tel 0272-667933/570534.

Write to us!

WANT to get something off your chest, tell our readers about an event you're planning? Be brief, write fewer than 400 words to LETTERS c/o Socialist Challenge, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP. Tel: 01-359 8180.

looking forward. The congress has called upon it to amend the present law and abolish the concept of 'illegitimacy'.

This the Congress declared will make both parents financially responsible for their children, irrespective of whether they are married or not.

The Congress stated that 'all children of the revolution should enjoy the human right to be supported financially'.

The theme of the congress was 'Women in Education, Training, Pro-

duction and Defence' and the atmosphere of the congress certainly reflected the growing spirit of independence among Grenada's women.

Prime Minister Maurice Bishop, remarked on the 'growth in self-respect, dignity and self-confidence of Grenadan women'.

Over the past years, women have become more aware of their own strength and increasingly committed to and involved in their revolution.

Spain 1936

IN THIS SERIES on social democracy, the last issue covered the role of the Spanish Socialist Party in the events leading up to the outbreak of the Civil War in July 1936.

This week BOB PENNINGTON deals with how the Socialist Party responded to the fascist uprising and the revolutionary demands of the workers and peasants.

Due to a typographical omission in the last issue the historical guideline should have stated that the election of the first Republican-Socialist government took place in 1931.

The Spanish Socialist Party fails the test

REVOLUTION AND COUNTER-REVOLUTION IN SPAIN

The tasks of the revolution

UNLESS THE Popular Front government could solve the agrarian question; develop and extend Spanish industry; break the hold of the church; smash the power and influence of the military and solve the colonial and national question, it was doomed to fail.

The attitude of the workers' parties to these matters was decisive. The Socialist Party was to stand or fall on them.

The agrarian question

Agriculture accounted for more than half of the national income and nearly two thirds of exports. Some 70 percent of the population worked on the land.

One third of the land was owned by the big landowners. Another third was owned by middle sized landowners. The final third was owned by peasants and this was invariably poor, dry land which was rarely capable of supporting a peasant family.

With few exceptions agriculture was conducted by the most archaic methods and the yield per acre was the lowest in Europe.

The agrarian problem could only be solved by distributing the two thirds held by the landlords to the peasantry, and by a big investment in modern farming equipment to raise agricultural productivity which meant cash from the state.

Industry

With fractionally over one percent of world trade, industry in an even worse position than before the 1914 war. Unemployment was rife, accounting, if you included dependants, for more than a quarter of the population.

When the government of de Rivera had introduced tariffs against imports to protect Spanish capitalism, the big powers had retaliated by cutting out Spain's agricultural exports, causing a dreadful agricultural crisis which led to the collapse of the internal market for industry.

There was no way forward for industry without the use of a monopoly of foreign trade, but the capitalists were hostages to foreign capital and inseparably linked to the landowners. This meant that it was impossible for a bourgeois government to create a monopoly of foreign trade.

The Church

The Church had enormous economic power. In 1931 the Jesuits owned one third of Spain's wealth. It ran a number of enterprises like flour mills and laundries, using the labour of unpaid orphans to cheapen production costs.

By its control of education it kept the peasantry illiterate. In 1930, more than 50 percent of the population could neither read nor write. If Spain was to embark on the path of progress, the power of the Church had to be broken. Its wealth had to be confiscated and used to help the peasants cultivate their land. Education had to be taken out of its hands and all the religious orders had to be dissolved.

The army

The army was essentially an outlet for the sons of the rich. Its officer caste was linked by kinship, social position and common interest to the ruling class. Its main purpose was to put down rebellion in Morocco and act as the last line of defence for reaction at home. With a ratio of one officer for every six men it was thoroughly dominated by an extreme right wing officer corps. Unless the army was democratised, which meant replacing all the officers by officers elected from the ranks it would always be a dagger at the throat of the government.

The colonies and the national question

In a series of bloody wars Spain had subjugated Morocco, viciously exploiting the Moroccan people for the benefit of the government and Spain's capitalist class.

The Republican-Socialist alliance took over the colonies and used the corrupt colonial administration, the Foreign Legion, and native mercenaries as its overseers.

Only by granting Morocco immediate and unconditional independence could the Popular Front government have broken the hold of the army, and incited the Moroccan masses to rise up against the Foreign Legion, thus depriving fascism the use of its shock troops against the Republic.

In provinces like Catalan and Basque, strong nationalist movements existed, led by the petty bourgeoisie but which could have been won to the side of the workers providing they had been granted their full rights to autonomy. A failure to do that meant leaving these movements under the political domination of forces hostile to socialism.

EXASPERATED BY the inability of the Popular Front to curtail the demands of the workers and peasants, the Spanish ruling class launched an open military revolt against the government.

At dawn on 17 July, General Franco assumed command of the Moors and Legionnaires of Spanish Morocco. His manifesto to the army and the nation called for the establishment of an authoritarian state. Within three days nearly every single one of Spain's 50 military garrisons joined him.

Landlords and capitalists quickly packed their bags and either fled the country or slipped into fascist territory.

Meanwhile the government of the Popular Front dithered. If fascism was to be crushed it could only be done by civil war and that meant arming the workers. But to the liberal bourgeoisie who were the servants of capital, an armed working class was an even more frightening thought than the armies of France.

So the arms remained locked up in the barracks. On 18 July the national committee of the Socialist and Communist parties issued a statement reassuring the masses that: 'The government is certain it has sufficient resources to overcome this criminal attempt.' Just to make sure that the workers did not start taking things in their own hands the statement went on to say: 'The government commands and the Popular Front obeys.'

But in Barcelona the workers ignored the Stalinists and the social democrat leaders by storming the army barracks and by 20 July they controlled the city. In Valencia rank and file soldiers shot their officers and armed the workers. In Asturias a column of 5,000 was equipped with dynamite from the mines for a march on Madrid. In the capital itself the workers were rising and on 20 July they stormed the city's barracks.

Acting against the advice of the socialist leaders the workers had saved the situation and stopped the counter revolution taking over great areas of Spain.

As the peasants heard the news from the cities they swarmed over the land, using their primitive tools they hacked to death landowners, and officials, who tried to stop them taking the land.

Committees of peasants and workers fed the militia and the workers in the cities. The old order did not have organisations that could deal with this new revolutionary situation so the CNT (anarchist trade unions) and the UGT (socialist trade unions) organised factory committees that extended their influence beyond the trade union organisations.

Everywhere these new committees sprang up, and in town and country they

began to organise separately and apart from the capitalist institutions on which the Popular Front government rested.

These bodies were based on the power of the workers and peasants organisations and their armed militias. As in all workers' revolutions a situation of dual power existed, as the newly emerging power of the masses challenged the capitalist state.

The Popular Front government led by its Liberal president Azana, had lost its army and its police. Its armed authority had gone to Franco. It could only carry out its function of defending capitalist property by taking over the workers' militias; first subordinating them and then, finally dissolving the joint committees that had replaced its authority.

Help

The discredited bourgeois politicians could not do that on their own. For that task they needed the help of the workers' organisations and particularly the help of the Socialist Party and UGT leader, Largo Caballero.

For seven weeks the Popular Front government could not get the workers' organisations to join it, but neither did these organisations organise an alternative to the government. Neither the Socialists, nor the anarchists, nor even did the left centrist party the POUM, call for the workers and peasants committees to organise on a national scale and to prepare to take the power out of the hands of the Azana government.

When the workers' parties did not organise workers' councils, the first step towards the creation of a workers state, then despite their 'leftism' and their good intentions, they had no alternative but to collaborate with the bourgeoisie. By not organising for workers' power in a situation of civil war, the workers' parties, the Socialist Party included, assigned the task of running the struggle to the capitalist state and allowed that state to dictate the social and political limits of the struggle.

The Socialist Party, led by the right wing, believed Spain had a long period of capitalist development before it, and had said that if the left wing gained control of the party they would fuse with Azana's Republicans.

Thus from the very beginning the right wing Socialists rejected socialist revolution and supported 'liberal' capitalism.

Caballero, leader of



FELIX MORROW

Front page of Morrow's classic 'Revolution and Counterrevolution in Spain'

For those readers who would like to take further their reading on the Spanish civil war the author recommends the following three books.

Revolution and Counter Revolution in Spain by Felix Morrow. This was written

during the actual events of the civil war. An excellent Marxist analysis written in simple clear concise language.

The Revolution and the Civil War in Spain by P Broue and E Temine is a scholarly Marxist analysis

and deserves the accolade of being described as the classic on Spain's civil war.

The bourgeois historian Hugh Thomas has written The Spanish Civil War which contains much useful material although he is no friend of revolution.

the party's left however was on record against coalitions and had declared himself for proletarian revolution. In 1936 the Madrid party organisation had come out for the dictatorship of the proletariat, but Caballero's chief theoretician, Luis Araquistain, explained that Spain did not need soviets.

The programme had stated 'the organ of proletarian dictatorship will be the Socialist Party' but this would have to wait until the party included a majority of workers.

This theory crippled the Socialist left. Caballero had agreed to the electoral coalition of 1936 and on all the big issues had supported Azana's cabinet. He agreed to support Azana from the outside and therefore was simply a loyal critic of the capitalist government.

Soviets need the involvement of the overwhelming majority of the workers, not just those holding Socialist Party cards. Caballero and his supporters could either recognise this revolutionary reality and break from their wrong position or else turn their backs on

the workers' committees and join the government. Eventually, Caballero did join the government. He became prime minister!

Immediately the Socialist Party entered the government the die was irretrievably set. Caballero and his party became nothing more than a left cover for the liberal Republicans.

Needs

The needs of the workers and peasants and the legitimate claims of the oppressed nationalities were subordinated to the interest of capital — which was hardly surprising since the workers' parties had handed power to its representatives! The CGT paper Claridad made this clear when it pointed out: 'The ministerial programme signifies essentially the firm decision to assure triumph over the rebellion ... To that is subordinated every other political interest ...'

The left socialists had made clear that the workers and peasants would have to wait until fascism had been crushed. The main task now was to unify all the so-called anti-

fascist forces and the price for that was restoring the authority of the capitalist state. The 'progressive' bourgeoisie must not be alienated from the Popular Front so private property must remain intact.

Workers' armed militias were guaranteed to frighten the men of property so they had to be replaced by an army under the control of the capitalist state. If the support of the 'western democracies' was to be won then the 'excesses' against the Church must cease and there could be no talk of freedom for Morocco, otherwise this might stir the colonial slaves of those same 'western democracies'. So the workers' parties with the Spanish Party dutifully playing its part, delivered the Spanish revolution into the grateful hands of the Liberal capitalists, who later in alliance with the Prieto wing of the Socialist Party and the Stalinists tossed Caballero aside when he had done his job.

But the betrayals of the Spanish Party did not just end there. By handing over the struggle to the Liberal bourgeoisie they made sure that the civil war was lost and that fascism triumphed.

YILMAZ GUNEY REVOLUTIONARY FILM-MAKER

By Nick Robin

YILMAZ Guney is Turkey's most notorious film-maker. The former Clint Eastwood of the Turkish screen, Guney turned to writing and directing in the early 70s under the impact of the widescale politicisation of Turkish society and the growth of a powerful working class and mass socialist youth organisations. He was prolific — seven of his films being released in 1971 for instance. He produced cinema which was not only realist and directly political but also very popular and influential.

In 1972, Guney was sentenced to twenty four years in prison for allegedly shooting in a bar a judge who had insulted him. This did not put an end to his work. Indeed, with the help of friends and fellow directors Zeki Ökten and Serif Gören, he has been responsible for (arguably) three of the greatest political films in world cinema produced in the last ten years: *Suru* (The Herd), *Dusman* (The Enemy), *Yol* (The Way). The showing of *Dusman* in London and the forthcoming distribution of *Yol* — 1982's principal winner at the Cannes film festival — provides an opportunity for reviewing his work.

How does Guney work from in prison? He says 'I felt I should put as much as possible of myself, of "my" story, of "my" images, into the script. This consequently became a new kind of work for me, and it took much longer than anything I'd done before. The scripts were much more detailed, broken down into individual shots, covered with little notes alongside the dialogue to indicate my ideas about the shooting, the lighting or the performances ...' *Suru* was written in a room in Izmit prison with eighty people in it!

Further, he says 'As I create my characters and flesh them out I try to act out their roles,

both the men and the women in every detail, and to experience the way they think and feel. When I write I don't start out with a definite plan, with a specific end in view, I put myself in the place of my characters, imagine their relationships and feelings, and make the development of the plot dependent on that. Many things turn out quite differently from what I had expected.'

The films as well as their author have been subject to severe repression (of course, now, under the conditions of military rule, the films are completely banned); *Suru*, for instance was a film about the Kurds in Turkey — all eight million of whom are officially deemed not to exist, they are rather 'mountain Turks' — and the economic and social backwardness of their society and its relation to Turkish capitalism. As the 'herd' of sheep are brought by train from the mountains of Kurdistan to Ankara we witness a great panorama of Turkish society and its contradictions.

Dusman is about unemployment and the rise of the fascist movement — the 'enemies' of the title. It is a beautiful measured, didactic film about Turkey in the 1970s. Ismail a young man with a wife and small daughter is typical of Turkey's rising proletariat. Coming originally from the countryside where his family own a small piece of increasingly barren land, he lives in a town on the Dardanelles, Eceabat. He travels to Cannakkale across the water to look for work. There is none. Both Cannakkale and Eceabat are small towns whose social cohesion has been completely destroyed by the spatial dynamics of Turkish capitalism. Gradually, Ismail, a complete in-

nocent, has his eyes opened to what is going on around him, a process which is followed by the audience. His wife, her aspirations to a 'Western' lifestyle frustrated, becomes a prostitute and leaves him to go to the city. A German tourist attempts to buy Ismail. Other tourists are interested in buying parts of Turkey's ancient and recent past: Troy and Gallipoli, local entrepreneurs willingly offer their country's heritage up for sale.

Against this background, Ismail gets a job poisoning stray dogs. 'Dog' is the Turkish left's epithet for fascist. As we see Ismail at work, the ever increasing number of dogs dying in



Yilmaz Guney



Scene from *Yol*



Scene from *Dusman*

close-up and being scooped up onto Ismail's cart reminds the audience wryly of Turkey's burgeoning fascist movement (one million votes in 1977). (Derek Malcolm in *The Guardian* completely misses this reference and instead presumes that these scenes offer some insight into the nature of Ismail's relationship with animals!) The symbol is extended at the end of the film, as Ismail, deserted by his wife, is leaving by coach for Istanbul to work in a factory where 'they have labour unions to defend workers' interests', the town is celebrating Republic Day with a military parade. Winding in and out of the ranks of the parade, the camera follows the progress of a dog — as it were now at the heart of Turkey's culture and traditions.

Yol which opens at the Lumière Cinema in London early in 1983, is also a film focussing on Turkey's culture and traditions. In particular, Guney explores one of his favourite themes: the intersection of pre-capitalist feudal norms and customs with the development of the capitalist economy. This is a theme of relevance not only to Turkey but to all countries

dominated by imperialism. *Yol* follows the different fortunes of a group of prisoners released from prison for one week's leave. They return to their various backgrounds where each is made to deal with a personal situation in an oppressive social context. From these individual fictions a picture is presented of life as it is lived in the towns of Anatolia and Kurdistan. Guney says of the film: 'The prisons where human beings are confined are of several kinds. Prisons can be social, cultural, or political. For instance, the men I talk about in my film leave a prison with visible walls, only to find themselves in one with walls that can't be seen. That is to say the prisons they have inherited from a patriarchal society prisons that a specific way of life, a specific culture, has built into their minds.'

The tremendous strength and originality of Guney's cinema is that while he consciously gives us a definite 'message' he combines this with a rich human involvement to produce a truly popular cinema. He says: 'In my view a film cannot limit itself to the simple narration of events. You have to plunge deep into the

human mind .. Art has a kind of magic about it. And it is this magic which makes art what it is.'

At a time when tens of thousands of leftists and trade union leaders and militants are in the torture chambers of the military dictatorship that has ruled Turkey for the past two years Guney's films offer us a picture of Turkey battling with the contradictions of underdevelopment. For the time being that battle has been won by the imperialists and the Turkish bourgeoisie but the story hasn't ended yet.

Guney himself managed to escape from prison and Turkey earlier this year. He is a wanted man, stripped of his citizenship by the junta. Perhaps now his films will get a wider international audience. Look out for them, and congratulations to the Rio cinema in Hackney for promoting Guney's work in London.

For more information about the situation in Turkey and the campaign to get Guney into this country overturning the Home Office's ban — contact the Turkey Solidarity Campaign, BM Box 5965, London WCIN 3XX.

Socialist Challenge

Six million Londoners would die in a nuclear attack

1983 - Peace Year

THE LABOUR CONTROLLED Greater London Council has designated 1983 as 'peace year'. A quarter of a million pounds has been set aside to campaign among Londoners on the dangers of nuclear war, and the government's nuclear strategy. This is particularly appropriate in the year in which Cruise missiles are due to be installed at the Greenham Common and Molesworth sites as part of the US and British nuclear escalation against the Soviet Union.

GLC leader Ken Livingstone has invited the mayor of Moscow to visit London later this year as part of the campaign. Last Monday Ken Livingstone together with Gwyn Kirk from the Greenham Common peace camp unveiled a statue in the jubilee gardens to launch the Year of Peace.

Livingstone said that the GLC had seen the civil defence plans for London, and on the basis of these government plans it was assumed that after a nuclear attack on London, within one year six million

of the eight million people in the capital would be dead.

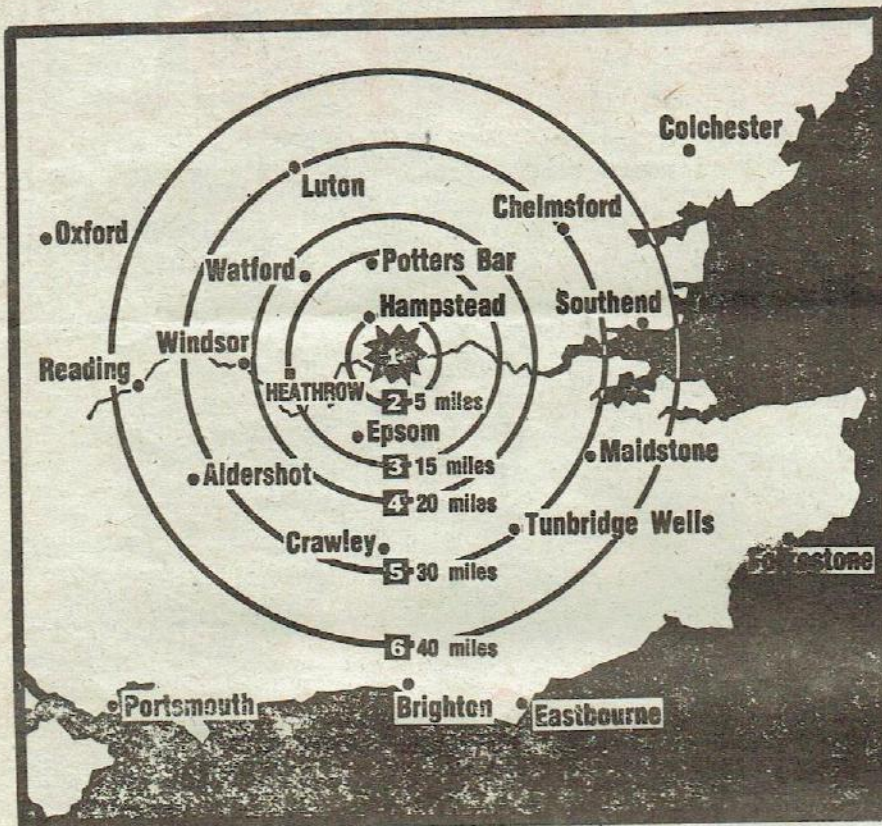
The launching of the GLC's 'peace year' came on the same day that 44 Greenham Common Peace Camp women appeared at Newbury magistrates court charged with 'behaviour likely to cause a breach of the peace', following their New Years Day invasion of the missile site during which they danced on top of the unfinished silos. If they refuse to be bound over, more women will be sent to jail.

Below we publish an account of the devastation which would be wrought on London if it were hit by a megaton nuclear bomb. This is among the smaller bombs in today's nuclear arsenal.

A 5 megaton bomb dropped on Westminster would cause the following effects:

1. WITHIN 3-4 MILES of the explosion. In this area all metals would vaporise as the temperature soared to 10 million degrees centigrade. This would be the case as far away as Brixton and Regents Park.
2. 4-6 MILES away from the explosion. In this area metals would merely melt. So would the people. A bus passing over Kew Bridge would simply liquidise around its incinerated passengers.
3. AT 15 MILES. Rubber and plastic burst into flames. Aircraft at Heathrow would explode. Car tyres as far away as Watford would melt. The stands at Epsom racecourse would burn to the ground.
4. AT 20 MILES. As far away as Windsor wood and people spontaneously catch fire.
5. AT 30 MILES. Clothes flare. On the outskirts of Crawley, Reading, Maidenhead, Tunbridge Wells and Aldershot people caught in the open are horribly burned.
6. AT 40 MILES. People in towns like Farnham, Southend and approaches to Oxford suffer second degree burns and severe blistering.

This is just the beginning. Throughout the next year hundreds of thousands of people die from radiation sickness.



Ken Livingstone and Gwyn Kirk unveil GLC peace statue.



Her Majesty to visit haven of tax dodgers and the 'mob'

AS YOU KNOW the Queen is keen on the family, particularly when you and I are keeping it for her. So when she makes her impending visit to the Cayman Islands she will feel at home.

The Caymans have an assembly which is run by 15 people and most of these are members of the same family, which assures cooperation. Another family that is big in the Caymans is the 'mob' who with their reverence for the God-fathers and the family structure are admirers of the Windsors, whom they think are class in the arts of extortion and embezzlement.

Last summer when Britain did its bit in the Malvinas, patriots like the 'mob', London pornographers, and people like Sir Peter Green, director of Lloyds Insurance, who has a 20 percent holding in a Cayman company called The Imperial Insurance, stumped up £500,000 to help Britain's South Atlantic protection racket. This was touchingly called the 'Mother needs our help fund'.

Mother might have got some help, but the local people do not seem to get much. Despite its 300 insurance companies, 420 banks and 15,000 registered companies, the distribution of the goodies appears to be uneven.

The financial secretary Vassal Johnson who set it all up does not do too bad. He has a Satcom Three

which gives him 53 television channels, 24 hours a day. He owns a motor cruiser, a Mercedes and a bloody great fortune. That's his due reward for getting rid of all company taxes and restrictions.

Unfortunately most of the islanders did not think of giving the mafia a hand with their finances. So their rewards are a little less. They have no sewage service, no free medical care and no higher education.

If they are educationally ambitious they can however buy a BA (Honours) off a kind American gentleman who owns two shacks which he calls the International College of the Caymans. A BA course costs \$4,000 dollars a year.

A nice thing about the Caymans is the reverence for privacy. If you start even to make inquiries into the affairs of any company that is an indictable offence. Mind you there is not quite the same reverence for the rights of individuals, particularly black ones. Rastafarians are officially forbidden.

to take over all those refuges of the international tax dodgers, gangsters and pornographers so beloved by their dear Mother, then you can bet your bottom

dollar Thatcher will send in the fleet.

After spending xmas with the family at Sandringham, Elizabeth will surely be happy with 'her family' in the Caymans.

Broad Left discusses block vote

By Pat Hickey

The Broad Left Organising Committee (Trade Unions) is to hold a conference on 19 February on the *Accountability of the Block Vote*. The conference will aim to discuss the way in which the block vote is used on policy and on the election of the leadership of the labour movement, both in the TUC and in the Labour Party.

This conference will be very important to socialists in the unions, who have seen the gains of the past few years in the Labour Party and the unions threatened by the undemocratic use of the block vote.

The last Labour Party conference saw the trade union barons using the votes of their members to elect a leadership that is openly opposed to such conference policies as unilateral disarmament, withdrawal from the EEC and no incomes policy.

The right wing which the trade unions put into power are also responsible for the witch-hunting of socialists in the Labour Party. As the statement from BLOC put it: 'The last TUC and Labour Party conferences have both raised the issue of trade union voting at these conferences. We are in danger that undemocratic practises will deprive the rank and file of hard won gains but these same practises will also bring discredit to the whole working class movement.'

The conference will also discuss the need for a real drive for work-place factory branches.

Delegates are invited from Broad Lefts within the unions, and from trade union official organisations (branches and shop stewards committees). We urge all our supporters to build this important event.

Credentials available from BLOC, 108 Princes Boulevard, Bebington, Merseyside, L63 7PE.

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