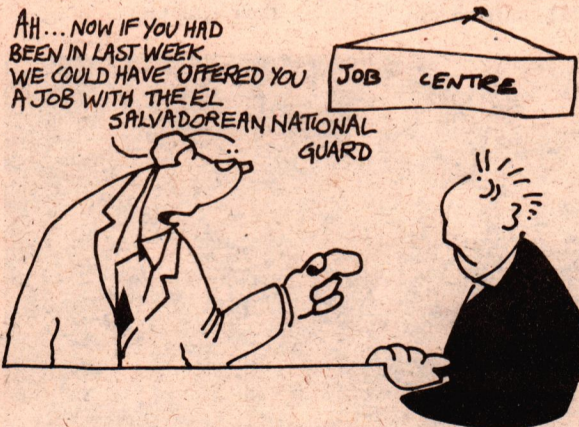


Socialist ACTION

5 million out of work until 1990



Fight back against jobs slaughter



THE TORY LIE that prosperity lies around the corner has been nailed. A report by the National Economic Development Council warns that there will be no reduction of unemployment for a decade.

This is despite Britain's bosses predicting an upturn of economic activity.

This news will be another blow to the five million people now without jobs — two million more than the government will admit to.

Majority

Unemployment now reaches into the majority of working people's homes which is why opinion polls show that the question of unemployment is the most important issue in the forthcoming general election.

Yet despite this the Tory government — if given the chance — intend to preside over further mass sackings. But workers are fighting against these Tory plans:

inside:

Stuart Holland
begins a
discussion on
the European
road out of the
crisis

Pages 8 & 9

**Drugs
and the
Third
World**

Page 7



**Communist
Party reply to
Ken Livingstone**
Page 13

the march.

The Labour manifesto should propose a truly radical plan for the reduction of unemployment based on the conference decisions to reduce the working week and for a crash programme of public spending.

This should be the starting point for the drawing up of a new trade union and Labour Party plan which — unlike the new social contract agreed between them — will put the cost of the crisis on the bosses, and introduce a sweeping programme of nationalisation under workers control.

- in telecommunications — where 100,000 jobs are at risk if the Telecommunications Bill goes through.
- in the steel industry — where on top of the 100,000 jobs already lost BSC chief MacGregor is coming back for more.
- in the rail industry — where secret plans revealed by the unions show that a further 5000 jobs are at stake in railway workshops.
- People's March for Jobs, Page 3
- Why the economic recovery won't mean more jobs, page 9

All

In all these industries the workers are not only fighting back against redundancies, but also against the carve-up of industry into profitable sectors already ready for sale to the Tories' City friends.

These struggles have to be the starting point of a campaign by the whole labour movement to end the scourge of unemployment.

The People's March for Jobs will command the attention of hundreds and thousands of people the length and breadth of the country. Labour should end its hesitation and thoroughly identify with

MODERN
TIMES

LABOUR PARTY



This election business is all very well, but it's playing havoc with my holiday plans...

Appeal for Solidarity seven

SEVEN of the best known leaders of the Polish free trade union Solidarity are facing charges of 'trying to overthrow the state by force'.

They include Andrzej Gwiazda, one of the best known leaders from Gdansk, who helped to negotiate the Gdansk strike agreement in August 1980, and Karol Modzelewski, well known in the West for

his 'Open Letter to the Party' co-authored with Jacek Kuron.

The others, all former leaders of regional committees of Solidarity, are Seweryn Jaworski, Marian Jurc-

**SOLIDARITY
with
Solidarność**

zyk, Grzegorz Palka, Andrzej Rozplochowski and Jan Rulewski.

The seven were all interned after the December 1981 clamp down. The charges against them stem directly from their activity as Solidarity leaders.

Today in Poland, despite the apparent 'normalisation', there are still 3000 Solidarity supporters sentenced or awaiting trial for their union activities.

The Polish Solidarity Campaign is launching an appeal for signatures from trade unionists in support of the seven to go the Polish embassy.

The campaign to release the seven has already been supported by the International Committee of the Labour Party.

● Add your name to the petition and get petition sheets from PSC, 186 Avenue Road, London W3.



A sign of the times

Snia Viscosa is a Milan based conglomerate which has a world wide reputation in synthetic fibre manufacture. In mid seventies it started running-up large losses. In the last two years, however, it has broken even, is set to start making nice fat profits, and is changing its name. Why is this?

In 1979 Snia's defence and space section accounted for 15 per cent of its turnover, this year it accounts for 40 per cent — worth about \$1.1bn. As dramatic an account of the extent of the war drive as one could find anywhere. Snia's directors are quite blasé about its growing role in the death business. So much so, in fact, that they are about to rename the whole company after its main defence subsidiary, BPD Difesa Spazio. Moral — it is more profitable to kill people than to clothe them ...

Jobs plus bombs?

One of the claims made by the Tories at the time the purchase of Trident was announced was that it would create more jobs because British companies would be able to get sub-contracting contracts from the main US contractors. The government even set up a special department to help companies who wished to tender in the US. After a year of trying, British companies have finally got something to show for their efforts. Sterling Metals has secured a contract to provide an aluminium investment casting for the giro in the guidance system! This valuable contract — worth a whole £4,000 is admitted by the Ministry of Defence to be the only contract gained by British companies. I'm sure it will bring life long job security to millions of workers.

Death bad

Finally we would like to bring to the attention of all the capitalists who avidly read Socialist Action a comment by Stanley Weiss, chairman of the American company, American Minerals. He is head of a group of business executives opposed to nuclear proliferation and excessive military spending. "Put simplistically, being dead is bad for business", he says. What can we do but agree.

★ **Wed 13 April** Meeting organised by Twickenham CND on 'Nuclear Weapons, Nuclear Power and Sizewell 'B'', speaker Chris Church. Starts 9.00pm at the Albany Pub, Station Yard, Twickenham, Mdx.

★ **14-20 April** Films 'Atomic Cafe' & 'No Nukes' at Unit 4 Cinema, Brierfield, Lancs. Contact BANANA Mag, Tel: Nelson 695899

★ **Fri 15 April** Film 'The Last Epidemic'. Organised by Camberley CND. Details from Marie Knowles Tel: Camberley 64697.

★ **Sat 16 April** Dayschool on building CND at the workplace organised by Southampton CND. Starts at 10.30 at Transport House, London Rd., Southampton. Details from 4 Onslow Road, Southampton.

★ **16-17 April** Gay CND Event at Caxton House, 129 St. Johns Way, London N19. Details from Gay CND, 18 Lyme Street, London NW1.

★ **Sat 16 April** 'Over Our Dead Bodies'. Women Against the Bomb event to mark the publication of the Virago book of the same name. Masses of speakers, theatre groups etc. At Central Hall, Westminster, 3.30pm-7.30pm. Details from (01)-499 9716.

★ **Sat 16 April** GLC Nuclear Bunker Party. 7.30pm at Langdon Park Community Centre, Tower Hamlets.

★ **Tue 19 April** Meeting 'Alternative Defence'. At Friends Meeting House, Queen Road, Leicester. Organised by Leicester CND.

★ **23-24 April** North West London Labour Movement Conference against the missiles 'Jobs not Bombs — No Cruise Missiles' at Brent Town Hall. Speakers: Ken Livingstone, Pat Arrowsmith, Tim Webb and women from Greenham Common. Details/credentials from Nick Papoloi 01-904 7951 or write to PO Box 332 NW10 5HU.

★ **Sat 23 April** Day School on Non-nuclear Defence. Contact Robert Colls Tel: Leicester 554455 ext 150 for details.

★ **Sat 23 April** TUC/Labour Party Jobs march starts from Glasgow.

★ **Sun 24 April** GLC Bunker Party 7.30pm at the Theatre Royal, Stratford East.

★ **Wed 27 April** Meeting organised by Leyton CND. Speaker Bruce Kent. At Leyton Town Hall. Details from Chris Gray (01)-601 9321.

★ **Thur 28 April** Meeting 'Greenham Common and Labour'. Speakers: Anne Cesek (Islington N. LP) and Helen John (Greenham Common). At Islington Central Library, Holloway Road, starts 7.30pm.

★ **Sat 30 April** East London Labour Movement Conference Against Cruise and Trident, to be held in Queen Mary College. Details/credentials from Phil Waterhouse 01-359 8288 or Ken Cull Hornchurch 53518.

★ **May** March from Truro to Exeter via Plymouth, Barnstaple and Somerset (only for the fit!). Details from Stephen Hugget. Tel: Plymouth 268724.

★ **Sun 1 May** GLC May Day festival for Peace, Victoria Park, London. Starts 11.00am.

★ **Sat 7 May** Youth CND Festival for Peace. Starts at 11am with a demonstration from Embankment marching to Brockwell Park. Bands, speakers and a festival village.

CND Diary is a regular column in Socialist Action, giving a round up of useful facts, news and dates of forthcoming events in the Anti-Nuclear movement.

The listing of events is free and the details should reach us by the Wednesday, one week before publication. Send to CND Diary, Socialist Action, 328 Upper Street, London N1 2XP.

More phoney 'offers' from Reagan

REAGAN'S NEW plan on limiting intermediate range nuclear missiles was carefully timed to coincide with the Easter peace demonstrations in Europe. Judging by the turnout it didn't have a dramatic effect in demobilising the movement — and no wonder. The offer of 'reductions' is a fraud from beginning to end.

In the first place, the plan would allow the siting of cruise and Pershing missiles to go ahead. US spokespeople were emphasising last week that the 572 missiles planned for Europe are a 'base line' and not a ceiling.

In other words, by putting no figure on the proposal, any number of cruise and Pershings can

be claimed as a 'reduction'. In addition, the US wants a 'clever' calculating device.

By Phil Hearse

Since the SS-20s have three warheads the US wants to have three times as many cruise and Pershing — so that 'equality'

is achieved. Except that everyone knows that Pershing and cruise are infinitely more accurate than SS-20s.

Missiles

But the real doublethink is the continued insistence that British and French missiles not be counted. Presumably Reagan expects people to believe that these are somehow *not* aimed at the Soviet Union? And to cap it all, submarine and air-launched missiles are not going to be calculated.

Which would leave the United States with its already achieved massive nuclear advantage.

Reagan's 'offer' is not a serious offer at all. It is a propaganda ploy, posing a 'reduction' which would leave more missiles in place.

The danger for the peace movement is that Andropov has indicated that he is prepared to leave out of calculation British and French missiles to get some kind of agreement. In the past the Soviet Union has negotiated agreements, the most important of which was the

SALT 1 treaty, which allowed the US to plunge ahead with its development of nuclear weapons.

Fake

The peace movement cannot tie itself to any fake 'agreement' which the USSR for its own political and military reasons is prepared to go along with. The basic demands of CND — against cruise and Trident, for unilateral nuclear disarmament and Britain out of NATO, must be fought for to the end.

What next for CND?

THE EASTER demonstrations in Britain and West Germany against the missiles have shown the power and potential of the anti-nuclear movement.

The counter propaganda moves, by Reagan in his speech the week before, and Michael Heseltine in his visit to Berlin, were embarrassing flops.

In Britain, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament leaders have set the date for another giant demonstration on 22 October and have proposed the main initiative of CND up to that date as being a 'peace canvass'.

The conference did not vote exclusively for non-violent direct action and the peace canvass: it also voted to campaign in the labour movement for action to stop the missiles. Yet these latter decisions are virtually being ignored by the CND leaders.

By Valerie Coultas

It has been left to the women at Greenham Common to give a militant lead. Their call for strike action on 24 May — the International Women's Day for Disarmament — where women in 20 countries are preparing to bring women onto the streets, is the first serious appeal for labour movement action in 1983.

Action at every level of the trade union movement involving men and women, however modest, should support the women-only activities planned for that day.

Young CND too are appealing for labour movement support to build their 7 May festival at Brockwell Park.

Of course the responsibility is not all CND's. Both the TUC and the Labour Party also have plans for stopping the missiles decided by their 1982 conferences.

Camps

But is this programme, plus support of the initiatives of the Peace Camps and Young CND's 7 May Carnival, enough to stop the siting of the cruise missiles at Greenham and Molesworth in December of this year?

The answer from an increasing number of peace activists is no, and calls are being made to return to the strategy decided at last year's CND national conference.



Greenham Common women have given a militant lead



May 24, 16 Arundel Road, Brighton, E. Sussex; or phone 01-226 1471.

For more copies of this leaflet/and posters write to:

Rock the Bomb — stop the missiles

ONE AN HOUR — that's the rate at which young people join Youth CND.

This good news was reported to last weekend's Youth CND national committee which discussed the final arrangements for the 7 May national 'Rock the Bomb' festival in London.

Doubts about the usefulness of mass demonstrations in winning young people to Youth CND have been dispelled as the festival has attracted thousands to join the movement.

By Jim Coutts (Youth CND National Officer)

Unfortunately that's only half the battle won, the next step is to actually stop the missiles. Five months after 7 May, cruise missiles will arrive in Britain.

Obviously the best bet would be for the election of a Labour government committed to unilateral nuclear disarmament.

But despite the two-thirds majority for unilateralism at the Labour conference, and the Campaign document which rejects cruise and Trident, it's not clear that Labour will

mobilise popular support for nuclear disarmament at the next election.

Principles

So while we hope Labour will win in parliament, most of our efforts will go into organising action on the streets. Planned for the coming months are a Youth CND trade union conference and an international youth nuclear disarmament conference. And in October we aim to stage a national youth day of action against the missiles.

These are the ways to reach out to young workers and the mass movements on the continent to get massive international action against cruise and Pershing.

That's for the future — first we have to make 7 May the biggest protest of young people against nuclear missiles.

● Youth CND has sent a letter to the US embassy condemning Reagan's support for the invasion of Nicaragua, and attacking his decision to spend \$247 billion on defence, including massive military aid to the El Salvadorean regime.

Sorry!

Contrary to our byline on page 3 in SA no.4, Tony Southall is secretary of Scottish Labour CND.

Peoples march for jobs

83



Photo: GAT COOKSON

THE SECOND People's March for Jobs, organised by the TUC, leaves Glasgow on 23 April. It will be arriving in London on the weekend of the 4/5 June. There will be 500 'core' marchers, with thousands more expected to join feeder marches and the main march as it travels southwards.

ANDY LILLEY, secretary of Ealing trades council, spoke to Socialist Action about the issues raised by the march for the labour movement.

"We can already see that this march will be greeted with more enthusiasm than the People's March in 1981. Every region in Britain has been contesting for its own slice of the march. In fact, there are now so many feeder marches that there'll be train lines if Serpell gets his way! This is the march that very nearly never happened. The TUC General Council only backed down and endorsed it as a result of a drive by some trade unions, and a very real threat that the regional TUCs would have gone ahead anyway — as they did last time.

Ranks

With an election looming, the TUC and the Foot leadership in the Labour Party want to close ranks for an election campaign. The People's March for Jobs gives movement policy a radical edge which they would rather avoid. We want the march to be a huge success. It could mobilise hundreds of thousands and help in turning masses of workers against the Tories. The labour movement should therefore unite and throw its weight behind it. The march has the TUC and the Labour Party's Alternative Economic Strategy (AES) as its policy. As with the 1981 march, the AES will probably be suitably watered down — TUC policy is to call on the government to make a U-turn. Even at full strength the AES is not enough. The only thing the bosses understand is mass action. I feel that the AES isn't even a half adequate policy for fighting unemployment, and in any case it means waiting for a Labour government. Of course, many workers who go along with the TUC want policies for jobs now. Many of these policies are OK — for a 35 hour

exposing the system that creates mass unemployment, rather than just criticising monetarism. An approach to fighting unemployment that doesn't leave you twiddling your thumbs while you wait for a Labour government. This kind of change, though, will have to be rooted in a campaigning reorganisation of militants in our movement. Unlike the 1930s, there's little resistance in the TUC to linking up with the unemployed and many trade unionists are looking to solidary and work with the unemployed.

March

The government's threat to remove grants from unemployed workers' centres where they support the march is a serious one. No doubt the unemployed won't be intimidated. The TUC, which sits on the Manpower Services Commission, should challenge this political blackmail. In local areas ad-hoc committees of the unemployed will be involved in town planning committees for the march. In Ealing, as in 1981, strike action to greet the march is being encouraged. The immediate job for us is to get leaflets and collection sheets into the local workplaces. We'll be using these to win support for the march and build strike

actions or delegations on the day. Like last time, the march will terminate in Southall before going onto the final central London reception being organised by the GLC, and the national demonstration.

Southall is a high unemployment spot scarred by the closure of dozens of large factories. In 1981 the local community along with striking workers came out in their thousands to greet the march. Local cafes and pubs heaped hospitality on the marchers while the temples provided accommodation. Those marchers are still remembered with affection in Southall, and we expect a similar — if not better — response this time.

The People's March for Jobs will be heavily centralised under TUC control. Nonetheless, it's important for everyone to get involved in the town planning committees along the route. And that doesn't just mean sitting in meetings — there'll be a hell of a lot of work to do just making all the preparations needed to host the marchers.

Funds

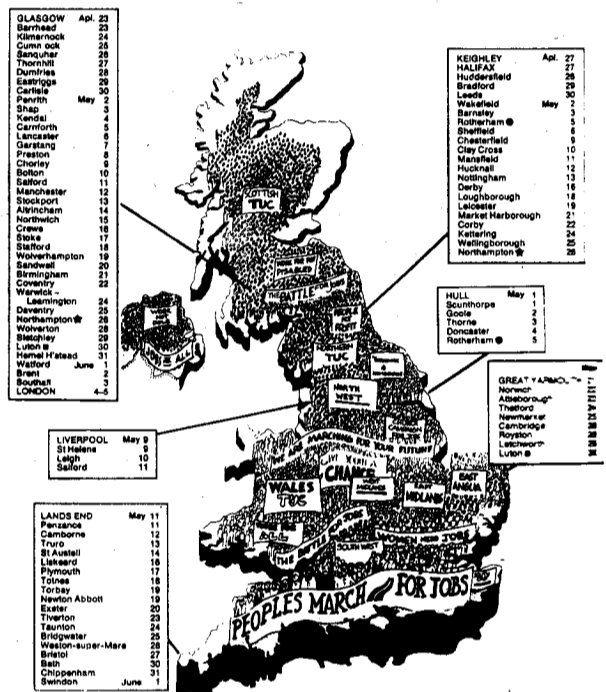
Two years ago, many of the marchers came from areas through which the march didn't pass. Those areas, like the rest of the country, will be raising funds and organising

transport to the mass demonstration in London on 5 June. The TUC, the unions and the Labour Party should really pull out all the stops to make this the biggest demonstration ever against unemployment.

Militant

Whatever the problems of the TUC's policies, this demonstration — like all the events on the '81 and on the '83 marches — will be a militant, anti-Tory affair. These are the best conditions for the movement to discuss out and develop a fighting alternative to the AES.

• The details and planning for the march vary by region. To find out more contact your regional TUC or your local trades council.



IRELAND UNFREE



Young Socialists debate policy

By Piers Mostyn

IF THE BRITISH PUBLIC knew nothing else about the recent Labour Party Young Socialist conference, they knew about the *Daily Mail* journalist booted out during the Irish debate.

In Fleet Street fashion the hack said 'they can't gag the press, I give no assurance of what will appear in my stories'.

In a polarised debate the delegates from Accrington YS said 'Every bullet in a British soldier is a nail in the coffin of British imperialism.' Another delegate called for the 'death of British troops' in Ireland and described them as 'the scum of British imperialism'.

The Militant controlled YS leadership easily whipped up noisy support from the conference for the journalist's removal. But it had little to do with the fight for democracy. It was motivated by the fear of losing respectability in the eyes of the Labour and trade union bureaucracy by allowing free discussion on Ireland.

There was much discussion about Ireland among the 2,000 YS members at conference. On Saturday night the Labour Committee on Ireland held a fringe meeting at which over 100 people heard Plastic Bullets Conference Organiser, Martin Collins, speak, followed by Stan Crooks, organiser of the Scottish Labour delegation to Belfast.

Collins explained that British workers could not make any decisive steps toward socialism, until the Irish achieve their aim of liberation from British domination. He pointed out that if the Labour Party is going to fight the next election to win, it must campaign on its socialist policies, actively campaigning for Irish unity and the banning of plastic bullets. The LPYS could play a big role in this, being linked to the most radical and militant section of the working class youth, and he called for YS branches and members to affiliate to the LCI to help break the labour movement from bipartisanship. YS branches should send delegates on future visits.

A special conference issue of the LCI Bulletin *Labour and Ireland* made a real impact, putting an alternative to *Militant's* abstract calls for workers unity around 'bread and butter issues'.

It was unfortunate that delegates supporting the paper *Class Fighter* could only offer equally abstract denunciations of British imperialism and calls for support for the IRA. The ultra left speeches did nothing to help the Irish people and let the YS leadership off the hook. This helped Militant to whip up a furor about 'terrorism' when it should have been answering basic questions.

If the YS stands for a British withdrawal, what is it doing to build a movement behind this demand? If the YS is in favour of banning plastic bullets why did it not mobilise support for the recent conference? If the YS is fighting back against the witchhunt, why did its NC line up with the right wing by denouncing Ken Livingstone during the summary of the Irish debate?

YS branches can start doing something now about getting these questions answered, by affiliating to the LCI and attending its annual general meeting in County Hall, London on 23 April.

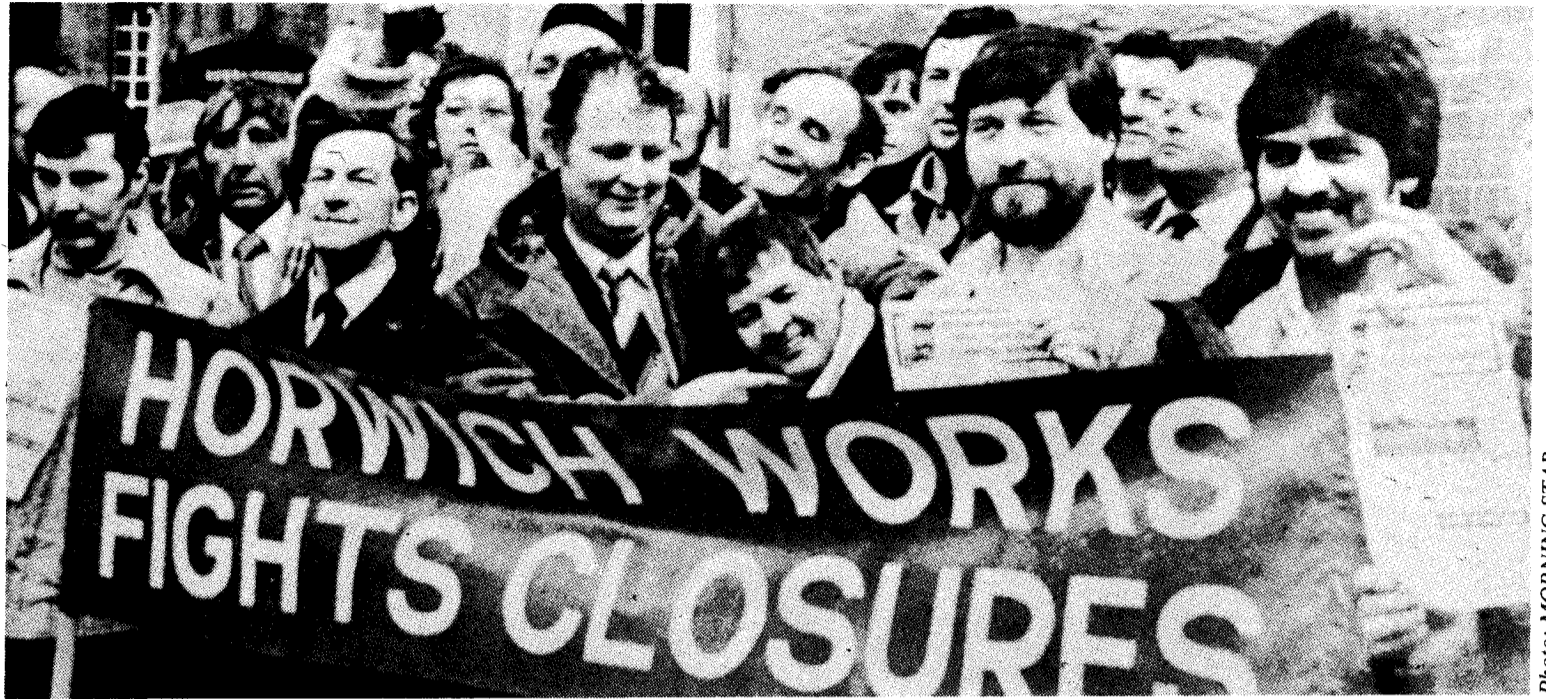


Photo: MORNING STAR

New bid to close rail workshops

THE CAMPAIGN to save the rail engineering workshops at Horwich, Shildon and Swindon took on a new urgency last week.

A confidential management document received by the Horwich Action Committee predicts further massive cuts in rail engineering, exploding the myth that once the three works have closed remaining workshops will be safe.

The document forecasts a 14.7 percent reduction in the work force. The closure count-down proposes:

1983 Temple Mills to close by year end
1983 Horwich except foundry
1983 Swindon: major redundancies — not yet announced

1984 Shildon: complete closure

1984 Derby: major rationalisation involving 'sharing of facilities' ie closure of one of the two factories

1984 Glasgow: major reductions
1986 Swindon: complete closure

As Dennis Green, Hor-

wich works convenor, explains in their bulletin 'unless we all fight together now we'll be picked off one by one, until BR have no major engineering facilities and all the work is done privately.'

The support is coming in. The major rail unions are backing the campaign and the NUR has put an embargo on any transfer of work from Horwich to other workshops.

As the Horwich workers bulletin says, the closures can be stopped 'by using new imaginative tactics — requiring simple organisation but produc-

ing maximum effect.

'This should include guerilla tactics involving "key" workers on the railways — signalmen in the large boxes, ticket collectors, guards.

'Instead of all-out strikes we need a series of lightning stoppages with the unions paying the wages of the workers taking action.

'A strike by a handful of power signalmen can cause as much disruption as a walk-out by thousands of rail workers, without the financial loss.

'Workers in every industry must realise that

our battle today will be theirs tomorrow. We will fail unless a stand is taken now, and given maximum support throughout the movement.

'The attitude of this government is to demoralise, frighten, and then attack the living standards and jobs of workers in every industry. Together we can stop them.

● Send donations and offers of help to: Horwich joint action committee, Convenors Office, Horwich Loco Works, Bolton. Tel Horwich 66801 Ext 7351.

'Survival' attacks jobs

By Bernard Connolly (Rotherham BSC Crafts Convenor) and Steve Pilley (Rotherham BSC, Boilermakers shop steward)

OUR STRIKE started with a walkout at Templeborough works in defence of jobs. Management sent two men home who had been made redundant under the so-called 'Survival Plan'.

Immediately the whole of Rotherham works, followed by the other BSC plants in South Yorkshire, took action, some ten thousand in all.

This is the first challenge to the decimation of jobs in the British Steel Corporation since 1980. Over the last three years, nearly half the workforce has been axed nationally by redundancies and even complete plant closures.

We've gone from around 17,000 in South Yorkshire to some 10,000 today. At this rate there will be no steelworkers left in another three years. We can see the impact of our

lead by the one day stoppage at Scunthorpe on Thursday and the possibility of further solidarity action from Scotland, Teeside and South Wales, despite the complete inaction of Bill Sirs and other national union leaders.

According to Sirs, this fight is about negotiations and lack of proper consultation. Rubbish. What difference does it make to a worker if Bill Sirs had

been consulted before redundancy notice gets sent out? That worker is still out of a job.

The so called Survival Plan is an attack on jobs and has to be fought as such. But more than this, it is a stepping stone to the privatisation of the Special Steels division of BSC.

Back in November, management declared that there were two options. One to close the Tinsley Park works or second to slash 1700 jobs throughout the whole division. This was the Survival Plan. The question is, whose survival — certainly not ours, but rather GKN, Lonrho and certain senior managers in BSC.

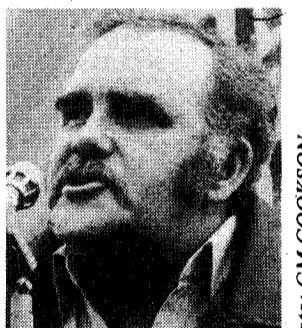
The Survival Plan and the 'saving' of Tinsley Park has been set up by BSC and their Tory masters to sell us off to the

'privateers' of the private sector.

We have seen a run down of BSC assets, plant, stocks, raw materials and equipment to a level which will allow the private sector to have the majority share in a new company, which they've even got a name for — the British Engineering Corporation.

So we are fighting the Survival Plan not just because it means a loss of jobs but also because of the impact it will have on the wages and conditions of the workers who are left.

We would lose all our long established conditions of employment relating to rates of pay, shift patterns, index linked pensions, sick pay, guaranteed week at 80 per cent, lump sum bonus



Bernard Connolly

scheme — not to mention the redundancy and severance schemes presently governing BSC — if we entered the private sector.

It is the whole future of the steel industry in this area that's at stake in our fight.

● Messages of support to ISTC, Edgecombe House, Doncaster Road, Rotherham.

Photo: GM COOKSON

7 May Demonstration

TWO YEARS ago, ten young men who grew up under conditions of poverty, unemployment and foreign troops on their streets, died on hunger strike opposing Britain's presence in Ireland

Despite the resulting massive upsurge of opinion for British withdrawal, in Ireland and worldwide, the present government has reacted with more repression and the farcical Assembly.

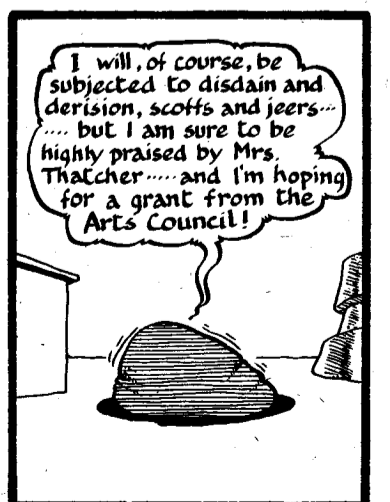
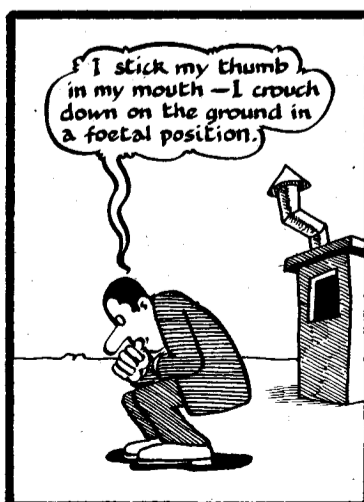
There is only one solution to Ireland's British problem.

- Britain out of Ireland!
- Self-determination for the Irish people!

For more details on 7 May demonstration contact the Organising Committee, Box 353, London NWS 4NH.

A PIECE OF THE ACTION

By CORMAC #5 4183



Labour students witch hunted

WITCH-HUNTING in the Labour Party is not confined to the five members of *Militant's* editorial board.

Its ugly head was raised at this year's conference of the National Organisation of Labour Students (NOLS).

John Dennis, Labour Party student organiser, and the NOLS leadership feared they would lose the majority for their tendency, Clause 4.

By Liz Davies, University College Labour Club

So they disenfranchised 22 delegates, all supporters of *Militant* and Socialist Students in NOLS — a loose left opposition group which includes *Socialist Action* and *Socialist Organiser* supporters.

The first day and a half of conference took challenges to Dennis's ruling. When conference voted for a procedure to allow Dennis only a single right of reply, he suspended proceedings for the evening.

Clause 4 delegates and supporters left, leaving *Militant*, and SSIN and the disenfranchised delegates. Together these made a quorum — half the registered delegates — and a voting majority against Clause 4. Even without the disenfranchised delegates we were only 9 delegates short of a quorum. No wonder Dennis was worried.

Comparison

We invited *Militant* editorial board member Lynn Walsh to speak. He drew the comparison bet-

ween the NEC and Clause 4 actions against the left. Next day Dennis threatened to close down conference if his method of procedure was not accepted.

Challenges

The challenges continued, with Dennis yielding on obvious cases like the Bristol Poly delegates who had been occupying at the time of deadline and had been given assurances by NOLS leaders that they would be accepted.

Birmingham was a plain case of forgery. Dave Mason, a Clause 4 hack, had volunteered to send in delegate cards for those elected — one *Socialist Organiser* and one *Revolution* supporter.

LABOUR BRIEFING

When the cards arrived they were incorrectly filled in. Mason admitted in private that he had forged the cards and conference went on to pass a vote of no confidence in him. But other delegates were excluded on the thinnest of grounds.

But hairsplitting was not the rule when it came to election for chairperson of NOLS. The Clause 4 candidate had only joined NOLS five days before conference.

Because of this witch-hunting, conference only had time for three political debates. It is vital this does not happen again next year and we get a truly representative conference.

Labour clubs should send motions to the NOLS national committee condemning this year's shameful manoeuvres.



Black workers, like those at Grunwick, have fought bitter battles, only to be betrayed by union leaders.

Black workers organise

BLACK trade unionists are organising to combat racism. The Black Trade Unionists Solidarity Movement is holding a conference on 4-5 June in County Hall London.

A declaration of BTUSM aims states:
 ● The disturbances in Brixton, Southall and elsewhere show that black people are no longer prepared to accept unemployment, bad housing, police provocation and the institutional and individual racism inherent in British society.

● As trade unionists, the day to day racism at the workplace must be of primary concern to us and we are aware that unemployment, short time working, redundancy and other forms of direct and indirect discrimination affect black people more than any other section within British society.
 ● We have a duty to organise ourselves within the trade unions and the labour movement to combat racism and we are resolved to organise in such a way that we can promote and protect the interests of black people in

the trade unions and labour movement.
 This appeal, which also pledges to work for changes within the unions and labour movement to restore the confidence of black people, is signed by union activists from NALGO, UCW, NUPE, AUEW, TGWU, NUJ, NUT, GMBTU, NUR and ASTMS.
 NUPE full timer Bernie Grant spoke for the BTUSM at a meeting of black Camden council workers on 9 March. He explained the work of the BTUSM and said that the June conference will be

opened by Grenadan High Commissioner Fenis Augustine and will have international speakers from South Africa and the USA.
 The 70 black workers at the Camden meeting discussed the issues that face many black workers — how to get the council and union to consider their interests when making policy; how to achieve real equal opportunities; how to get representation in the unions and organise in caucuses avoiding the trap of setting up rival union organisation; how to allocate places for black

workers in trade union training courses and policy making bodies.
 From the conference they set up the Camden Black Workers Group to combat individual and institutional racism.
 Black workers throughout the country share these concerns. The June BTUSM conference on the theme of black unity will be an important step to bring these experiences together.
 ● For information contact Neville Adams, 115 Nevill Rd, London N16

Lesbian mothers

DID YOU know that over 90 per cent of lesbian mothers lose custody of their children?

And that those women who do win custody in spite of all the odds are often forced to live away from their lovers in order to keep their kids?

A woman at the lesbian mother's custody conference said she was even afraid to have a female lodger for fear that her ex-husband will find out and take her back to court.

Women who are forced to leave their children under these pressures are little better off.

They face the guilt imposed by a society that upholds the supreme value of motherhood and the reproductive role of women — if they conform to a heterosexual 'norm' of course!
 (Val Coultas)

● If you want to get in touch with a regional contact for the lesbian mother's custody campaign, write to Lesbian Line, BM 1514, London WC1 3XX or telephone 01-837 8602.

Infanticide

THE *People's Daily*, China's newspaper, has just published detailed official figures on the murder of baby girls, which is becoming increasingly widespread in some rural areas.

In some villages boys outnumber girls by up to nine to one because of female infanticide.

Daughters are murdered or abandoned at birth for a number of reasons — because sons carry on the family name and, it is believed, can work harder in the fields.

Another factor is China's strict laws on childbearing and population control. Married couples are restricted to one child, and as in most other societies today, sons are preferred for social and economic reasons.

Female mutilation

STRONG evidence points to the fact that female genital mutilation ('female circumcision') is being carried out in Britain.

The March/April journal of the Socialist

Health Association carries a report from the Anti-Slavery Society following an article in the *Observer* last year which alleged that the practice was taking place regularly in Britain.

The *Observer* quoted a Harley Street doctor who estimated that a dozen such mutilations are carried out in London each year for a fee of £800 to £1000. The report in *Socialism and Health* also reveals that this practice isn't new to Britain.

'A prominent surgeon in the mid 19th century believed that women, particularly young working girls, would be happier and healthier if the "burden" of their sexuality was removed. He therefore performed many operations to cut out the clitoris from young women.'

● For a full copy of the report send 25p plus a stamp to *Socialism and Health* (March/April 1983), Socialist Health Association, 9 Poland St, London W1V 3DG. For further information contact the Anti-Slavery Society for the Protection of Human Rights, 180 Brixton Rd, London SW9 6AT (01-582 4040).



Benefits for women

'WOMEN, could you use an extra £25 per week?' is the title of a new leaflet produced by the GLC Women's Committee to publicise and campaign for women's right to claim unemployment pay. It's well written and designed, and

will be a very useful aid in spreading information to women.
 An estimated half a million unemployed women don't register and therefore lose benefits to which they are entitled.
 ● Copies of the leaflet and further information available from the GLC Women's Committee, County Hall, London SE1 7PB (01-633 1038)

Not positive action

THE Labour Party's recently published campaign document calls for increased rights for women. (Although not too stridently, particularly on the question of abortion).
 But just a week before it was published,

the inaugural meeting of the new constituency of Holborn and St Pancras Labour Party voted overwhelmingly for the Women's Section to have four delegates to the 170-strong General Management Committee.

John Braggins, the head office official sent along to chair the meeting, told the party it could vote as it liked, but when the constitution went up for ratification the NEC would chuck it out.
 'The NEC will not allow more than nominal representation for the Women's Section,' he

said. That means two.
 Once again, the fight for women's rights must start at home.
 (Humphrey Evans)
 Compiled by HILARY DRIVER. Send contributions to 'Male Order' Socialist Action, 328 Upper Street London N1 2XP to arrive not later than Thursday a week prior to publication.

WORLD IN ACTION

Vietnamese offensive

VIETNAMESE troops have launched a major offensive along the Thai/Kampuchean border in an attempt to prevent raids by the Kampuchean dissidents over the border.

The Vietnamese are constructing a 32-kilometre barrier along the border to prevent incursions.

The main force of the dissidents are Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge, in alliance with those of Prince Sihanouk and former prime minister Song Sann.

Already the Vietnamese have clashed with Thai army units in trying to destroy the base camps of the rebels. The conflicts gives some interesting insights into imperialist morality. The whole of the Western media gave extensive publicity to the horrors of the Pol Pot regime, as a way of demonstrating once again the savagery and barbarism of communism.

Now the Western powers refuse to give diplomatic recognition to the pro-Vietnamese regime in Kampuchea, and the CIA pumps money materials and advisers into Pol Pot's camps.

Instead of the horrors of Pol Pot, all we get now is 'Vietnamese expansionism'.

Brazil upsurge

THE 'economic miracle' of the third world in the 1960's was Brazil. But now the countries in the semi-colonial world have been the hardest hit by the capitalist recession.

Last week the industrial centre of Sao Paulo erupted in riots against unemployment. Sao Paulo is one of the biggest industrial centres in the world.

In a city of some 12 million people, some 770,000 are out of work — 400,000 have lost their jobs in the last 18 months.

The promises of the new governor of Sao Paulo state to create 40,000 new jobs won't go very far towards dealing with that problem — even if they are fulfilled, which on past form is unlikely.

We'll blow you up

DMITRY USTINOV, Soviet Defence Minister, warned the United States last week that the Soviet Union would retaliate directly against the United States, if the Soviet Union was attacked by the new US missiles in Europe.

He argued that the United States was 'offering its NATO allies as

the targets for nuclear retaliation'.

The European powers, he said, 'are making themselves hostages of American strategy'.

Borge banned

THOMAS BORGE, a leader of the FSLN and interior minister in the Nicaraguan government has been banned from travelling to the United States, where he had been invited to speak by Harvard and John Hopkins universities.

Since the refusal to grant Borge's visa, six other US universities have extended invitations to the Sandinista's most experienced leader to speak.

Ambush

LAST WEEK the Salvadorean army suffered its worst defeats at the hands of the FMLN guerrillas.

The FMLN ambushed part of the US-trained Belloso battalion in the northeastern province of Morazan.

Radio Venceremos announced that the FMLN had inflicted 119 casualties including 74 deaths on the US-trained brigade.

The military high command refused to give any figures for their losses.

At the same time the FMLN overran Verapaz, Guadalupe and Teptitan three towns near the provincial capital of San Vicente.

Nuclear Integration

US DEFENCE Secretary Caspar Weinberger has issued an important document on US defence spending and planning. The directive, known as Fiscal Year 1985-9 Defense Guidance, in addition to outlining the increases in military hardware, has two aspects which give an insight in to US military thinking.

The first is the instruction for the integration of nuclear capacity at every level of defence capability. Or, to put it another way, conventional forces will be routinely equipped with 'tactical' nuclear weapons.

Weinberger's instruction further breaks down the distinction in US thinking between nuclear and non-nuclear war.

The second item which will bring joy to hearts of peace-loving and sane people everywhere, is the stepping up of the production chemical weapons.

Weinberger wants to develop the ability to rapidly employ existing chemical weapons worldwide by 1985'.

Reagan takes aim at Central America

'A DAGGER aimed at the heart of the Western hemisphere' — that's how Ronald Reagan describes the escalating revolutionary struggle in Central America.

Over the past few months US intervention in the region has increased dramatically.

● US-backed right wing forces in Honduras have begun their seeping invasion ('a slow motion Bay of Pigs' as the *Sunday Times* called it) of Nicaragua.

● As the fighting in the border areas of Nicaragua continues, new revelations came last week a secret document was leaked last week which gave proof of the US plan to topple the Sandinista government.

● Last Wednesday a leader of the Salvadorean FMLN Melida Anaya Montes ('Ana Maria') was murdered at her home in an attack which had all the hallmarks of a CIA assassination squad.



Comandante Ana Maria

● Last Thursday the Nicaraguan government revealed that US spy ship was lurking in Nicaraguan waters.

The timing of the US attempt to overthrow the Nicaraguan government is no accident. First and foremost it reflects the catastrophic situation for the United States in El Salvador, where the right wing military dictatorship is in a state of military and political collapse.

Reagan hopes to strike a devastating blow at the Salvadorean revolution, both by massively increasing the aid programme to the Salvadoran dictatorship itself and by hitting the Salvadorean revolution in its political and logistical 'rear' — Nicaragua.

Without doubt, the overthrow of the Sandinistas would be a demoralising blow to the revolution in the whole region: the project of inflicting a simple military

defeat on the revolutionary forces in Salvador itself seems more and more unlikely.

By Phil Hearse

Six weeks ago Reagan despatched UN ambassador Jean Kirkpatrick — a well known 'hawk' who backs the rightists in Central America to the hilt — to reassure the regime that the United States would not allow it to be defeated.

Her report-back to Reagan was a sombre one — that the regime was in imminent danger of defeat.

Since the beginning of the year the revolutionary guerrillas of the FMLN have launched a sustained offensive, temporarily occupying a series of towns, including the industrial centre of Berlin.

Increasing parts of the countryside are becoming liberated zones, which outside of major government military 'sweeps' are administered by the FMLN itself.

Both the Salvadorean government and the military elite are wracked with divisions.

While death squad leader Roberto D'Aubuisson, now leader of the National Assembly, continues his in-fighting against President Magana, the army is incapable of devising an effective military strategy against the FMLN.

El Salvador now has all the hallmarks of Vietnam before the final victory of the revolutionary forces there.

Reagan is faced also with increasing problems in Guatemala, where the dictatorship of eccentric Christian fundamentalist Rios Montt is besieged by rival army factions and the left wing guerillas.

Fearing the 'proliferation of Cuba-style states' in the region, Reagan's aides have worked out a package of measures, first aimed at preventing revolutionary victory in Salvador, then at 'roll back' of revolutionary ad-

vances elsewhere in the region.

In addition to the destabilisation programme against Nicaragua from Honduras, the US is attempting to block the negotiation of Cuba's international debts to the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. As part of this international economic campaign, the Tory government in Britain has already withdrawn trading licenses with Cuba.

Escalating pressure is being put on Grenada, with naval exercises in the seas around the tiny revolutionary island which has defied the United States for four years.

As the war in Central America deepens the labour and peace movements in Europe have an important role to play.

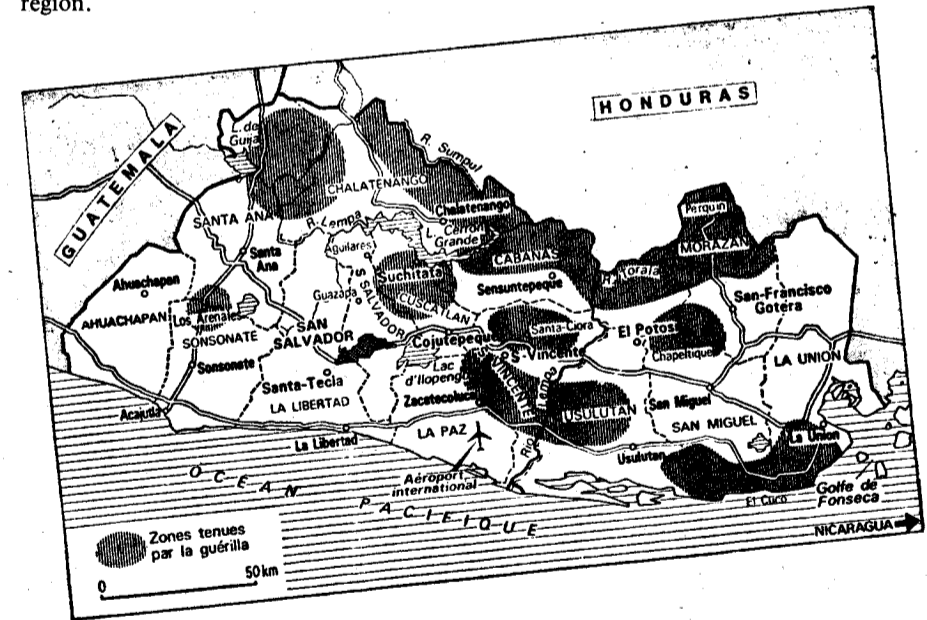
Bloody

The self-same forces responsible for the nuclear escalation in Europe are engaged in a bloody counter-revolutionary war.

In the coming months all socialists should be active in ensuring the maximum solidarity with the revolution in Central America, and in raising the demand that the Thatcher government ends its political support for Reagan's war aims in the region.



Women's militia in Nicaragua



FMLN-FDR controlled areas in El Salvador

El Salvador Conference Get delegated!

THERE'S JUST four weeks to the 14 May El Salvador Labour Movement Conference.

As Reagan's war against the people of El Salvador and Nicaragua builds up, this conference will be a vital jumping off point for the building of solidarity in the British labour movement.

Delegations have already come in from a large number of trade

union and Labour Party branches, but there are still many areas not represented. With not much time to go, we are asking all our supporters to make a special push to get delegations in the next couple of weeks.

Trade union branches and Labour Party constituencies and branches can have two delegates each.

● Further information from: El Salvador Solidarity Conference, 29 Islington Park St., London N1. Tel: 01-359 2270.

CIA murders Ana Maria

MELIDA Anaya Montes ('Ana Maria'), a leader of the Salvadorean FMLN, was murdered at her home in Managua last Wednesday. Her assassins were a three-man commando dressed in black.

According to the pathologists report she was struck 82 times with an icepick, her arm was broken and her throat was slit.

Ana Maria was, next to Cayetano Carpio, the

best known leader of the FPL — largest of the revolutionary organisations in the FMLN.

She was buried last Saturday in Managua at a ceremony attended by the whole of the Sandinista leadership.

Ana Maria lived in exile in Nicaragua, while spending much of her time in political work in other countries.

The area in which she lived was heavily guarded. Without doubt the three men who assassinated her were trained experts — either Americans or Central

Americans working for the CIA.

Her brutal killing is typical of the sadistic methods of the reactionary forces in the region.

In a statement the FMLN said:

'Although repression of Salvadorean opposition leaders in not new, the murder of Com-mander Ana Maria is an indication of the US plans to increase a selective repression against our leaders as a way to contain the great popular advances towards our liberation'.

How the drug monopolies pillage the Third World

By Kathy Kirkham

CAROL had been plagued by a headache for a week or so. Now she was running a high temperature. A pharmacist in her town in Mozambique advised her to try a popular painkiller called Cibalgin.

The drug didn't help. Instead, Carol started to develop cold sores around her mouth. Soon, her gums were coming off on her toothbrush. When her face began to swell beyond recognition, and new, painful infections developed along the veins of her arms, Carol was admitted to hospital. Since it was clear her life was in danger, she was flown to Johannesburg for treatment.

The infection which had started in her mouth erupted all over her body, and X-rays revealed abscesses on her lungs too. Her lips fell off, the flesh completely decayed. The jawbone, now exposed to view, also proved to be diseased. Fortunately, the laboratory in Johannesburg was able to diagnose the unusual bacteria responsible and managed to halt Carol's physical disintegration.

Once on the mend, Carol mentioned to doctors that she had taken Cibalgin. There was no need to look any further for the cause of her illness. The local office of Ciba-Geigy, the manufacturer of Cibalgin, at first denied any knowledge of the product — not surprisingly, since its sale is not allowed by the South African drug authorities. Amidopyrine, the active ingredient in Cibalgin, had first been shown to cause agranulocytosis, Carol's complaint, 58 years before ...

The uncontrolled sale and promotion of Western-made drugs in Third World countries is causing avoidable suffering, even death, for countless people like Carol. A modest 'shopping list' of essential 'generic' drugs not sold under a manufacturer's brand name) could be used to treat diseases in the poorest countries in the world and save millions of lives. Instead, European and North American pharmaceutical companies are swamping the market with vitamin and mineral tonics, antidepressants, cough and cold remedies and 'body building' steroids.

Harm

These products often do little good and can do a lot of harm. But they are a lucrative source of money for their manufacturers.

The international trade in pharmaceutical products is overwhelmingly dominated by rich industrialized nations, like the US, France, West Germany, Britain and Switzerland. Some 50 transnational corporations (TNCs) account for most of this.

Some leading corporations are pushing, without proper warnings, drugs banned in the West because of their possible serious side effects. They are encouraging the development of drug-resistant diseases by an overuse of antibiotics. They are promoting powerful anabolic steroids as appetite stimulants for malnourished children. And they are charging extortionate prices — up to twenty times higher in real terms than in the West.

Aggressive advertising, though aimed primarily at better-off people in the cities, inevitably influences the poor. Besides reinforcing the belief that Western-made medicines are the answer to all ills, sales promotion campaigns persuade people to buy



Photo: MIKE WELLS

Photo: MIKE WELLS

more expensive name-branded goods even when cheaper, locally produced alternatives are available.

The problem is aggravated by the unequal distribution of wealth and health care within many Third World nations themselves and by the absence of government controls. Antibiotics may be sold loose on market stalls like sweets. Pharmacies staffed by unqualified assistants sell all kinds of strong drugs over the counter. Petty traders with no medical training tour villages, offering pills, potions and injections. Company salesmen woo doctors with samples.

Doctors

Such is the commercial pressure that in Nepal, Brazil and parts of Central America there are three times as many pharmaceutical sales representatives as there are doctors.

To counter criticism that they are selling irresponsibly, Western drug firms may argue that it is up to Third World governments to decide which drugs to accept. The truth is that these governments rely largely on the manufacturers for information about their products. Forty-five of the world's poorest and smallest nations depend entirely on imports of finished good drugs.

Recent research has thrown light on some shocking abuses of this situation:

- Amidopyrine, the painkiller that triggered Carol's horrifying physical disintegration, was restricted to prescription usage in the US in 1938 because of its dangers. In 1963, in response to medical opinion, the manufacturer withdrew it voluntarily from Britain. In 1977 Ciba-Geigy announced that it intended to remove amidopyrine from all its products by the end of that year. Three years later Ciba brands containing the ingredient were still being sold in Portugal and 10 Third World countries — including Mozambique, where Carol took her near-fatal treatment in 1979.

- Entero-vioform and Mexaform (also made by Ciba-Geigy) are products for the treatment of diarrhea. They contain clioquinol, which, when taken for a prolonged period in high doses, has led to some patients becoming blind and crippled. Manufacturers have paid out compensation to such patients in Japan and Europe, and Entero-vioform has been effectively withdrawn from the British market. Yet it continues to be freely available in many Third World countries such as Bangladesh, India and North Yemen, sold mostly in foil

strips without instructions or warnings.

- Orabolin anabolic steroids, made by the Dutch firm Organon, are used in Western countries mainly to treat serious blood diseases. They can produce very nasty side effects like jaundice and liver tumours. The company itself advises British doctors that Orabolin is 'not recommended for children'. Yet its sales representatives in Bangladesh have been promoting the product without warnings as a body builder and appetite stimulant for malnourished youngsters.

- Antibiotics are being marketed by Western manufacturers for trivial, unnecessary uses, thus encouraging an alarming rate of drug resistance.

- Non-essential drugs flood many of the countries of the world that can least afford them. For example, in the Philippines 162 different brands of cough suppressants are on sale — accounting for 12 per cent of total drug expenditure there in 1980. Fewer than a dozen of these are based on codeine, the only cough suppressant included in the World Health Organization's essential drug list.

- Drug waste and consumer deception go hand in hand. Vitamin B-12 is widely sold in many poor countries. It

is often contained in multivitamin tablets, even though experts say that taking B-12 by mouth is useless. It is also offered in large doses that provide no more benefit than smaller ones. Of the Vitamin B-12 injectables sold in Brazil, 106 are offered in doses of five to thirty times the maximum concentration recommended and sold in Britain by the Glaxo firm — including two which Glaxo itself sells in Brazil.

- Name-brand Western drugs cost an incredible amount of money in relation to wages and the cost of basic necessities in poor communities. Roche's Bactrim, the best-selling antibacterial drug in Mexico, cost 138.60 pesos in 1978 — enough to provide a basic diet for a family of four for two weeks. In Bangladesh, 100 aspirin, sold under the brand name Genaspirin, cost the equivalent of 2.5 per cent of a poor family's annual income.

The tragedy is that many poor people are making sacrifices to buy these costly, often unnecessary drugs when the underlying cause of so many of their illnesses is poverty and ignorance. A widow in a village near Dacca, India, sold her cooking pots, then her small plot of land to buy tonics for her fifth child, who was suffering from diarrhea and malnutrition. The child's health did not improve. The basic cause of her serious condition was lack of food; yet, ironically, without land, the whole family were put at risk.

Crying

A Bangladeshi woman was discovered by a doctor crying with her dead baby in her arms, surrounded by medicine bottles. Having spent all her money on these expensive drugs, she could not understand why they had not saved the child. The baby had become severely dehydrated from diarrhea. Her death could have been avoided with a simple home made mixture of water, salt and sugar.

The drug corporations enjoy bumper returns from their Third World sales. These are sometimes well disguised. Many companies are careful to mix developed and developing country statistics when publishing their sales and profit figures.

It is also a well-documented practice of TNCs with Third World subsidiaries to transfer profits out of the country by overpricing their raw materials. The United Nations has reported that, in 1975, if subsidiaries of foreign firms in Brazil (many of them drug companies) had imported raw material at the going rate, the return on invested capital would have amounted to 65 per cent rather than the 15 per cent declared.

Not surprisingly, the highest prices and fattest profit margins are found where governments exercise few controls over foreign investors. The Philippines is perhaps the classic case of this. A recent study undertaken by the UN Commission on Trade and Development revealed that the least expensive tetracycline capsule in the Philippines cost over eight times more than the cheapest available in the USA. Roche's best-known products, Librium and Valium, were priced eight and fourteen times higher than in Britain.

The Third World's drug problem can never be solved in isolation. At the end of the day better health for the poor can only be promoted if governments show the political will to bring primary health care services to the mass of the population instead of catering for the rich through costly Western-style hospitals and clinics in urban areas.

This article is based on two recent books: Bitter Pills: Medicines and the Third World Poor, Dianna Melrose (published at £4.95 by Oxfam, 274 Banbury Road, Oxford OX2 7DZ, UK), and The Health of Nations: A North-South Investigation, by Mike Fuller (published at £3.95 by Faber and Faber, 3 Queens Square, London WC1N 3AU, UK). The case of 'Carol' is taken from The Health of Nations.

A European road out of the crisis

IT HAS become commonplace to argue that there are three strategic demands which must feature in Labour's election manifesto — 1) nuclear disarmament, (2) the alternative economic strategy and (3) withdrawing from the common market.

These demands — so long sought and fought over — should not be in question. They represent Labour's response to nuclear militarism, monetarism and the dominance of the EEC by market forces and multinational capital. They also represent the case for disarmament, economic development and the restoration of economic democracy in the sense of regaining autonomy for people and parliament in key aspects of European and international affairs.

Nonetheless, one of the problems which the Labour Party faces is mobilising mass support for policies for peace, jobs and freedom is avoiding the impression — not due entirely to the Tory press — that our strategy amounts to a position of being anti-monetarism, anti-Market and anti-bomb. We risk giving the false impression that our three main policies are isolationist in a world of increasing tension.

It is crucial that we take advantage of progress which has been made in the last two or three years for joint policies against nuclear weapons and for the transformation of the economic crisis mobilised and supported by the main parties of the European Left.

European Nuclear Disarmament

The campaign for European nuclear disarmament must be one of the lynchpins of a socialist foreign policy. The deployment since the 1960's of an in-



Photo: GM COOKSON

By Stuart Holland

THE DEPTH of the British economic crisis entails supranational solutions. This contribution opens a debate on the way forward for the Western European labour movement. Future issues will carry articles from international contributors.

creasing number of nuclear field weapons had littered Europe with the armoury of Armageddon long before the neutron bomb, cruise missiles, SS 20's or Pershing rockets became part of current vocabulary. 'Mutually assured destruction' through the use of nuclear weapons has given way with increased accuracy and improved delivery systems to the concept of a winnable nuclear war. Strategic deterrence theory has given way to a new theory of tactical deterrence. With it, the premise that nuclear weapons are unusable has been buried, as most of Europe would be were the weapons used.

Challenging the militarism of the Thatcher-Reagan nuclear strategies carries force without stressing that the Soviet Union has followed rather than led new weapons systems developments in the West (atomic and hydrogen weapons, intercontinental bombers, ICBMs and others). Not least, it has to be asked whether the Soviet Union can really afford to maintain such an armaments effort when it cannot feed its own people, nor respond to rising con-

sumer expectations nor carry the debt of failing modernisation in Eastern bloc countries such as Poland. The Soviet Union itself imports modern technology through the circuits of Western multinational companies.

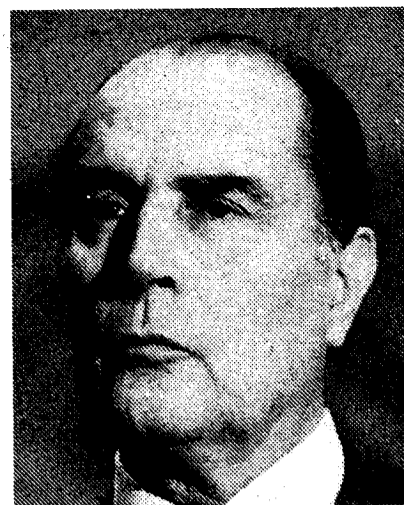
European Economic Cooperation

Such double standards from the West — trading and lending to a regime allegedly bent on world domination — must be challenged by a socialist policy embracing Europe wide. Just as a European nuclear free zone would not be real unless it included both West and East Europe, so European economic cooperation will not be genuine unless it does the same.

Economic and monetary union among some of the Western European countries is unachievable on the supranational grounds favoured by EEC federalists. But economic and monetary cooperation between East and West Europe is an imperative that cannot be ignored if we wish to underpin peace with prosperity, matching increased security through a nuclear free zone with increased security of income and welfare for European countries.

By such criteria the so-called European Economic Community or EEC is nothing of the kind. From a failed European Defence Community proposed in 1954, and a European Political Community proposed a year later, the EEC has achieved a cartel for coal and steel, little more than OECD on trade liberalisation, no enforceable joint policies against multinational companies. Its common agricultural policy swallows four fifths of its budget to the benefit of the large scale wheat and milk farmers in the north and against small scale Mediterranean producers.

In fact the CAP is a reverse regional policy, while the Regional Fund and Social Funds of the Community together represent less than a tenth of the EEC budget. This is less than one per cent of Community GDP, and less than a tenth of the Regional Fund changes hands between countries. Put differently, only about 1/100th of one per cent of Community GDP is redistributed between member states. There has been much talk of the need for a Marshall Aid programme for the lower income EEC countries. But Marshall Aid amounted to some 4 per cent of US GDP over the four years 1948 to 1952. Even a ten fold increase in the regional and social funds would not



Mitterrand, France



Palme, Sweden

register a similar effect, while the funds are shrinking — not increasing — as a share of the EEC budget. Such realities more than a quarter century after the signing of the Rome Treaty are encouraging more realistic analysis of the costs and benefits of EEC membership by socialists in not only Britain and Denmark, but also in Greece, Spain and Portugal.

can join such countries in their counter offensive against monetarism, backing their ideological challenge to capitalist orthodoxies.

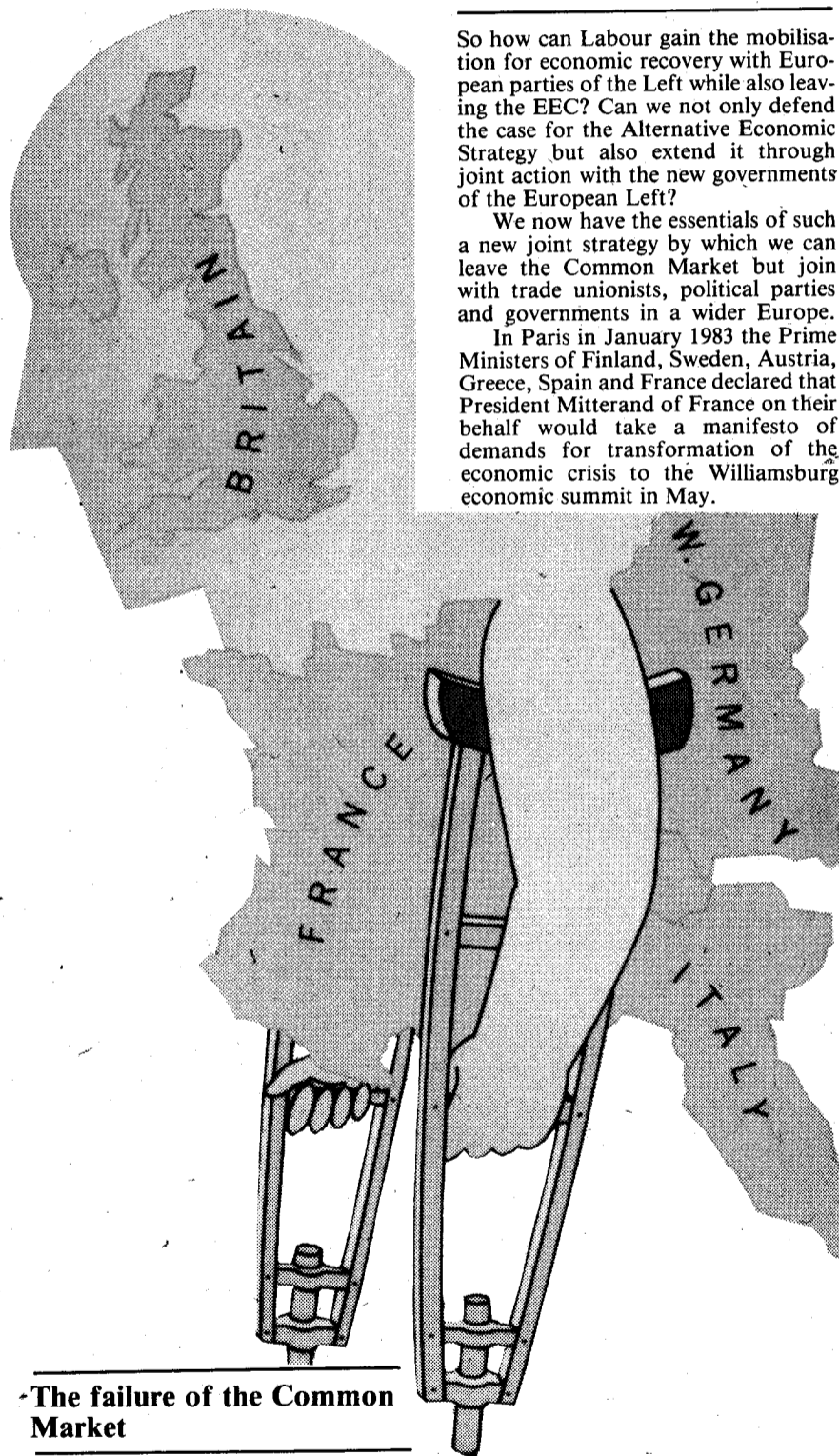
This is crucial for a socialist foreign policy. It is the positive politics of internationalism rather than negative posture of 'leaving Europe'.

Out of Crisis

So how can Labour gain the mobilisation for economic recovery with European parties of the Left while also leaving the EEC? Can we not only defend the case for the Alternative Economic Strategy but also extend it through joint action with the new governments of the European Left?

We now have the essentials of such a new joint strategy by which we can leave the Common Market but join with trade unionists, political parties and governments in a wider Europe.

In Paris in January 1983 the Prime Ministers of Finland, Sweden, Austria, Greece, Spain and France declared that President Mitterrand of France on their behalf would take a manifesto of demands for transformation of the economic crisis to the Williamsburg economic summit in May.



The failure of the Common Market

It used to be claimed that the real test of the EEC would come with the crisis of a major recession. That crisis has been with us now for ten years, but the Community has aggravated it by a retreat to monetarist policies which have worsened the slump syndrome.

Both the Greek and French governments want to challenge this and transcend the current crisis through socialist policies. They want to reflate, restructure and re-distribute. They also want to do so through a remix of the capitalist economy, with policies for public spending, public enterprise and planning. But France has been set back by three devaluations and austerity programmes. Economic welfare is at risk there, as in Spain and Greece, unless we

Parallel and supporting this, in March 1983 in Paris, some 200 political economists, politicians and trade unionists from fifteen West European countries launched a *Project for European Recovery* — endorsed by Michael Foot as leader of the Party and by the British TUC.

The European Recovery Project includes three strategic resource aims:

- to reflate
- to re-structure
- to re-distribute

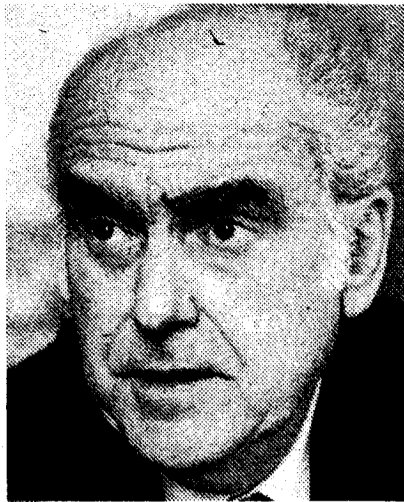
Complementary with these are policies varying in degree and method between countries but including:



Photo: C DAVIES (Report)



Gonzalez, Spain



Papandreou, Greece

- public spending
- planning agreements
- public and cooperative enterprise

The project includes economic models for joint reflation of the main European economies and OECD. These have been developed by economists from Cambridge, Paris, Bremen, Modena and Madrid. They show that it is possible to create 10 to 20 million new jobs over the next ten years if the European economies pursue policies of 'better-my-neighbour' reflation rather than the present trend of 'beggar-my-neighbour' deflation.

The economic arguments are essentially simple. One country's imports are another country's exports. Thus if each country cuts domestic spending to reduce import demand and improve its balance of payments it will deepen the vicious circle of deflation in international production and trade.

Inversely, if the main European and OECD economies increased spending and import demand they would thereby increase employment, income and international trade. The vicious circle of slump would be reversed and the conditions for a virtuous circle of recovery established.

Restructuring and Redistribution

However — for reasons different from those claimed by monetarists — we cannot simply spend our way out of the crisis. Even high and sustained cumulative reflation will not of itself abolish involuntary unemployment by the 1990's. Therefore the European Recovery Project stresses that reflation must be accompanied by policies for restructuring and redistribution.

Restructuring cannot be conceived simply as rationalisation since through technical progress this could or would increase unemployment. Nor can reflation be conceived only in Keynesian terms of increasing demand. Both policies must be pursued with a redistribution which is:

- structural — between firms and sectors
- social — between different social groups and classes
- spatial — between countries and regions

Restructuring of investment between public and private sectors, and of employment between industry and services is both feasible and necessary to gain a balanced recovery. Redistribution of income and expenditure between firms and industries, social groups and classes and regions and areas of the European economy will facilitate recovery.

Joint Planning Agreements

When 140 companies now account for one third of the output of the EEC companies, joint policies for accountability of multinational firms are in-

creasingly feasible. Planning agreements or Agreed Development Plans on the lines of Labour's alternative economic strategy either have been or are being adopted in France, Greece, Spain and other European countries, have a key role to play in joint accountability of multinationals and the extension of economic democracy.

Joint recovery implies progressive action by countries in and out of the EEC, including Sweden, Norway, Finland, Austria, Spain and Portugal as well as the EEC countries, and that Britain outside the EEC can act with both member and non-member governments.

Recovery does not exclusively depend on major institutional reforms of the IMF or other international agencies and OPEC countries have a vested interest in supporting governments pursuing recovery programmes since this would increase the price of oil.

The European recovery project is complementary to the global reforms demanded by the Brandt Commission but focusses on the recovery of the North as the precondition for effective joint recovery of the South.

Thus the European Recovery Project has implications not only for the EEC but also for EFTA, OECD, the UN Economic Commission for Europe and other UN agencies as well as for the IMF and World Bank. In effect the project is European rather than simply for Community Europe, and projects a dialogue which also extends to the wider world economy.

The project does not focus on membership or non-membership of the European Communities, simply stressing that the economic crisis affects western Europe as a whole and that policies to get out of the crisis should be promoted together by member and non-member countries of the EEC in Western Europe.

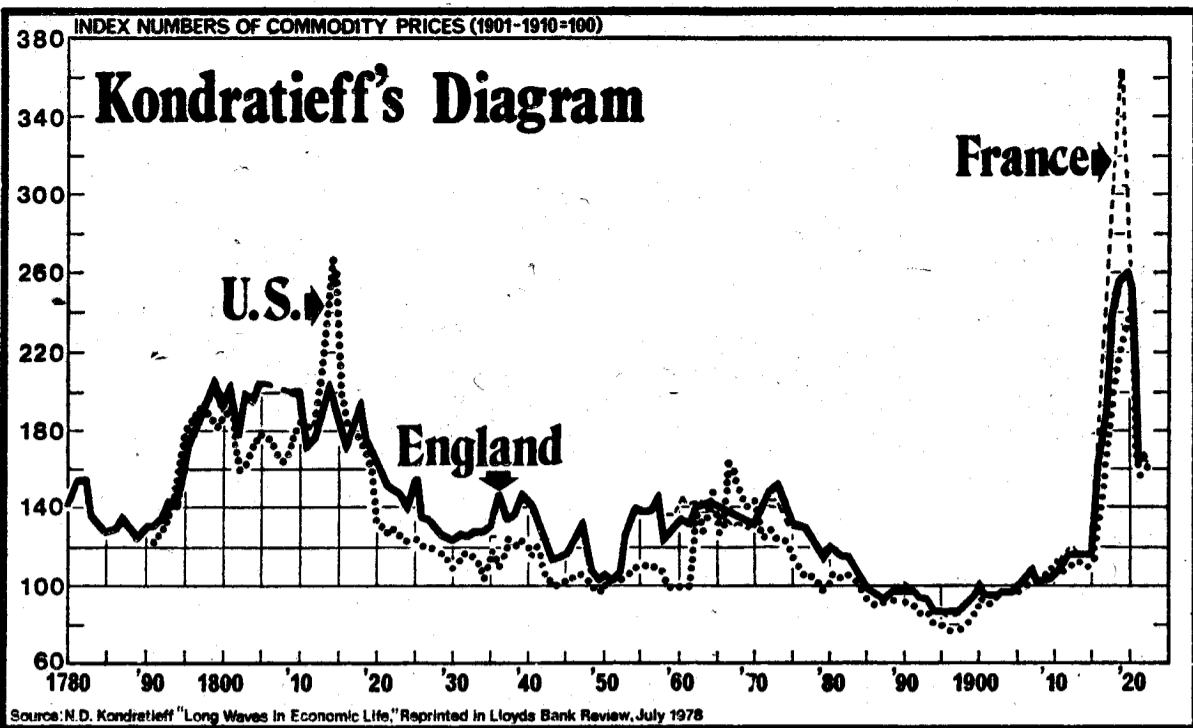
Also, while stressing that Europe need not depend on the United States and the rest of OECD its case for European recovery, offers the prospect of major jobs and income creation in the US and OECD countries.

It should be clear that *because* rather than *despite* the new austerity measures in France, this new recovery project has wide support in the labour and socialist movement of Western Europe. It derives from a process of convergence in thinking and policy in the main parties and institutions of the European Left. It also has sufficient support for an on-going process of widened pressure and impact in a range of international institutions.

Originally sponsored by the French Minister for Research and Industry, the project had major commitment for follow up from Andreas Papandreou in Greece, from the Spanish Socialist Party PSOE and from representatives of the Scandinavian trades unions. Its framework provides a means by which the potential for transforming the crisis can be promoted by EEC and non EEC parties and unions.

It can make real our claim that we would leave the EEC to join a wider Europe based on an international AES for both an Alternative Economic Strategy and an Alternative Economy and Society. In turn, we should not miss its potential for progress towards a socialist foreign policy.

● **OUT OF CRISIS: A Project for European Recovery**, is published by Spokesman Press, Russell House, Gamble Street, Nottingham NG7 4ET.



'An anaemic recovery'

AFTER three years of deep recession the British and world capitalist economies are turning upwards again. JOHN ROSS looks at one view of the likely economic developments of the next few years.

British manufacturing output has turned up at last after declining almost continuously since May 1979. Housing completions are up almost eight per cent in the last three months compared to the preceding quarter. An economic upturn in Britain is underway. This is despite the fact that manufacturing output is still lower than fourteen years ago. This situation is being fed by the upturn in the United States economy.

What might seem surprising in such a period is the deep gloom in which all the more serious economic analyses of the situation remain plunged. The American journal *International Business Week* characterised the general situation accurately as 'an anaemic upturn' in its 7 April issue.

It is therefore of some interest, and a fairly indicative sign of the general mood, that Samuel Brittan, the most well known economic commentator of the *Financial Times*, chose to devote his centre page article in the 7 April issue, to an attack on the idea that capitalism is subject to regular economic cycles and laws of development. According to Brittan:

'The belief that mankind is in the grip of mysterious forces, which it is powerless to change, recurs periodically in periods of stress and difficulty... It is this kind of fatalism which accounts for the revival of interest in the so-called Kondratieff cycle — a 50 to 60 year long wave (25 years up and 25 years down — J.R.) of economic activity supposedly discovered by a Russian economist, N.D. Kondratieff, in the 1920s... Kondratieff looks plausible today mainly because the depression of the 1930s occurred just over 50 years ago — the length of a Kondratieff cycle.'

But the cyclical movement and development of capitalism is one of the best established of all its features — even Brittan admits it. The short term business cycle has been observed since the very beginning of capitalism. It had roughly a seven year up and down duration prior to the Second World War and has since shortened to roughly five.

Thus for example, to take only the last twenty five years, 1958, 1963, 1967, 1972, 1975, and 1981 were the bottom years of recessions and 1960, 1964, 1969, 1973, and 1979 were the peak years of booms. The short term economic recovery we are now entering into in 1983 is therefore no surprise or great hope for the future — indeed it is somewhat overdue.

But what makes the situation much more serious, and explains the 'anaemic' character of the recovery, is that these short term cycles are superimposed on much more profound 'long waves' of development.

Contrary to what Samuel Brittan claims these long periods of development studied by Kondratieff and others, are not an 'artificial' construction, limited to the 1930s and the 1980s, but a clear pattern of development inherent in the nature of the capitalist system itself. The roughly twenty five year expanding, then declining cycles can be clearly seen starting in Britain, the first major capitalist country, from 1700 onwards.

Interval

Working backwards from the present downturn, which started in 1975, there was a long economic upturn from 1945-75, downturn from 1914-45, upswing from 1896-1914, downturn from 1873-96, boom from 1849-73 etc.

In attempting to disprove this long term analysis Samuel Brittan is in fact actually forced to confirm its correctness. He writes,

'The presence of the 50 to 60 year interval in the U.S. data can be linked to wars: the Napoleonic war, the Civil War and the First World War... Thus supporters of Kondratieff have also to claim that his mysterious cycle explains the occurrence of major wars.'

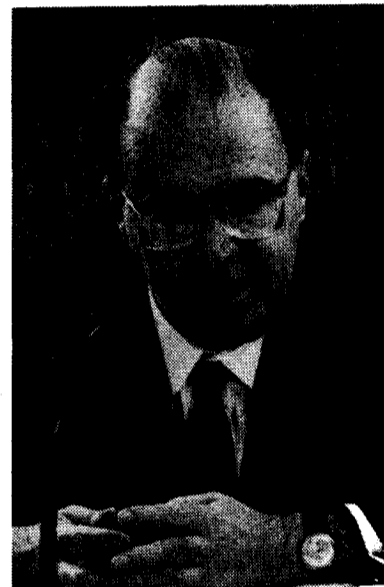
But Brittan should not have confined his analysis to the United States. The last such international long wave had even more momentous events marking its beginning and end. They were known respectively as the First and Second World Wars. The beginning of the first cycle of capitalist development we mentioned was marked by the revolutions of 1848 in Europe and the downturn from 1873-96 by the vast outward expansion of European imperialism across the world.

The vast surge of capitalist rearmament and war preparations in the late 1970s and early 1980s are right on schedule. They are not 'abnormal', or the result of a new force called 'exterminism', as E.P. Thompson has claimed, but a perfectly lawful product of capitalist development.

Long

Thus during a long economic upswing, such as from the end of the Second World War to 1975, the cyclical slumps are brief and shallow and the expansions long and far reaching. In a long downswing, such as we are at present in, the depressions are progressively longer and deeper and the recoveries, to use *International Business Week's* term, are 'anaemic'.

What would turn the situation



Samuel Brittan

around for capitalism and launch a new period of expansion? Brittan already gives the answer. The most typical mechanism of capitalist recovery is war. Taking the First and Second World Wars together, and adding the intervening conflicts, the twenty five year post-war capitalist boom was purchased at the cost of approximately 100 million dead — and even then it should be remembered it never extended its benefits to hundreds of millions in the semi-colonial world.

Upturn

But now the 25 years is up and capitalism requires another similar bloodletting for a new upturn. This would not be irrational in capitalist terms, but creates a new increase in exploitation and redistribution of the world market. The reduction of real wages during the 1979-82 slump, the tens of millions of unemployed in the advanced capitalist countries, the wars in El Salvador, Nicaragua, and the Middle East, horrors such as Nigeria, Assam, and the famine in Ethiopia are only the tiniest beginnings of what capitalism would require this time around for a new upturn.

Whether capitalist accumulation could be relaunched after a nuclear war, which is one of the most probable outcomes by any historical precedent, is of course unlikely.

Despite Samuel Brittan's protestations capitalism does have a logical development. After the 'anaemic recovery' will come a new downturn in the 1980s which will make Thatcherism look like days of halcyon prosperity.

Perhaps as Samuel Brittan gets a considerably larger salary for writing his column than I do mine he would like to make a large bet on it. *Socialist Action* would find it useful to have some spare money for what is going to come.

Tribune's call to arms

AS MICHAEL HESELTINE gazed across the Berlin Wall, ignored by the world's press, half a million people demonstrated against the missiles in West Germany and Britain. CND had won the first round of the propaganda battle with the Tories.

But the theme which Heseltine was trying to place at the centre of the disarmament debate — that of an embattled West faced by an aggressive Soviet Union — has had an impact in some surprising quarters.

Moving left

In particular, *Tribune*, a newspaper which has been moving to the left under its new editor Chris Mullin, ran an article by him on its front page advocating a conventional instead of nuclear strategy against the Russians. 'If some form of national service is the price that has to be paid for a non-nuclear defence policy then so be it' the article states.

It was even more surprising because in the same issue diarist John Street, who is known to be in sympathy with Mullin's views, correctly chastises Joan Ruddock for ascribing equal responsibility for the arms race between East and West.

Main problem

But is defence against the Soviet Union the main problem facing the labour movement in relation to the debate on disarmament? Let that question be decided by a brief inspection of the active role of our 'defence' forces today.

Apart from forays to defend our more distant colonial possessions, the major role of the armed forces today is holding down the nationalist population in the north of Ireland. In addition, the frequent stand-by mobilisations and HMS *Keren* hijacking confirm the strike breaking role of the military.

Britain's standing army is best equipped for counter-insurgency exercises abroad and at home.

Suicidal course

In that context to advise the strengthening of the armed forces through the re-introduction of national service is a suicidal course for the labour movement.

Correctly, it would be rejected out of hand by the hundreds of thousands of anti-militarist youth who are used to such blimpish proposals from the right as a solution to both unemployment and the 'Russian threat'.

Mullin argues that the eventual purpose should be to fight a Yugoslav-type partisan war against the 'invaders'. But the British Army is the last institution to teach such techniques to a conscript army. It reserves this role for the elite counter-revolutionary squads of the SAS.

Our objective should be to remove Thatcher's finger from both the trigger of nuclear forces and conventional forces. This is not an argument for pacifism. The labour movement does need to defend itself, but against the very forces that Mullin proposes we strengthen.

It is also true that demonstrations are not enough. As we argue elsewhere in this issue the trade unions now have to seriously consider industrial action to stop the missiles.

This should be the objective of papers such as *Tribune*. Not advocating the wrong answer to the wrong question.

Editor: ALAN FREEMAN

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Send all material for publication (including advertising) to Socialist Action Editorial at the same address.

We regret that due to the high cost of postage we cannot return or acknowledge unsolicited copy or photographs unless accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope.

Ireland and partition

YOUR editorial about Ireland titled 'The legacy of partition' (SA 1 April) deserves comment.

You state that a nationalist victory in Ireland would 'remove the Loyalist reactionary bloc and open up the way for a socialist Ireland on Britain's doorstep'.

Surely, as socialists, our first duty is to unite the working class. To label a large section of the Irish working class as 'reactionary Loyalists' can do no good to the cause of a united Ireland and even less to the cause of socialism.

Socialists should seek to unite the Irish working class, Catholic and Protestant.

As long as there is sectarian violence in Ireland the working class will remain divided and as long as the Irish working class are divided a united socialist Ireland is a utopian dream.

TIM PORTEUS, Edinburgh.



The Loyalist general strike in 1974. Working class unity has to confront problem of Loyalist ascendancy.

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Newsline on Soviet Union

UNDER the headline 'The Revolutionary Way to Fight the War' the *Newsline*, daily paper of the Workers Revolutionary Party, directed a one and a half page tirade by Alex Mitchell against my informational piece on the Group for the Establishment of Trust between the USSR and the USA (SA 25 March).

Mitchell's main thrust was that the USSR did not need a peace movement — presumably because the Soviet bureaucracy is doing such a good job that any independent action

automatically places you on the same side as US imperialism.

I shall reply to some of the points raised because they express ideas with a certain currency on the left as to the defence of the Soviet Union and our attitude to the dissident movement in Eastern Europe generally.

Firstly, since the rise of the Stalinist bureaucracy revolutionary Marxists have defended only the socialised property relations resulting from the October Revolution.

Secondly, the bureaucracy has material

interests separate from those of the working class, and, in defending its interests it only incidentally defends these property relations.

The possession of nuclear weapons should be judged in the light to which they contribute to the defence of these relations.

Neither Socialist Action nor, for that matter, the independent Soviet Peace Group call for Soviet unilateral nuclear disarmament in the face of armed imperialism because they would threaten these gains for the working class.

However, and this the WRP completely fails to appreciate, the only real defence of the USSR is the extension of the world revolution and the bureaucracy has not been interested in this for 50 years.

The defence of the

Soviet Union can only be guaranteed by the overthrow of both imperialism and the Soviet bureaucracy. The latter is not subordinate to the former but part of the same process.

The Soviet bureaucracy maintains its rigid control through a monopoly of the forces of repression and the dissemination of information. In these circumstances the fight for basic civil liberties takes on

a fundamental character. Socialist Action does not necessarily support the demands of the independent Peace Group but supports its right to exist free of harassment.

Discussion of an activity around Soviet foreign policy, which apparently has become a taboo subject for the WRP, can only help the Soviet working class break out of its enforced passivity.

RICK HELLMAN, Oxford

Write to us!

This is your page. Send us your comments, criticisms or even congratulations. But please be brief — letters over 300 words will be cut. Write to: Letters, Socialist Action, 328 Upper Street, London N1 2XP. (Tel: 01-359 8180)

Labour's Campaign Document:

Militant
THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

LABOUR'S new campaign document 'The New Hope for Britain', based upon Party Conference resolutions, will undoubtedly attract the support of millions of workers suffering under the effects of four years of Thatcherism.

Militant supports this programme and will fight to see it implemented. If Labour wins the election, the party ranks must see that there is no retreat under capitalist pressure.

Across the English Channel, however, in France, a country one

What the left press said

third richer than Britain, Mitterrand has demonstrated that a programme more radical than this one cannot be implemented if the power and wealth of big business is not broken.

Unless the capitalist system is overthrown and socialist policies introduced, the French experience will be repeated in Britain under the next Labour government.

Only in a democratically planned economy in which the top monopolies are nationalised under workers' control and management can the promises of this programme be made real.

Labour HERALD

A WORLD crisis, and increasing danger of nuclear war, with nearly four million unemployed in Britain can be seen to demand radical solutions. Voters, whether middle class or not, can understand the need for change, even if they do not agree on what it should involve.

What they will reject is a programme which looks just like a rehash of what went before and did not work. There is nothing to be gained by a further dilution of the Campaign Document.

Quite the opposite is true. If we take our cue from what the document says, rather than what the press reported, it is plain to see that too many of the most important issues are badly fudged.

It is not yet the radical left-wing pro-

gramme which would provide a convincing socialist alternative to Thatcherism.

If the manifesto is to differ from the Campaign Document it must be stronger, much stronger, and not weaker.

Socialist ORGANISER

THIS is not a battle plan for storming the commanding heights of the economy, but a scheme for co-opting the trade unions into taking responsibility for the sickness of capitalism.

When the system of production for profit has brought us to today's crisis, why is Labour begging and bribing the profiteers to expand business? Shouldn't Labour be fighting to take over the major banks and enterprises, putting them under common ownership and workers' democratic control?

Isn't that the only way to have rational planning and jobs for all,

rather than vague hopes of unemployment being brought below one million within five years?

Such a fight would raise many other issues. The millionaires would not submit passively to being stripped of their millions: the top civil service chiefs, the courts, the monarchy, and the police and army hierarchies could all be expected to swing into action to support them.

The labour movement would have to mobilise the working class to meet sabotage by direct action; counter-revolutionary violence by armed workers' defence.

Yet that is the consistent class struggle alternative to the Campaign Document's new social contract. And to build towards it now, we must fight for Labour to break with its projected unity with the bosses and the bankers — to support workers in struggle, rather than spinning schemes to persuade the capitalists to hand down some crumbs.

Recent books reviewed by Bob Pennington

Durruti — the people armed

By Abel Paz. Published by Black Rose Books. £4.95.

IN SPAIN in 1936 when the civil war broke out the anarchists had enormous influence in the working class and the peasantry. And among the anarchist leaders none stood out more than Buenaventura Durruti.

After his death at the front his funeral in Barcelona on 23 November 1936 was attended by over half a million people.

For the revolutionary masses of Catalonia Durruti symbolised hopes and aspirations. Unlike the Stalinists and the right wing socialists such as Prieto he was not prepared to subordinate the need for social change to a pact with the liberal Republicans.

He had no illusions in the capitalist government of the Popular Front. He said:

'No government in the world fights fascism to the death. When the bourgeoisie sees power slipping from its grasp, it has recourse to fascism to maintain itself.

'The Liberal government of Spain could have rendered the fascist elements powerless long ago ... instead it temporised and compromised and dallied.

'Even at this moment, there are men in the government who want to go easy with the rebels.'

This statement made on 5 August 1936 was to be tragically confirmed by the bloody events of the next three years. Nor did Durruti think that the Spanish revolution should hold back in the interests of the Soviet bureaucracy's peaceful co-existence with capitalism.

He pointed out, 'the workers of Germany and China were sacrificed to fascist barbarism by Stalin' because of this policy. He explained how the Spanish workers were 'setting an example to the German and Italian working class how to deal with fascism.'

Whether he expected any help from France or Britain when Hitler and Mussolini began to assist the rebels he replied: 'I do not expect any help for a libertarian revolution from any government in the world.'

He recognised 'the conflicting interests of the different imperialisms

might have some influence on our struggle.

'Franco is doing his best to drag Europe into the quarrel. He will not hesitate to pitch Germany against us. But we expect no help, not even from our own government ...'

Unfortunately the workers' organisations did not heed Durruti's words. In the interests of unity with their own capitalist class and in an attempt to win the favour of the Western 'democracies' they strangled the revolution and prepared the way for Franco's victory.

When a reporter told him he would be sitting on a pile of ruins if the workers won he retorted:

'We have always lived in slums and holes in the wall. We will know how to accommodate ourselves for a time. For you must not forget, that we can also build these palaces and cities here in Spain and in America and everywhere. We, the

workers.

'We can build others to take their place. And better ones. We are not in the least afraid of ruins ... The bourgeoisie might blast and ruin its own world before it leaves the stage of history. We carry a new world in our hearts.'

His tragic death not only denied the Republicans a military leader but it denied the revolution an authentic and credible voice of opposition to the compromisers.

Later, when the anarchists' leaders entered the government justifying this on the grounds of 'exceptional circumstances', they were able to overcome opposition in the ranks of the CNT.

It is hard to imagine that Durruti would have sanctioned such a move, nor would he have been likely to have accepted binding the interests of the workers to the broken-down machine of Spanish liberalism.

Abel Paz's book tells the story of Durruti's life and explains his role in the civil war.

Anyone who is interested in the Spanish revolution must know about Buenaventura Durruti. This anarchist biography about an anarchist revolutionary helps to do just that.



Durruti



Zapata and Villa meet in Mexico City 6 December 1914

The Mexican revolution

By Adolfo Gilly. Published by Verso Editions. £6.95

THE MEXICAN revolution after the Russian events in 1905 was the next popular uprising to show that the bourgeoisie was incapable of carrying out the tasks of the democratic revolution.

When the revolution began in 1910 it was an attempt to modernise and transform the oligarchic state by the modern bourgeoisie who cast envious eyes across the Rio Grande where they could see their US counterparts prospering on an unbelievable scale.

But to achieve their aims the Mexican capitalist class needed the help of the peasantry who yearned for land reform. In an unstable alliance with the liberal politicians the peasants took the road of revolution.

From the north came the armies of Pancho Villa and from the south came the armies of Emiliano Zapata. Both eventually entered Mexico City in December 1914.

Reform

Of course they were promised land reform by the capitalist politicians who explained that this would be done constitutionally and naturally

would take time. The revolutionary peasant armies were expected to disband and go home whilst the capitalist politicians go on with running the state.

Despite their heroism and their distrust of their allies the peasant leaders were not able to sweep the bourgeoisie aside and take over.

The working class was weak and disorganised and, unlike the Russian in 1917, did not have a revolutionary party like the Bolsheviks to provide political leadership.

The radical impulses of the revolution burned themselves out in political frustration and by 1920 Obregon had stabilised

capitalist rule through the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI).

Ruled

The PRI has ruled Mexico for the last 60 years without interruption. However, it has never been able to wipe out the memory of those stormy years when the revolutionary armies of Zapata and Villa carried the hopes of the downtrodden and hitherto despised peasantry.

Gilly's book has been through 16 editions in Spanish and this study of the Mexican revolution is particularly appropriate when Mexico once again is heading towards crisis.

Nuclear disarmament starts here

Published by CND Publications. 40p

THIRTY EIGHT YEARS ago the Americans dropped a small bomb on a Japanese city called Hiroshima.

Within seconds 70,000 people died. The final count showed that 200,000 people died.

Today a Polaris missile submarine can wipe out more people than all the bombs dropped in the last war. There is no defence at all against megadeath — that's a word the military coined for describing the death of a million people by the explosion a single weapon.

If you live in Britain the prospect of megadeath is a real one. We have — or more correctly the government has — more than 100 nuclear bases here. So if there is a nuclear war then our opponents would concentrate on us.

Emergency services would disappear. Injured victims would lie dying of lack of attention, thirst, starvation, cold or burns. Epidemic would sweep through the cities and the towns. Getting blown to hell is an expensive business. Every week the average British family forks out £20 a week to pay for our arms programme and Trident will cost £10,000 million.



This pamphlet lists in a clear readable way all these horrific facts which you need for the works can-teen; arguing in the pub; moving a resolution at the trade union branch or taking on the right wing in your Labour Party. So buy it. Now here's the snag. It also says: 'We might need

fighter planes, patrol boats, small submarines, helicopters and small non-nuclear, missiles.' It also thinks: 'We may need large part-time armed forces ...'

Here I part ways. The facts yes, the conclusions no. We should be putting across what nuclear war will mean to the majority

of people in this country — that's a bloody painful death.

But we should also be explaining that, not only are we against Thatcher and her man Mr Heseltine having their finger on the nuclear button, we are also opposed to them having their hands on any weapons at all.

TV CHOICE

Dallas
Wednesday 13 April, 8.10, BBC1

JR, having arrived in Cuba, has been thrown into Hollywood's idea of a Cuban jail. This stupid plot would be completely hilarious if it weren't for the fact that some people will actually believe it.

Could there be any link between the timing of this and Reagan's current activities in Central America? Anyway, the plot thickens when Bob- by discovers a box of Cuban cigars ...

The Paras
Thursday 14 April, 8.30, BBC1

IN THE FINAL part of this blatant advertising series for the most brutal regiment in the British Army, the lads finally get to see some action. But after having been psych-

ed up to blast the Argies, they find themselves sent to the North of Ireland instead.

Perhaps this is where their particularly vicious training is thought to be put to the best use, as the residents of Derry found out on Bloody Sunday in 1972.

The War about Peace

Thursday 21 April, 9.00, ITV

THIS IS Central Television's 'balance-restoring' answer to John Pilger's recent film, 'The Truth Game'.

That was the one they refused to put out until 'Journalist of the Year' Max Hastings could be

rushed back from the South Atlantic to produce this little number.

'I've tried to produce a personal report for uncommitted viewers rather than a propaganda polemic against the disarmers', whines Hastings.

Heroically brushing aside bias Max goes on to interview Heseltine, George Bush, right wing professor Michael Howard, various US generals and Reagan's former arms co-ordinator, all of whom deny that the American Administration believe in winnable nuclear wars.

With 'personal reports' like this, who needs propaganda!

Socialist ACTION

16/17 April

TRADE UNION SCHOOL

After Barmendsey and the miners ballot, the Labour leaders attack socialists in the movement and passively watch the Tory onslaught against workers' rights. Yet there is a strong minority of working people that reject these right wing policies. Socialists will play the central role in organising this minority into a left wing that can take on the Tories and fight for a Labour government committed to socialist policies.

The Socialist Action trade union school will examine the history of our movement in order to arm socialists in the unions with the tactics and strategy needed to face this situation. The school will look at the Second Congress of the Comintern, the Minority Movement and the principles underlying the united front. It will finish with an examination of the class struggle in Britain from 1968 to today.

The school will provide some of the theoretical and practical weapons for the next steps towards a class struggle left wing. Introductions will be given by speakers from the British and International labour movement.

The school will be held in London and accommodation can be arranged. For more details write to: Socialist Action TU school, 328 Upper St, London N1 2XP, or see your local paper seller.

DIARY

(These listings are free for all major labour movement and campaigns activities. Semi-display advertisements cost 5p per word and must be paid in advance. Send to: Diary, Socialist Action, 328 Upper Street, London N1 2XP to arrive not later than Thursday, one week prior to publication.)

● **Labour Research Department AGM.** Saturday 16 April, 2.30-5pm, Tudor Room, Caxton Hall, Caxton Street, SW1. Details: 01-928 3649.

● **Black Theatre Cooperative benefit for Roach Family Support Committee.** Guests include Saka Eati, Benjamin Zephaniah, Spartacus, Indian Dancers. Sun 17 April, Half Moon Theatre, Mile End. Details: 01-254 7480.

● **Hunger Strikers Commemoration Rally,** 1 May in Birmingham. Assemble at Sparg Hill at 1.30pm.

● **'Plantation Workers of Sri Lanka'.** An international conference on 23/24 April organised by the Sri Lanka Research and Information Group. Further details from SLRIG, 9 Grays Inn Buildings, Rosebury Ave, London EC1.

● **International Women's Day for Disarmament — 24 May.** For more information please contact 'May 24th', 16 Arundel Rd, Brighton, E. Sussex.

● **'Plastic Bullets' public meeting (exhibition and slideshow)** with Alistair Renwick (ex-British soldier) and Andy Harris (GLC Councillor). Wed 27 April, 7.30pm, 1 Thorpe Close, Ladbroke Grove tube. Organised by West London Troops Out.

● **'Towards a police state?'** Hounslow Socialist Forum meeting with criminal lawyer Brian Rose-Smith introducing on the Police Bill. Sun 24 April, 7pm, George IV pub, 185 Chiswick High Road, W4.

● **Labour Committee on Ireland Conference/AGM.** Sat 23 April, County Hall, London SE1. Discussion on new magazine and trade unions. Details: Box BM 5355, London WC1N 3XX.

● **Benefit for Greenham Common Women.** Sat 16 April, 8pm, at Apples & Snakes, The Roebuck pub, Tottenham Court Rd. Tickets £1.50/£1. Ring 01-699 5265 for details.

GREENHAM COMMON AND LABOUR

Speakers include:
Helen John
Greenham Common peace camp
Anne Csek
Islington North Labour Party

Thursday 28th April at 7.30pm
Islington Central Library, Holloway Road

● **24 May — Glasgow Women for Peace** are calling a Scottish Day of Action. Rally in George Square and Festival. For details contact Glasgow Women's Centre, 57 Miller Street or ring 061-221 1177-Saturdays after 1pm.

● **El Salvador — Bristol public meeting.** Speaker: Megan Martin (El Soc), Perry Lees (T&GWU) regional officer, personal capacity; and Solidarity with Latin America representative. Film: *Ballots and Bullets*. Sponsored by SLAM and Bristol T&GWU. Wed 27 April, 7.30pm, Transport Hse, Victoria St. Contact Rose Cooper, 5 Albermarle Row, Hotwells, Bristol for details.

● **'Labour — Barmendsey and beyond'** Hounslow Socialist Forum discussion introduced by Peter Tatchell. Sun 8 May. Details as above.

● **'Why Labour needs to speak to Sinn Fein'** Haringey Labour Committee on Ireland meeting with Steve Bundred (GLC councillor) plus LCI speaker. Thur 14 April, 7.30pm, Brabant Rd TU/Community Centre, N22.

● **Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom Conference and AGM,** 7/8 May at Goldsmiths College SU, Lewisham Way, London SE14. Details: CPBF, 9 Poland St, London W1.

● **Nicaragua, Guatemala and El Salvador Briefings** are produced by the Central America Information Service, 14 Brixton Rd, London SW9. If you would like to receive them regularly, please write enclosing your name and address.

● **Turkey — an evening of solidarity.** Organised by Tower Hamlets trades council with discussions, food, music, dancing and Guney's film: *The Herd*. Sun 17 April, 5-11pm, Oxford Hse, Derbyshire St, Bethnal Green E2. Admission £1.

● **Defend the NHS!** Socialist Health Association action pack against private medicine containing information on all aspects of private medicine and how to fight it. Includes pamphlets and factsheets. Copies from SHA, 9 Poland St, London-WIV 3DG, £2.50 (includes post).

● **'El Salvador — another Vietnam'** free film show at Wakefield Labour Club, Mon 18 April, 7.30pm. Speaker from Leeds El Soc. Sponsors include Wakefield trades council.

● **Concert for Chile** presented by Chile Solidarity Campaign with Quilapayun and The Boys of the Lough. Sun 1 May, 7pm, Dominion Theatre, Tottenham Ct Rd, London. Tickets £6, £5, £4, unwaged £2 from CSC, Seven Sisters Rd, London N7. Tel: 01-272 4298.

● **El Salvador Movement Conference.** 14 May, County Hall, SE1, 10am-5pm. Speakers include Judith Hart MP and Dr Salvador Moncada, senior FDR/FMLN London representative. TUS, LP and LPYS branches are invited to send two delegates. Details from El Salvador Solidarity Campaign 29 Islington Park St, London N1. Tel: 01-359 2270.

● **'Labour and the bomb — will unilateralism win?'** Newcastle CND public meeting. Speakers Tom Sawyer (NEC), Pat Arrowsmith, Bob Cryer and Ian Davidson (Anti-Trident Campaign). Fri 22 April, 7.30pm, Rooms 4&5, YMCA.

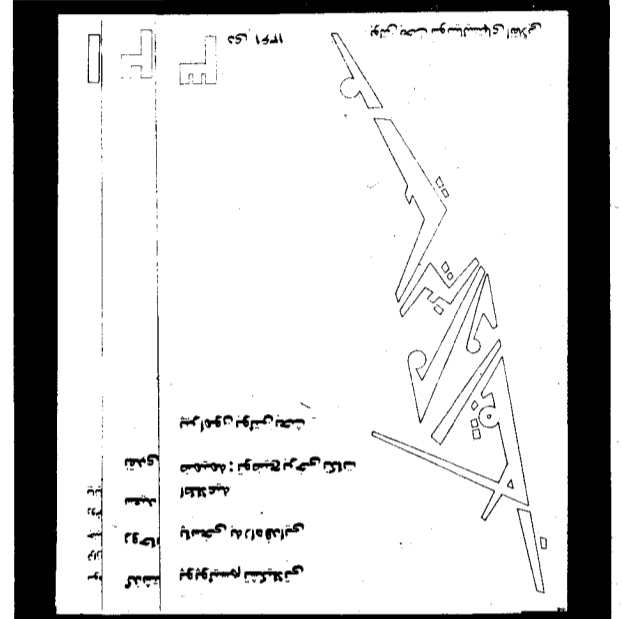
● **Gay Socialist:** special issue out now. Available from GS c/o 19 Hamilton Rd, Southall, Middx.



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- Socialist Action Forums**
- SHEFFIELD Speakers** Pat Hickey (SA), other speakers invited. Wed 13 April, 7.30pm, Burn Greave Vesty Hall (top of Spital Hill).
- EALING 'Getting rid of the bomb'** Speaker Alan Lenton (London Region CND Exec., personal capacity). Thurs 28 April, 7.30pm, Three Horseshoes pub, Southall High St (opp Town Hall).
- GLASGOW Speakers:** Helen John (Greenham Common), Val Coultas (SA), and speakers from Glasgow Women for Peace. Thurs 14 April, 7.30pm, Conference Suite, Mitchell Library.
- EXETER 'Socialist Action — a new labour movement newspaper'** Speaker from SA. Thurs 21 April, 8pm, The Oddfellows Arms, New North Rd.
- NOTTINGHAM Joint Revolution/Socialist Action day school on 'Central America and the Caribbean' and 'How to use SA'.** Sun 24 April, 1-6pm, Queens Walk Community Centre, The Meadows. For details phone Nottingham 256667.
- Support the May 7th demonstration for Britain out of Ireland and Self Determination for the Irish People.** For details of sponsorship etc contact the May 7th Organising Committee, Box 353, London NW5 4NH.

ADMINISTRATOR FOR RESOURCE CENTRE

Administrator wanted for community resource centre in Lambeth. Flexible 36-hour week, wage AP3 plus London Weighting. Worker should be experienced in administration and working in a collective and preferably have background in printing. Job description and application form from: Union Place Resource Centre, 122 Vassall Road, London SW9. Tel 01-735 6123 for further information. Closing date 16 May.

Socialist Action Spring Appeal

THIS week, Socialist Action launches its Spring Appeal for £19,500.

It might seem surprising, but the economic facts about producing a socialist newspaper mean that the cover price alone will never pay the production costs.

When we launched Socialist Action we had to decide — a 'realistic' cover price of say 60p, or a combination of a medium cover price of 30p discounted to sellers and shops with an appeal to make up the rest.

Month

This month we are planning a promotional drive around the big events like the Peoples' March, the YCND Carnival and the May 24th Womens' Day of Action.

We want Socialist Action to have the best coverage on these events, to have the best photos, the best interviews and the biggest impact.

To do that we need money. We need prompt payment from sellers, and generous donations from our readers. Every payment sent in will be credited in the paper.

Why the target of £19,500? It is what we need to pay for our rent, electricity, rates, phone bills and all the other expenses for producing Socialist Action.

By Martin Collins

We have no big advertising revenues like the Fleet Street press, so all the money we get is from sales and readers' support.

This weekend is the Socialist Action trade union school. All supporters of the paper are invited to the school which will discuss building the left in the unions.

We want more such events for our supporters, but we need the money to do it.

Year

All you have to do to be a supporter is to send us £20 for the year, or make out a standing order for £5 a month.

But we know we have supporters all over the country who are committed enough to give us much more than that.

By 1 July, we want to see our Spring Appeal logo completely covered by CND protestors. Sit down today and send us some money!

| | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| Manchester | £115.00 |
| South West London | 110.00 |
| Swindon | 45.00 |
| Nottingham | 65.20 |
| Manchester | 8.89 |
| Islington | 100.00 |
| Luczynski | 20.00 |
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| L. Ross | 5.00 |
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When completed and signed please return to: The Business Manager, Socialist Action, 328 Upper Street, London N1 2XP.

Please do not send the Bankers Order direct to your bank. Thank you.

'The influence of the Communist Party is there for all to see'

The article by Ken Livingstone, in your issue of 1 April, contained a number of distortions of the Communist Party's position; several inaccuracies; and some incorrect assessments.

I am grateful to have the opportunity to deal with some of these issues.

The article implied that the Communist Party is in favour of what is described as 'coalitionism'. This is, quite simply, not true. Ken's argument appears to be based on a very strange interpretation of our view on proportional representation.

Unlike most other political parties, we actually take our stand on democratic principles — and not on whether we think this or that particular fiddle will benefit this or that particular party.

Our position, unequivocally, is that the most democratic electoral system is that which most adequately reflects the view of the electorate. To suggest, as the article does, that this means that the Communist Party would be prepared, either itself to enter into coalition alliances with other parties hostile to socialism, or to encourage the Labour Party to do so, is a gross distortion.

Gerry Cohen replies to Ken Livingstone



Communist Party canvassing. Gordon McLennan, CP general secretary (centre) joins John Peck (left), national election agent and Bermondsey candidate Bob Gordon.

Left

Ken Livingstone says, 'I'm not opposed to proportional representation in principle.....', but then goes on to state a completely distorted version of why the Communist Party is not only 'not opposed to proportional representation', but is actively and deeply committed to it.

We in fact specifically argue in our programme the *British Road to Socialism** that proportional representation 'would not only make Britain's electoral system much more democratic,' but it would create more favourable conditions for uniting the left and achieving Labour/Communist unity.

It is, therefore, yet a further distortion to suggest that the Communist Party would 'line up with the social democrats against the left wing of the Labour Party' as the article says.

As the Communist Party argues in its programme, the *British Road to Socialism*, 'It is clear, however, that if these movements and their struggles proceed in isolation from each other, they can do no more than challenge the position of the ruling class on a series of different issues, and not its overall domination. If they are isolated from the labour movement, not only will they themselves suffer from the lack of its support, but the working class will be unable to fulfil its role of the leading force in society.'

Mass

The Communist Party takes the view that the conscious construction of alliances between the labour movement and other democratic movements is also necessary because, in the process of such alliances being forged, the labour movement will become increasingly aware that the struggle against class oppression extends far beyond the workplace and embraces strata beyond the working class — a concept dimly hinted at, albeit in rather limited fashion, in the article's last paragraph.

Through the dialectical process which will ensue in the course of this development, the labour movement will also arrive at a greater consciousness of its role as the leading force in society, and indeed be better able to fulfil that role.

This is the basis of our principled

approach to the concept of alliances — not some unprincipled approach based on 'coalitionism'.

With regard to the way forward for the left in the Labour Party, the Communist Party has always argued that the key is mass campaigning among the people, bringing people into struggle around the issues of the day, alongside consistent discussion, explanation, and ideological combativeness.

A recurring theme of the most recent meeting of the Communist Party Executive Committee, on 12 March 1983, following the setbacks of the outcome of the miners' ballot and the Bermondsey by-election, was that 'the battle for the hearts and minds of the working class will not be won only by initiatives from the top. It has to be engaged in continuing fashion, at grass roots level.'**

The Communist Party has consistently warned that the fight for left and democratic advance in the Labour Party should not be seen as more important than, or separate from, the fight to develop mass movement among the people.

Learn

'Palace Revolutions' in constituency Labour Parties or elsewhere, which result in right wing Labour candidates being replaced, whether by ultra-lefts or others, will not only not necessarily be helpful to Labour's election prospects. They could be positively harmful, especially when the internal struggle is at the expense of, and takes precedence over, the fight to take progressive policies to the people.

There are many in the Labour Party who have yet to learn that internal manoeuvring to win support for a particular political attitude within the Party is no substitute for mass politics.

From this point of view, I am completely in agreement with Ken Livingstone's concluding point that what is needed is a campaigning party with radical socialist policies.

This brings me to the points made in the article about the Communist Party itself; points which I find difficult to believe that Ken was seriously making, when he said that he didn't think that the Communist Party's views were relevant.

To assume that, because Communist candidate, Bob Gordon, got only fifty votes in Bermondsey, 'the

Communist Party is dying on its feet' is an unworthy conclusion for any serious politician to draw.

In the first instance, it is most unwise to draw generalised political conclusions concerning any party, based on the experience of one particular by-election result. Ken Livingstone argues in the very same article in which he does precisely that, 'that Bermondsey was totally untypical of everything else in the recent electoral past.'

Alive

Let me assure Ken, and all your readers, that the Communist Party is alive and well, and living in Britain!

It is a well known fact, certainly attested to by our enemies, if not always by our friends, that the influence and importance of the Communist Party in the British political scene is far greater than either the votes cast for it at election times, or the size of its membership, would suggest.

Of course we would like to win more votes, win seats, and have a much larger membership.

We ourselves were keenly disappointed with our small vote in Bermondsey. The result underlined yet again the enormous difficulties with which minority parties have to contend in the present British electoral system.

Those on the right wing, in whichever party, may draw some comfort from Ken's view that 'history has moved on past the British Communist Party.' I would urge them not to rejoice too soon. All the evidence suggests that history has yet to determine its own destiny, and will not have it decided in advance by Ken Livingstone!

There is scarcely a major area of political or social life in which the Communist Party does not exercise a considerable, and in some cases quite decisive, influence.

Class

Nowhere is this more so than in the crucial arena of trade union and labour movement struggles, at the heart of the struggle for left and socialist advance. No other political party is as deeply rooted in the working class, or as firmly based in its organisations.

In a whole number of other vitally important arenas, the influence of the

Communist Party is there for all to see — and, very often, to be attacked!

This is so, not because we seek to gain positions, or any sort of sectarian advantage; it is so because we, as an organisation, and our members, are sincerely concerned to develop struggle around the great issues of the day, and to help the people to win victories on them.

The very concept of the Peoples March for Jobs 1981, was initiated by the Communist Party as an important contribution to the fight against unemployment. When the TUC General Council and the Executive Committee of the Labour Party were trying to resist the organisation of a People's March for Jobs this year, it was the Communists who were to the forefront in the fight to ensure it takes place.

Thus you will find Communist Party members immersed in all the issues — of jobs, peace, against racism and sexism, for a decent future for young people, and the myriad problems facing working people.

Right

There may indeed have been some illusions at one time — shared by a few then members of our Party — when it appeared to some that the left was all set to roll on to victory in the Labour Party, that there was no longer any need for a Communist Party. Those illusions will, I think, have been shattered for many, as a result of the way in which the right wing of the Labour Party have tenaciously fought back, and indeed wrested back gains from the left.

It is worth recalling in this context that, when the trade unions were almost wholly under the control of the right wing, many on the Labour left argued that the traditional link between the trade unions and the Labour Party should be severed. It was the Communists who above all resisted this view, and argued that the challenge was to win the unions and their membership for left policies, not to abandon the unions to the right wing.

Perhaps a unique and crucial contribution that the Communist Party has made over the years, and continues to make, is to maintain in existence a national daily newspaper — the *Morning Star*.

The *Morning Star* is owned by a Co-operative Society, the People's Press Printing Society, whose members meet annually to elect a Management Committee. It is this Management Committee which is responsible for running the *Morning Star*.

It is a well known fact, however, that the PPPS has a special relationship with the Communist Party, and its successive Annual General Meetings over the years have reaffirmed that, while providing a platform for widely differing expressions of left and democratic opinion, the paper will express editorially the position of the Communist Party.

It is equally well known that the *Morning Star* could not have survived without the existence of the Communist Party itself. No other political party of the left in Britain can point to anything like this achievement. The sustaining of a national daily newspaper, advocating revolutionary socialist policies and strategies, in a Britain in capitalist crisis is an experience unique to the Communist Party.

There are of course many non-Communist individuals, and organisations, which have supported and will in future support, the *Morning Star*.

There are many non-Communist donors to the *Morning Star* Fighting Fund; and more will be welcome. There are many non-Communist shareholders in the PPPS; and more will be welcome.

But none of them would claim that the *Morning Star* could have survived without the commitment and determination of the Communist Party.

This alone suggests that, with whatever problems, and there certainly are many, the Communist Party, warts and all, nevertheless continues to make a vital contribution to British politics. Given the possible avenues of development of the political scene, and given the recent experiences of the Communist Party and the *Morning Star*, the pointers are that that contribution, far from diminishing, will become increasingly significant over the coming years.

It may appear to be a strange contradiction that, in the face of attack on so many different fronts, by one of the most reactionary governments Britain has seen this century, there has not been the massive revulsion from Toryism one might have expected.

It is not perhaps so strange, when you consider that Britain is ruled by a capitalist class that is still enormously powerful, profoundly experienced, and incomparably resilient. No ruling class anywhere in the world is more adept at adjusting the mixture of coercion and consent to provide the medicine by which it maintains itself in power.

Another factor is undoubtedly the tragic pre-occupation of the left with its self flagellation, tending to fragment itself with its theoretical organisational, and political differences.

It is no contribution towards overcoming these problems to misrepresent and distort either the views, or the condition, of what is probably the most effectively organised unit for the generation of Marxist ideas in the British labour and democratic movement — the Communist Party.

(Gerry Cohen is a member of the Executive and Political Committee of the Communist Party.)

* *British Road to Socialism* — Programme of the Communist Party.

** *Labour's Electoral Campaign* in *Communist Party*, by Gerry Cohen, *Communist Focus* No. 5, 1979.

Both the above are available from: the CPGB, 16 St. John Street, London EC1M 4AL.

Next week Vladimir Derer of the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy replies.

Union democracy and the block vote

FOLLOWING the conference organised by the Broad Left Organising Committee on 19 February this year, the Organising Committee met on 26 March.

This meeting decided to launch a vigorous campaign on union democracy and the block vote.

The meeting issued the following statement for discussion at the forthcoming union conferences. The Committee decided to call a further conference in November 1983.

THE RANK-AND-FILE of the trade union movement will be looking keenly toward the defeat of the Tories at the general election. It is us who have suffered directly the blows directed by this reactionary government.

Only a Labour government committed to implementing socialist policies based on Labour Party conference policy can eradicate poverty, mass unemployment and take the economy forward.

The party's policy if fully implemented could be the first step to fundamentally changing society in a socialist direction. But will the agreed policies be implemented? Already commitments to unilateral disarmament, withdrawal from the EEC, free collective bargaining etc, have been blurred and watered down.

To prevent further erosion of conference policy the rank and file of the trade unions must be fully vigilant, exerting constant pressure on the trade union leaders so that they in turn apply the necessary influence to ensure policies which will defend and advance the interests of working people are carried out.

The question arises how can the rank and file exert the necessary pressure.

Trade union democracy

Greater efforts must be made to further democratise the unions by union members alone and

no others. They are our organisations. Only we have the right to determine the methods by which openness, accountability and democracy can be best achieved. However, these methods have to give membership control.

The block vote

The block vote provides a target for hostile criticism of the trade union movement. Much of this criticism is aimed at fragmenting our collective decision making but creates doubt even among trade unionists.

We believe that the organised working class, the trade unions, must maintain and develop its political voice and this should be reflected on the basis of each union's strength. As in all other issues there must be uniformity and unity in action in casting the votes which reflect each union's strength. We are not in favour of either abolishing or splitting the block vote (on proportional lines) as some have suggested.

The block vote, rank and file democracy

However, the casting of the vote for policies and TUC and LP executives is often done with little involvement of the mass of our movement. Quite often these vital decisions are taken by a few officials. Subsequently even these decisions and how and why they were made are rarely reported back to

the respective unions. This should and must be changed.

The block vote should be the reason and basis for involving trade union members in the highest aspect of industrial, political and leadership questions via the organisations of the unions themselves.

The Broad Lefts hope that every union and union delegation will discuss the following ideas in order that the block vote become a fully democratic practice in all unions:

1. Union delegation to TUC and Labour Party should consist of at least half lay delegates. Conferences must control the size and make up of delegations.
2. All delegates should have equal rights, eg to vote and speak in the delegations and on the conference floor. There should be equal rights to speak on the conference floor (naturally in line with their union's policy).
3. All motions and elections should be debated and decided within each delegation.
4. We suggest that delegation meetings at the TUC and Labour Party conferences themselves are inadequate. Extra meetings during the year to discuss the union's propositions and nominations should

also be held and decisions collectively taken by all the delegation unless the union's conference has already passed its own judgement.

5. Decisions taken should fully reflect the union's conference decisions.

6. Minutes should be taken at delegation meetings and approved by them. Where a delegate wishes, the voting record on proposi-

TUC and Labour Party reports at union conferences becomes vital. The pitiful times allowed in many unions prevents rank and file influence over the union leaders. Separate TUC and Labour Party delegate written reports should be submitted to conferences for discussion and ratification.

9. Nominations to the TUC and Labour Party

should be made directly to the nominating union.

10. Minutes with voting recorded patterns of the TUC Council and Labour Party NEC on important issues should be circulated to each union.

11. The terms of delegations should last until fresh elections are held.

12. The 'leader' of each delegation should be elected by the delegation.

13. At regional level (for regional conferences) delegations are often appointed or selected by undemocratic practices. We believe that they should be elected and the same democratic procedures referred to above be applied.

Some or all of the above ideas feature in many unions. In many they do not. Individual rules may have to be changed if they are to be accommodated. In other unions the rules may be silent and allow undemocratic practices to flourish. In such cases codes of conduct could be adopted pending rule changes. The willingness of leaders to so self-reform should be a touch stone of their sincerity and intention to maximise rank and file involvement.

For further information contact: Phil Holt, Secretary BLOC, 108 Princes Blvd, Bebington, Wirral, Merseyside.



tions and elections should also be minuted. The minutes to be circulated in union journals or a special report.

7. Minority reports should be allowed to be circulated alongside the majority reports. Both minority and majority should be allowed to justify their points of view. There should be extensive but interesting and debate provoking reports.

8. At a time of intense crisis more time to discuss

executives should be approved by union conferences where possible. Conference should be allowed to express disapproval of other nominations. In particular now that most nominations to the TUC General Council are direct from individual unions and that this body represents the leadership of the trade union movement, elections for the nomination in each union should take place. After all, the person who is elected is now only respon-



Sheffield occupation

ENGINEERING workers at Firth Derihon in Sheffield have been occupying their factory since 1 April. For the past two and a half years, the workforce has been on short time — sometimes only two days a week.

You'd have thought the company is everyone's dream in Thatcher's Britain — good profits and a satisfactory order book. The company have a 40 per cent annual rate of profit, that's an average

of £1,879,666 over the last three years.

But the workers don't benefit. The employers decided to close the saw and die shops and to enforce redundancies with 'more drastic action' to follow.

The 80 workers involved — from Engineering, Transport, Electrical and Building unions — are determined to fight for their jobs and working conditions.

● Messages of support and donations: D Michie, 21 Mather Rd, Littledale, Sheffield S9. Cheques payable to 'Firth Derihon (Tinsley) Joint Works Committee'

Aluminium picket

ELEVEN HUNDRED workers at the Alcan aluminium works at Rogerstone near Newport, South Wales have been on strike for three weeks.

Following a merger of Alcan and the British Aluminium Company, management brought in rationalisation — 350 redundancies before Christmas, the plant to work at 50 per cent capacity and hiring of outside contractors for various skilled jobs.

The workforce oppose the use of contrac-

tors and demand enhanced redundancy pay. The last straw was the attempt to replace 'first in last out' with selective redundancies. This sparked off the strike by a workforce known as moderate.

They see this as an attack on jobs, union rights and return to hire and fire conditions of the 1930's.

Engineering union convenor Harry Jones explains 'If they get away with this, there is no point having a union,

Asian workers

TWENTY TWO spinners at Aire Valley Yarns, Farsley, near Leeds came out on strike on 13 March after their new Transport union shop steward was victimised.

The workers have recently joined the TGWU to protect themselves from a management that expects them to work a seven day week. The strike is now official.

The Asian workers, mostly from Bradford are demanding full union rights and no victimisation. The company is trying to break the strike using scab labour.

● Messages of support and donations to: Lia-quot Ali, strike fund treasurer, 34 Dirkhill Street, Great Horton Road, Bradford 7. (Paul Hutchinson)

apart from as a messenger service'.

The pickets have found an ingenious way of getting around the six picket rule. Up to 900 attend the mass 'information meeting' held each morning as office staff and foremen go into work.

(Paul Eynon and Roger Phillips)

PICKET LINES. Short 150 word reports by Thursday before publication. Longer stories, contact the Editorial Board by Monday, the week before publication.



Grosvenor House pickets outside industrial tribunal on 30 March. Support to GMBATU, Thorne House, 154 Brent St, Hendon NW4.

Scotland on the edge

IT IS as well that there are few Tory votes north of the border. Nothing much is risked when Tory industry spokespersons put up Scotland as a shining example of the regeneration possible in British industry.

True Scotland has fared less badly in the recent recession than the West Midlands and some parts of the North East (not to mention Northern Ireland).

It is also true that while the growth rate for the whole of Britain in the last three months averages out at 0.4 per cent, in Scotland it is estimated to be 1.4 per cent.

But these statistics hide more than they reveal. Scotland's recession is less severe than some other parts of Britain because the damage has already been done. The 1980-3 recession more or less finished off Scotland's industrial base. The seventy year illness of Scottish industry is over. The patient has all but croaked.

Scotland got into this state because it is on the extreme edge of the most recent developments of

British capitalism. Scotland's industrial story is not the product of its uniqueness. It is rather that Scotland brought together all of the most contradictory elements of the British capitalist economy as a whole.

By Paul Smith

Virtually all of the popular prejudices about Scotland's economy are wrong. In 1974 one third of Scottish jobs were in manufacturing. Today it is more like one fifth (considerably less than the proportion of industrial jobs in Britain as a whole.) Since 1975 111,000

manufacturing jobs have disappeared.

Productivity in Scottish industry has been consistently higher than in Britain as a whole for several years. But by the end of 1981, with productivity running at 10 per cent above British levels, industrial output was 15 per cent lower than during the time of the three day week. In the early seventies manufacturing accounted for some 40 per cent of Scotland's income. Today it is 20 per cent.

The only areas of employment growth in Scotland in the last few years have been in the oil industries (now levelling out at 65,000); electronics (40,000); financing and related services. Less than 20,000 work in steel, less than 10,000 in shipbuilding.

What's left of basic industry is weaker than its UK counterpart. It is more dependent on exporting

and 30 per cent more likely to be branches of multinationals which can easily be withdrawn.

100,000 Scottish workers now work for multinationals, and 60 per cent of Scottish income is dependent on exports. The economy is absolutely dominated by oil and oil related industry. Its insertion into the international capitalist market makes it part of the process taking place in the British economy as a whole. In Scotland they are carried through to their logical conclusion.

Upswing

What's happening to the Scottish economy makes clear that the latest economic upswing is unlikely to do much for jobs. Mr. James Goold, chair of the Scottish CBI, according to the *Glasgow Herald* of 28 March, says that the recovery is being

led by 'high technology' industries. This will do nothing to cut down unemployment but would stimulate growth in the economy.

Now it seems the *coup de grace* is to be administered to what is left of the battered industry of the Clyde. The bottom line of Scottish heavy industry, outside the pits (one tenth of their 1950 size) are the remaining shipyards Scott Lithgow and Govan — now marked to lose 2000 and 1000 jobs respectively and the Ravenscraig steelworks, where 4300 jobs are at risk.

Plans are well underway to turn the fight in these plants to save jobs into a Scottish-wide jobs fight.

The initiative is now with the Scottish TUC, which must develop a plan of action which can save the Scottish working class from the misery and poverty of the dole queue.



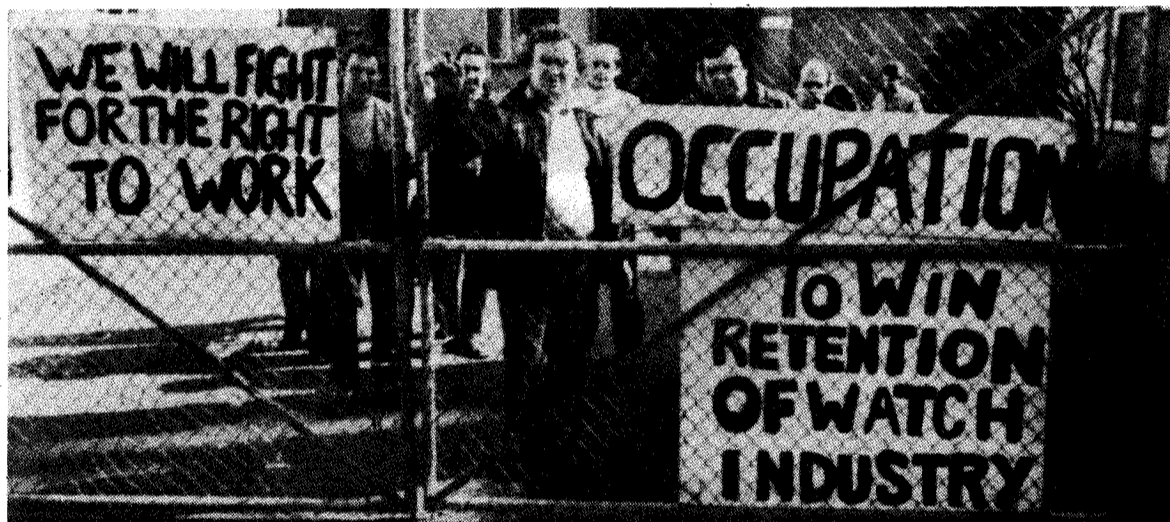
Scottish economy is dominated by oil and oil related industries.

Occupation at Timex

LAST FRIDAY at 9pm, 100 Timex workers stormed the Milton Plant in Dundee as they began an occupation to save their jobs. Works convenor Gordon Samson said that all possibilities of saving the 197 jobs due to go because of the redundancies decided by management 'have been exhausted'.

The Milton complex with the largest auto-screw department in Europe contains machinery valued at somewhere between £40 and £60 million which makes it particularly vulnerable to the tactic of occupation.

The decision to occupy was taken at a meeting of 700 workers who know that with 20,000 other Dundee workers already on the dole their chances of get-



ting another job are at best remote and at worst near impossible.

Deputy convenor John Kydd says: 'We are occupying for the right to work and we won't be leaving until we have a

negotiated settlement.' The Labour controlled Dundee District Council showed that Labour councillors can and should do other things than put up rents and cut back education.

In a magnificent gesture of solidarity it has voted £10,000 to the workers' fighting fund which is an excellent way to use public funds. The AEUW executive council has already given official

support. This determination not to take any more redundancies could show the way across Scotland and herald a real fight back against the dole queue.

Photo: MORNING STAR

WORM'S EYE VIEW



Grand race, grand profits

SAVING the Grand National has now become a national industry. Prince Charles made an impassioned plea for you and me to dig into our pockets and stomp up towards the £4½ million needed to keep the race going.

Another two nobles who have been working hard to screw money out of us are Lords Vesty and Derby.

You remember Lord Vesty? He's the guy with all those millions who

generally manages to pay zero tax.

Lord Derby scrapes a living by being one of Britain's wealthiest landowners.

Charles also has a few bob, which you — the great unwashed public — cough up anyway.

Others dead keen to keep the National going because of its great tradition are the bookmakers, who traditionally make a lot of money from the race.

This year they and their helpers loaded up

their satchels and made their betting shop tills play a merry tune with a take of £30 million.

Other enthusiasts for the National are the owners, trainers and jockeys. Liverpool has only three days racing a year, but the 18 races carry total win prize money of above £154,000 — the National pays £52,949 to the winner and the second, third and fourth collect £16,112, £7026 and £3833 respectively.

Mr Brian Burrough, who owns this year's winner, Corbiere, is a stockbroker. We all know what a hard time the City is having these days, so the money should come in handy and will help out with his supplementary benefit.

Others dead keen to keep the race going are firms like Fosters Lager, MFI — the furniture firm — the brewers, Edward Courage, Haig Whiskey and the *Sun* newspaper.

These, along with a number of other firms, sponsor races at Aintree and the *Sun* has

unselfishly been sponsoring the National itself.

Of course these firms put up prize money for the various races because they want to make the horses happy. It has nothing to do with all the advertising and free publicity they get.

Another body that should be anxious to keep the National going is the Inland Revenue. Every time a punter has a bet on the course, 4½ per cent of their stake goes to the tax people. Off-course punters have 8½ per cent clipped from their stake, plus another 1½ per cent by the bookies, who do that just to round the figure up — they have tidy minds you see.

But despite all their wealth, the bookies, owners, trainers, and commercial firms, discreetly egged on by the tax people, are not too proud to come to humble proles like you and me to ask us to pay up to save them.

It's nice to know that in a democracy we all have our part to play.



US Ambassador Dailey, a much 'misunderstood' man.

Being misunderstood

IT'S awful when you know you are misunderstood, particularly when you are getting paid for convincing people that your government suffers only from good intentions.

The US ambassador to Ireland, Mr Peter Dailey, thinks the case of the American government is 'misunderstood'. Being a bright and perceptive chap he says he detects '... an undercurrent of distrust of US policies among Europe's youth.

That must have taken a lot of working out

being in the vanguard of the struggle to defend Christianity. No wonder Mr Dailey thinks we are an ungrateful lot of sods.

Mr Dailey sees his jobs as 'public diplomacy'. That means he has to persuade British youth that all those cruise and Trident coming to Britain are just what we need. If a war starts the USSR would have the cheek to retaliate. These Russians never play fair.

A reliable estimate reckons that the USSR would despatch 300 bombs, equal to 220 megatons — which would be worse than 13,000 Hiroshimas.

Selling that prospect to people with even half a wit of intelligence calls for a glibness that I hope Mr Dailey does not possess.

Compiled by BOB PENNINGTON. Send contributions to Worm's Eye, Socialist Action, 328 Upper Street, London N1 2XP to arrive not later than Thursday a week prior to publication.

A Socialist ACTION



Workers assemble for Wednesday's mass meeting

BL workers reject management's 'peace formula'

AT A MASS MEETING last Wednesday, 5000 workers at BL Cowley voted by 8 to 1 to stay on strike. This decision followed a unanimous recommendation by the shop stewards to reject management's 'peace' formula.

In a letter sent to the homes of all employees management said the 6 minutes a day washing up time would be phased out by 6 May, and that a return to work on this basis would mean a speedy introduction of audited plant status.

The letter claimed this would mean an increase in possible bonus earnings from £18.75 to £30 per week.

This is a worse deal than the loss of the 6 minutes. APS means demanning — 243 workers would go in exchange for the increase in bonus.

The shop stewards recommendation contained four points. First, rejection of management's offer. Second, a campaign by the stewards and local union officials for the strike to be made official by the AUEW and T&GWU leadership. Third, all letters and intimidatory threats sent by management direct to workers, should be dealt with through the unions. Fourth, a further mass meeting to be held on Thursday 14 April.

By a Cowley worker

Management are trying to break the strike and divide the workforce, by encouraging workers to go back. They are unlikely to succeed.

But we need to guard ourselves against being sold out by the leaders of our unions. Over the weekend there were secret talks between national AUEW and T&GWU leaders and BL

management. As yet, we don't know the outcome but going by the past record of people like Duffy and Todd we have no reason to be confident.

We also need solidarity from other workers, particularly those in car and related industries, and from the labour movement in general.

If we can win support from the wider labour movement, especially public backing from Labour's leaders, then the leaders of our union will find it more difficult to sell us out.

Oxford Trades Council and the local Young Socialists have organised a rally to win the local labour movement to support the Cowley strikers.

The call made by Oxford LPYS delegates to the recent national BPYS conference for backing from union, Labour Party and LPYS branches country-wide, will also help win the support of the labour movement nationally.

TELECOMS

Kill the Bill!

By Pete Cooper
(POEU London West Branch)

MEMBERS OF the Post Office Engineering Union at the Bank of England and Whitehall Repair Service Control are on official strike against government plans to privatise Telecom.

Management have retaliated by suspending a further 22 telephone repair staff.

This action against the Telecommunications Bill and the blacking of the imminent interconnection of Project Mercury, the planned business only network, with the BT network has the government worried.

The *Observer* reported that Sir George Jefferson, the BT Chairman, and Kenneth Baker, the Industry Minister, have had to cancel a sales trip to India to take personal charge of fighting the union.

Bryan Stanley, the general secretary of the POEU, called the suspension an act of grave provocation aimed at escalating the action.

He said that the union would be considering what retaliatory action was appropriate. Operators on the South Bank Exchange, members of the Union of Communication Workers, refused to deal with calls reporting faults in the Whitehall area.

been waiting since 20 October 1982 day of action for something to happen and now things are galvanising quite quickly.

'We've had quite a lot of messages of support from branches from around the country now that the industrial action is underway, and we expect a lot more.'

'The objective of the action against the Telecommunications Bill is to Kill the Bill. While we don't believe that the industrial action by itself will do that, we think industrial action is an essential ingredient of the campaign to stop British Telecom being sold off into private hands.'

The right-wing dominated NEC's unanimous decision to call for industrial action is a turnabout from its previous emphasis on parliamentary opposition plus electing a Labour government to stop the sale going ahead.

Pressure has mounted from traditionally moderate branches in the union especially in the threatened rural areas because BT has started to reorganise itself into 'profit centres' prior to denationalisation.

Profit

Trunk and international calls currently make most of BT's profit. This pressure has added to the union's Broad Left's cam-



Bryan Stanley

campaign for industrial action to convince NEC moderates of the need to act.

'As far as the next steps are concerned the policy of my branch remains that we should be taking decisive action both against the government and against the financial institutions.'

'We have the power in central London to have a great deal of effect on both those institutions,' said Talbot.

Westminster Branch has called a branch meeting in work time next Wednesday to show those that are taking industrial action that they have full backing.

Speakers include Tony

Benn and Stan Orme, the Labour Shadow industry minister.

Talbot says: 'We've invited them to make the point that we have to involve ourselves in the political process to defeat the Bill.'

'Campaigning and taking selective industrial action now will mean that if we haven't already defeated the Bill it will be a central issue in the general election.'

'People will be clear that only a vote for the Labour Party will ensure that Telecom remains a publicly-owned corporation.'

Faults

Members of the POEU working at the Post Office Tower refused to test faults on Whitehall lines going through the Tower. None of them was suspended.

Colin Talbot, secretary of the POEU Westminster Branch, says that morale amongst the strikers, the suspended staff and the rest of the 2000 strong branch is 'very good and very solid. The branch has



PETER KENNARD'S montage in last weeks SA came from this excellent 72 page pamphlet from the GLC, County Hall, London SE1. Price 90p

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