

# A Socialist ACTION

**National demonstration**

No more Chiles —  
hands off Central America!

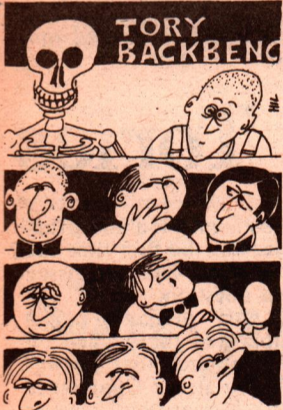
Sunday 11 September in London

Defend the workers of  
El Salvador and Chile!

## Tories slash our health service

# Fight for your life!

### MODERN TIMES



He's one of our new lads — just landed a plum job in the Department of Health and Social Security

THERE WILL be no honeymoon with the new Tory government. In the last seven days the Tories have:

- \* announced cuts in public spending which will mean the loss of tens of thousands of jobs and endanger the health of hundreds of thousands of working people
- \* given the first reading to Tebbit's new anti-union legislation
- \* allowed the hangers and floggers a grab at the return of capital punishment

#### By the Editor

And yet the TUC leadership is still dithering about whether to collaborate with the Tories.

The right wing trade union leaders are increasingly open in their act of

betrayal. John Lyons, the leader of the power station engineers, is proposing to discuss with Tebbit how strikes can be avoided in essential services — Tory code words for smashing up the public sector unions.

Frank Chapple, of the electricians union, wants to talk to the Tories on union reform and proposes that the trade unions break their political link with the Labour Party and back the Alliance too.

These proposals will only give aid and comfort to the enemies of the labour movement. Backing should come from every union for Arthur Scargill's intransigent stand against any dealings with the Tories and for preparing industrial action for the inevitable confronta-

tion with Thatcher.

That means fighting to remove the right wing 'fifth column' inside the ranks of the labour movement.

### Unions

In the trade unions the job of building broad lefts that can take on and defeat the right wing has just begun.

In the Labour Party, it means fighting for the Heffer/Meacher ticket for the Labour leadership and throwing the right wing majority off the National Executive Committee.

The labour movement has been served a declaration of war by the Tories, it must act accordingly to remove its traitors and cowards before they cause further damage.

- Behind Lawson's cuts — page 2
- Defend the NHS — page 4

## US Embassy picket



Photo: CARLOS AUGUSTO GUARITA

OVER 500 people took part in a picket of the United States Embassy on 5 July. They were protesting at the continued imperialist aggression against the revolutionary governments in Nicaragua and Grenada and US backing for the regime in El Salvador.

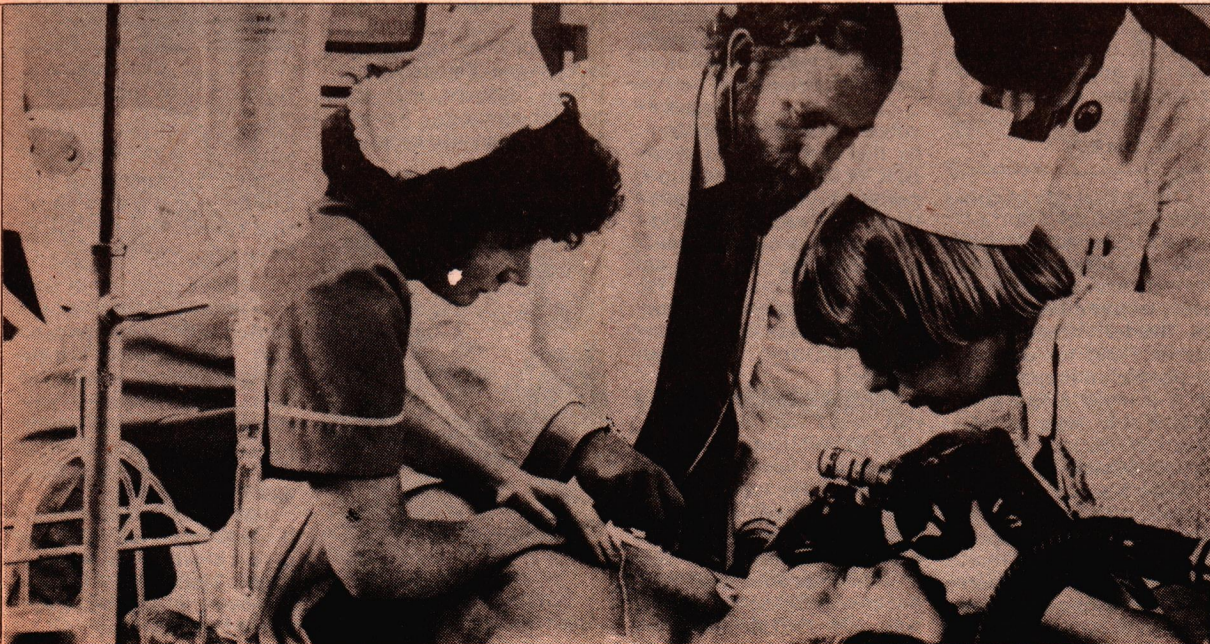
The crumbling El Salvador army is desperate for more US aid, and even direct US involvement, to crush the popular organisations in El Salvador — the FMLN-FDR.

The US Congress will be asked in the next few weeks to certify increased

aid. US special envoy to Central America, Richard B Stone, made a special trip to Costa Rica this week in a propaganda stunt to counter opposition in Congress.

He sought negotiations with the FDR-FMLN around the Salvadorean presidential elections due in December. The FDR-FMLN reject these phoney elections as a fraudulent claim for democracy. They refused to play Stone's little game and he went home empty handed.

The only negotiations that interest the FDR-FMLN concern meaningful steps to real democracy and freedom from US backed repression in El Salvador.



# Behind Lawson's cuts

NIGEL LAWSON attempted to pass off last week's £1000 million of spending cuts and 'privatisation' measures as simply a small adjustment in the economy.

It was too brazen for a Tory Chancellor to admit that a Conservative government had lied to voters throughout an election campaign. So, according to Lawson, there were no real economic problems. Just of bit of financial tidying up.

The City of London, which deals in money and not words, had a very different attitude. It is baying for blood and considered the government's moves totally inadequate. Share prices fell sharply on Friday — the day after Lawson made his economic statement.

## The election boom

The background to the cuts is quite simple. The government engineered a major consumer boom in the last year to help ensure that it won the election. The money supply increased by 15 per cent in the 12 months up to May. Spending in the shops increased by 6 per cent in the same time. This consumer boom helped gain the votes that Thatcher won in the South East of England and elsewhere.

By John Ross

The problem for Thatcher is that this surge of spending has nothing to do with the underlying state of the British economy. It was consumer spending which was essentially paid for simply by oil revenues. No significant increase in production in the British economy took place at all and huge quantities of imports were sucked in — the import being financed initially by North Sea oil.

The result is that now the government faces a deterioration in the balance of payments which is far worse than

anything in the money supply figures which the press have been publicising.

In 1981 Britain was running a £6000 million surplus on the balance of payments. For 1983 the Treasury was only predicting a £1500 million surplus — which was already a reduction of three quarters from two years ago.

But the reality has turned out much worse than even the most pessimistic Treasury forecasts. For the first five months of 1983 the surplus on the British balance of payments was only running at an annual rate of £80 million — a twentieth of what the Treasury had predicted.

A total of a £6000 million surplus on the balance of payments has disappeared in only two years. Without roughly £500 million a month benefit from North Sea oil Britain would already today have a massive balance of payments deficit. This situation is now getting worse each month.

## Manufacturing Industry

What underlies this rapid deterioration of the balance of payments is the sharp decline of the competitive position of British manufacturing industry which has taken place under the Thatcher government.

In 1978, the last year before Thatcher came to

office, Britain had a surplus of £5066 million on trade in manufactured goods. By the first three months of 1983 Britain had a deficit on trade in manufactured goods running at an annual rate equivalent to £2700 million — the first deficit on British manufactured trade in history.

That £7700 million discrepancy in the international position of British manufacturing industry is what explains the rapid deterioration in the balance of payments.

To see just how dramatic the collapse in the international competitiveness of British manufacturing industry has been under Thatcher we show in the table below exports of British manufactured goods compared to imports in the last 10 years.

## Imports

As can be seen in 1978, the last year before Thatcher came to office, British manufacturing industry was still selling 22 per cent more goods abroad than were imported.

By the first quarter of 1983 Britain was actually exporting 6 per cent less manufactured goods than it was importing. In other words British manufacturing industries competitiveness, as shown by the struggle in markets, has declined by roughly 28 per cent in the four years of the Thatcher government.

This is without comparison the most disastrous collapse of the competitiveness of British manufacturing industry in history.

Lawson's spending cuts are only just part of the price that is now going to be extracted by the Tory government. In the last four years Thatcher



More empty wards on the way with Lawson's cuts

Year	Percentage of manufactured goods exported compared with those imported
1973	118%
1974	117%
1975	131%
1976	131%
1977	130%
1978	122%
1979	110%
1980	119%
1981	116%
1982	107%
1983 (1st quarter)	94%

smashed into the unemployed, the low paid, women and many others but she used oil to finance an increase in real living standards for many of those still in work.

Unfortunately many people were misled by this and voted Tory at the election. Now they too are going to pay the price as the collapse of manufacturing industry exerts its deadly toll.

First will come the spending cuts in the NHS, education and other fields — with another round of reductions to come in the autumn.

Then will come reductions in wages as the brakes are slammed on the economy to try to halt the worsening balance of payments. This has already started with the increase in mortgage rates and the reduction in living

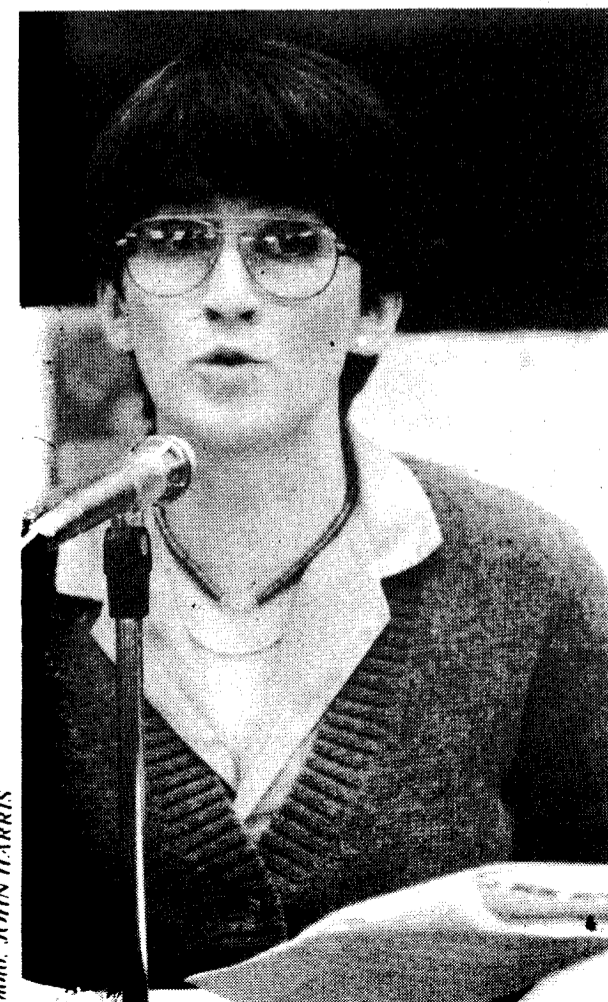
standards it will cause.

The process has just started. Instead of trying to talk the Tories out of it as Len Murray and the TUC leadership proposes, a joint plan should be drawn up between the trade unions and the Labour Party to prevent the present cuts going through and to resist the inevitable second round later this year.

Such a plan must have as its first principle support for all those in struggle against the Tories, and a pledge that the health workers, rail workers and others who will be fighting against the cuts, will not be betrayed as they were in last year's battles.

\* Fighting to defend our health — page 4.

## TGWU Conference



Ann Pettifor: challenged executive

AMID frequent assertions that the Transport and General Workers Union was 'the biggest and best' union in the country, the union's executive managed to fudge its way through the 30th Biennial Delegate Conference with a minimum of clarity and with the maximum room for manoeuvre.

With the single exception of the debate on women's rights, conference followed the lead of the executive.

- It voted:
  - Against incomes policy, but for the National Economic Assessment
  - For opposition to Tebbit, but rejected a commitment to industrial action
  - For independent trade unions but also for a campaign for import controls (which will mean joint campaigns with employers)
  - Against the anti-working class policies of the Tory Government, but for continuing talks
  - For Kinnoch as leader of the Labour Party but against taking a choice between Meacher and Hattersley for Deputy.

As a result, Britain's largest union is set to continue the balancing act it has maintained since Jack Jones retired — a balancing act which has always landed it on the side of the right, when the crunch has come.

In view of the composi-

tion of the conference the outcome was hardly surprising.

Of 1200 delegates, I counted 20 women (there were no official figures). The average age of delegates was 45 to 50. The Communist Party, which was the main left current there, was content with having a 'left' executive and loath to put demands on it that might show it to be something different.

By Pat Hickey

On the first day of conference Michael Foot addressed delegates and spoke of the need to 'recover from a severe setback', to unite behind the new leader 'whoever it may be', and to 'educate our people' in preparation for a general election in 1987. There was no explanation of the general election debacle.

After a polite standing ovation, Walter Green- dale, conference chairperson, pronounced that, 'that is the kind of leadership we will be voting for, I hope'. And so it was.

## no policy to fight Tories

The discussion on the leadership of the Labour Party was adroitly manoeuvred by the executive to ensure that there was no discussion on policy.

The choice of candidate was mixed in with a debate on two resolutions on the democratic control of the T&GWU's 1.25 million strong block vote.

A motion calling for a ballot of affiliated members was rejected, as was a motion which called for a recall delegate conference to decide on the leadership question.

Instead, delegates voted to leave the decision to the executive between BDCs. CP delegates supported this on the grounds that conference should have confidence in 'our left Executive'.

The decision on the Deputy leadership was left to the executive on similar grounds.

On past performance, this could well mean that the T&GWU vote going to Hattersley in order to 'balance' the left drift. There will need to be a vigorous campaign for Meacher to stop this.

The executive did not have everything its own way. In the debate on

women's rights it was dramatically overturned. The debate on this was due to be taken on Thursday, but the executive attempted to preempt it with a procedural move on Wednesday by using a statement.

Marie Patterson made the statement on behalf of the executive — a bland and complacent assertion that the union leadership had done a great deal already, and would do more, and the matter should be left in their hands.

Despite the surprise attack, Anne Pettifor from 1/975 Branch led the counter-attack. Several other women also opposed



Moss Evans

the statement, arguing that this was the first time the T&GWU had discussed this question.

One delegate (male) supported the women on the grounds that he was able to attend Conference with a clean shirt because of his wife. To the amazement of almost everyone the statement was defeated.

Conference then went on to discuss the motions. All were passed. Marie Patterson made clear the executive's opposition to women's advisory committees, or the women's conference of the LP having the power to elect members of the Labour NEC or the union executive. The success at the Conference is a very good first round. But the battle has a long way to go.

On the CND issue, conference voted to support any branch which boycotted work on nuclear bases, but avoided any suggestion of the union nationally campaigning for national strike action against the missiles.

As Moss Evans said in his 'I'll go to jail' speech, in fact it will be business as usual. That will be his intention. It is not the intention of the Tories.

Women take on boys in green

# Fortress Greenham



Photo: MORNING STAR

Women defy the police barrier

Troops keep watch on perimeter

**MICHAEL HESELTINE** informed the Greenham women last week that troops were being sent to the airbase to protect them! They were needed in case US airmen thought the women were terrorists and decided to shoot to kill! Some protection, having the police, military riot police and troops from the Highland Regiment throwing you away from the 10-foot high fences during the day — and hurling sexist abuse at you all night as lights flashed round the perimeter.

But despite all the police precautions during the week-long blockade, women still managed to get into the base, and early on Friday morning started to dismantle part of the fence. For this act 15 women were charged with criminal damage and face fines up to £1,000 and six months in jail.

Police massively outnumbered the women during the blockade until Friday, when 1000 women

turned up and 63 arrests took place.

By Valerie Coultas

Two features of the blockade were significant. Large numbers of women attended from abroad — Australia, Canada, Sweden, Holland, France and Germany. Second, there is a growing sophistication of police tactics. A special training

and operations centre at Newbury race course has been established to covey the workers into the base and to organise the police/army operations.

## Fortress

The sexist abuse was calculating and continuous. Women without bras were ridiculed and women at the camp were singled out for verbal abuse and tougher treatment.

Spitting, swearing and the use of horses indicated one thing clearly to all the women — the state is preparing fortress Greenham for a showdown. Women can expect increasingly violent tactics from the police.

But something else

needs noting. The numbers at the blockade were not what was expected — the organisers had been banking on 3000 a day, but until Friday the turnout was more like 300. A debate is emerging about the future of the women's peace movement.

Some women see direct action at the camp as the way forward. Others want to concentrate their energies on the European Nuclear Disarmament Campaign and the European Freeze Movement. Others, after the experience of the Women's International Day for Disarmament, wish to take the disarmament debate out from Greenham and push CND into a strong

labour movement orientation.

A further difference exists among women in the peace movement about what attitude to take towards the independent peace movements in Eastern Europe. This is likely to be the focus for a big debate in CND as a whole, given the meeting between some women and CND observers and Charter 77 activists at the Prague conference of the World Peace Council.

## Energies

Helen John speaking to 30 delegates at the Transport Workers Union conference on Wednesday strongly urged the unions to act against Cruise. She

suggested that the trade unions might urge CND to bring the 22 October demonstration forward by one day — and combine it with a peace strike on Friday 21 October. This bold suggestion received a mixed reception from the delegates. Most at the meeting felt that this proposal was unlikely to win support from the union.

But the point was made that the unions must take a far more initiating role in the disarmament fight. Helen argued that a trade unionists day of action should be organised to picket ports and airports where missile equipment might be brought in.

It looks as if 17 September will become the next important date in the

women's peace movement calendar. A massive protest is being planned in Geneva at the end of the disarmament talks. Women are discussing getting London buses from the GLC to drive 500 women over there.

## Cruise

Clearly this action will raise all the questions associated with the debate over the freeze. Women should go to Geneva, delegated by their Labour Parties and trade unions if possible — but with the clearest possible demands — no cruise, no Trident or Pershing in Europe, no to 'independent deterrents', and no to NATO and the imperialist death plans.

# Not just a camp — but a movement

By Kay Bastin (Manchester Greenham Support Group)

7.20am, Friday 8 July at Blue Gate, Greenham Common.

**THE CONTINGENT** from the North West and Midlands numbers several hundred women. A row of policemen are behind the gate, a row of women in front of it. The first convoy is due.

Many of the women have never been before, but have come to give support to the action. A band is playing and women are dancing and singing to prevent the paralysis of fear — we know how violent the police have been.

Word reaches us that women have cut through and exposed 30 yards of fence at Indigo Gate — and that the Halifax coach has met the convoy on its way, stopped and

that the women lay down in the road, which delayed the convoy by 1½ hours.

There is a feeling of strength and a roar goes up when police vans full of women rush past.

The police pressure increases — most of us block the road. Mounted police arrive as do reinforcements behind the gate. The helicopter swoops over us — the convoy is due.

Suddenly seas of police pour out of the gate, some lining the road, some hauling women inside — and at the same time rows of mounted police ride straight into the women on the road. There is a cacophony of horses hooves, police shouting orders — and through it

all women singing in defiance.

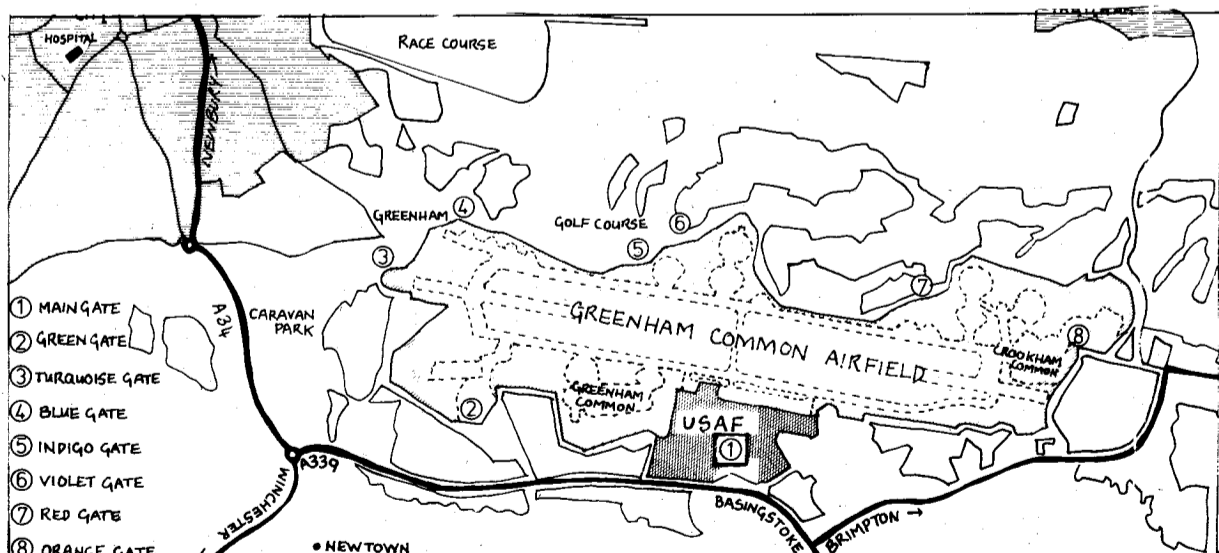
The convoy flashes past to a rousing chorus of whoops from the women. The police run back through the gate to prevent us getting in. No arrests but a great deal of violence.

Amazingly — there are no major injuries, just extensive cuts and bruising. We have glimpsed, as has everyone at a mass picket, the forces of the state with the gloves off, sanctioned to do anything except shoot — yet — to get the workers through.

## 12 noon

The next convoy is due. This time there are women in the road from the gate to the main road. Sitting, singing and dancing. We have pulled together a cohesive block.

The motorbikes, vans and horses arrive. The



Greenham Common and surrounds

helicopter swoops. The convoy flashes into sight and around the corner, roars towards us and suddenly swings left down the road. We know that they have gone through another gate where it is easier to get in, but we feel victory together.

Throughout the day a feeling of solidarity grows and the question of the future of the movement is discussed. I've heard it said that Greenham is the largest movement of women since the suf-

fragettes. There is no doubt that it has drawn thousands of women into action for the first time — and begun to raise the issue of women's liberation for many.

Across Europe it has created a mass solidarity movement of women. It is no coincidence that the Tories plans on women came out soon after Greenham began — a mass political movement of women is a threat such a government cannot ignore.

## Greenham Star Marches

At the end of July eighteen Women for Life on Earth 'star' marches are being organised from different points in Britain to Greenham Common. All eighteen marches will arrive on 6 August — Hiroshima Day. If you want to be put in touch with your local march organiser contact Stephanie Leland, 2 St Edmunds Cottages, Bove Town, Glastonbury. Phone 0458-34484. For details of the 17 September event in Geneva ring Sarah Meyer 054-884 2851 or the Greenham Office 01-251 3133.

# IRELAND UNFREE

## Why they prefer assassination to hanging

THE DEBATE in parliament on hanging has really very little to do with the morality of a barbaric means of maintaining law and order.

Even the Armagh bishops found secular issues uppermost in their minds when discussing the issue.

Although the calls for the reintroduction of the death penalty for terrorism have been as the *Irish Times* acknowledges 'as traditional as the call for the reintroduction of Stormont, with as much chance of success', the strengthening of the hardliners after Tory election gains and the increased influence of the Police Federation has rattled the status quo.

Fears are that hangings would only escalate violence in the province, increase the risk of reprisals, hostage taking, and assassinations of the judiciary.

The non-jury and little evidence 'Diplock Courts' would once again come under public scrutiny. The limited successes of the supergrass campaign would be wiped out and every potential conviction would be met by waves of rioting.

The voice of the establishment says: 'we do not want to create martyrs' despite the fact that killing has been the one consistent thread of British policy in Ireland.

Of course the current problem is that if terrorists were to be exempted it would smack a little bit of a 'special' or should we say 'political' status.

Hence the rush to get the vote out of the way before the hang-em all brigade of the Tory conference gets unleashed.

We would point out that the death penalty is already in use in the North. It was used on the hunger strikers. It was used on two Derry youths killed by a Landrover. It was used against 14 people on Bloody Sunday found guilty of demonstrating in Derry and summarily executed.

It has been used 14 times against nationalists found guilty of offending British soldiers by their presence on the streets, sentenced to execution by plastic bullets.

## Troops Out Delegation

THIS YEAR, the TOM delegation to Ireland on 5-7 August marks the 12th anniversary of internment and the 14th anniversary of the troops going in.

The delegation will join in the annual commemorations of internment and have plenty of chance to talk with local people and groups.

Transport is being arranged from London and other areas. Cost is between £30-£40 from London and other areas depending on distance.

There is also an £8 (£4 unwaged) registration fee for overheads, accommodation and food.

If you are interested send SAE to Delegation Organising Committee, PO Box 353, London NW5 or Tel. 01-250 1393.

# Stop the Tories triple attack on health!

THE GIANT CUTS imposed by Chancellor Nigel Lawson on the National Health Service have completely exposed Thatcher's post-election lie that the health service was 'safe in our hands'.

But the £140m reduction in health spending is only the latest in a series of measures taken against comprehensive and free health care.

The NHS also faces deadly threats from the growth of private medicine and the increasing use of private contractors.

Of the £500m cuts, £240m will come from defence, £140m from health, £50m from nationalised industries, £36m from education, £30m from employment, £20m from overseas aid and transport £16m.

The cuts in a defence budget swollen by 'Fortress Falklands' will still leave spending 3.1 per cent higher in real terms next year.

### By Steve Potter

For the health service it means a cut of 0.5 per cent in the budget and a probable 2 per cent cut in the hospital building and renovation programme.

This has to be set against the factors which contribute towards the growth of the health service budget.

Britain's population is rapidly ageing. Before the year 2000 over one quarter of potential health service users will be over 60. It has been estimated that just to keep pace with this increased demand for medical treatment the NHS budget has to grow 0.7 per cent per year in real terms.

### Cost

On top of this there is the rapidly increasing cost of medical technology which adds another necessary 0.5 per cent growth into the budget. In total it is calculated that the budget must grow 1.4 per cent in real terms just to keep in the NHS in the same place.

Through the strict implementation of the 'cash-limits' system on Area Health Authorities, budgets have had to be continually trimmed.

Since 1979 government policies have led to 90 hospitals being closed and the loss of 13,000 hospital beds. A recent pamphlet produced by Birmingham's NALGO Health Services branch\* estimates that there are now well over 80,000 people waiting for operations in the West Midlands Regional Health Authority.

Nationally, if all those waiting for an operation were to line up in one queue it would stretch for

nearly 200 miles.

The cash limits policy too, with its assumed NHS rate of inflation, was the basis on which the Tories took their stand against health workers in the seven month long battle for a decent wage in the health service. That defeat led to talk in government circles of the health unions being 'soft' targets for the government's anti-union policies.

This is also one of the main objectives of the government's privatisation policy — now being applied with full force in the health service.

### Works

Privatisation works in four ways in the health service:

\* **Contracting out NHS ancillary services.** On 17 February this year Norman Fowler, through a circular to Health Authorities, gave details of how to contact private companies, draw up tenders and encourage this process through promises of VAT rebates on contracted-out services.

\* **Expanding the private sector in the NHS.** Phasing out of pay beds was reversed by the Tories in 1980. Pay beds have increased by 21 per cent since then. At the same time consultants were allowed to earn up to 10 per cent of their NHS salary without forfeiting any of it. Private out-patients are allowed use, sometimes priority use, of DHSS facilities and equipment.

\* **Selling of NHS assets.** 'Idle land' owned by the NHS and whole hospitals are now being sold off to private medical schemes to be reopened as luxury clinics.

\* **Encouraging the private sector.** Another DHSS circular in January 1981 argued for health authorities to reduce their waiting list by directing NHS patients to the private sector. Over 4 million people are now covered by private health insurance.

These measures along with the cuts will have a dramatic effect on jobs and working conditions. While it will be the black

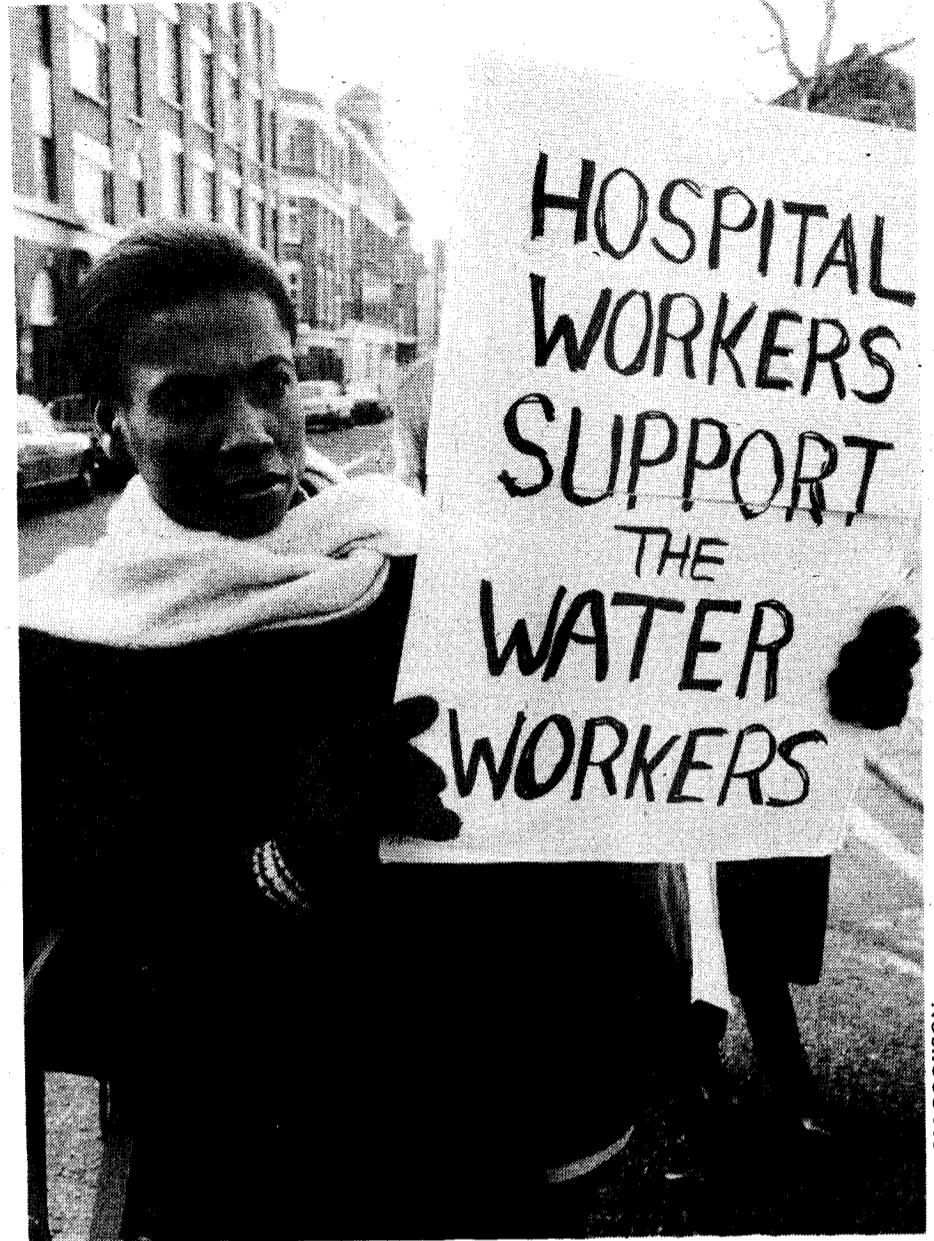


Photo: GM COOKSON

% GDP Spent on Health	Health Index Quality Ranking (1975)	% GDP spent on health (1975)(1)	% GDP spent on health (1980)(2)	general admin costs as a % of total health expenditure(3)	% health financed from public sector(1)
Sweden	1	8.5		7.6(1972)	91.6
Netherlands	2	8.1	8.5	2.8(1974)	71.1
Switzerland	3	6.9			66.5
UK	4	5.5	5.7	2.6(1975-6)	92.6
Australia	5	7.3			64.4
Canada	6	7.1	9.6	2.5(1973)	75.4
France	7	7.9	8.0	10.8(1974)	
Italy	8	7.1	6.5		91.3
US	9	8.6	9.6	5.3(1971)	42.7
West Germany	10	9.4	8.0	5.0(1974)	77.1

Health Index Quality Ranking is an index based on a composite of a number of health indicators; such as infant mortality, perinatal mortality and premature deaths - taken from sources: (1) *Health and Wealth*, R J Maxwell, Lexington Books (1981), (2) *Hansard*, Col 39; 17.1.1983, (3) *Public Expenditure on Health*, OECD, Paris (1977). Labour Research.

and women workers in the ancillary services that will be the hardest hit, no job is safe from privatisation.

Crothalls, one of the firms recommended by the government in its circulars, specialises in health management.

The basis exists for a united fightback by all health workers alongside other unions hit by the cuts and the public sector pay policy.

The chief obstacle to such a fightback is the TUC leadership and the national leaderships of health service unions. The role of these leaders during the healthworkers' strike amounted to the calling of successive protest actions to gradually wear out the massive enthusiasm and drive for action in the ranks.

### Result

One positive result of this was the strengthening in some areas of a new layer of rank and file leaders, sometimes organised through joint shop stewards committees. A national shop stewards conference was able to plan action during the health dispute.

The other result was a boost for 'broad left' type

formations in most of the public sector union: Group '81 in COHSE, a 200-strong meeting at the recent NALGO conference in the Isle of Man and in NUPE the victory of Broad Left candidates in executive elections.

These developments can link up with similar ones in other industries.

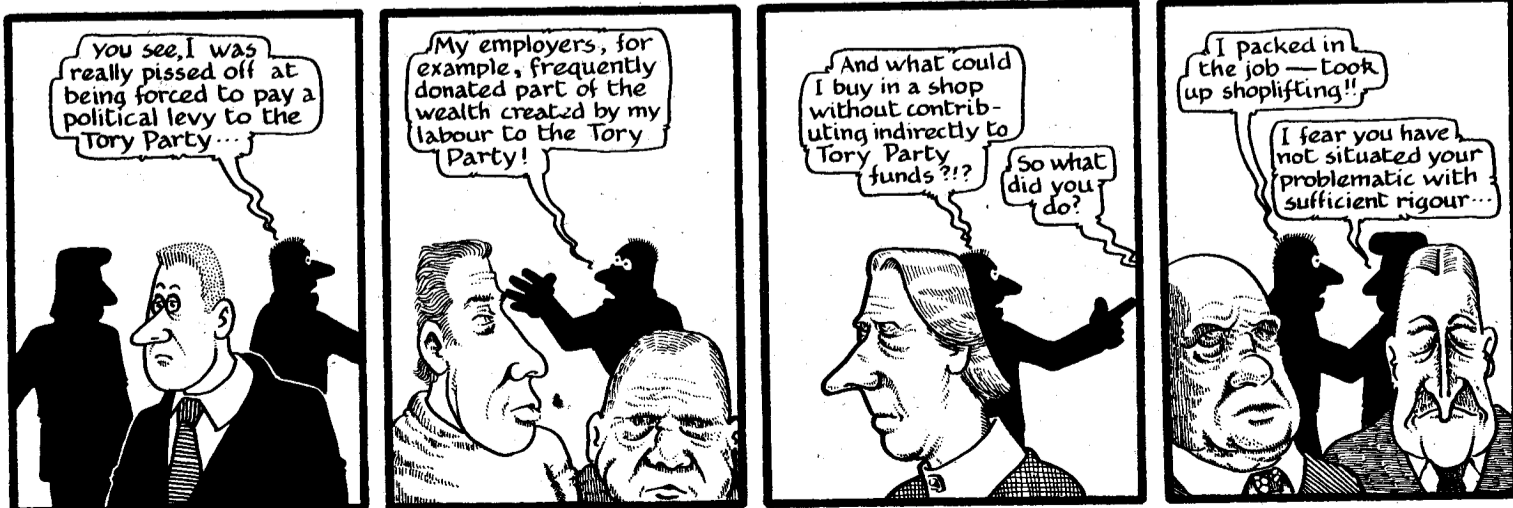
### Link

Area and regional conferences to defend the health service can link together the unions and the Labour Party in labour movement wide action to confront the danger that the workers movement faces in both its working conditions and its health as a result of the new Tory attacks.

\* *Profit out of Health.* NALGO Birmingham and Solihull Health Branch. £1.00. Reduced rate for bulk orders, details from above at 6th Floor, Trafalgar House, Paradise Circus, Queensway, Birmingham B1 2BQ.

## A PIECE OF THE ACTION

BY #18 7/83 CORMAC



# Glasgow's miles better for rich bankers

THE Labour controlled Glasgow District Council have just launched a one million pound advertising campaign, similar to the one launched by the City of New York 'to improve Glasgow's image at home and abroad'.

Called 'Glasgow's miles better' this campaign will pretend that the monstrous slums of Easterhouse, Drumchapel, Blackhill, Ruchazie and Hutchestown just do not exist. Instead it will concentrate on presenting an image of Glasgow as a city of green parks, and of fine, ornate Victorian buildings erected during the industrial revolution.

Lord Provost, Dr Michael Kelly, who lives in the affluent part of Pollokshields is worried 'that Glasgow's old image as a city associated with drink, dirt, and crime still plagues us'.

He further points out that 'this does us great harm'.

Dr Kelly seems unaware that the damp growing rampant on thousands of Glasgow houses does immense harm to Glasgow's citizens. He also seems unaware that due to various factors including bad housing, alcoholism and heart disease in Glasgow are the highest in Europe and among the highest in the world.

## Abroad

However Dr Kelly, who travels abroad a lot, is full of 'frustration and anger' everytime he meets an ex-Glaswegian who remembers life in Easterhouse or Drumchapel. He worries that 'Glasgow's bad image is the one that is always highlighted'. But his biggest worry about Glasgow's image is 'it hinders the economic

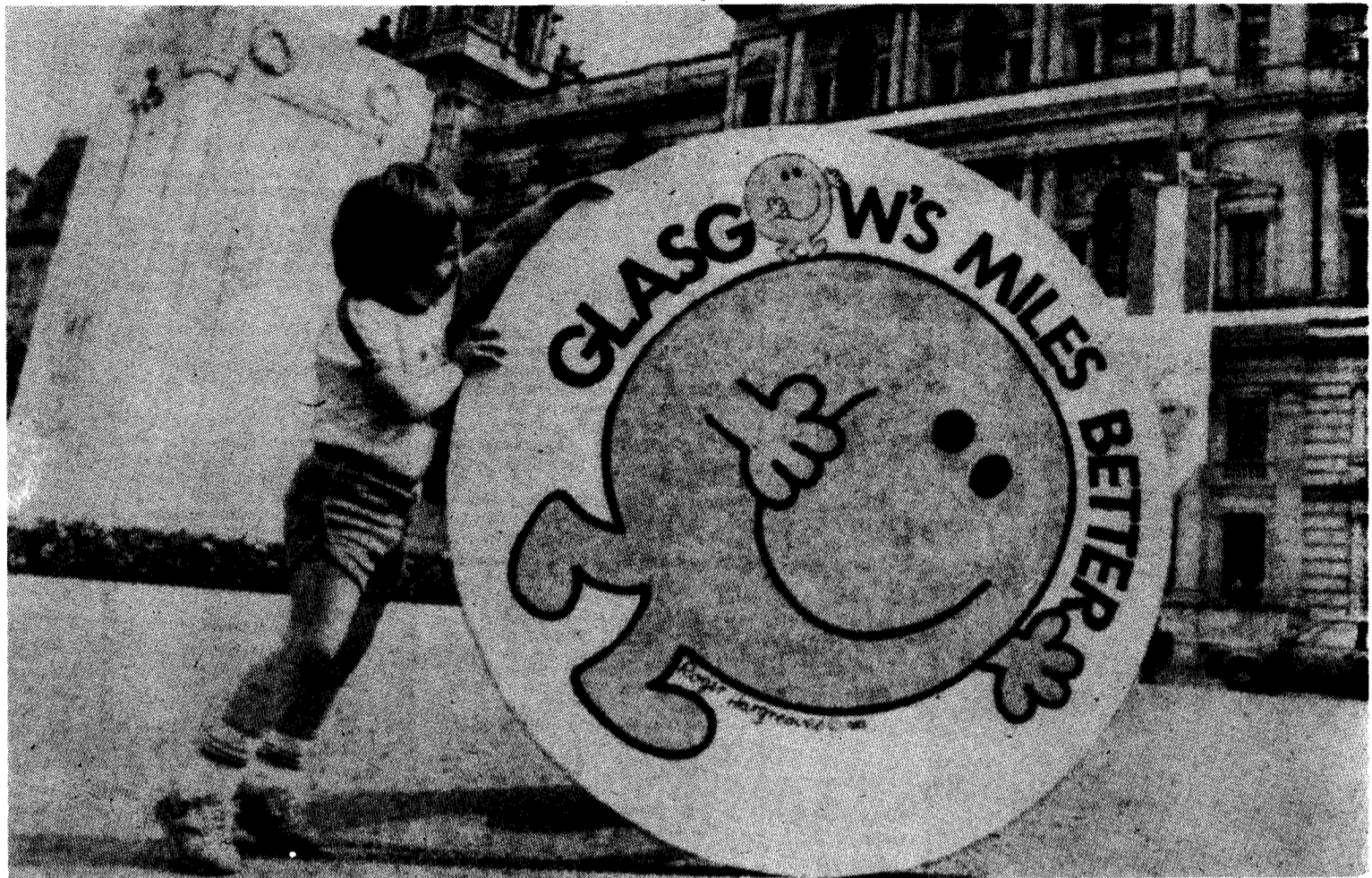
regeneration of the city'. To assist the 'economic regeneration' of the city, Councillors, Council officials, and private housebuilders have held meetings to discover ways to sell off public land.

## Secret

In a secret document of the New Private Housing Working Party councillors and council officials report a meeting they had with the Strathclyde Housebuilders Association — a property developers front group.

In it they are bothered that 'the builders only considered two sites to be viable'. This is from around fifty they were offered. Some were rejected for what seemed to the council very 'specious reasons'.

Strathclyde Regional Council's Planning Department representative on the committee is convinced 'that the builders had treated sites in other districts in the same way with the obvious intention of discrediting brownfield sites so that the Secretary of State would release greenfield sites'.



The minutes also mentioned another document which hinted that 'builders were to be asked to accelerate their rate of build, refurbishment and conversion up to 3000 units per annum with the twin objectives of ensuring replacement of the city's housing stock and regenerating employment

while the public sector building resources were restricted'.

Glasgow District Labour Party have consistently opposed the increasing use of private housebuilders, and the appearance of this document will further anger Labour Party members.

However Glasgow's

Labour councillors have consistently sought the line that brought least resistance from Secretary of State, George Younger.

Instead of launching a campaign against the Tories who are attacking the council for 'overspending' they have decided to find other ways to implement some of their

policies by increasing rent and rates.

This means the working class will bear the costs through rent and rates bills. But the use of private housebuilders also means the council has to borrow from private banks. This inflates the rent and rates bills with astronomic in-

terest rates which will take decades to be paid.

Their short-term solutions will leave Glasgow's working class with massive long-term problems in housing and employment that cannot be combatted by any number of campaigns 'to change Glasgow's image'.



## Women on trial

IT'S NOT only at the hands of the police and the Home Office that women suffer harassment and oppression.

Prisons are packed to overflowing in this country as most people know. What is not so well known is that more than three quarters of women currently serving prison sentences are jailed for minor offences.

Women are twice as likely to be sent to prison for a first offence than men are, and much more likely to be refused bail and held in custody pending trial.

Of women held in custody during remand, over 65 per cent of them are subsequently not imprisoned.

These facts were revealed in an excellent documentary by the *Broadside* current affairs series on Channel 4, which is produced by women. The programme revealed that in one particular case a woman was

remanded for 7 months for stealing a bottle of milk.

Women who step outside the 'acceptable' patterns of female behaviour are often treated by the courts as though they were mentally ill.

Judge David Wild takes his responsibilities very seriously in this respect. Some readers may remember him for his notorious remark last year in a rape trial, that women who say 'no' don't always mean 'no' and reminding the jury of the phrase 'stop it — I like it'.

Well, Judge Wild has hit a new low in jailing a woman for 3 months because she lied about how long she and her husband had been separated in an earlier divorce petition.

Previously, Judge Wild had punished the husband by binding him over when he held his former wife at gunpoint in her home.

Sweet Ramparts: Women in Revolutionary Nicaragua has just been published jointly by the Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign and War on Want. Available from The Other Bookshop 328 Upper Street, London N1 (01-226 0571), £2.95 plus 40p p&p.



## Police assault

A WHITE rastafarian grandmother, Margaret Parchment from Birmingham, has been sent to prison for two years for allegedly assaulting a police woman.

The police had arrived at her house at 8am looking for her son. They leapt on Margaret as soon as she opened the front door, not surprisingly causing her injuries.

They then took Margaret to the station where she was charged, strip-searched and locked up all day. When she was eventually released, Margaret's hands and arms were swollen and bruised from the rough handling she had received.

Incredibly Margaret

was later found guilty of assault. She has now been suitably punished for choosing an alien lifestyle and protesting at police harassment of black youth.

A defence campaign has been set up which can be contacted for more details, and which needs your messages of support and donations.

● Margaret Parchment Defence Campaign, c/o PO Box 572, Birmingham 20 (021-523 0580). (Bob Smith)

Compiled by HILAKY 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.

# Defend the ILEA

ONCE AGAIN many London teachers face being compulsorily redeployed by September. The Labour ILEA have chosen to ignore the protests of teachers against themselves and their colleagues being redeployed.

The Labour Group are not alone in their attempts to force redeployment on the London membership of the NUT. The National Executive of the Union have also attempted to thwart the strike action on 22 June.

They tried to go round the Inner London Teachers Association leadership by writing to every school representative telling them that the Executive think they should accept the 'deal'.

By Carole Regan (ILTA Treasurer)

The 'deal' being that the ILEA will agree to negotiate with ILTA on a voluntary transfer agreement, an end to temporary contracts and more supply teachers. All these are important, but they all hang on acceptance of compulsory transfer — a totally unacceptable deal to London NUT members.

Not only is the ILTA under attack from the Labour Group and it's National Executive, but now the SDP have joined in in the form of Anne Sofer, writing in *The Times* on 4 June, in an article entitled 'Class Warfare at County Hall'.

It would have been rather disturbing to London NUT members reading this article, (particular-

positions in the local branches of the NUT either.

The present leadership were elected on a platform of preparedness to lead a struggle in defence of their members conditions of service and the defence of the ILEA.

It will be extremely difficult to involve the NUT members in London in a campaign to defend the GLC/ILEA from a position of weakness and demoralisation. A defeat of the present short-sighted policy of the ILEA Labour Group to transfer teachers will be a positive step in ensuring this is not the case.

The unofficial strike action on 22 June showed just how strongly the London NUT members feel about compulsory transfer. It was the largest unofficial action there has ever been in London, with over 1500 teachers on strike and more than 50 schools affected by the strike.

Socialist Action supporters will be campaigning for the Labour Group of the ILEA to think again — to end transfers this year and develop a completely voluntary scheme for next year. This will mean we can get down to planning a joint trade union and labour movement campaign to save the GLC/ILEA from the attacks which are coming from the Tory government.



ly if they happen to be an SDP member) to note that a GLC/ILEA member is so totally clueless as to what is going on in the major union with which she has to deal.

## Largest

Not only are there no SWP members in the leadership of ILTA (which is the basis of her attack on the present ILTA officers), but none to be found in any leadership

# Blockade the uranium!

FOR 17 YEARS South Africa has waged a steadily escalating and brutal war against the Namibian people's struggle for liberation. Today against 100,000 South African troops imposing the most intense military occupation in the world (1 soldier to 10 civilians), the resistance of the Namibians is stronger than ever.

From bases in Namibia South Africa carries its war northwards, occupying 80,000 square kilometres of southern Angola. 'Special force' units, incorporating large numbers of European mercenaries, carry out a reign of terror, wreaking havoc on the economy.

This war is financed from the revenues generated by US and European corporations who exploit Namibia's resources. British multi-nationals play a strategic role in the economy, operating with conditions described by the International Court of Justice as 'unique in its organised and efficient application of conditions that are akin to slavery'.

The war is aided directly by technology from Plessey and Marconi.

In 1975 the Labour government used a veto in the United Nations Security Council against an arms embargo against South Africa and in 1976 against economic sanctions being applied to the apartheid regime.

Under international law Namibia is under the direct legal sovereignty of the United Nations. The UN Council of Namibia was created to administer the territory until independence.

## Namibia's workers

THE NUMBER of wage workers in Namibia is second only to South Africa south of the Sahara.

45 per cent of black Namibian adults are in wage employment; 40 per cent of whom are contract workers from the poverty-stricken reserves established under the apartheid regime.

While 27,000 whites received 18 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP), 270,000 blacks receive 9 per cent of GDP.

In 1977, average income for whites was Rand 3037, for blacks Rand 126.

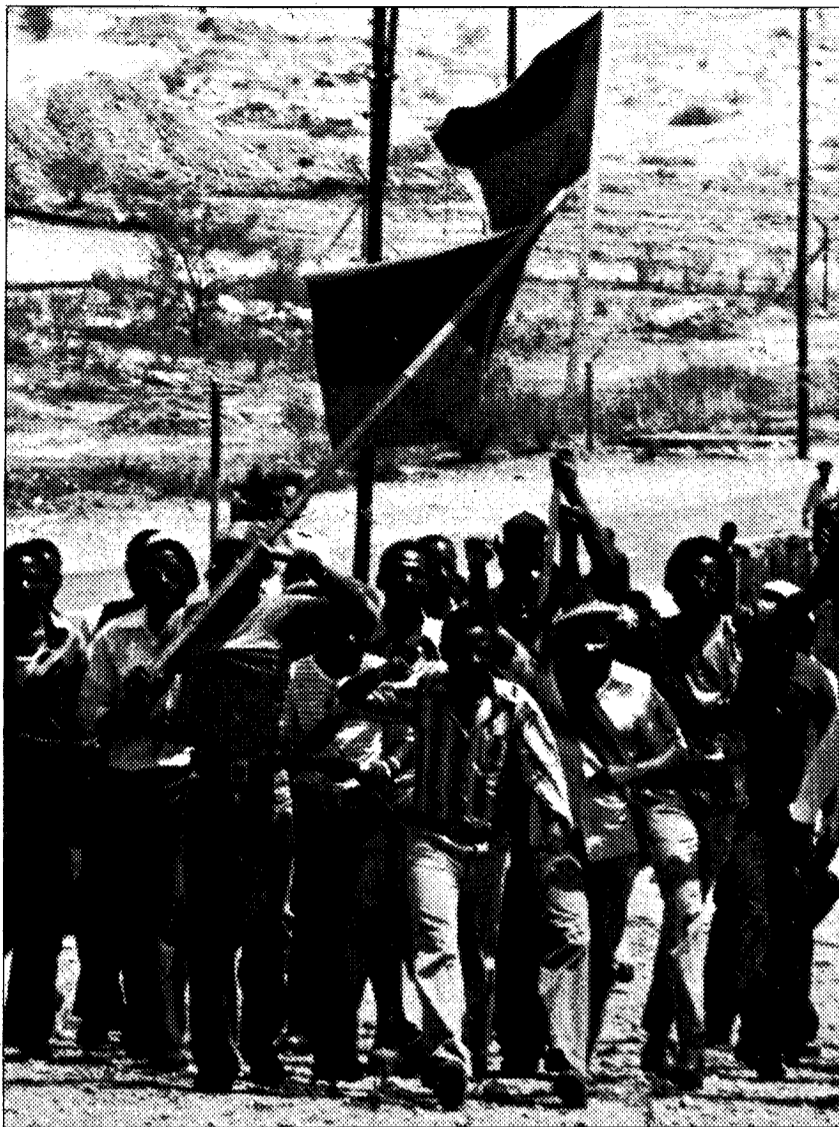
Profits and taxation take a gigantic 70 per cent of GDP, while 35 per cent has been exported abroad since 1945, testifying to the domination of the economy by foreign corporations.

Numerous general assembly and Security Council resolutions, passed without Britain's veto, obliged member states to refrain from any dealings with the illegal regime.

Following these decisions, the UN Council for Namibia enacted Decree No. 1 forbidding any dealings in Namibia's natural resources and empowering the Council (or agencies on its behalf, eg trade unions) to seize such produce.

Needless to say the imperialist powers with a huge stake in southern Africa's resources have ignored the UN's paper resolutions. The UN position came about as a result of the Namibian people's resistance through strikes, demonstrations and guerrilla war organised by SWAPO and the People's Liberation Army of Namibia.

While UN decisions have given SWAPO's struggle legitimacy, SWAPO's war against the apartheid regime started in 1966 because of the failure of two decades of appeal and peaceful negotiation to anything for Namibians.



SWAPO supporters in Windhoek, December 1978

The history of workers' struggle goes back to the miners' resistance to the German occupation in the First World War which resulted in the annihilation of over 50 per cent of the population.

By Dale Gourlay

The famous general strike of 1971 against the contract labour system brought the economy to a halt and involved mass mobilisations and a boycott of services run by the regime. This was the fruit of SWAPO's 1969 Congress decision to establish a department of labour charged with assisting in the formation of an autonomous trade union, the National Union of Namibian Workers (NUNW).

SWAPO itself began in 1959 as an organisation formed to resist the contract/migrant labour system. By 1977 workers had established a network of underground NUNW branches ready to use international trade union aid in a systematic way.

In February 1978 the murder of 26 workers in a workers' compound by one of the regime's armed gangs led to the first NUNW strike which closed down half of the Windhoek firms. Widespread arrests, detention and torture of SWAPO and NUNW officials followed.

**It was under a Labour government that RTZ first obtained a contract to supply uranium oxide**

By July 1978 the NUNW had steering committees in all the major mines and towns with office and full time organisers based in Windhoek. Major strikes in the mines through 1978-79 led to numerous beatings and arrests.

A strike committee at the British Rio Tinto Zinc Corporation (RTZ) uranium mines at Rossing put forward demands on pay, housing and radiation protection. They also protested against victimisation by the security police and denounced the mines' illegal operation under international law.

A year later an international appeal by the Rossing workers to the British labour movement to stop handling Namibian uranium led to the regime smashing SWAPO and NUNW's open organisations.

The Rossing mine, the largest uranium mine in the world, has become the international focus of a campaign in solidarity with the Namibian workers. It was under a Labour government in 1968 that RTZ first obtained a contract to supply uranium oxide to the United Kingdom Energy Authority. Supplies began to arrive in 1978. In the meantime the 1973 and 1976 Labour Party conferences had voted to end the contract.

## Namibian workers appeal

BEYOND ALL logic and in defiance of the wishes of the people of Namibia and the international community, RTZ with the full blessing of the British government went ahead to exploit our uranium.

But it is not because of their concern for the Namibian workers that they have decided to go ahead with this exploitation, but because of their lust after profits.

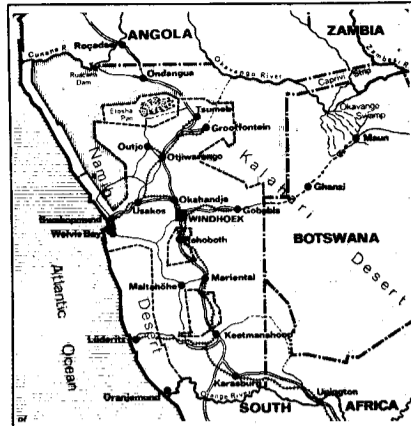
It is of the utmost importance that Namibian workers and Western European workers stand together to end this exploitation.

It is your workers that are being used in the transportation, processing and sale of this stolen commodity. Therefore in the spirit of the true trade union solidarity we are calling upon you to stop this illegal exploitation of Namibian uranium by refusing to handle any stolen wealth from our country.

Pevari Muniaro  
National Union of Namibian Workers

But the Callaghan government ignored these decisions and instead collaborated with the US administration to achieve a settlement of the Namibian crisis on terms favourable to imperialism. This resulted in the establishment of the Contact Group (consisting of the US, Britain, France, Germany and Canada), countries with major investments in the region, putting itself forward in 1978 as a diplomatic go-between.

While there has been a nine-fold increase in the number of South African troops from 1976 to 1982, the Contact Group has worked to pressurise



SWAPO and the Angolan government into making concessions on an independence solution to an increasingly aggressive and intransigent apartheid regime, in particular demanding the withdrawal of Cuban troops in Angola. Their goal is a client state dependent on imperialist investments and open to cheap exploitation of its resources.

SWAPO, the NUNW and the workers at Rossing have repeatedly called for the labour movement to stop

**The significance of Namibian uranium is that it is not covered by the non-military use clause insisted on by Britain's other suppliers**

the present trade in Namibian resources.

Uranium oxide from Rossing and South Africa is processed by British Nuclear Fuels Ltd (BNFL) at Springfield near Preston and enriched by URENCO (a consortium of BNFL, a Dutch and a German company) at Capenhurst in Cheshire.

Uranium from southern Africa is part of a network of deals whereby South Africa acquires enriched uranium, technology and skilled personnel for its nuclear programme — which includes a tactical nuclear warhead capability.

While over half of Britain's needs (2000 tons per year) are supplied from Rossing, how this uranium arrives is unknown.

BNFL processes a further 7000 tons per annum for export to other countries, half of which comes from Namibia and South Africa. Since 1979 partially enriched uranium has been sent to the US to be highly enriched and returned to Britain for use in nuclear weapons. This deal includes the US sending Britain tritium in return for the plutonium produced in Britain's reactors to be used in the US weapons programme.

The significance of Namibian uranium in this trade is that it is not covered by the non-military use clause insisted on by Britain's other suppliers Canada and Australia.

At a recent enquiry into RTZ held in Bristol, Tony Benn (twice minister for energy) stated: 'This government has a continuing interest in Rossing primarily for weapons purposes.'

The Campaign Against the Namibian Uranium Contract (CANUC) was formed in 1976 by the Namibian Support Committee and the Anti-Apartheid movement. The campaign's progress in the trade union movement has resulted in the National Union of Seamen, the Transport and General Workers Union and the train drivers'

## Stop the plunder

A conference for trade union solidarity

Sunday 17 July 10.00  
Oxford House, Derbyshire Street, London E2

Supported by NUM, ASLEF, NUS, Black Trade Unionists Solidarity Movement.

## Tebbit's law versus international solidarity

UNDER BRITISH law practical trade union solidarity with the Namibian workers is illegal. Clause 15 of the 1982 Employment Act prohibits industrial action by unions to support of workers in other countries — only action affecting their own employment is allowed.

But the United Nations is obliged to support action to stop illegal traffic from Namibia.

Trade union action would not only materially aid the people of Namibia and expose the British government's sanctions-busting position on Namibia, but would also bring onto the international stage the Tories' attempts to prevent British workers being able to take solidarity action with other workers in struggle.

union, ASLEF, asking their members not to handle Namibian uranium, as well as demands from a dozen other national unions and the TUC for the government to cancel it.

The October 1980 visit to Britain by John Ya-Otto, SWAPO secretary for labour, gained a hearing for the campaign throughout the labour movement.

At an international conference organised by the NSC in June 1981, the TGWU and the NUS, along with the French and Dutch trade union confederation, pledged themselves to establish effective coordination to monitor the secret route and blockade shipments.

In April 1982 TGWU Region 3 organised an inter-union conference in Bristol for CANUC. Blockade policies have been adopted by TGWU regions 3 and 6 and a motion before the recent Biennial conference of the union proposed that the union support the blockade.

Meetings with lorry drivers and transport officials are expected to yield information on the activities of the non-union firm Edmundson's which is used in the shipment of Namibian uranium, and information from port workers on movement and container bases used by the firm.

Efforts are also being made within the National Union of Railwaymen to build support for the policy adopted by other transport unions.

Obviously the power to stop the uranium lies in the hands of the labour movement — a movement hard-hit by the recession and under attack from the Thatcher government.

For serious action to take place to blockade the uranium, policy on paper is not enough.

The battle must be made to win the support of those workers who will be the ones to actually put the policy into effect. This is not impossible. Even within the ranks of the RTZ's workforce there is some support for CANUC's policy.

However no group of workers can be expected to go it alone. Hackney and Tower Hamlets Trades Council and the Namibia Support Committee have organised a conference on 17 July for trade union solidarity with the Namibian workers.

Officials and delegates from the transport unions, the National and Local Government Officials Association and other trade councils will be present to consider how that unity can be built up for a successful blockade of Namibia's stolen uranium.

**PENDUKENI KAULINGE** is secretary of the South West African People's Organisation Women's Council and was previously a military instructor in PLAN, the armed wing of SWAPO. She recently visited Britain to campaign for material aid for the thousands of Namibians who have fled South Africa's occupation and brutal war in their country.

Below is a discussion she had with women from various groups in a special women's meeting organised by SWAPO Women's Solidarity Campaign.

Firstly, comrade Pendukeni explained to us the projects the SWAPO Women's Council organises for women in the refugee settlements and what aid is desperately needed.

THE WOMEN'S Council has promoted several projects for women in the refugee settlements. Women need to learn new skills, both useful now and in preparation for independence. The projects include traditional women's skills such as weaving, knitting and dressmaking and also cultivation, husbandry and chicken farming. Women are also given driving lessons and trained to be mechanics.

These projects encourage better self-sufficiency in food, such as our chicken farming in Zambia. The products made from weaving are sold through our solidarity groups, like that in Denmark, to give us an income for more raw materials and to provide money for our literacy projects and scholarships for students, to send them to study in countries like Denmark.

**Are there any women in the armed struggle?**

Yes, but I obviously can't give numbers because of security. 35,000 people now live in the refugee settlements in Zambia and Angola. Women leave Namibia to escape South Africa's war and terror; others leave to fight in the armed struggle.

All identify with SWAPO and the liberation of their country, so there is no need to politicise them on this level.

Women who have no children serve in the guerrilla army (PLAN) at the front for three years — they go of their own free will. Their time is limited because of our emphasis on the education of women. But our experience in the struggle means that women are emerging strong and courageous.

**In countries such as India and Bolivia women are used as guinea pigs by Western drug companies to test contraceptives. Is this going on in Namibia?**

Yes it is. Women are given experimental pills and depo-provera. Women are also sterilised without being consulted, often after giving birth. They don't know they have been sterilised, so this often results in enormous problems for the women in families and with husbands.

In exile, the SWAPO Department of Health and Social Welfare does educate women on this and provides contraception.

**I am Grenadan, and I would like to know if SWAPO has connections and open dialogue with other liberation movements in Africa and the Caribbean, and if not, I think this dialogue must take place. A lot can be learnt from countries such as Grenada and Ghana and experiences shared. I think SWAPO Women's Council is placing too much emphasis on building links with western white women's movements and their governments.**

We have made lots of connections with women in Latin America, Grenada, USA, Cuba and Canada for example. We are a member of the Pan-African Women's Organisation.

We get lots of invitations to conferences, but as a liberation movement we are poor and can't always afford to

# 'No-one will tell us to go back to the kitchen sink after all we have struggled for'



Pendukeni Kaulinge

send people. This of course is a problem. Western organisations send us the tickets — so we go.

Although we cannot necessarily learn from the experiences of women in the west, whereas we can from women in other liberation struggles, there are important links to be built in the west and we cannot ignore them.

An important example is Britain, and the central role it plays in the exploitation of our country through the uranium mining and the ties with South Africa. A development of anti-imperialist consciousness and the growth of the anti-war movement will help us in our struggle.

**Has support for Namibia been built in the women's peace movement in this country? (Two women from the Greenham Common National Office were present).**

Greenham Common peace women have for some time taken up the question of the use of Namibian uranium in Britain. At Capenhurst, a nuclear enrichment plant using Namibian uranium, women picketing in protest against this recently were arrested.

The SWAPO Women's Solidarity Campaign hold meetings with the Greenham women to link the struggle into the anti-nuclear movement in Britain. Last weekend the SWAPO women's group organised a sponsored cycle ride to Greenham Common.

**Have the trade unions in Britain taken any solidarity action with Namibia?**

Yes, there is trade union support for CANUC (Campaign Against the Namibian Uranium Contract). The TGWU and Seamen's Union have an agreement on paper to boycott uranium imports into Britain. It now needs to be put into action.

**What will be the situation of women after independence?**

Women will contribute to the reconstruction of the country. But exactly how independence will be achieved or what kind we get we can't tell at the moment and obviously that affects what will happen afterwards.

**What gains are women making in SWAPO?**

In SWAPO the role of women is changing. Before 1974 we only had two women members on the Central Committee. Now we have six. We have concentrated a lot on women's education, training, building co-operatives and so on.

Before our first Women's Congress in 1980, over 95 per cent of Namibian women were illiterate. In the refugee settlements we have built schools, sent students abroad, campaigned for educational materials, and the situation is improving.

Inside Namibia the situation is worse in regards to education. Many of the teachers are armed South African soldiers who intimidate and discourage study. I was in a different situation because I went to a missionary school.

**What kind of solidarity work can we do for people still living inside Namibia?**

The most important thing people can do is to build the campaign for trade boycotts against South Africa, and to campaign against British collusion in South Africa's war.

For our people in Angola and Zambia we need support in our liberation struggle and also material aid for the refugees. Algeria has been very good in its solidarity work in providing us with aid and materials for our farming and other projects.

**How exactly is Britain involved in Namibia?**

British mining companies, such as Rio Tinto Zinc, illegally export Namibia's

natural resources, such as the uranium, and exploit the people for their cheap labour in the mines and factories.

**Do women work in the mines and how does it affect them?**

Very few women work for the mining companies. If they do they work as secretaries or accountants, not as miners.

However, the mines have far reaching effects on women as well as the male miners. A migrant apartheid labour system operates similar to that of South Africa.

The Namibian people have been pushed onto reserves by the colonisers against their will. These areas are the most arid and unproductive in the country, so the men are forced to migrate to factories and mines on contracts of 12-18 months.

Since there are no jobs on these reserves they are forced to do this and women are left with families to scratch out a miserable existence. The male workers, needless to say, are paid very low wages.

In the mines and factories black workers are not covered by safety regulations, so they work under extremely dangerous conditions. For example, the biggest problem is the contamination from uranium. When the men return to the reserves they pass on the contamination. Diseases spread, such as TB and the men often become impotent.

There are very few health clinics or hospitals and treatment costs money. So the women bear the burden of looking after the sick, are forced to walk for days, weeks in search of the few doctors available.

Lack of money and food means that the children die of malnutrition. So the mines affect everyone.

Rio Tinto Zinc's largest mine, the Rossing, exports the uranium to Britain for nuclear power and weapons.

**But hasn't the UN passed a decree prohibiting all companies from exporting goods and uranium from Namibia. Why is Britain still doing this?**

Because since the British government voted against the UN decree, they say they're not bound by this decision. Although there is a glut of uranium in the world market, the west will continue to stockpile and fleece the country dry before we gain independence — so that we have nothing left.

Compiled by Ros Young

### The Aims and Objectives of the SWAPO Women's Council are:

Those embodied in the SWAPO Constitution, but in addition to strive:

1. To achieve equality for women as well as their full participation in the struggle for national and social liberation;
2. To develop and deepen political consciousness and revolutionary militancy among Namibian women;
3. To bring about women's full participation in the productive work, in public administration, in education and in the cultural creativity of our society;
4. To prepare thousands of feminine workers, now engaged in domestic work in Namibia, for productive jobs;
5. To campaign for the creation of sufficient nursery schools and day boarding schools in a liberated Namibia so as to facilitate women's full participation in productive work;
6. To inculcate in the Namibian child a sense of justice and a revolutionary respect for women; and
7. To develop an internationalist spirit in the Namibian woman by enabling her to work in solidarity with all militant and progressive feminine movements, thereby strengthening the world-wide anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist front.

### USEFUL ADDRESSES:

SWAPO Women's Solidarity Campaign, PO BOX 194, London N5. Tel: 01-359 9116

Namibia Support Committee, 53 Leverton Street, London NW5. Tel: 01-267 1941/2

Campaign Against the Namibian Contract (CANUC), c/o Namibia Support Committee.

## f Namibia



# WORLD IN ACTION

## AIDS hysteria in US

AIDS — acquired immunity deficiency syndrome — is being used by ultra-right wing forces in the United States to whip up an anti-gay crusade.

AIDS is a disease which causes a break down in the body's natural immunities, thus leaving the victim open to all kinds of terrible diseases. Most victims die within a couple of years.

So far there have been around 1600 cases, and 600 fatalities in the United States. The majority of sufferers are gay men.

Other groups to have caught the disease in significant numbers are drug addicts using syringes, and haemophiliacs.

Naturally the disease is causing concern in the gay community; its origins and precise causes are unknown.

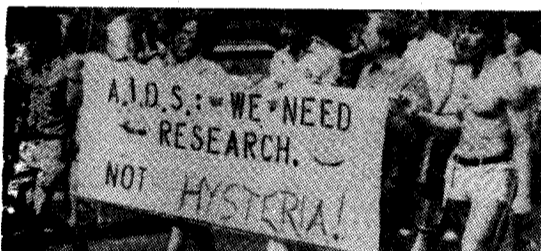
The right wing 'Moral Majority' is using the disease to whip up

anti-gay prejudices. Just as they said herpes was God's punishment of 'promiscuity', now AIDS is retribution for 'perversion'.

Moral Majority officials have suggested that 'AIDS spreads by mere contact with homosexuals' and that 'the whole of America could be infected' — ludicrous and nonsensical arguments.

Police in San Francisco have asked for plastic gloves and face masks when dealing with homosexuals. The main demands of the loony but powerful right is that gay bars, restaurants and discos be shut down to stamp out homosexuality.

There have been some cases of AIDS in Britain, France and Belgium. It's only a matter of time before Malcolm Muggeridge and Mary Whitehouse start our very own anti-gay campaign.



## Sao Paulo workers on the march again

SAO PAULO was once the boom town of Latin America, with its population of 15 million, its car plants and huge engineering industry.

Now unemployment is 15 per cent, and thousands of metal workers have been thrown out of work.

Last week Brazil, which has the highest international debt in the world, received a delegation from the International Monetary Fund

which proposed (surprise, surprise) strict terms for an international rescue attempt.

The main point was the imposition of wage cuts. Last Wednesday 200,000 metal workers struck at all Sao Paulo's main factories and staged a mammoth demonstration bringing the city centre to a standstill.

The strike was led by leaders of the metalworkers union who support the Workers Party (PT).

## More trouble for Rios Montt

LAST WEEK we reported the turmoil in Guatemala which threatens to develop into a military coup against president Rios Montt.

Last week the Interior Minister reported that Montt's sister, Maria Rios Montt, a schoolteacher, has been kidnapped by uniden-

tified gunmen. So far no one has claimed responsibility for the kidnapping.

The government is saying little, refusing even to reveal where it took place. But the assumption must be that she has been captured by left wing guerrillas. If so it will be a dire embarrassment for the regime.

## Soweto black killed

PARIS MALATJI, a 24-year old black from Soweto, has been found shot dead in Protea police station near the black township.

He was arrested by security police under the Criminal Procedures Act which enables police to hold suspects without

trial. The police have instituted an 'inquiry' to try to establish who shot him.

Naturally the South African Police Commissioner, General Joaon Coetzee considers this death to be a great mystery — and he must be about the only person in the world who does.

# The crisis in the PLO

THE SIGHT of Palestinian fighting Palestinian in the Bek'aa valley will have alarmed many friends of the Palestinian struggle. Why has it come to this, that differences inside the Palestine Liberation Organisation are settled with guns? What do the different forces fighting one another represent and what role are the Syrians playing?

The affair started in May, when Yasser Arafat tried to replace the chief Fatah commanders in the Bek'aa valley, and replace them with others loyal to himself.

The commanders who Arafat wanted out, including the leader of what is now the dissident group, Abu Musa, had been critical of the role which Arafat played as the PLO leader.

On the one hand they accused him of downplaying the armed struggle against Israel, on the other they accused him of international diplomacy which compromised the interests of the Palestinian people.

By Phil Hearse

Arafat tried to replace the dissident commanders and put the Palestinian forces in Lebanon and Syria under the sole command of Ahmed Affani, an Arafat loyalist whom the dissidents consider to be pro-Egyptian.

The dissidents refused to accept this reorganisation and denounced Arafat's moves, supported by the Central Committee of Fatah, as 'a hypocritical action by Arafat and his cohorts designed to split the movement'.

The dissidents, with obvious Syrian connivance, took over PLO military installations in Damascus. Since that time clashes between the two sides have continued sporadically, with the dissidents gaining the upper hand — in part at least because of Syrian support.

The first thing to note is that the conflict started as essentially a political dispute within Fatah, by far the largest and most important organisation within the PLO.

Prominent dissidents like Abu Musa and Abu Saleh (until 1976 the PLO commander in Lebanon) have a long history as leaders of the Palestinian struggle.

Their opposition to Arafat has been based on opposition to his diplomatic moves, in par-

ticular his support for the Fez summit agreement and his talks with King Hussein, and his decision to evacuate the PLO forces from Beirut during the Israeli invasion of Lebanon.

Without doubt the Fez summit agreement, drawn up by the reactionary Saudi regime, involves some compromises in long-standing positions of the PLO.

Basically the Fez summit proposed a state for the Palestinians on the occupied West Bank of the Jordan, in return for PLO recognition of Israel. This plan is acceptable neither to Israel nor to the United States, Israel's main backer. They see a West Bank state as being a permanent threat to Israel's existence.

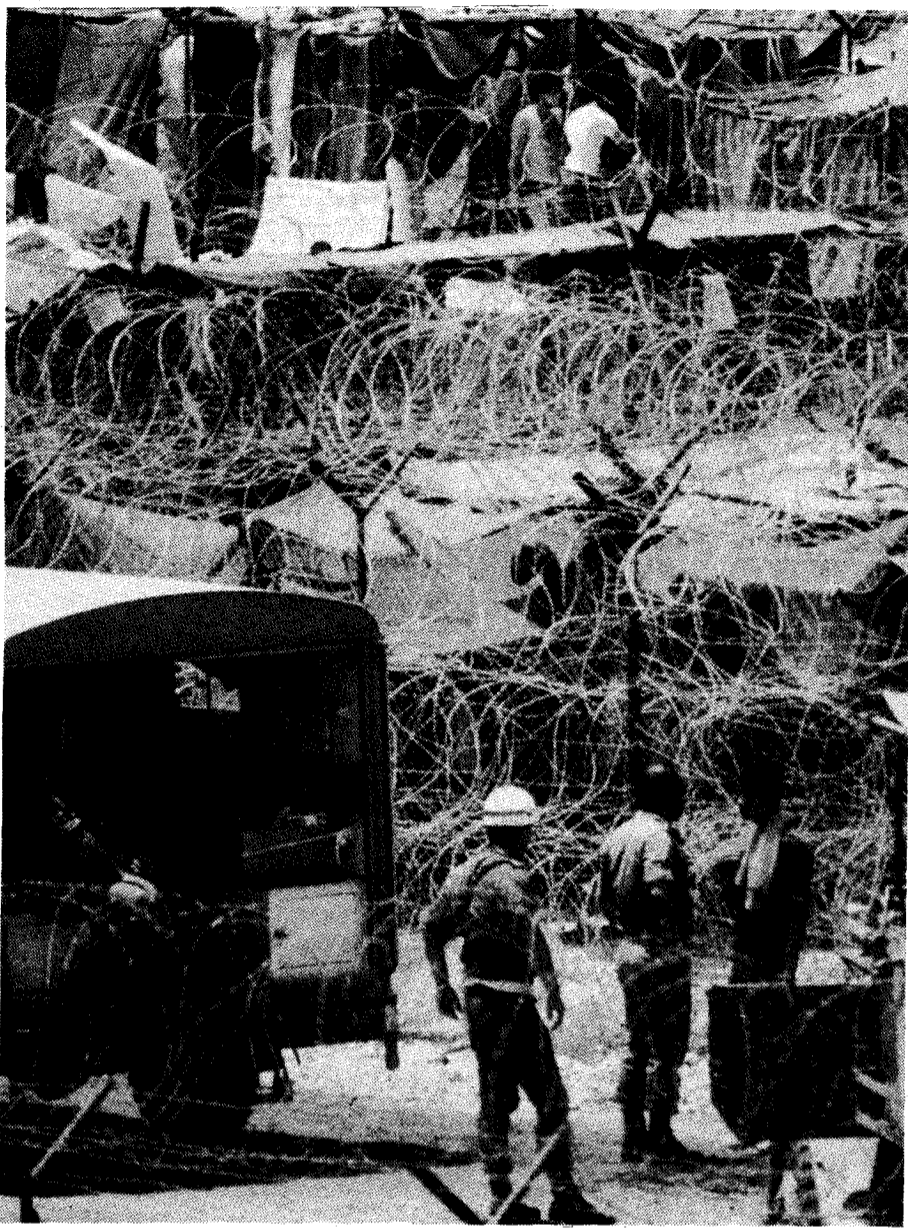
Begin and Reagan want the Palestinians out of harm's way in Jordan — not in any part of the occupied territories and certainly not in Lebanon.

But the objection of the dissidents is that the Fez plan involves a compromise on the PLO's objective of a 'democratic secular Palestine' — which would involve the end of the Israeli, Zionist state. More fundamentally, the dissidents saw Arafat as relying on diplomacy after the military defeat in Lebanon, rather than making further preparations for armed struggle.

Abu Musa declared that the dissidents had opposed the PLO withdrawal from Beirut, and had threatened to open fire on the departing ships. They also demand a democratisation of the PLO leadership structure.

The justice or otherwise of the complaints and demands of the dissidents is outside the scope of this article, but certainly as leaders of the Palestinian revolution they had the right to raise them within the structures of Fatah and the PLO.

Arafat's decision to remove the dissidents was incorrect. But the alliance of the latter with Syria is a grave and potentially disastrous error.



Ansar prison camp — at least 5000 Palestinians are still held here by the Israelis

Abu Musa has said, 'Syria rejects the Reagan plan and is pointing its tanks in the direction of Israel. That is my position too. If Syria retreats, I will take the same position as I did in Sidon' (a reference to his leadership of a PLO unit which destroyed a Syrian column attacking the PLO in 1976).

The problem with this position is that Syria is not at all concerned with the success of the PLO struggle. Syrian president Assad is concerned with consolidating his power position in the Middle East, and wants to bring the PLO under Syrian domination and control — to make it 'Syria's card'.

In 1976, when the PLO and Lebanese leftists were on the verge of destroying

the right wing Phalangist gangs, Syria intervened to prevent their victory. Assad, if he brings the PLO under his control, will then make a deal with Israel and the imperialists at the expense of the Palestinians — forcing them to recognise his central role in the area. It would be a crime against the Palestinian revolution if Syria were allowed to take control of the PLO.

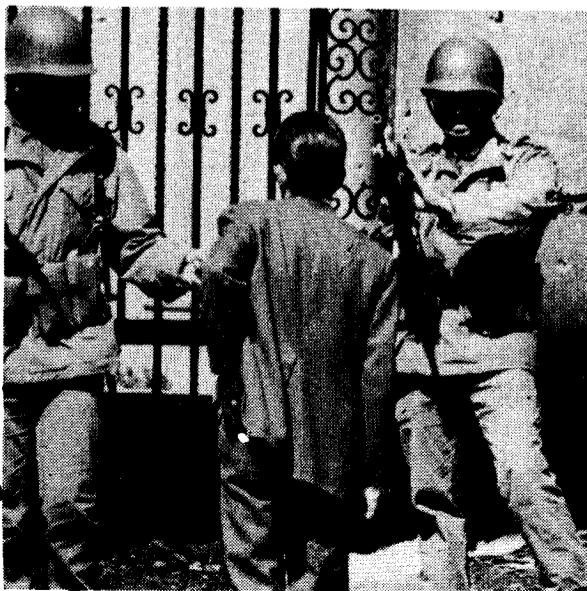
The present plight of the Palestinian movement is first and foremost the responsibility of the bourgeois rulers of the Arab states, who while giving lip-service to Palestinian rights have always acted to impede their struggle. They understand that the fight for justice for the Palestinian people threatens to spill over into

their own countries in a revolutionary way.

The leaders of countries like Jordan and Saudi Arabia are hand-in-glove with imperialism. Assad wants to deal with imperialism — but on his own terms. Once again, it is obvious that the fight for the rights of the Palestinians is intimately bound up with the fight to carry forward the whole Arab revolution.

Syria should get out of the quarrel in the PLO. Both PLO factions should put down their guns, and settle the long-overdue debate on strategy and leadership through democratic debate. Right now, Abu Musa should break his alliance with the Syrians, which threatens the whole future of the Palestinian movement.

## 11 September — No more Chiles! Build this demo



Outside the Moneda Palace after the 1973 coup

TEN DAYS ago YCND conference voted to mobilise its supporters for September's Chile solidarity demonstration. This year's demonstration has a special significance. It takes place ten years to the day after the military coup which overthrew the Popular Unity government of Salvador Allende.

In the weeks that followed the coup at least 30,000 workers were slaughtered by Pinochet's gangsters. But even this level of violence, and the torture and repression which followed, has not prevented the Chilean workers movement from

reorganising and fighting back.

But the demonstration has yet another significance. As the Chilean workers prepare to finish off Pinochet, the people of Central America are struggling to defeat military dictatorship in El Salvador and Guatemala and defend the Nicaraguan revolution. The demonstration will thus be one of solidarity with Central America as well as with the people of Chile.

The YCND support for the demonstration is a sign that thousands of people can be mobilised for 11 September. Over the summer months supporters of Socialist Action will be building for the demonstration in their Labour Parties, trade

unions and CND groups.

Make sure that transport is organised from your area. If there is a Latin America or Central America campaign in your area they will almost certainly be organising for the demonstration, so get in touch with them.

Put a resolution supporting the demonstration in your local labour movement bodies. And march with Socialist Action on the day!

● Demonstration assembles 1pm at Clerkenwell Green. March to Trafalgar Square. Speakers include Moss Evans, Judith Hart and Ken Livingstone. Organised by Chile Solidarity, supported by El Salvador Solidarity, Nicaragua Solidarity, etc.



K L M N O P Q R S T U  
 V W X Y Z  
**LETTERS**  
 K L M N O P Q R S T

**Baba must stay**

**BABA** Bakhataura, the much loved and respected Punjabi folksinger now living in Oldbury West Midlands, is under threat of deportation.

Despite the fact that he has supported himself with his music during his stay and has not claimed benefit, the Home Office has decided to deport him.

He has already spent two months in prison for supposedly 'overstaying'. When his sentence was

up, only a sustained campaign gained his release on bail from an administrative order. The Crown Court then refused to order his deportation.

But the Home Office jumped in and issued a deportation order. Baba appealed, but the Home Office adjudicator dutifully upheld the order. Baba's defence campaign are now taking the appeal to the High Court.

It would be inconceivable that a white immigrant to this country, who came over and made an honest living in the entertainment industry, would be subjected to the same treatment.

In the June general election, Baba stood as an independent parliamentary candidate in Ladywood, Birmingham. His strategy was to expose the way both Tory and Labour Party have assisted the ruling class in exploiting black and Asian groups, by encouraging them to come over to work as cheap labour.

Then, they use inhumane, racist and sexist immigration laws to cast them out when their usefulness is at end and jobs are at a premium, even for whites.

Baba called for the repeal of all racist

immigration and nationality laws and the end of deportations of black people. He received a very large protest vote of over 300, in a constituency where the Labour Party attempts to take up the problems of the black community in a serious way.

Deportations are now running at over 250 a month. Unfortunately too many people disappear from the scene without a struggle.

Campaigns like this and the Mohammed Idrish one do valuable work in bringing the facts to people and showing them a struggle can be waged.

**BOB SMITH,** Birmingham

● Send messages of support and donations to Baba Bakhataura Defence Campaign, c/o Elite Cinema, Soho Road, Birmingham 21.



Rightwing groups and the Army have slaughtered over 37,000 civilians in El Salvador

**We're backing McEnroe**

DOES Peter Purton think that sport exists in a political vacuum (SA 16)?

Does he believe that television and media coverage does not influence what individuals think and that it exists outside the class struggle?

In his letter he uses the terminology which the right wing use to describe John McEnroe and other non-conforming sports people.

There are several good reasons why all self-respecting socialists should support John McEnroe. First, he is the only top tennis player who, after consulting a black colleague, refused to play in South Africa.

Second he supports a united Ireland and Irish nationalism. Third, he rebels against the conservatism and English nationalism of tennis, which

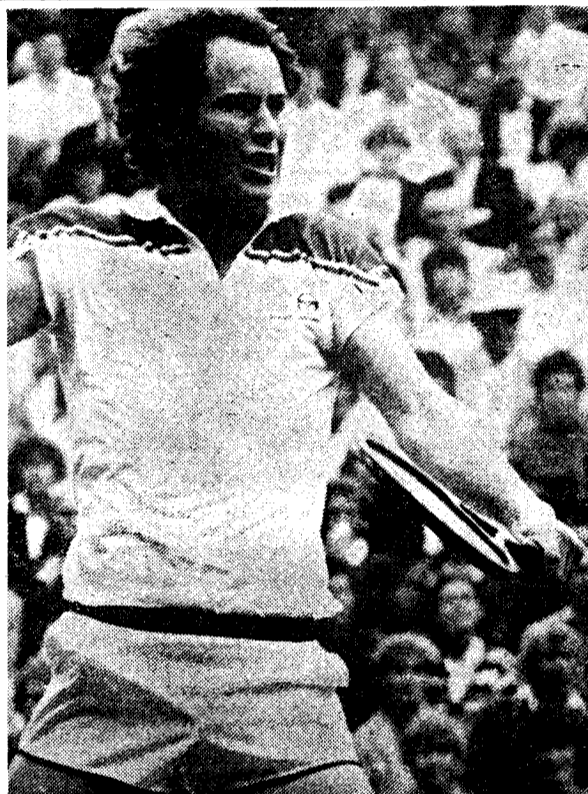
stems from its upper class origins.

We believe these are the reasons why McEnroe is berated by the right wing press.

It does matter if a white South African, proud to be South African, wins Wimbledon, and it does matter if an Irish nationalist wins.

As socialists we recognise that sport is political and for these reasons are pleased that Socialist Action and other socialist papers come off the fence and support progressive sports people.

**MARY BIGGAM,** Christine McCall, Linda McLaughlin, Margaret Lynch, Ross McKay, Martin Edjvet, Gerry Kirk. Glasgow



**The Front Line**

Review by Richard Walker, Salvadorean Film Institute Support Group.

**THE FRONT LINE**, the latest television documentary on the war in El Salvador, screened on Channel 4 on Saturday 9 July follows a series of C4 commissions, Vietnam and The Spanish Civil War.

Sadly, *The Front Line* exhibits none of the strengths of these earlier C4 commissions.

The film makers Jeff Harmon and Chris Wenner believe that the vast majority of El Salvador's people either know nothing or don't want to know anything of their country's struggles. And that the Salvadoreans who are involved are confined to a statistically negligible group of political malcontents who are divorced from the concerns of the majority.

*The Front Line* further contends that, whatever the ideology, the outcome is the same — the barbarous actions of the Right are interchangeable with the actions of the Left.

**Equal**

All sides are presented as sharing equal responsibility for the non-combatant deaths in the conflict, and an assertion that the forces of the FMLN torture and murder their prisoners is left unchallenged, assumed to be fact.

The unknown circumstances of an unidentified man's death and the mock investigation which opens the film become symbols, in the hands of the filmmakers, of the victimisation by extremists of all sides of the population involved in the conflict.

Or as the publicity for *The Front Line* puts it, 'civilian, peasant, parents, children — whoever you are, you may be the target of the death squads, the Army or the guerrillas.'

An isolated statement from a worker for the Commission for Human Rights in El Salvador (CDHES) is used to strengthen this same assertion. And this, when the CDHES have stated publicly that it is right-wing groups and the Army who are responsible for the killing of a documented 37,392 civilians.

in the film.'

The unchallenged assertion that the forces of the FMLN torture and murder their prisoners is no more credible. The records of the International Red Cross details that the receipt of prisoners from the FMLN and the return of those prisoners to the nearest army base is in accordance with the Geneva Convention.

The popular opposition is not made up of the military forces of the FMLN alone, as their isolation in this film infers, but of a rich amalgamation of the progressive organisations of the society as a whole.

The Revolutionary Democratic Front and Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front — FDR-FMLN — encompass trade union representatives, education and cultural workers, the progressive church, international diplomatic representation, health care, food production, etc. This coalition is a general alternative to the joblessness, malnutrition, illiteracy and terror that has been the daily reality of the people for so long.

**Mockery**

Most disturbing of all is *The Front Line's* lack of respect for its proposed subject — the people of El Salvador. Contemptuous mockery and ironic detachment from this struggle is evident throughout.

Sequences from *The Front Line* are intercut with a wrestling match where two masked men (analogous with the forces of the right and left) growl and posture as they wrestle in the centre of the ring. Around the ring the 'audience', with particular concentration on one woman's severely disfigured face, cheer on the opponents in the match.

This is a viciously callous analogy to draw of a conflict in which a people in the depths of poverty and oppression are giving their lives and in which they are placing their hopes for the future.

**TV CHOICE**

**What Went Wrong?**

Saturday 16 July, 7.30, Channel 4

**JEREMY** Seabrook, whose book on unemployment has the same title, starts a three-part series on the working class movement in Britain.

The first programme looks at early struggles and the rise of the Labour Party up to the 1945 Atlee government.

The second analyses the decline of Labour since then and Seabrook elaborates his theories of the causes and the 'different kind of suffering'.

The third programme is a debate with Stuart Hall, Philip Whitehead and Paul Barker, editor of *New Society*.

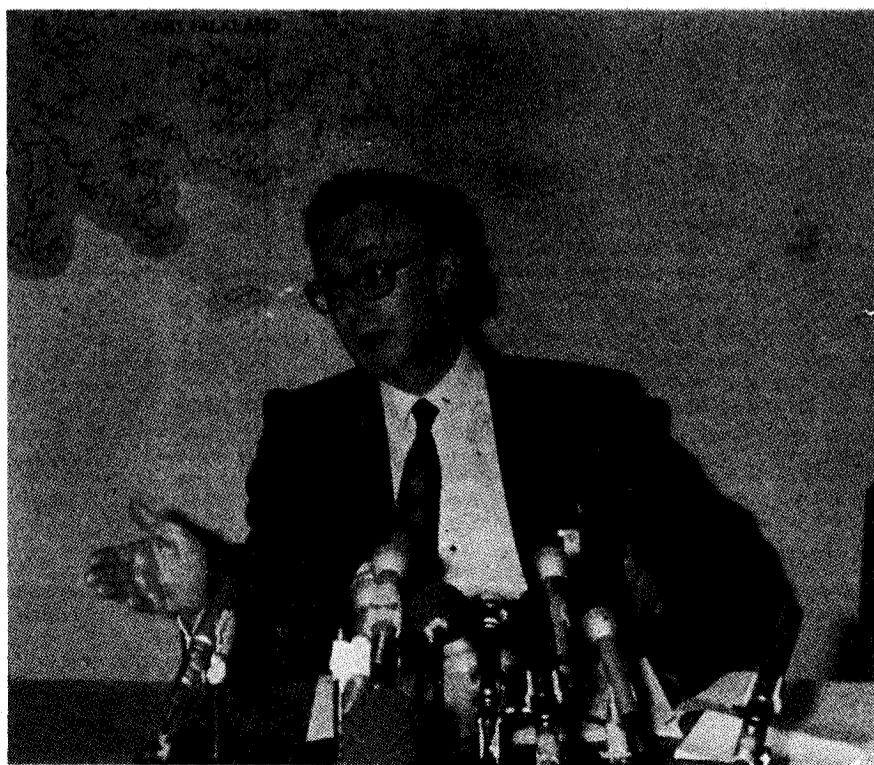
Don't expect all the answers, but worth watching anyway.

**The Best of CLR James**

Monday 18 July, 11.25, Channel 4

**JAMES** discusses the Caribbean and the future for the West Indian peoples, much along the lines of his books such as *The Black Jacobins*.

Minister of Falkland misinformation Ian McDonald



**Tuesday documentary: Trumpets and Typewriters**

Tuesday 19 July, 9.25, BBC1

IN WAR, should truth be the first casualty?

asks this film.

Good question, and numerous veteran war correspondents readily admit that WWII reporting was a 'prograganda job'.

Other wars from the Crimea to Vietnam are covered, with unfavourable reporting sometimes helping to bring down

governments.

And Ireland and the South Atlantic? Well, they do get a mention ('touches briefly' is the phrase used in the press blurb).

The obvious conclusion that should be drawn is that the reporting from these wars is no different from the past.



## Unity in Aberdeen

IT'S not often that a pay cut is reported as a victory, but that's what has happened at the Mugiemoos Paper Mill in Aberdeen, where I work as a welder on maintenance.

During the Aberdeen trade fortnight in July, production stops for maintenance and for capital projects to be carried out.

Management wanted this work completed within the fortnight so that following production would not be disrupted.

So they offered the maintenance engineers a bonus package for each of the two weeks.

Their offer would have given skilled workers, fitters, instrument mechanics and welders around £230. Mates and labourers would get £180 for the week.

But this involved a discriminatory bonus favouring the skilled workers. We demanded a bonus the same for all.

Ironically this came from the skilled workers who would make most out of the offer.

Management rejected the demand, which was almost unanimously supported by the maintenance group. They tried all sorts of tricks to split

us up and get their way. They organised meetings and secret ballots just for skilled workers.

But we stood firm — it looked for a while that the majority of us would be out on the gate demanding a cut in earnings for the sake of unity. But we won. This a victory over management's efforts to divide the workforce and over some very conservative stewards who keep telling us we can't budge management.

(Jeff West)



Jeff West

## Divisions in Clay Cross

TEBBIT and Thatcher love a bit of divide and rule and inter-union wrangles play into their hands.

On 15 March this year, Ashton Containers, part of a multinational St Regis Packaging Company, made 87 workers redundant — 67 members of the General Workers Union, GMBATU and 20 printers from the National Graphical Association.

Under instruction from the national union, six NGA members occupied the plant.

The NGA officials appeared unconcerned about the GMBATU members who had lost their jobs.

Despite management intimidation, GMBATU

members were willing to refuse to cover printers jobs. The NGA members have now been offered different jobs within the firm and their redundancy notices have been withdrawn, but they have been instructed not to accept.

For their own reasons the NGA officials are trying to play NGA members off against GMBATU members. Management are using this to split the workforce — to set worker against worker.

This is a case of national union officials treating members jobs as bargaining counters instead of promoting unity across unions against the common enemy, the employer.

(A GMBATU member)

## Bristol bakers dispute

WORKERS at Parkers Bakery, Bishopsworth in Bristol are in dispute with management over changed working practices.

The company, part of the Sunblest group are trying to force the workforce onto a 55 hour, five day week — rather than the present six day, eight hour shifts.

The company refused to negotiate a compromise with the Baker's Union, or go to the Arbitration Conciliation Advisory Service, ACAS. Management

must win this fight to be able to force the same deal on other bakeries in the group.

Their determination was shown when they drafted in scab management from other bakeries to do shop floor work. Although the bakery is still working, the workers believe that this struggle can be won.

• Messages and donations to:  
Serge Kuchanny,  
Secretary of BFAWU,  
2nd Floor, 200 North  
Street, Bedminster,  
Bristol BJ3 13F.  
(Danny O'Leary)

# DIARY

(These listings are free for all major labour movement and campaign 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).

• **National Abortion Campaign** conference is now postponed until Oct 1-2nd. For details please contact NAC at 374 Grays Inn Road, London WC1. Tel. 01-278 0153.

• **Fourth Anniversary of the Nicaraguan Revolution** — concert and speaking tour: **Bristol** Tue 19 July, 7.30pm, Trinity Hall, Old Market; **Manchester** Wed 20 July, 7.30pm, UMIST SU; **Newcastle** Thu 21 July, 7.30pm, St Thomas' Church, The Haymarket; **London** Fri 22 July, 7.30pm, Friends House, Euston Rd, WC1. Presented by Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign, 20 Compton Terrace, London N1.

• **Release Nelson Mandela! Victory to the ANC!** Weekly picket of South Africa House, Trafalgar Square 5.30-7.30, Fridays. Called by City Anti-Apartheid Group.

• **Oppose police racism!** Public meeting organised by Stoke Newington & Hackney Defence Campaign. Wed 20 July, 7.30pm, Hackney Town Hall, Mare St, E8.

• **Belfast** — see for yourself A meeting to publicise the annual delegation (see below). Speakers, music and a film of past delegation's experiences. Fri 15 July, 7.30pm, Caxton House, St John's Way, Archway, London. £1/50p unwaged. Organised by Islington TOM.

Advertisement

### OUT NOW!

**Permanent Revolution, the theoretical journal of the Workers Power group, No 1, Summer 1983. Articles on British imperialism's decline 1964-83; International crises in the '70s & '80s; Theses on Reformism; Fundamental principles of our programme.** Price: £1.50 (plus 50p post) from Workers Power, BCM 7750, London WC1N 3XX.

• **The Politics of Health in Zimbabwe** Hour long video available for meetings or functions. £10 (payable in advance). Send to Books for South Africa Fund, PO Box 50, London N1.

• **Glasgow Polish Solidarity Ctee** Conference 17/18 September. For details contact Gordon Morgan, 59 Durward Ave, Glasgow 041-649 8958

• **SE England Trade Union Conference on Namibia** Sun 17 July, Oxford Hse, Derbyshire St, London E2. Further details from Namibia Support Committee 01-267 1941.

• **GLC Women's Committee** next meeting is discussing Defence and Disarmament. Fri 22 July, 7-9pm, County Hall, London SE1. Women only.

• **Support Irish political prisoners in English gaols** Public meeting Thu 14 July, 7.30pm, Lambeth Town Hall, Acre Lane, SW2 (Brixton tube). Organised by South London Irish Solidarity Committee.

• **Women in Nicaragua** Public meeting (to launch the new book: 'Sweet Ramparts') Mon 18 July, 7pm, Almeida Theatre, Almeida St, London N1.

Speakers: Sarah Stewart & Jenny Pearce (writers), Maria Arcelia Urbina (Nicaraguan Embassy), Bernadette Barristoe (Grenada High Csn). Music and Cabaret. Tickets £2/£1 unwaged.

• **Troops Out Movement** is organising a mass delegation to visit Belfast in August. See for yourself what's going on in the North of Ireland. For details contact Gail on 01-250 1293.

• **Acid Rain** — Britain's invisible export. Public meeting with speakers from Scandinavian organisations, Labour Party and scientific community. 13 July, 7pm, Grand Committee Rooms, House of Commons, London SW1. Details from Socialist Environment and Resources Association (SERA) Public Health Group, 9 Poland St, London W1 (01-439 3749).

• **Preparing for Power** Conference organised by the Revolutionary Communist Party. 16-22 July, Polytechnic of Central London. Over 80 workshops including Marxism after Marx, racism, women's oppression, Ireland etc. Phone 01-274 3951 for further details.

**HOMES** wanted for very cute socialist kittens. Phone Sue 01-359 8288 (day), 01-806 9181 (eves).

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### Socialist Action Forums

**EDINBURGH** Socialist Action readers forum is on the last Thursday of every month. Phone 031-667 9630 for further information and details of venue.

**SOUTH WALES** Socialist Action & Revolution summer school on 'Women in the struggle for their liberation and socialism'. 16/17 July, 11-5pm, East Moors Community Hall, Sanquahar St, Splott, Cardiff. Creche provided, social in evening. £1.25 per day (50p unwaged).

**BRENT** Socialist Action fundraising social 'Solidarity with the Palestinian struggle', an evening of Middle Eastern delights, traditional food and music. Sat 16 July, £1.75 (£1 unwaged) includes food. Tickets & info phone Kath 01-226 0571 (days).

**SOUTH WEST LONDON** Socialist Action & Revolution fundraising Sunday dinner. Afternoon of Middle Eastern dinner, music. Children very welcome. 24 July, 2pm. Tickets £2.50/£2 unwaged. Phone Anne or Ros 01-228 7000 for more info.

## It's never too late!

THIS week is the final end of our Spring Appeal which has been running for 3 months. Over that period we have received cheques, standing orders, notes and coins — and, this week, a trumpet!

We know our readers are not the richest people in Britain, so to have raised over £14,000 is a fantastic achievement and a very good start for a new paper. Letters that have come in from supporters and new readers are encouraging. They are full of helpful criticism and promises to take the paper to new places to sell.

Although we didn't achieve the full amount we were aiming for, we'd like to thank everyone who contributed and say to those who always meant to send us a little something — it's never too late.

Through the summer we will be trying to pack all the usual features of the paper into 12 pages and will be back with 16 pages in September.

Don't let your summer holidays stop money coming into us. Not meeting the targets over spring means that we will be very hard pressed over the summer to pay our bills.

Nigel Lawson has just turned round and said 'if the money supply is too much there will have to be cuts'. We make a firm promise if our money supply increases there will be no cuts from us!

Thanks this week to:

Ealing	£150.00
Cardiff	72.00
Islington	5.00
E Griffiths	5.00
J Baston	3.00
Anon	6.00
T&GWU shop steward	20.00
John Baker	2.00
TR from Glasgow	30.00
Brent	327.00
Anon	12.00
C Mason	4.00
<b>Total this week:</b>	<b>£636.00</b>
<b>Grand Total:</b>	<b>£14,322.96</b>

I would like to become a Socialist Action supporter.

Please send me my supporters bulletin  
 Please put me in touch with local readers  
 I enclose a standing order/donation of £

### Socialist Action Bankers Order Form

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of .....

(Address of your bank in capitals)  
Please pay to the credit of Socialist Action, Acc. No. 70372315 at Co-Op Bank, 08-90-33, 1 Islington High Street, London N1. Starting on ..... (date of first payment) and thereafter monthly on the same date until further notice. Debit my A/C No ..... for the amount of £ .....

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Signature .....

**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.**

**Labour Movement Conference on Ireland 16 July**, has now been cancelled.  
 **Hounslow Youth CND March: Stop Cruise!** March from Greenham Common to Greenham Fields, Hounslow, August bank holiday 27-29th. Details from Hounslow YCND, 42 Wellington Rd North, Hounslow, Middx.  
 **Has socialism a future?** Conference organised by the Labour Co-ordinating Committee. July 22-24, Manchester Poly SU. Details from LCC 9 Poland St, London W1.  
 **Is Labour worth saving?** Debate with Jeremy Corbyn MP, CPGB, Socialist Organiser, Workers Power and RCP at Preparing for Power conference (see above) Tue 19 July, 7pm.

## Socialist ACTION

### Join the fight for socialism

If you want more information about Socialist Action or to be put in touch with local supporters send this form to Socialist Action, 328 Upper Street, London N1.

Name .....

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# "This is the age of the train" — or is it?

**THE TORIES** are set to sell off the profitable parts of publically owned industry and massacre the rest. High on their list is the national rail network.

National Union of Railwaymen member, **CHRIS GOUGH**, explains.

In 1981 the British Rail Board requested urgent government investment and an independent review. Thatcher's answer was the Serpell Inquiry.

The terms of reference ruled out a plan for transport and looked only at the finances of the industry.

The final Serpell report emphasises profitability and reduced public expenditure. It rejects subsidy, along with the social, environmental and energy case for rail. Quality of service and safety are ignored.

Serpell's options for the network range from a cut to 1630 miles, with a loss of 105,000 jobs, to a cut of 380 miles, with 27,000 job loss.

Wales, west of Cardiff and Scotland, north of Edinburgh, could be without a rail service.

Buses are promoted as a substitute. Profitable commuter lines will be sold off. The London to Southend, Brighton and Gatwick services have been mentioned so far.

Two merchant banks and an insurance company have put in claims to take over the London to Southend line, which is BR's most profitable per mile. This earns £20 million a year and carries 25,000 people every weekday, a useful subsidy for services in rural areas, which are socially essential but don't bring in the cash.

Serpell is being brought in through the back door already. British Rail are using arguments about efficient manage-

ment structures to set up subsidiary companies like Sealink. This is a step towards eventual sale.

Talks are going ahead for the food service Travellers Fare to drop the British Rail logo, with the excuse that this gives the service a bad name.

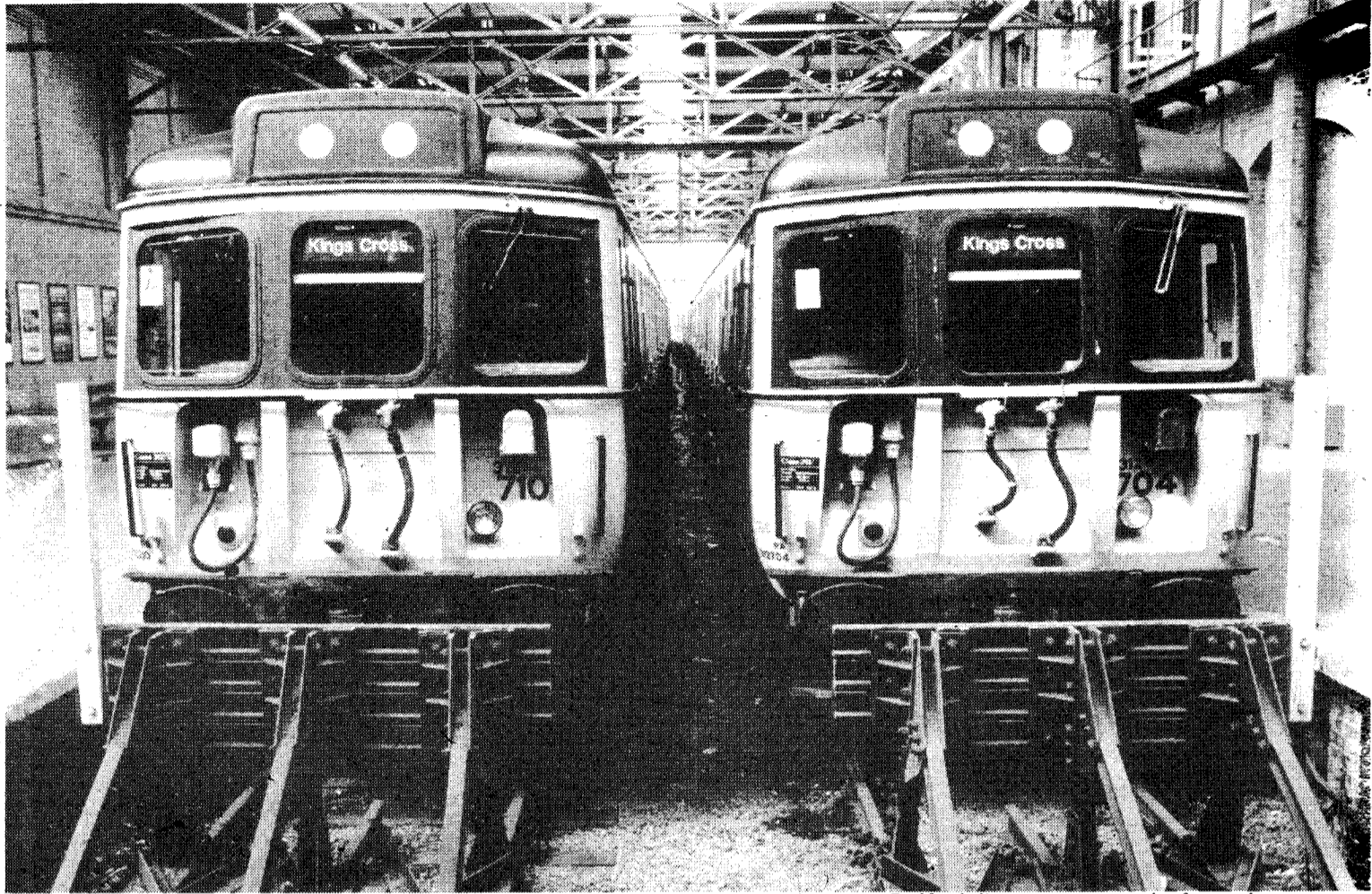
Other subsidiaries like the National Freight Company, British Transport Hotels and BT Docks have already passed to the private sector and BR rolling stock, both new building and maintenance, could go the same way if there is no fightback.

Serpell recommends selling British Rail Engineering Limited — the engineering workshops (BREL). In preparation for hive off, the BREL workforce is being slimmed down, with the closure of Temple Mills in London and Horwich in Lancashire by the end of 1983 and the closure of Shildon near Darlington in the following year.

In recent negotiations over BREL closures, the managing director laid out the future, 'An overriding philosophy of BREL is their aim to become a free standing company ... responsible for their own financial stability on the same lines as any commercial company.'

The Queen's speech floated the idea of a London regional transport authority, incorporating profitable commuter lines and London Transport. This points to further hive off.

Already London's *Evening Standard* an-



The British Rail Board want to force through driver only operation on the Kings Cross to Bedford line, with removal of guards.

nounced on 5 July that longer distance bus routes in outlying suburbs are on offer to private operators.

This assault on the public transport system hits at working conditions and union organisation, as well as jobs and services.

The Virani and Seaco Group, who bought 13 of the BTH hotels, intends to run each hotel as an individual unit, with wages and conditions varying according to the profitability

of each hotel. This breaks the unity of the union and attacks basic conditions.

The future is one of station and line closures, job loss, manning reductions, high fares, poor service, hive off, productivity deals and scrapping of electrification.

In the past, the NUR has accepted productivity deals in return for false hopes that this will prevent closure and sell off. But at this year's conference, the

NUR called for action against attempts to privatise BREL and introduce Serpell.

The campaign against workshop closure could be our first battle against privatisation. Nationally coordinated industrial action must be organised against the assault on the rail industry.

The Tories are attacking every public sector industry in an attempt to smash the collective

strength of the unions. We must unite and not get picked off one by one.

## Alliance

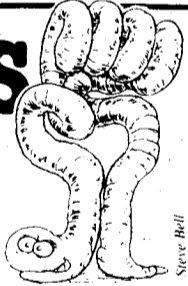
Our brothers and sisters in British Telecom have already taken industrial action against privatisation and we need to do the same.

The Triple Alliance of rail, steel and coal unions needs to be transformed

from a talk shop with the Tories to a fighting alliance against redundancies, closures and privatisation.

Policies for an integrated transport system, based on need not profit, should also be discussed, with the Labour Party building a campaign for renationalisation and backing the industrial, extra-parliamentary action needed to defend the unions and public services.

## WORM'S EYE VIEW



### Debategate

WASHINGTON'S latest scandal may seem like a minor affair, but it tells us a lot about the Reagan entourage.

The scandal is basically this. During the 1980 election Carter's aides provided him with a 'briefing book' for the TV debate with Reagan.

This somehow got into the hands of the Reagan camp, and was used by the present budget director David Stockman during the rehearsal for the TV debate, in which he played the part of Carter.

Despite this, Reagan claims he never knew anything about the briefing book. The present White House Chief of Staff James Baker did see the book however.

And Communications Director David Gergen, while not remembering the briefing book, did this week by chance discover a stack of private documents from the

Carter camp in his own files, under the heading 'Afghanistan'.

Baker claims that the person who got the book was present CIA director William Casey.

During the election campaign Cassey was in charge of the Reagan camp's intelligence, and employed ex-army officers to report on troop movements — in case Carter tried another attempt to release the hostages in Iran, as a last minute campaign gamble.

Casey, of course, doesn't remember the briefing book either. This is also minor stuff in terms of American bourgeois politics, which is difficult to distinguish from gangsterism at the best of times.

What it shows is that Reagan is lying through his teeth. After Watergate he will be in big trouble if he gets caught.

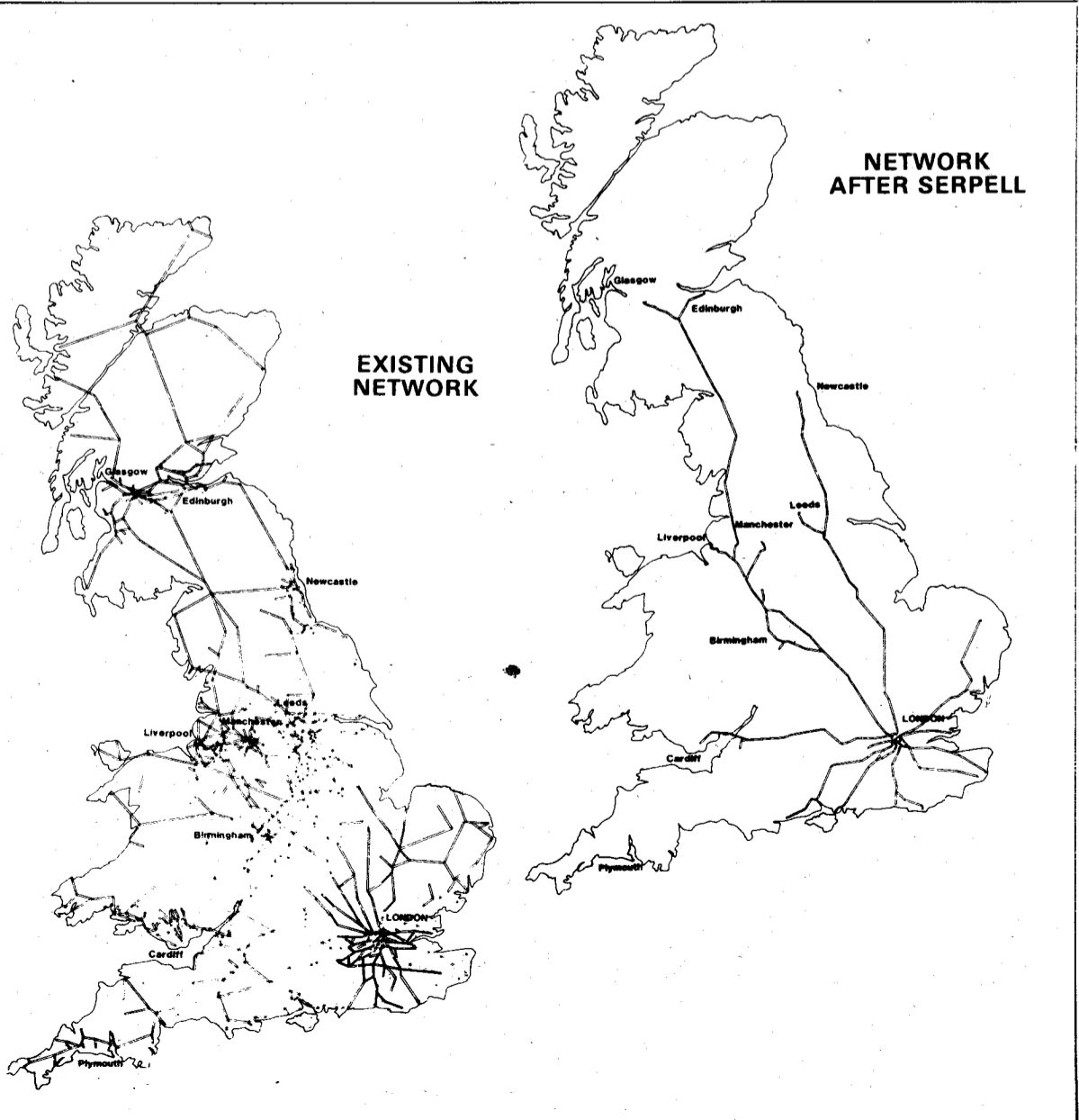
## MCC to back South Africa?

WHAT a reactionary load of old buffers run cricket in this country. In what other sport would someone be left out of the national team because he was considered too 'uppity'?

Now Tory MP John Carlisle in alliance with Denis Compton and Bill Edrich, are running a campaign for an MCC tour of South Africa. Wednesday evening will see a mass meeting of MCC members at Central Hall Westminster, to debate out the issue of a South African tour.

As it happens the debate at Central Hall is the same evening as the debate on hanging in parliament. John Carlisle hopes to be able to pop out of the Central Hall debate to vote for the reintroduction of hanging. 'I'm in favour of hanging them all' he says.

Compiled by PHIL HEARSE. 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

## Stop the closure of Marylebone!

**MARYLEBONE BR station is to be axed if the British Rail Board gets its way.**

This would be the first London terminus to close and, as stated in a report in last Monday's *London Standard*, will be a 'prelude to a major sale of assets on BR and London Transport planned by the government'.

**By Tessa van Gelderen (Marylebone NUR)**

Marylebone is a prime site for development and its closure will inevitably mean lost jobs as well as services. Line closures will follow fast on the heels of the station shutting down.

The station's depot has been under threat for

many years, particularly since no investment has been put into its antiquated signalling system, track and rolling stock.

But recent information indicated that closure was imminent and a local co-ordinating committee of National Union of Railwaymen and the train drivers union ASLEF has been established to launch a campaign to keep Marylebone open.

The decision of the NUR's recent Annual General Meeting to fight closures with industrial action has to be implemented by the union leadership. Not only is this the only way to save Marylebone and the jobs and services there, but it will give a warning to the Tories that each and every plan to further erode the rail industry will be met with action.

Like the closure of BR's engineering workshops, the closure of Marylebone is the implementation of the Serpell Report by the backdoor. (see page 11)

Marylebone's demise would also aid the Tories' plans to abolish the GLC and set up a transport authority prior to hiving off profitable parts of London's transport system.

Every Labour council including the GLC has to totally oppose BR's plan and support any action taken by Marylebone's rail workers to defend our jobs.

The campaign to keep Marylebone open is the same campaign to fight all the Tories attacks on BR and the whole of the public sector.

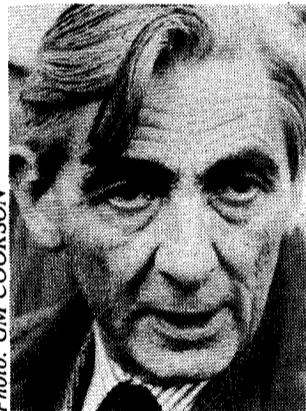
As far as we are concerned at Marylebone, the axe stops here.



Cardowan miners — determined to resist



British Rail apprentices warn of cuts to come



Len Murray

**Scargill**  
**rebutts**  
**Murray**



Arthur Scargill

## Miners prepare for action

**DELEGATES** to the National Union of Mineworkers conference in Perth last week prepared to go into battle against Tory attacks on pay, jobs and union rights.

In a snub to TUC leader Len Murray, the conference rejected talks with Thatcher on anti-

union legislation and called on NUM members 'to refuse to comply with any legislation that derives

directly from there.'

South Wales NUM president, Emyln Williams declared 'Tebbit looks like an undertaker, talks like one and acts like one. He wants to bury us, but we are going to bury his laws'.

This confrontation with Tebbit could come around a campaign for industrial action to resist curbs on the union claim for 'a substantial pay increase' or promised action against plans to shut 70 pits, with the loss of 70,000 jobs.

Miners' anger and determination to resist closures came alive during the conference week when three Scottish pits went on strike against the transfer of miners from the threatened Cardowan pit in Lanarkshire.

Bogside pit in Fife and Polmaise colliery in Stirling joined a third Scottish pit, Polkennet in a stand against the Coal Board's attempts to pre-empt review procedures.

The results of a NUM appeal against the closure

of Cardowan are not due until 16 August, but the NCB is blackmailing and bullying, with the premature closure of two production faces at the colliery, cuts in earnings and a lock-out at Polmaise.

Scottish NCB director, Albert Wheeler even ordered the Cardowan management to refuse admission to South Wales leader Emyln Williams, who wanted to bring a solidarity message to the pit.

But these provocations did not deter conference delegates. An emergency resolution declared 'This conference of the NUM instructs the executive and the national officials to embark on a campaign to win the whole hearted support of miners, not only to oppose pit and works closures, but all reductions in manpower'.

This was backed with a call for national strike action if the Scottish area request solidarity in the likely event that Cardowan is axed next month.

### Post Office Engineers hit the City

**By Marcella FitzGerald (London North Central Internal, POEU)**

A MAJOR commodity broker, with Keith Joseph as a director, is without phones this week.

Post Office engineers from their exchange are on strike against Tory plans to privatise British Telecom.

Eight members of the London North Central internal branch of the Post Office Engineering

Union were called into action by their national executive.

Within 25 hours of refusing to mend faults on two City exchanges, commodity brokers Hoare and Gavette had no phones, Thatcher's backers at the offices of the Confederation of British Industry were running into difficulties and 330 line faults were reported.

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