

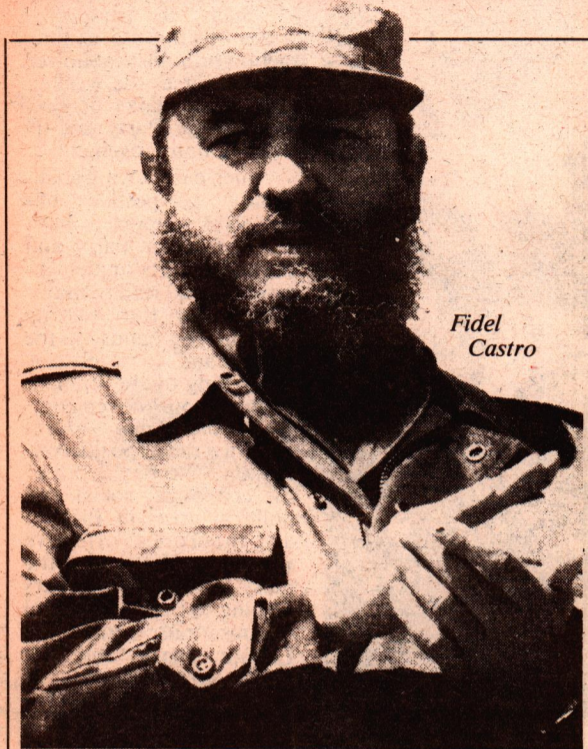
A Socialist ACTION

National demonstration

No more Chiles — hands off Central America!

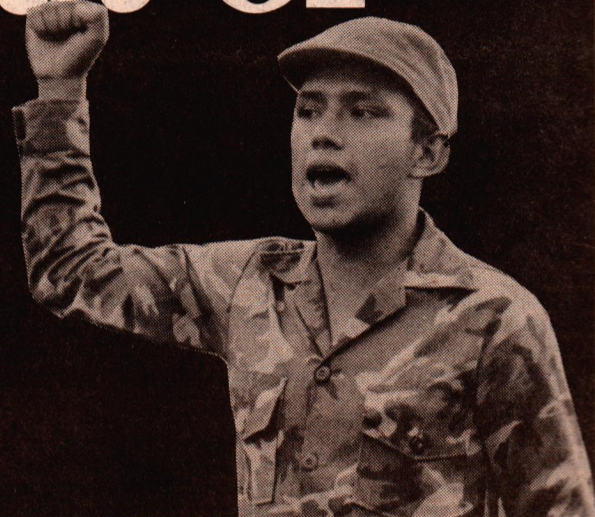
Sunday 11 September in London

Defend the workers of El Salvador and Chile!



Fidel Castro

Reagan out of Central America



Cuba si!

AS US imperialism bellows, threats and brandishes its military hardware in Central America and the Caribbean, the Cubans are celebrating the thirtieth anniversary of the heroic attack on the Moncada barracks.

That attack ended in failure. But less than six years later Fulgencio Batista the Cuban dictator, creature of the American State

Department and hiring of the Mafia, had been driven out of the country by the Castro-led rebels.

The Cubans had shown that the revolutionary road was the way to dispose of the hated dictators and exploiters who sweated the poor and the oppressed, and whose regimes were 'guaranteed' by the US marines.

Cuba became, and still is, a beacon of hope and a revolutionary inspiration to the downtrodden in America's so-called backyard.

Its example fuelled the struggles of the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, the New Jewel Movement in Grenada and the FMLN in El Salvador.

Heart

Throughout Latin America those who rebel against and fight the corrupt, crisis-ridden dictatorships take heart from the victory of the Cuban revolution.

This is what enrages the Reagan administration. It is a living testimony to the fact that the Monroe Doctrine which spelt out that Central and Latin America were the preserve of the USA is now being ripped apart.

For all those who believe in the right of self-determination, for all those who are against exploitation and injustice and for all those who oppose imperialist war the message is clear — defend Cuba against the threats of imperialism.

● Interview with FMLN fighter — page 3.

THE REAGAN administration is waging war against the revolutionary Sandinista government of Nicaragua. The war, organised by the Central Intelligence Agency, is the most extensive covert operation organised by the US since the Vietnam war.

Plans approved this week by the White House will mean that the present force of

10,000 counter-revolutionaries trying to overthrow the Nicaraguan government will be radically increased.

The CIA-organised war will receive fresh backing from the US Defence Department in the shape of military supplies. And for the first time, 5,000 US

combat troops will join Honduran troops in military exercises next month.

The exercises form part of military manoeuvres which included the dispatch of two major naval forces to the Pacific and Caribbean coasts of Nicaragua.

defend democracy in Nicaragua, was asked why the lack of democracy of rightist governments in the area did not provoke the same reaction from Washington.

Influence

He replied: 'We have more influence over the others. You can trust them not to go against vital US interests.'

Reagan fears that the example of the Sandinistas in throwing off the yoke of dictatorship will be followed, not only by other countries in Central America such as El Salvador and Guatemala, but also by the powerful working classes of Brazil, Chile and Argentina.

If the US succeed in their campaign of intimidation it will set back the prospect of working class advance in Latin America and boost the US war drive world-wide.

Support

That is why it is in the interests of the peace movement in Britain to give full support to the campaign to get the US out of Central America and end Thatcher's complicity.

A major opportunity for Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament groups and the labour movement to show their solidarity comes on 11 September.

The call for a national demonstration on the tenth anniversary of the Chilean coup is a major opportunity for the peace movement to make its voice heard against the bloody war in Central America.

By the Editor

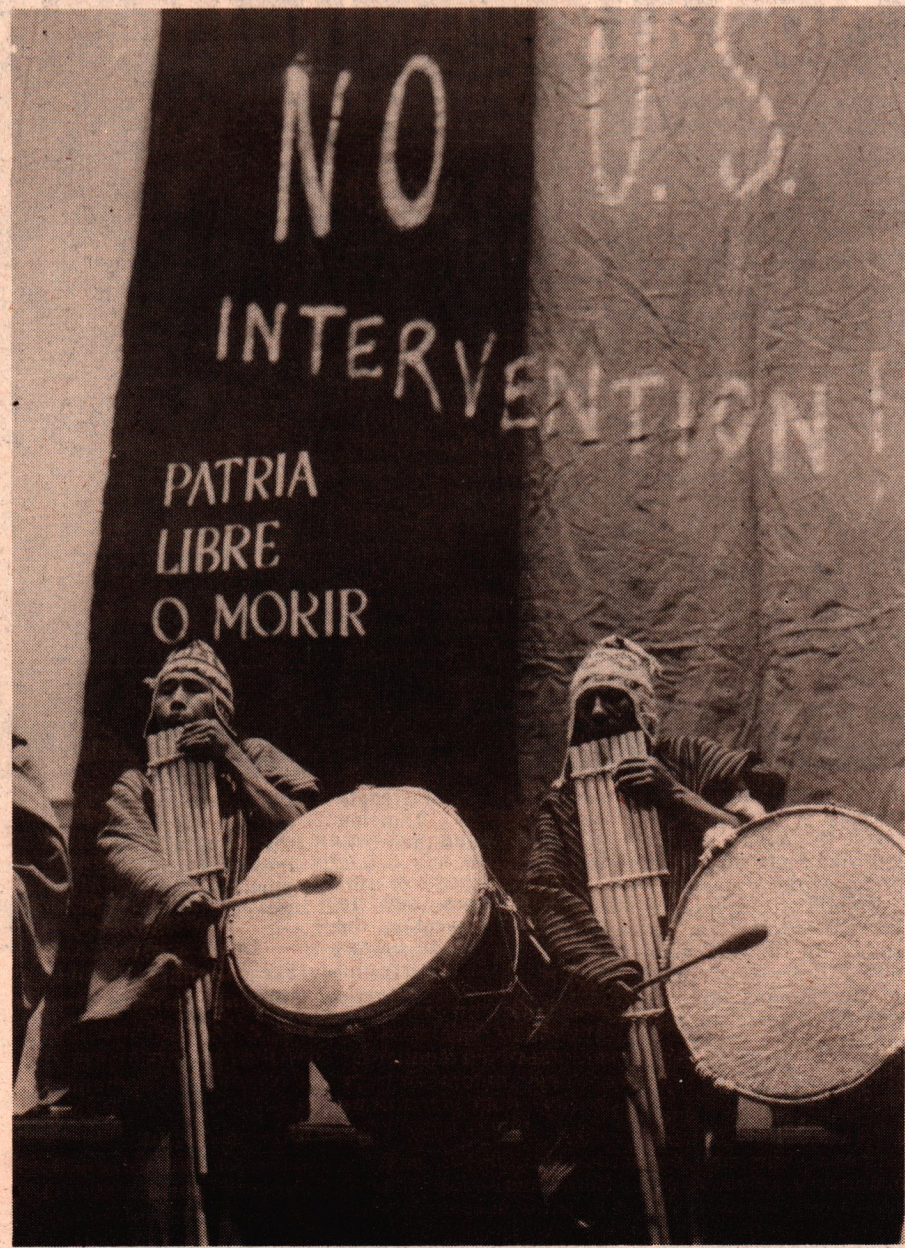
For the first time too US military advisors will accompany Salvadoran government troops into battle against the FMLN.

The appointment of Henry Kissinger, the architect of the later stages of the Vietnam war, to head a commission of inquiry into the situation in Central America has raised both scorn and alarm among such props of the US establishment as the *New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times*. They fear that Reagan's policy will lead to all-out war between Nicaragua and Honduras, followed by a new Vietnam with direct US military engagement.

Papers

Both papers have called on the administration to take part in negotiations called for by the 'Contact' group of Latin American governments and backed by the Nicaraguan government.

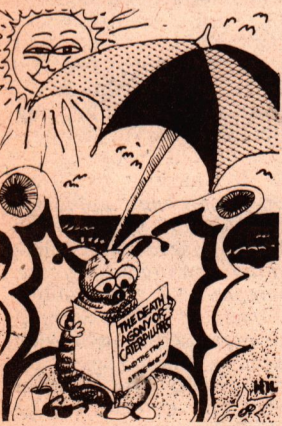
The reasons for the US war drive were explained by a senior US diplomat in the area who, claiming that the purpose of the US government drive was to



LOS AWATINAS from Bolivia were the highlight of a concert and rally held in London on 22 July to celebrate the fourth anniversary of the Nicaraguan revolution

Photo: CARLOS AUGUSTO GUARITA (Photom)

MODERN TIMES



SOCIALIST ACTION will be taking a two week break and will be back on 18 August. We hope all our readers have a good holiday.

In the event of any further moves by the US and Honduras against the Nicaraguan revolution, Socialist Action will contact its supporters about any emergency solidarity mobilisations. Be prepared.

US Hands off Central America! Stop British complicity! Solidarity with revolutionary Nicaragua!

What alternative to Kinnock?

LABOUR'S ELECTION DEFEAT and the scale of the Tories' planned attacks have stunned the labour movement and led to a profound inquest on what went wrong.

The contenders for the Labour Party leadership each reflect differing views inside the labour movement on what happened and where we should go from here. **DAVY JONES** looks at the debate on the way forward for the labour movement.

Since the election debacle the right wing in the Labour Party have taken the offensive. Their intentions are most clearly laid out in the manifesto of the main right wing candidate for the Party leadership contest, Roy Hattersley.

He quite specifically singles out the need for Labour to support incomes policy, to end its opposition to the EEC, and to develop a 'more convincing' defence policy — to drop unilateral nuclear disarmament.

At the same time he has called, along with another right wing challenger Peter Shore, for secret ballots to be introduced for Party leadership elections. The effect of this would be to weaken the power of the left wing constituencies and to bolster the power of the media to determine internal Labour Party affairs.

All of the moves by the right wing on policy and the witch hunt are justified by the need to 'be more in touch' with the ordinary Labour supporter. Translated, this means that the Labour Party has to be more in tune with the interests of British imperialism and its ruling class.

Fortunately this current emerged from the election weaker in the new parliament and in the trade union leadership, and somewhat discredited for its election campaign sabotage.

Futility

For the centre left Party and union bureaucrats the election defeat may have demonstrated the futility of their line of 'party unity' at all costs, but they have nevertheless emerged from the election in a stronger position against both the right and left wings of the party.

This is clear in relation to the leadership election where their candidate Neil Kinnock looks likely to win comfortably.

Kinnock is a younger version of Michael Foot in many ways — a charismatic South Wales MP, part of the traditional party left wing, but moving rightwards sufficiently quickly to inspire confidence in many a moderate trade union leader.

Furthermore he also has shown his preparedness to deal ruthlessly with the party's left wing, both in his support of the expulsions of the *Militant* editorial board members and in his effective ditching of Tony Benn's deputy leadership campaign two years ago.

The right wing union bureaucracy would like to see Neil Kinnock elected party leader and Roy Hattersley as his deputy.

This is known as the 'dream ticket' because it would prevent the nightmare for the bureaucracy of a left vic-

tory. In reality a Kinnock/Hattersley leadership team would be almost identical to the Foot/Healey team that lost Labour the election.

The Labour left suffered a major defeat in the election. Not only were Benn and Livingstone denied seats, but there was also a major defeat of the left's political line into the election.

This had been summed up by Benn as 'uniting the party around the existing policies, the existing leadership and the existing membership' — unity round the left manifesto and the Foot/Healey leadership in return for an end to internal party witch hunts.

Dump

What really happened before and during the election was that the existing leadership organised to dump the existing policies and the existing membership!

What's more the leading lefts failed to challenge the routinist electoralist campaign of the Labour leadership or the right wing's sabotage of the election campaign itself with their continual attacks on party policies.

As a result the left is weaker after this election inside the Labour Party. Its candidates for the party leadership contest, Eric Heffer for leader and Michael Meacher for deputy, in no way inspire the same enthusiasm among rank and file activists as did Tony Benn's campaign two years ago.

Indeed while Meacher has an outside chance of winning the deputy leadership contest, which would be a big blow against the right wing of the labour movement, Eric Heffer is likely to get a derisory vote.

The impact of Labour's election debacle has hastened the re-composition of the Bennite left in the Labour Party and the unions.

Impact

One section, particularly the Labour Coordinating Committee, whose supporters include Meacher and which still enjoys the sponsorship of Tony Benn, is shifting to the right under the impact of Labour's defeat. Even among some of the lefts there are signs of backsliding over withdrawal from the EEC, and over the centrality of campaigning for unilateral nuclear disarmament.

But importantly inside the unions the shift to the left of the last few years has continued. Another major industrial union, the railworkers, at this year's annual conference declared for unilateral nuclear disarmament. This position, was reaffirmed at many other



Workers protest against Thatcher's policies. The anger is there, can Labour organise it?

No talks with the Tories!

LOWE, the cartoonist used to draw the TUC as a venerable carthorse. After the debacle of last year's health workers' dispute and their retreats before Thatcherism on unemployment and cuts in the welfare state, even this caricature is too flattering. Further retreats are planned.

The first feelers have been put out to start talks with Employment Secretary Norman Tebbit. Discussions will start on the unions' political funds, but Bill Keyes of the print union SOGAT who is chairperson of the TUC employment committee admitted 'wider ranging talks were possible if Mr Tebbit and

other ministers were prepared to listen and to be flexible.'

Bill Keyes prides himself as a 'left realist' preferring cooperation with Tory ministers to confrontation with a government hell bent on breaking the power of the unions.

But do not get the idea that the TUC has gone soft. In fact they are getting really tough — with Bill Keyes' colleagues in the National Graphical Association who will not accept the TUC's formula for selling out their dispute with the *Financial Times*.

Nor are the TUC leaders going to stand any nonsense at Blackpool this year. They have made it clear that none of the four contestants for the

Labour leadership are welcome to put their points of view at a round-table-discussion.

Strangely enough Moss Evans, another 'left', thought their presence 'would distract delegates and the media from the important business of conference'. With policies like the TUC is pursuing one would have thought that Moss Evans would have been only too pleased that delegates' minds were distracted elsewhere.

Election

There is a minority within the ranks of the union leaders who are opposing this disastrous course of the TUC

leaders.

Arthur Scargill has spoken for millions of rank and file trade unionists to oppose collaboration with the Tories and for a fight by the TUC to confront Thatcher.

Workers in industries like telecommunications have voted for left leaderships to defend their jobs and conditions from the Tory offensive.

This minority needs to be unified and linked with the left in the Labour Party. Then in the course of the coming inevitable battles with the Tories there will be the basis to build a new leadership pledged to class struggle rather than the shameful class collaboration of Len Murray, Moss Evans and Bill Keyes.

back these attacks would mean a serious defeat for the organised labour movement of major proportions. These are the stakes in the conflict.

On the other hand it is likely that the Tories will face mounting unpopularity as the disastrous state of the British economy becomes more transparent. The basis will exist for organising widespread opposition to the Tories and major defensive struggles by the labour movement are likely over the next few years.

Development of, and solidarity with these struggles will be a decisive fac-

tor in determining the outcome of the class battles under Thatcher.

Debate

These battles will closely interlink with the debate within the labour movement on the way forward under Thatcher. Millions of workers are asking two questions: how can we resist Thatcher's attacks and how can we ever get another Labour government to replace the Tories? There are two coherent answers to these questions which form the heart of the debate wracking the labour movement from top to bottom.

One response is for the labour movement to form an 'anti-Thatcher' bloc with the SDP/Liberal Alliance which entails dropping the left wing policies adopted by the labour movement in recent years and waiting five years for the parliamentary opportunity to dump Thatcher.

Such a perspective rules out the use of mass action or industrial power, and endorses the weakening of the links between the Labour Party and the trade union movement.

Such a right wing coalitionist perspective has powerful supporters both in the Labour Party and the unions. Its implementation would lead to major defeats for the working class at the hands of the Tories and to a historic weakening of the strength of the labour movement.

Revolutionary Marxists draw the opposite conclusion. The very depth of the economic, social and political crisis in Britain, and the Tories' offensive will deepen the trend of the most advanced workers turning to their traditional organisations, both the Labour Party and the unions, to seek methods of resisting the Tories and for rebuilding a new leadership of the labour movement committed to a class struggle perspective.

For that reason revolutionary Marxists in Britain place themselves right at the centre of the re-composition of the left currents within the Labour Party, the LPYS and the unions to fight for a line of rebuilding the Labour Party and the unions on a class struggle perspective.

Support

That means building the 'hard left' current in the Labour Party round the *Labour Briefing* journal which enjoys wide support among constituency activists, the Broad Left and their Broad Left Organising Committee within the unions and building the Labour Party Young Socialists.

It means over the next months the left throwing its weight behind each and every industrial struggle which breaks out against the Tories. It means backing the Irish liberation struggle, supporting the black youth fighting for their rights and building the CND mass demonstration on 22 October.

It means the left organising behind the Heffer/Meacher ticket in the Labour leadership elections, and organising conferences of the labour movement in the autumn to organise the fight back against the Tories on privatisation, the political levy and defence of the GLC and of welfare services.

And it will be vital for the left to raise its sights beyond the confines of the British situation and show solidarity with the revolutions in Central America against the threats of US imperialism and their allies in the region.

Specifically the 11 September demonstration, 'Hands off Central America - No more Chiles' must be made into a major priority for socialists.

Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)

NICARAGUA US prepares for all-out war



'THERE IS NO chance of serious negotiations' while the Sandinistas are still in power'. So said President Reagan last week, as the US began a huge military build-up against Nicaragua.

In addition to the considerable preparations being made by the Honduran army on the border with Nicaragua, the United States is preparing to use its own forces to co-ordinate and assist the invasion effort.

Provocations against the FSLN government and violations of Nicaraguan sovereignty are occurring almost daily:

- Reagan has ordered a naval task force, as big as the British invasion fleet to the Malvinas, to Nicaraguan waters. On board are 5000 US soldiers.

- The United States is organising huge arms shipments to counter-revolutionaries in Honduras from Israel, including artillery, mortars and ammunition.

- Honduran fighters are overflying Nicaraguan territory on an almost daily basis. Planes have

flown within 25 miles of the capital Managua.

- 5000 US soldiers will join the Honduran army for military manoeuvres in the first two weeks of August. Last February US-Honduran manoeuvres came within five miles of the Nicaraguan border.

- US newspapers have reported that the CIA is carrying out cartographic studies of Nicaraguan waters to prepare for possible mining of Nicaraguan ports.

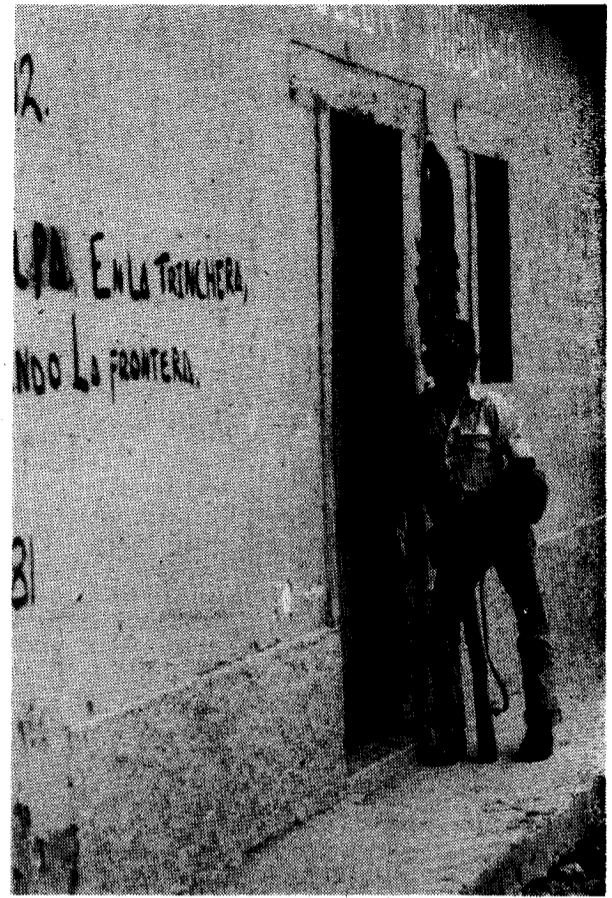
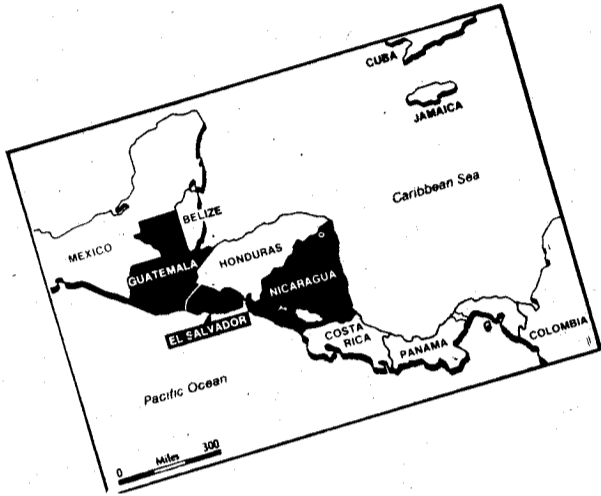
- Honduran patrol boats have attacked Nicaraguan vessels, in Nicaraguan waters in the Gulf of Fonseca.

Through these military preparations the US is maximising its options for an invasion. It seems clear, however, that US forces would at the very least be used to 'quarantine' Nicaragua while a Honduran-backed invasion took place. US ships would prevent supplies of arms or other equipment coming in by sea.

Other options short of the use of US troops include using US ship-based planes to attack targets inside Nicaragua, and the use of US planes to transport Honduran and counter-revolutionary troops.

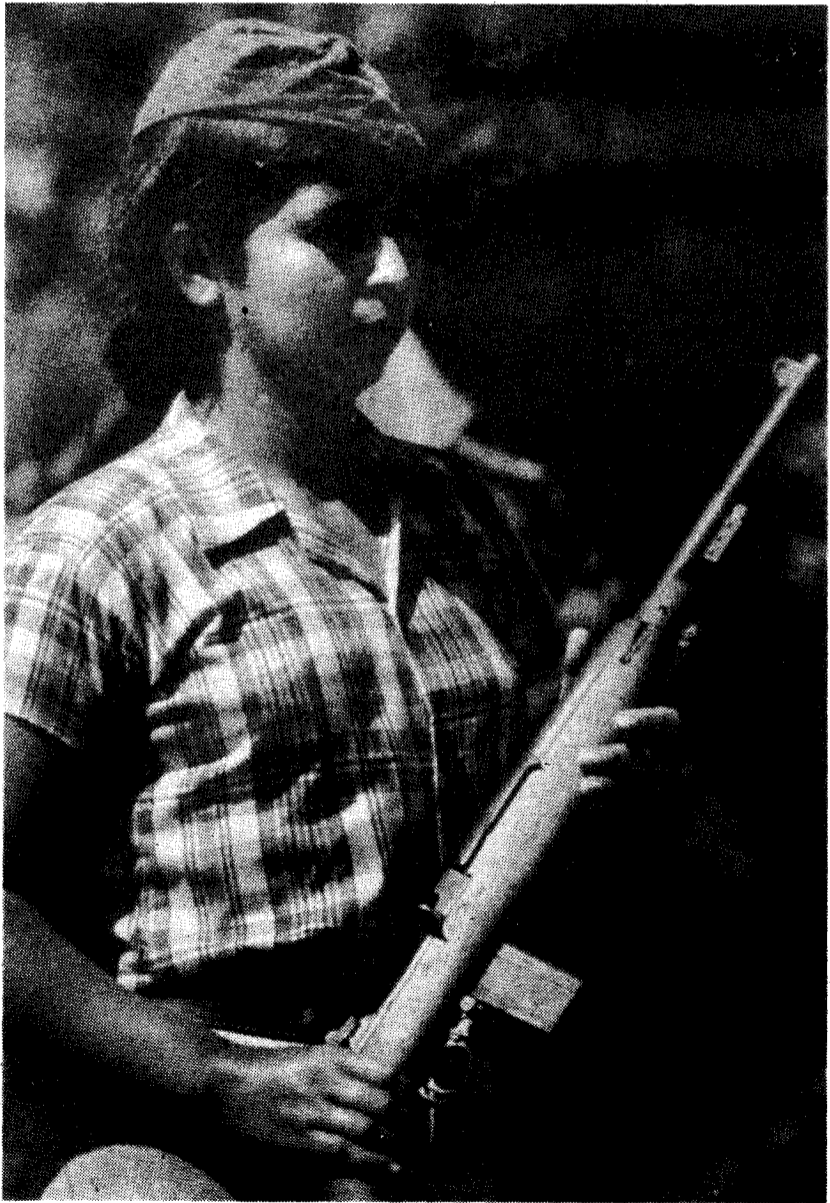
The US possesses the capability to use its air force base at Fort Howard in Panama to carry out these operations, in addition to its naval task force.

Reagan and his friends are preparing, in full view of world public opinion, a crime against the people of Central America. It is vital that the international solidarity effort is stepped up now.



Sandinista militia

Interview with Rosa Elena of the FMLN



FMLN woman fighter

ROSA ELENA is a member of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front of El Salvador, and was interviewed in Mexico earlier this year by JILL BARCLAY.

You have said, Rosa Elena, that you want peace for your country.

Can you explain to us then why you are fighting?

In El Salvador we have been struggling for more than fifty years. Our people have tried by every possible means to obtain their just demands for peasants to have land and for workers to have high enough salaries so that we can live in peace without hunger.

We have the same basic needs as the rich.

The government and the oligarchy have never allowed the development of our country and have never resolved the problems of how we are to eat. They have never encouraged the development of industry.

Instead our people have been tortured, massacred and have 'disappeared' every time they tried to change things by peaceful means. For example the massacres of 1932 when 30,000 people were killed including women, children and old people.

We are not against the elections. What we say is that in El Salvador fair elections are not possible. The people have never been allowed to have their voices heard in elections. The most blatant example was that of Duarte whom the people voted for.

But what happened? There was a fraud and people were kidnapped and killed.

Ninety per cent of natural deaths in El Salvador are from things that could be cured, especially diarrhoea. But there aren't medicines and there aren't hospitals.

We believe in peace. We are a people who love peace. For years we have been exploited, putting up with working for miserable wages which do not allow us enough to eat. But there came a moment when we said: 'Enough is enough. We won't take more of this exploitation and repression' and we began to fight.

What do you think when you hear Reagan saying that the struggle in El Salvador is a result of the East/West conflict?

We know that imperialism will do everything it can to hold back the revolutions in Central America. And that they will use every justification that they can.

But Reagan knows what our fight is about. It is clear that our struggle is not part of the East/West conflict: revolutions cannot be transported. The conditions and process of revolution in each country is different. Although it's certainly true that revolutions in other countries can make our own easier. But the process is not automatic.

Why is imperialism so keen on maintaining the social structure of El Salvador?

Imperialism has learnt from the Vietnam war that a whole people in arms cannot be defeated.

What they hope to do in El Salvador is to hold back our revolution. They know that in the end we are going to win because we are united in the determination that we are going to triumph.

Imperialism feels its interests in El Salvador as strategic rather than economic — our's is a small country — but of course it has economic interests here. But they are scared that if they lose El Salvador all of Central America and eventually Latin America will follow.

What about the role of the solidarity movements in the imperialist countries?

If the people of the world do not support us we are going to lose the war. Solidarity is all that is holding back the type of direct intervention that happened in Vietnam. The recently announced conditions on US aid to El Salvador came as a result of this pressure: it wouldn't have happened if it wasn't for solidarity.

The people of the world are not at the stage they were at the beginning of the Vietnam war. Now the peoples of the world have a clearer understanding of what imperialism is. They will not allow direct intervention.

What is the overall situation of women in El Salvador?

There was always an attitude in our country that women weren't capable of doing anything and that men had to do everything for women. As a result of this there was always a lot of suffering on the part of the women: we were paid less and had worse work and little possibility of realising participation.

But now we are coming to realise all this. We are realising that men can't fight for our liberation. So we took the decision to integrate ourselves into the struggle at all levels of participation.

There are women who lend their houses for meetings, or who help with food for all the companeros who are militants. Then there are women who help at the level of propaganda. Some women are militants at the political and military levels: participating in meetings, fighting in our army, though at this time women's par-

ticipation in the army is not at the same level as men's — our army is still developing.

But very many women are involved in our struggle at all levels. Women are involved too at the rural level: everyone is involved in our struggle: all must fight for the liberation of all.

What are the differences between the lives of women in the liberated zones as compared to their lives previously?

The differences are great. Peasant women always used to have to work a double day — working alongside the men in the fields despite the fact that she also had her household tasks. Now everyone just has one job. Those who, for example, work doing the cooking, do only this work. They also get military and political training. People change the tasks they have to do. People's personal lives also develop.

What changes have there been in the lives of children in the liberated zones?

Life for ordinary children in our country has always been hard. For the children of working class in the cities they would leave school at twelve to learn a trade and start work at thirteen. For the children of peasants life was even harder. They wouldn't be able to go to school at all because there wouldn't be a school. Instead they'd get up at four or five in the morning to work like adults in the fields. School doesn't fill the stomachs, working in the fields does.

But now in the liberated zones the main task of the children is to go to school, which is also attended by adults when there isn't an offensive and when the day's work is finished.

But the children also have tasks to do, for example in the house, which is work not just for girls or women. But they don't have the same obligations as before to work a full day on the land — they are tasks for children.

They are given responsibilities, everyone must be responsible for society. We are trying to create a new kind of person, a more just society. Everyone is fighting for a better society for all and so everyone must participate to the extent that they're capable.

Where will you be Oct 22? 

IRELAND UNFREE

Sinn Fein and Westminster

The following is an abridged version of the front page editorial of the latest issue of Socialist Republic newspaper of Peoples Democracy, Irish section of the Fourth International.

The vote for Sinn Fein in the North is the main spark of hope within a general election which otherwise marked a major victory for the British Tories' and a major defeat for the working class in both Britain and Ireland. It's clear from the opening of the new parliament and the British Queen's Speech outlining the government's programme that a new offensive is to begin now.

But the Tories and their Unionist allies have won a battle, not the war. The real struggle comes now, when they try to crush the resistance of the Irish people and their own minorities and working class opposition.

That struggle won't be fought in Westminster, and it won't centre around the way the vote went in an election now past. It will be fought in the streets, in the factories and trade union structures. And it will depend on the combativity, political awareness and level of organisation of ordinary working class militants.

If Sinn Fein recognise and respond to this central fact then the spark of hope that their victory represents can be converted into a new blaze of resistance against British rule in both parts of Ireland.

It's not enough to point to votes cast, to point to the next election, to offer an advice service or to pretend that military action by itself offers any prospect of victory. Only a programme of action that unites the mass of the people in a fight against Britain's military repression and economic oppression, against the Stormont Assembly, and for an anti-imperialist alternative to the Council for a New Ireland will build our confidence and organisation for the battles ahead...

One gain of the struggle before the election was the new dialogue between Sinn Fein and sections of the British Labour Party Left. Gerry Adams MP has already announced his intention of going to Britain to reopen those discussions.

We believe that the Sinn Fein abstention policy is wrong, but without moving on that Sinn Fein could learn from the experiences of Bernadette McAliskey as an MP. Gerry Adams should speak not only to the leaders but to the militants. By going on picket lines with British workers and joining in demonstrations of the black community he can build a real solidarity in action.

But at the end of the day solidarity from British workers depends on a real mass struggle here. The left in Sinn Fein are aware of this and in numerous public statements extending to well before the Assembly elections have pledged to build such a movement against the Assembly. Instead of fighting for this in the Westminster elections they settled for the politically meaningless slogan of 'principled leadership'...

Anti-imperialists have gained in the elections, but the imperialists have gained in a much more dramatic way. We gained a breathing space — let's use it to spell out 'principled leadership' as a political programme that will lead to a fight back against the Assembly, oppose the Council for a New Ireland with an all-Ireland constituent assembly, build anti-imperialist opposition to the right wing, 'pro-life' amendment to the constitution, and lead both employed and unemployed workers in all 32 counties in a fight against the economic austerity programme of Thatcher and her puppets in Dublin!

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Subscribe to the only paper with a revolutionary Marxist analysis of current events in Ireland, North and South. 12 issues for £6.50. Send to Connolly Bookshop, 6 Avoca Park, Belfast.

As Reagan steps up war drive

CND calls mass demo for October

IT'S CRUNCH TIME for the anti-missiles movement. Last week the US Congress voted for deploying the first ten MX first strike missiles. And by the end of this year cruise and Pershing missiles are due for installation across Europe. Now's the time for the anti-missiles movement to sort out its strategy and to develop some effective tactics.

Only fools now believe that the Geneva disarmament talks will make any serious progress in stopping the deployment of cruise and Pershing 11 missiles.

By Redmond O'Neill

The capitalist governments of Western Europe intend to ignore the views of the overwhelmingly majority of European people. In Germany and Britain right-wing governments are preparing to physically confront the peace movements.

In Greece and Spain social democratic governments have retreated on promises of the withdrawal of US bases. In France, the Mitterrand government, has been the most fervent supporter of Reagan's plan to station new nuclear missiles in Europe.

That's the context in which the National Council of CND met in London over the weekend 16/17 July. It had to decide how to regain the initiative which the Tories won as a result of Labour's disastrous performance in the general election campaign.

Important

The Council's most important decision was to call for a mass demonstration against cruise and Trident in London on 22 October. All over Europe similar demonstrations will take place on the same weekend.

But the Council did not crack the really tough nut of how to qualitatively broaden the forces involved in such mass actions as the date of deployment of

cruise approaches.

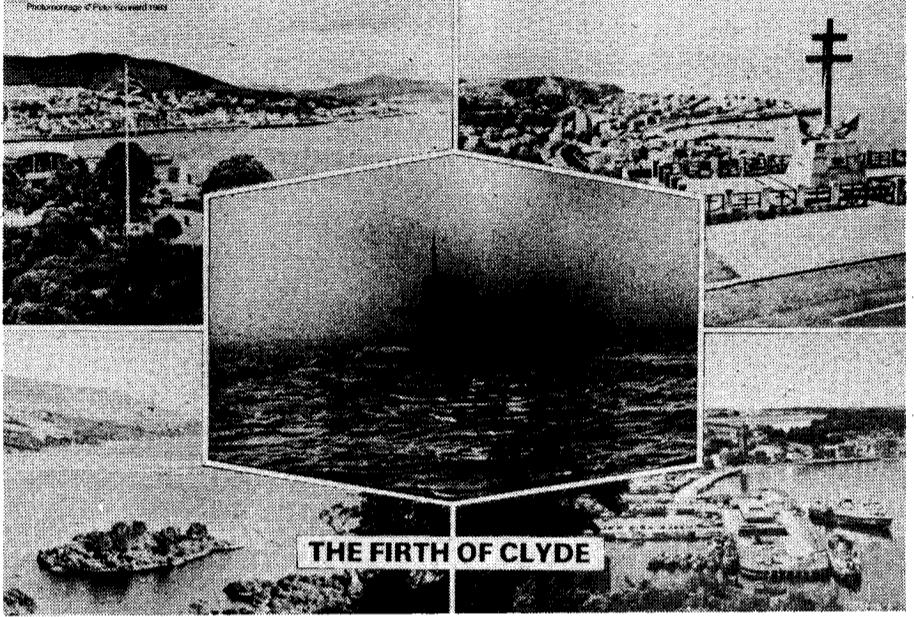
This is in marked contrast to the rest of Europe. For example the Dutch movement is discussing the call for a general strike against cruise. In Germany the peace movement has called for a week of action to precede 22 October with days of action by women, by youth, in the factories, etc. In Italy the movement, together with a section of the unions is demanding a referendum to demonstrate that the Socialist-led government has no mandate on cruise.

Strategy

All over Europe basic questions of strategy are openly under debate in the mass movement. It is already clear that individual self-sacrifice is no substitute for a strategy to force the workers' organisations, committed on paper to oppose the missiles, to actually mobilise the immense power of their membership against their governments.

But neither is there any point in relying on the leaderships of the unions, or the Socialist and the Communist parties to put their paper commitments into practice. This has already been shown by the failure of the Labour Party and TUC to organise the day of action which their 1982 conferences pledged them to on Hiroshima Day this year.

What is possible and necessary is for the peace movements to publicly demand and campaign for such action and for the left wing in the unions and the Labour Party to organise pressure for such action. For example Labour CND is organising a lobby of the



Photomontage by Peter Kennard, taken from GLC peace posters pack. The pack is part of the GLC peace year, available free to peace and community groups, etc. Write to Peace Year organisers, Dept of Recreation & Arts, County Hall, London SE1 7PB.

Labour Party conference to support its conference resolutions which demands that Labour mobilises for 22 October.

In the unions it is necessary now to start organising to make action against the missiles an issue. For example, for local government unions could refuse to carry out civil defence plans, the Post Office engineers could cut off phones to the bases, and so on. In particular there must be a lobby of the TUC which forcefully brings home the message that action speaks louder than words, and strike action loudest of all.

Rejected

But this approach is rejected by the central core of the CND Executive. On the contrary, they have added the slogan of a 'nuclear freeze' to the demands of the October demo. E.P. Thompson advocates freeze as the basis for agreement with the Liberal/SDP Alliance. This line threatens the anti-missiles movement with disastrous defeat as the London Region of

CND and others have recognised.

In what way does the 'freeze' take us beyond the demands 'No cruise, No Trident'? In what way does a 'freeze' prepare us for a situation where cruise and Pershing are actually deployed?

In reality it is a retreat from unilateralism, it prepares for the acceptance of cruise and it substitutes cuddling up with those great disarmers of the SDP, for the task of fighting to put the leaders of the labour movement on the spot.

How do the leaders of CND propose to foist this new line on the movement? Very simple, they have borrowed an idea from the Labour Party's right-wing and launched a witch hunt against their opponents. That is the meaning of the CND Executive's decision to first suspend and then impose a veto over the actions of the democratically elected executive of Labour CND. Every CND body and every Labour and trade union branch should demand that this witch hunt is ended.

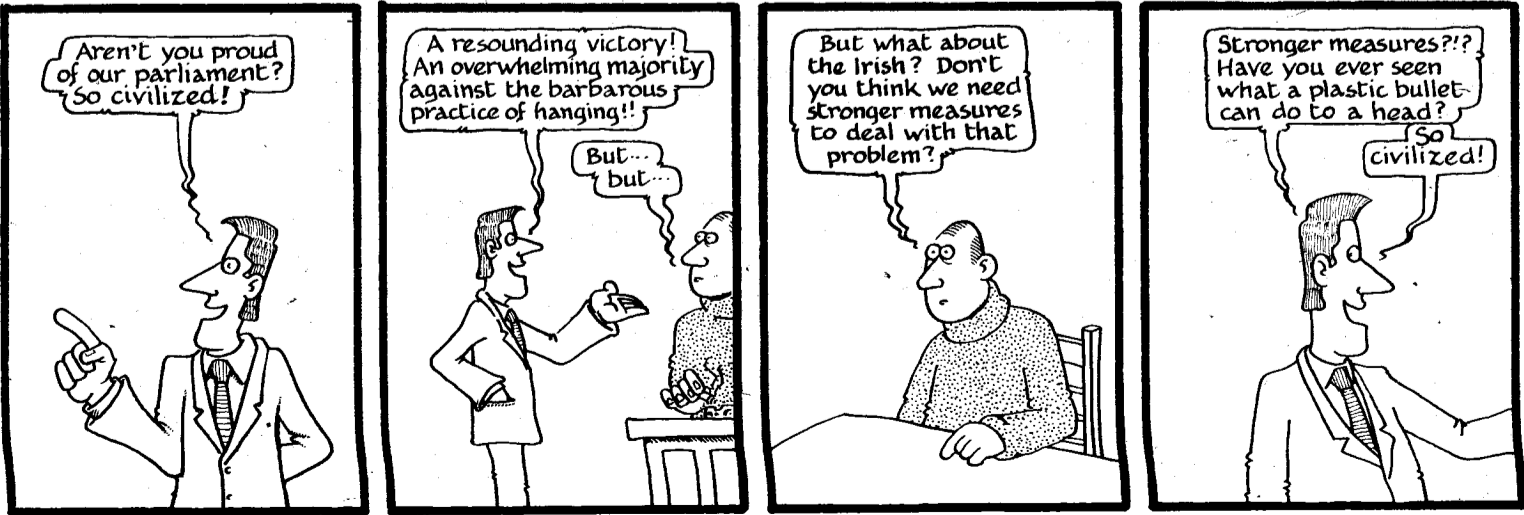
Thankfully the CND Council narrowly rejected a still more ineffective and divisive slogan: 'Defend Britain without the bomb'. The idea that CND can take on the Tories on the basis of building more battleships to send to the Falklands, recruiting more soldiers to die in Ireland, or building more tanks to occupy West Germany shows just how disoriented some of CND's 'leaders' have become following the general election.

Drift

This drift to the right must be blocked. The forces that stand in its way are all of those, like the Greenham movement, the Youth and labour CND, the CND branches and regions, as well as the left wing in the unions and Labour Party, who genuinely want to stop and scrap nuclear weapons. These forces will increasingly constitute the left-wing within CND. Its first task is to pull out all the stops to mobilise against cruise and Trident on 22 October.

A PIECE OF THE ACTION

BY #19 7/83 GORMAC



Young Socialists must be based on mass campaigns

IN THE PLEASANT surroundings of the Forest of Dean on 30 July the Labour Party Young Socialists holds its annual week long summer camp. As always in the Party's history, Labour's most turbulent periods are acutely reflected in its youth movements.

This year's camp will be held against the background of a Labour leadership election in which most of the contenders are advocating the expulsion of LPYS members on account of their support for bold socialist policies.

There is a bitter debate as to how Labour can rebuild its base, having secured the support of only a minority of workers at the election, in order to fight the Tories.

By Piers Mostyn

At the election, young people's traditional support for Labour slumped. According to a survey published in the *Guardian* less first time voters supported Labour than either the Alliance or the Tories. And yet, as a part of its witch hunt, Labour's executive has cut the YS budget, resulting a rise in the summer camp registra-

tion fee from £15 in 1981 to £25, a prohibitive increase for any unemployed youth or school student.

There is nothing new in this situation. At every period of youth radicalisation in the last seventy years, Labour's youth wing — especially when allowed to organise and discuss politics — has grown rapidly.

No sooner has this happened, than the Labour leadership has imposed restrictions, suspended national structures or closed down the organisation altogether.

In 1927, the Labour League of Youth was set up. Through the campaigns around fascism and

unemployment in the early 1930s it grew, claiming 25,000 members in 440 branches in 1934. And with the advent of the Spanish Civil War it was active in organising aid for the Republican side.

Discuss

Heavy restrictions were placed on the right to discuss resolutions and control its paper, which the pro-CP leadership didn't challenge, but the League continued to grow. In 1939 its conference was cancelled and the National Advisory Committee suspended by the Labour leadership. Large numbers left to join the Young Communist League.

After the war, the organisation reformed and tensions again developed in response to the tight control by the Labour Party. By 1949, it had 507 branches.

The right to a national conference was won in 1950 and in 1951 the League claimed 25,000

members in 820 branches. But, after Labour's defeat at the election and with the cold war, another witch hunt developed. In 1952 the League conference was cancelled and in following years members were expelled. In 1955 the organisation was closed down and 'youth sections' under tight party control set up instead.

However even these sections became politically active, in particular through the developing movement against the Hydrogen bomb.

Under this pressure, and with the realisation that Labour was lacking the youthful support it needed to beat the Tories, the Young Socialists was formed. At its first conference in Easter 1961 it claimed 726 branches and passed resolutions supporting unilateralism and British withdrawal from NATO.

Another witch hunt began and *Keep Left* — a paper of one of the left currents in the YS — was proscribed by the

Labour Party National Executive Committee and three *Keep Left* YS National Committee members were expelled.

The number of YS branches declined and in 1965 *Keep Left* split off to form the youth wing of what is now the Workers Revolutionary Party. Part of the remains were reconstituted as the Labour Party Young Socialists which held its first conference that year and has continued to organise to this day.

Lessons

There are lessons to be learnt from this history. At present the LPYS is a small organisation of, at most, 4,500. It is growing, but compared to European equivalents and given the 70,000 youth who turned out for the youth CND demo and festival in May, there is room for dynamic growth.

An LPYS based on the mass campaigns of youth could be, as in the 1930s

the late '40s and the early 1960s, more like 20-30,000.

Such an LPYS will always be witchhunted, but even moderating its policies will not save it from the attacks of the Labour leadership, as the events of the last year confirm.

The *Militant* dominated leadership refused to oppose last year's war in the South Atlantic, have not thrown the LPYS into building Youth CND and gave its backing to the fudged manifesto that lost Labour the election.

In fact the small size of the LPYS and its isolation from the missiles movement, mass campaigns of women, blacks and gays and the main currents of the labour movement left, make it more vulnerable to a purge.

Supporters of the youth paper *Revolution* will be making these points at the summer camp — arguing that a mass campaigning youth organisation can be built. But this

involves organising in action with and leading all the struggles against the bosses and the Tories.

It means, above all, getting right into the biggest mass movement of youth against the Tories: YCND.

Builder

The 22 October CND march poses a great opportunity for the LPYS to show itself as the best builder of YCND.

Revolution will be supporting the call by Oxford LPYS for a young women's conference and its meeting to organise all those LPYS branches and members that want to build such a conference.

Additionally, to be a youth organisation that defends workers internationally the LPYS must welcome the visit of Sinn Fein MP Gerry Adams to Britain and follow Youth CND's lead in building a massive youth contingent on the 11 September Chile demonstration.

National Briefing on the road

THE FIRST ISSUE of the proposed new *National Briefing Supplement* is to appear in late September in time for the Labour Party conference, its editorial board decided at its meeting on Saturday 23 July.

The new journal, set up initially to link locally-

LABOUR BRIEFING

based left groupings in the constituency parties, took an important step forward by agreeing to include a strong trade union section dedicated to news, strategy and discussion amongst the new emerging union broad lefts.

The journal was founded by a conference of local Briefing groups last month, to build on the advances made by *London Labour Briefing* in creating a broad forum for the Labour Party's 'hard left' at local level.

The new supplement, it

is hoped, will provide a national organising forum for the hard left in the party and unions through which it can try and give a new strategic orientation to the left as a whole.

National Briefing will challenge the drift towards Kinnock and propose instead a campaigning left wing clearly linked to movements of industrial and political resistance to the Tories.

• For information contact: Graham Bash, 23 Leghorn Road, London NW3.

Left MPs back action against privatisation

THE CAMPAIGN Group of MPs have agreed with the Post Office Engineering Union Broad Left to try and establish campaigning links between local Labour Parties and workers fighting privatisation.

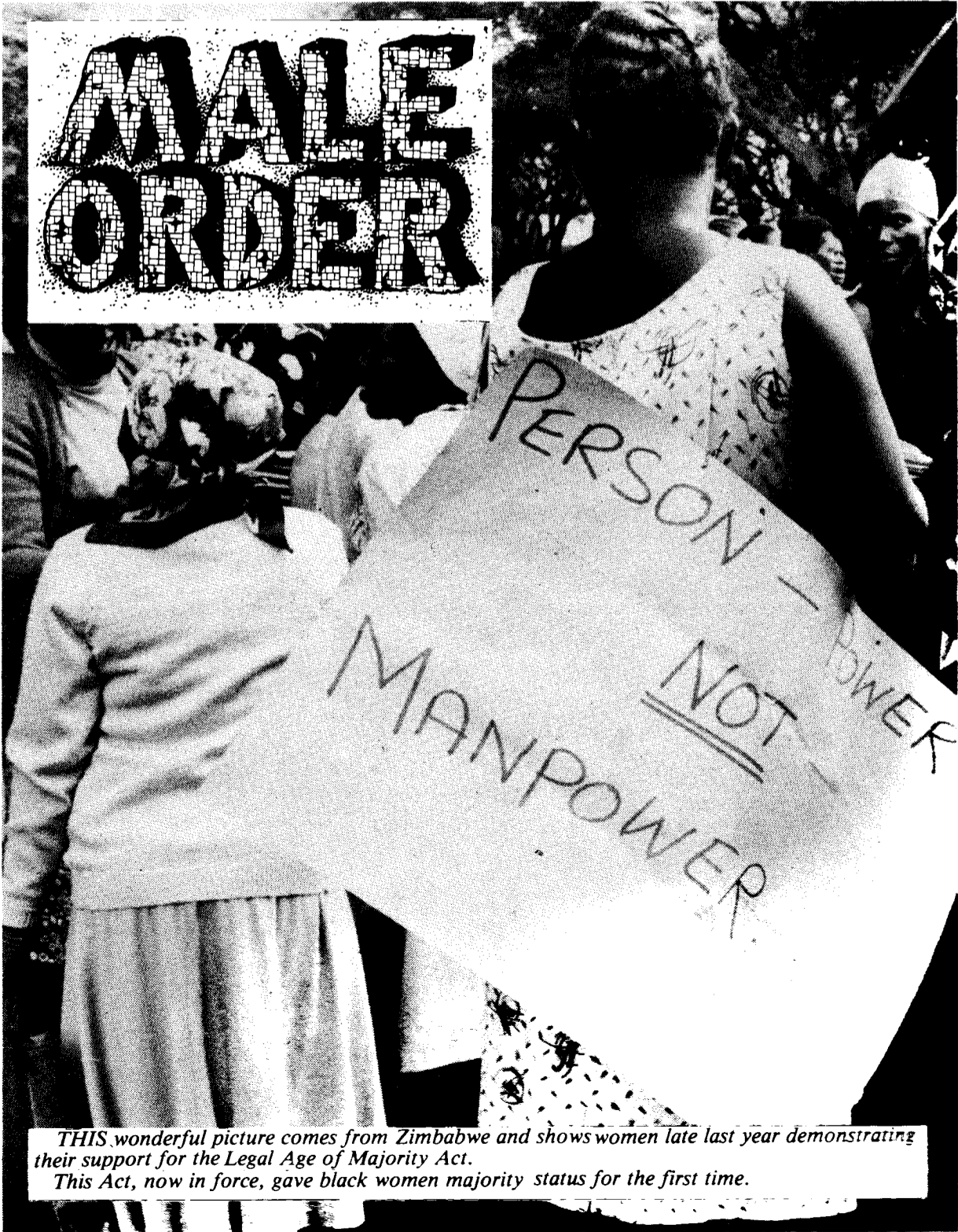
A Campaign Group meeting on Wednesday 20 July, which was addressed by Phil Holt of the POEU executive and Broad Left. Afterwards Jeremy Corbyn MP said that the two groups will work together to try and ensure that the Labour Party at all levels is active in backing up action taken by the telecoms

engineers against the government's proposals to privatise British Telecoms.

The Campaign group sees this as the first step to secure close links between trade union Broad Lefts and the left in the Labour Party.

They intend to organise a meeting with representatives of the Broad Lefts who came together to form the Broad Lefts Organising Committee, of which Phil Holt is secretary.

The aim, Jeremy Corbyn told a meeting of the *National Briefing Supplement* editorial board on Saturday 23 July, is to try and call a broad based conference in the autumn between left MPs, trade union left wingers, and constituency lefts.



THIS wonderful picture comes from Zimbabwe and shows women late last year demonstrating their support for the Legal Age of Majority Act. This Act, now in force, gave black women majority status for the first time.

SAVE MARYLEBONE STATION
Public meeting organised by NUR & ASLEF
Thursday 28 July, 7pm, North Westminster
Community School, Penfold Street,
London NW1
Speakers: Jimmy Knapp (Gen Sec NUR),
Tony Benn
plus speaker from ASLEF

Why socialists should oppose th

Last week Neil Kinnock proposed to change the Labour Party's position of opposition to British membership of the EEC. Stuart Holland, in the pages of *Socialist Action* and elsewhere, has presented new support for Britain being in the Common Market.

Marxism Today has also been running a series of articles favouring EEC membership. The autumn Labour Party conference will be asked by the Union of Communication Workers to change the party's position to one of support for the Common Market.

JOHN ROSS traces the changing attitude of the Labour Party leadership to the EEC and why socialists should continue to oppose the Common Market and Britain's membership of it.



EEC ministers in summit — planning for a Western European imperialism

Socialists and the EEC

'Looking further ahead, I believe that Europe is going to emerge as one of the largest and richest communities in the world with the potential of the present super powers and it is unthinkable that this new Europe should lack adequate means of self-defence.

'Moreover, this new Europe will be a global power whether she likes it or not. Trade will be her life blood as it has been Britain's for centuries. Her interests will not stop at the Tropic of Cancer. Increasingly West Europeans will have to look outward and play their part in maintaining peace and stability in the world.'

That was how one of the most far sighted representatives of the British ruling class, Lord Carrington, summed up the real nature and purpose of the Common Market.

The EEC is *not*, as is commonly supposed, simply an agreement on free trade in goods — a 'Market' as the name is used in English. If it were merely that it would have little impact in British politics and be of little interest to socialists. No one bothered their head about the old European Free Trade Association (EFTA) to which Britain used to belong — and which still exists if anyone cares.

The EEC was intended by the European capitalist powers to be, and still is, something very much more. It is an attempt to marshal

THE BOSSES' MARI

the powers of the European capitalist states to engage in a competitive struggle with the United States, to develop a military capacity to defend European capitalist interests against the colonial revolution and the Soviet Union, and to strengthen the position of every national European state against its own working class. Whether European capitalism can succeed in this goal is of course open to great doubt — almost certainly it cannot and the EEC will weaken under the deepening contradictions of international capitalism. But that does not mean that socialists do not have to have a clear attitude to this process of European capitalist co-ordination. That attitude should be very clear — total opposition.

The needs of European capitalism

The necessity for the European capitalist powers to attempt to build up a centralisation and co-ordination of their forces is obvious. Modern capitalist production requires huge productive resources and huge markets. No

individual European capitalist state can even remotely compete with the productive power of the United States.

Furthermore since the mid-1970s the US has mounted a huge economic counter-offensive against Western Europe with the result that today United States capitalism is once more growing more rapidly than its EEC rivals. Without the protection of the EEC each of the West European capitalist states would be economically crushed.

Furthermore *military* power is still the final arbiter of the interests of capitalist states. The United States imposes *its* solutions in the Middle East and other areas of the capitalist world because it has the military power to do so. As long as European capitalism has no independent military power it must accept United States dictats on all fundamental questions and remains weakened when confronted with challenges to its interests.

While the EEC commences with economic integration its final goal is precisely to aid building a unified foreign policy

of the European capitalist states and the strengthening of their military power.

There should also be no illusions as to what would be the culmination of such a policy. Military power in the modern world means above all nuclear weapons. Each of the major European capitalist states is today developing its nuclear armaments or the means to create them. The build up of atomic weapons by the Mitterrand government in France is the most rapid ever embarked upon by a European state. During the recent negotiations on cruise and Pershing missiles the Mitterrand government offered the French nuclear 'shield' to West Germany as a possible future alternative, or complement, to that of the United States.

As for Britain, the only differences within the ruling class over atomic weapons and military strategy is *what type* of arms build up it wants. Those sections of the British ruling class most closely tied to the United States — the Thatcher leadership of the Tory Party — want the 'first strike' Trident missile system.

Those sections of the British ruling class more oriented to European capitalism — such as the SDP and the Liberals — want more emphasis on conventional weapons and more 'deterrent' nuclear ones. But this is only a difference on *how* to build up military and nuclear strength and not on *whether* to.

While nuclear co-operation of the West European powers is the most difficult to achieve, advances on the field of conventional weapons have been able to go far further. The incredible sums of money spent on the Concorde airliner were not in order to fly people across the Atlantic at high speed. They were intended to develop the high technology skills of the French and British war plane manufacturers. The Jaguar fighter bomber is just one of the products of this strengthening of Europe's military aircraft manufacturing capacity.

The Europe for which the EEC is intended as an instrument to strengthen is not the peaceful idyll 'independent of the two super-powers' but of European capitalist states armed to the teeth. Whether or not the European capitalist states can ever bring that co-ordination fully into existence, nevertheless socialists have to fight against every move to build up European capitalist power. Even without a 'European state' each step in economic and military integration aids the political and military capacity of each independent European capitalist power.

The Common Agricultural Policy

The second key mechanism needed to build up a really powerful European capitalism is the Common Agricultural Policy. The stories of the 'butter mountains' and 'wine lakes' are not the jokes they are made out to be in the press. Nor do they have anything to do with 'subsidising French peasants' as the chauvinist arguments against the EEC state. The EEC is in fact engaged in



Increasingly Labour leaders are becoming converted from chauvinism to fake 'internationalism'

EEC



NET

gricultural war with the United States — one which in its implications is far more serious than anything which has so far occurred over the steel industry or the Siberian gas pipeline. American productivity in agriculture in 1980 was still twice that of France, almost four times that of West Germany, and one and a half times that of Britain.

British agriculture has expanded massively since joining the EEC — up 32 per cent since 1975 — precisely because it is the most efficient in Europe. The National Farmers Union, one of the most conscious of all capitalist organisations in Britain, is a fanatical advocate of membership of the EEC for very good reason.

But the Common Agricultural Policy has nothing to do with keeping in business 'small peasants'. The aim of the CAP is precisely to drive many small farmers out of production and allow the concentration of production in agriculture in order to compete with the United States.

Already between 1960 and 1967, 882,000 family farms in Europe were closed. In Western Germany 30 per cent of farms were closed between the creation of the EEC and 1975. The Mansholt Plan for European agriculture aimed to reduce the number of persons employed in agriculture in the EEC from 10 million to 5 million between 1970 and 1980 — a figure which was almost achieved, and which makes the rate of unemployment even in industry look small in comparison.

Combined with the sweeping plans for rationalising agriculture the Common Agricultural Policy also creates higher food prices for the working class. By 1982 the CAP had increased agricultural prices in the EEC to a level 25 per cent above what would have existed on the world market — a price naturally passed on to the working class of Europe.

But the high prices involved were not going to 'French peasants' but, as we have seen, to building up an efficient European agricultural capitalism. The

working class of Europe was paying more for its food in order to help drive small farmers off the land and build up big capitalist agriculture!

This Common Agricultural Policy is not an 'excess' of the EEC as the new converts to membership of the Common Market pretend. It is an absolutely logical consequence of the EEC's drive to build up an economic alternative to the United States.

The great steel closure

Finally what about the argument that the EEC protects jobs — that 3 million jobs in Britain are dependent on membership of the Common Market as the Tories, SDP, and Labour right wing claim?

Nothing could be further from the truth than that the Common Market protects jobs. The role of the EEC is to rationalise capitalism to compete with the United States and not to create employment.

A classic example is the steel industry. Here the United States has been increasingly putting the squeeze on European capitalism. The US first threatened to cut off all imports of European steel by imposing a tariff. Then it imposed quotas on European steel imports. Now the United States has unilaterally blocked the import of special grades of steel from Europe.

The response of the EEC to this, naturally enough, is not any sort of socialist policy but instead a vast programme of rationalisation of the steel industry (the Davignon plan) to attempt to compete with the United States on a capitalist basis. The huge wave of steel closures not only in Britain but in France, Belgium, and now Italy is the result.

For the EEC is not a step towards 'internationalism' or socialism but a step away from it. It is a mechanism to attempt to build up a European state with military power, with rationalised economic policies, with agricultural policies against the interests of small farmers and in the interests of big agricultural capitalism. Membership of the EEC means absolutely and necessarily participation in these policies.

The attitude of socialists to these measures and the EEC that creates them should be the same as to every other such step. It should be total and complete opposition. The EEC cannot be reformed and it is a powerful mechanism to rationalise capitalism and not take steps towards socialism.

Those who advocate membership of the Common Market — the Tories, the SDP, the Liberals, Duffy, Boyd, Chapple, — do so because they are opposed to socialism. As British capitalism is now far weaker than in the past they seek props and aids for capitalism in a link with the more powerful economic organisation of the EEC.

Those who oppose socialism and support membership of the EEC are entirely consistent and logical. They want European capitalism to have effective military forces, atomic weapons, industry and agriculture rationalised at the expense of the working class.

Those socialists who support membership of the EEC are like those who aid their own executioner. Socialists are and should be absolutely and totally opposed to membership of the EEC. Two of the most fundamental of all planks of socialist international policy should be:

Britain out of NATO!
Britain out of the EEC!

Why Kinnock and Marxism Today are changing on the EEC

The change of position of Neil Kinnock and *Marxism Today* on the EEC is only the latest of a long line of shifts within the Labour Party on the question of membership of the Common Market.

When Britain first applied to join the EEC in the early 1960s the right wing leader of the Labour Party, Hugh Gaitskell, violently opposed membership. In a nauseating speech to the 1962 Labour Party conference Gaitskell said that for Britain to join the EEC would mean 'the end of a thousand years of history', and 'the end of Britain as an independent European state'.

He said, 'it does mean the end of the Commonwealth' and that: 'When people say "What did we get out of New Zealand; what did we get out of Australia?" ... I remember that they came to our aid at once in two world wars. We, at least, do not intend to forget Vimy Ridge and Gallipoli.'

When Gaitskell had finished this chauvinist tirade the chairperson of the Labour Party conference that year, Harold Wilson, rose to propose that: 'This historic speech ... be immediately sent to be printed and made available to every party member in the country and to the wider areas beyond.'

Within 10 years of course the situation had totally changed. The self-proclaimed, and rightful, heirs of Gaitskell — Roy Jenkins, Shirley Williams, David Owen, Bill Rodgers — had brought the Labour Party to the edge of a split over the question of demanding that Britain should be a member of the Common Market. In 1981 Jenkins and company did split the Labour Party and the question of the EEC was one of the crucial questions in that decision.

Campaign

Wilson, also went the same way. By 1975 Wilson, far from supporting the 'historic' position of Gaitskell to oppose Britain joining the EEC openly sabotaged the conference decisions of the Labour Party to campaign in the referendum of that year in favour of membership of the Common Market. Boyd, Chapple, Duffy, and the right wing of the Labour Party all took up the banner of supporting British membership of the EEC. Kinnock, *Marxism Today*, and all the rest are just treading belatedly in the footsteps of the Gaitskellites, Wilson, and Chapple. All this is now termed 'internationalism'.

The reason for the constant stream of changing positions, starting with the extreme right wing of the labour movement, is not hard to find. Trotsky explained it beautifully in an earlier phase of 'internationalism' by the Socialist and Labour Party leaderships. This was the wave of enthusiasm for the 'democratic' United States which followed the First World War. Trotsky wrote:

'The Social Democracy ... are now ... trying to instill in the working masses the religion of Americanism ... it ... means that they are making a new political religion out of Americanism and out of the role of American capitalism in Europe. They are trying to teach the toiling masses that Europe cannot maintain itself without the pacifying role of American capitalism and its loans.'

'They are leading the opposition to their own bourgeoisie, as for example, do the German social patriots — an opposition not from the standpoint of proletarian revolution, nor even from the standpoint of some sort of reforms, but from the standpoint of exposing the German bourgeoisie as intemperate, greedy, chauvinistic and incapable of reaching an agreement with the humane, democratic, pacifist capitalism of America. This is now the central question of the political life of Europe, and especially of Germany. In other words, the European Social Democracy is becoming, before our very eyes, the political agency of American capitalism.'

'Is this development expected or



Gaitskell, opting for link with US makes 'fight and fight again' speech

unexpected? If we recall ... that the Social Democracy is the agency of the bourgeoisie, it will become clear that the Social Democracy, by the logic of its political degeneration, is bound to become the agency of the strongest and most powerful bourgeoisie, the bourgeoisie of bourgeoisies. This is the American bourgeoisie.

'To the extent that American capitalism undertakes the task of "unifying" Europe, "pacifying" Europe and "educating" Europe how to cope with the question of reparations, war indemnities, and so on, and to the extent that the purse is in the hands of the American bourgeoisie, to that extent the entire dependence of the German Social Democracy upon the German bourgeoisie, and of the French Social Democracy upon their own bourgeoisie in France is gradually transferred to the chief master. Yes, a great master has come to Europe, American capitalism. And it is only natural that the Social Democracy should assume a position politically dependent on the master of masters ...'

'Today the German Social Democracy permits itself the luxury of being in an opposition. It criticises its own bourgeoisie and thereby keeps a certain distance between itself and the parties of capitalism. How does it criticise its own bourgeoisie? It says: You are self-seeking, dull-witted, cunning, but here is a bourgeoisie on the other side of the Atlantic which is, first of all, rich and powerful; secondly, it is humane, reformist and pacifist, and it has come to us and wants to give 800 million marks cash in order to restore the currency.' (Trotsky — *Europe and America*).

Rhetoric

Following the Second World War of course the Socialist Parties rhetoric was different — with anti-communism being the chief argument. But the content was exactly the same. The Americans intervened to create a pro-United States 'Social Democratic' split from the Socialist Party in Italy, to split the French trade unions, to keep the French Socialist Party on an absurdly pro-Cold War line well into the 1970s.

In Britain innumerable Labour Party committees for 'trans-Atlantic understanding' were created. The Labour Party leadership praised the 'special relation' between Britain and the United States. The basis of all this 'trans-Atlantic understanding' was American aid to Europe under the Marshall Plan and to support flagging British capitalism in particular. Gaitskell and the Labour Party leadership even came out against the British invasion of Suez with the blessing of United States capitalism. Narrow British chauvinism, the particular needs of British capitalism, and support for the United States were behind Gaitskell's opposition to membership of the EEC.

World

But today the capitalist world has changed. The United States is not economically subsidising Europe and Britain, but engaged in an increasingly bitter trade war with it. British capitalism is looking not to Washington but to the EEC for economic support today.

With that change also goes the changing adherence of the Labour right wing leadership. Yesterday the interests of British capitalism demanded a 'special relationship' with the United States and this could be cloaked in 'defence of British sovereignty'.

Today British capitalist interests demand a 'special relationship' with the EEC so this requires a new cover of a spurious internationalism — an internationalism of bombs, European military production, and European capitalist rationalisation of industry. The rhetoric changes but the content remains exactly the same. It is defence of capitalist interests not those of the working class.

The 'soft left', and *Marxism Today*, as usual are just dragging along in the coat tails of the right wing and the interests of British capitalism itself.

Socialist Organiser and the EEC

By Davy Jones
(Islington South
Labour Party)

It's not just *Marxism Today* and Neil Kinnock who back the EEC, it's also Socialist Organiser!

In last week's issue Martin Thomas proudly boasts that SO supporters helped to ensure that a pro-EEC motion was passed at the last Islington South Labour Party management committee. Unfortunately he is telling the truth!

The meeting in question saw an important left/right split over an inquest on Labour's election defeat and the way forward for the Labour Party. The right wing organised a major offensive inside the party against Labour's left policies on the Bomb, incomes policy, and the EEC and for decision-making ballots for the Labour leadership election.

Part of that offensive was a resolution to support the EEC, moved by the most right wing ward in the constituency. It was passed thanks to SO supporters and a few other left wingers, taken in by the pseudo-internationalism of backing the EEC.

What, comrades, is internationalist about the EEC, NATO or the IMF, all of which co-ordinate the offensive of international capitalism against the workers movement? Helping to break up all these institutions would help build real workers internationalism, not voting with the right wing in the Labour Party.



'The workers united will never be defeated'. Brazilian metal workers on strike last week against austerity proposals imposed by the International Monetary Fund. The government proposes wage increases of only 8 per cent over the next two years, whereas inflation is 120 per cent (!) annually. In Portuguese the initials for the International Monetary Fund are FMI — which the workers say stands for 'Fome, Miseria, Inflacion' — hunger, misery and inflation.

The hour of the furnaces approaches

IN THE MID-1970s Latin America seemed a bleak place for the working class and socialism. Army coup followed army coup, as the workers were defeated.

The Brazilian generals were securely in power, and had not been challenged since the army coup in 1964. The Chilean army took power in 1973. Isabella Peron was overthrown by the army in 1976 in Argentina.

And following the defeat of the Tupamaros guerrillas, the Uruguayan authorities had created a brutal dictatorship. The flood of Latin American exiles to Europe reflected this massive series of defeats for the working class.

In 1983 the whole of Latin America faces a new situation. Everywhere the dictatorships are being challenged by a new upsurge of working class protest.

The reasons for this turnaround in the situation are not hard to find. Despite the economic problems in the advanced capitalist world, many of the Latin American economies were actually growing in the early 1970s. Today their situation is catastrophic.

This economic crisis is most dramatically demonstrated in chronic debts, with Brazil owing the international financiers something like \$55,000m, Mexico \$30,000m and Argentina \$40,000m. During the boom years of the sixties and early seventies, the major Latin American countries underwent a considerable modernisation, albeit of a partial and dependent kind. The expansion of industry brought about profound social changes in society, despite the authoritarianism of the working class.

But this modernisation was financed from foreign loans. The day

major Western banks and financial institutions were happy to dole out loans so long as the interest mounted and the economies expanded. Then came the 1974-5 international recession, from which the world economy has not yet recovered. US 'Reaganomic' policies of high interest rates have sucked investment funds into the United States.

By Paul Lawson

The end result is that Latin America remains with gigantic foreign debts but a collapse of industrial production to finance them. Today, the interest on Brazil's foreign debt is equal to its yearly earnings abroad. In Mexico, the discovery of oil led to a positive orgy of industrial investment during the 1970s. But the world recession has dealt the Mexican oil industry a devastating blow.

This process has resulted in a huge assault on the living standards of the masses throughout the continent. In Chile, the extreme monetarist policies of the Pinochet regime have added to the misery of the effects of the world recession, and both the working class and middle classes have been hard hit.

In Brazil unemployment in the main industrial centre Sao Paulo has rocketed, while real living standards have declined by 5 per cent in two years. In Mexico the purchasing power of the average worker has fallen a catastrophic 40 per cent in the last year, while the price of bread has doubled.

In Argentina and Peru the same process of falling living standards is being repeated, but in concert with runaway inflation (55 per cent in Peru, 300 per cent in Argentina).

Such a huge assault on the living standards of the masses is bound to lead to a response. Most dramatic of all has been the response of the working class in the Sao Paulo district of Brazil, who launched a general strike last week, and the movement against the dictatorship in Chile.

The problem for the rulers of the Latin American dictatorships is this: the economic crisis, which has

hit all third world countries disproportionately hard, comes at a time when the working class movement is recovering from political defeats, and when the mass movement is growing rather than receding. The consequence is bound to be an explosive social and political situation.

Moreover, this coincides with the outbreak of a regional revolutionary war in Central America, which promotes and inspires the whole working class mass movement across the continent. The impact of the Central American revolution has been most strongly reflected in Mexico, where millions of workers actively identify with the Central American revolutionaries.

If the United States pushes forward its plans and organises an invasion of Nicaragua, or if the revolution in El Salvador is successful — both of which seem likely — the continental repercussions will be enormous, just as they were after the victory of the Cuban revolution.

The ruling classes in Latin America are thus in a trap between the world recession and the rise of their own working class. But the attitude of the major representatives of western capital seems unlikely to give them any respite. This month's visit to Brazil by a delegation of the International Monetary Fund merely resulted in demands for more austerity as the price for re-negotiation of the debts.

Two crucial processes dominate the political scene in most of the countries where the dictators ruled in the 1970s — the growing fight for class independence of the working class, and partial and hesitating moves towards a democratic opening by the bourgeoisie.

The problem for the working class is that in many Latin American countries the first step of constructing a party independent of the bourgeoisie has not been taken.

The biggest advance in overcoming this problem has been taken in Brazil, with the construction of the Workers Party (PT), led by the metalworkers leader Ignacio da Silva ('Lula'). This same process was reflected in the one million votes received by the Mexican Trotskyists in the 1982 general election, where there

is yet no mass workers party.

In Brazil and Uruguay the process of returning to civilian rule has gone some way. But in both cases it has resulted in major problems, as opposition parties have won general elections.

In Uruguay the party most closely associated with the dictatorship ('Partido Blanco') decisively lost the 1982 elections to elect conventions for preparing a return of party government. In the December 1982 elections in Brazil the party associated with the dictatorship (the 'Social Democratic Party') lost to the bourgeois opposition party the Brazilian Democratic Movement (PMDB).

The significance of these results is not that a mass workers' challenge at the electoral level looks like being successful in the near future, but that the transition to democracy will, if completed, inevitably encourage dissent and a working class revival.

Burdened

In Bolivia, another country burdened with an enormous foreign debt, such was the degree of workers' mobilisation that in 1982 the military dictatorship voluntarily handed over power to a civilian government, the Democratic Popular Union (UDP) coalition, which includes left bourgeois nationalist currents and the Communist Party.

This civilian government is caught between applying austerity measures, and the pressure of the working class movement — and in particular the tremendous mobilisation of the Bolivian tin miners. All the time, the military waits in the wings, preparing to come back to power if the UDP fails to keep the mass movement under control.

In Argentina the military rulers have announced elections for October 1983. Seven years after the coming to power of the military and the construction of a dictatorship which murdered 30,000 civilians, the Argentinian economy is in ruins. The foreign debt is \$30,000. Employment has fallen 30 per cent since 1974. The dictatorship was struck a heavy blow

by its bungling of the Malvinas war, despite the mass popular support for the struggle against Britain.

Argentinian politics is dominated by a multi-party coalition — the 'Multipartidaria' — which is negotiating with the regime the conditions for a 'return of the army to the barracks'. Unfortunately, the dominant party of the Argentinian working class, the Peronist Party, is part of this coalition together with a gaggle of bourgeois parties. But the combativity of the working class, led by the Peronist union federation the CGT, remains intact. Peronism, as soon as a civilian government comes to power, will be more and more torn between its working class base and its bourgeois leadership. The construction of a working class party on the lines of the Brazilian PT — perhaps by splitting the Peronists — remains the crucial task.

One dictatorship which is refusing to consider any 'democratisation' process is of course that in Chile. But Pinochet's days are numbered. The rebuilding of a trade union movement and the reorganisation of the political parties has reached an advanced stage. Repression has not been an effective weapon in crushing all opposition. If Pinochet himself remains oblivious to the growing strike and protest movement, the Chilean bourgeoisie probably will not. And if the Chilean bosses won't act then the dictatorship will fall in the worst of all circumstances — under the impact of a workers' uprising.

No one should underestimate the crime being committed against the working class and peasantry of Latin America by world imperialism. The economic crisis means hunger, disease, illiteracy and infant mortality. It means untold millions unemployed. It means misery without end for a continent.

This is the social order that Reagan defends when he sends his gunboats to blockade Nicaragua. But it is impossible to inflict this agony on hundreds of millions of people without a response.

The years of easy victories for the dictators are over.

Hanging debate

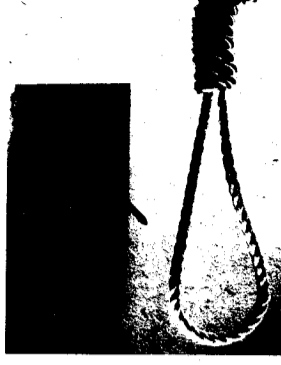
BOB Pennington finished his article on hanging saying 'as socialists we must do everything in our power to make sure the death penalty never comes back'.

Why then, Bob, did you not do everything in your article to come down against hanging? Your article was reminiscent of a piece I read recently in the *Christian Science Monitor* (per chance!).

I'm sick and bloody tired of hearing how horrific and barbaric hanging is — it reminds me of those stories you hear at Labour Party Young Socialists conferences each year about YOPsters losing fingers on unguarded machinery.

It's all very moving I'm sure. And important. But as socialists we have so much more at our

fingertips to analyse the problem.



For example, a little matter such as scientifically collected evidence. Internationally there are almost 50 reports on the effects of hanging — from New Zealand to Canada. Only one of these reports purports to have evidence to show that hanging is a deterrent, and this report

has been widely denounced for its inaccurate methodology.

That leaves us with unanimous evidence that hanging, as a deterrent, just doesn't work. As an argument this is far more substantial than any humanitarian claptrap.

We should also be asking ourselves why each year the Police Federation devotes so much time and energy to the hanging question in the light of such overwhelming evidence and such a large anti-death penalty lobby in Parliament.

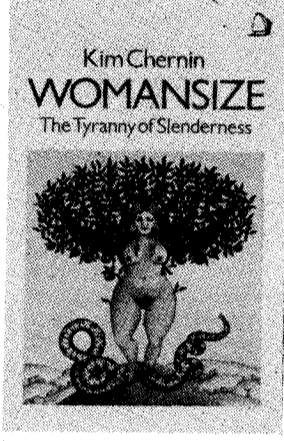
Why? Because it's part of a long term drive towards arming the police. Their argument each year is this: if we can't hang those villains who would kill the great British bobby in the course of his duty (*sic*), then we need to arm that copper to protect himself against such fiends.

IAN DENISON, Bristol

Your holiday reading

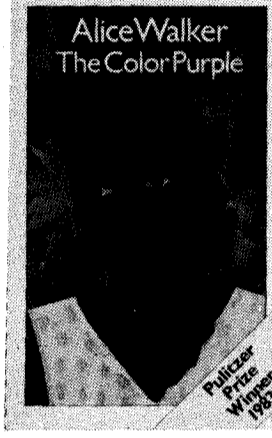


Alice Walker
The Colour Purple



Womansize — the tyranny of slenderness
by Kim Chernin

A new book from The Women's Press, discussing the implications behind society's increasing demands that women should be 'fashionably' thin.
Published by The Women's Press £4.50.



The Colour Purple
by Alice Walker

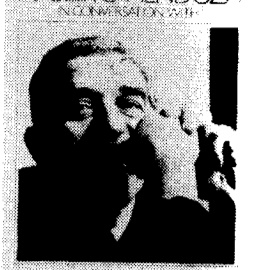
A story of two black sisters in the segregated world of America's deep south. One, Celie, is raped by the man she knows as her father. Her sister has run away and her children are taken away from her. But it is not a depressing book, because it shows the liberation that Celie gets from the love and support of other women.
Published by the Women's Press £3.95



One hundred Years of Solitude
by Gabriel Garcia Marquez

This famous novel is set in a town in the depths of the South American jungle. The family at the centre of the book are represented as an account of Latin American history.
Published by Picador £2.95.

THE FRAGRANCE OF GUAVA — OF GUAVA — PLINO APULEYO MENDOZA IN CONVERSATION WITH GABRIEL GARCIA MARQUEZ



The Fragrance of Guava by Plino Apuleyo Mendoza in conversation with Gabriel Garcia Marquez

A portrait by the author of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, discussing his books, his politics, South America and his life.
Published by Verso Editions £2.50



The Moonstone
by Wilkie Collins

Published in 1868 and considered to be the first English detective novel. It is still probably one of the best and most gripping. It tells about the disappearance of a famous yellow diamond — yes it might sound trite — but it's unputdownable!
Published by Oxford University Press £0.75.

These books are available from The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper St London N1 and 137 Digbeth, Birmingham.

Polish solidarity

THE END of August will mark the third anniversary of the Gdansk accords, through which Solidarnosc was established in Poland, and the fifteenth anniversary of the crushing of the Prague Spring in Czechoslovakia by Soviet tanks.

Both the Prague Spring and the rise of Solidarnosc were events of great hope for the labour movement. They showed that working people in Eastern Europe continue to struggle for a real democratic socialism, rejecting both the capitalist exploitation of the West and the bureaucratic misrule in the Eastern bloc.

There is a struggle which should also be ours — and which has much to tell us about fighting for a society which genuinely meets the needs of working people.

This struggle continues today through Charter 77 in Czechoslovakia and the impressive underground network of Solidarnosc in Poland.

At the same time, the



huge movement against nuclear weapons in the West is also finding an increasing echo in Eastern Europe. The Polish Solidarity Committee (Glasgow) proposes to hold a working conference in Glasgow on the weekend of 17/18 September to discuss these developments.

Proposed sessions include: Democratic forms of social organisation in Czechoslovakia 1968 and Poland 1980-81; The Peace Movements in Eastern Europe; The situation of women in Eastern Europe.

Speakers invited include Edward Thompson (END), Oliver MacDonald (Labour Focus on Eastern Europe), Marek

Garztecki (Solidarnosc), Karel Kyncl (Charter 77 signatory) and a representative of the Women in Eastern Europe collective.

We believe that discussion of the experience in Eastern Europe can make a valuable contribution towards resolving the present crisis of perspective facing the labour movement in Britain today.

For this reason I would urge any of your readers who are interested in participating to contact me as soon as possible at — 59 Durward Avenue, Glasgow G41 (tel 041 649 8958).

GORDON MORGAN, Secretary Polish Solidarity Committee, Glasgow

family unit and that women need to organise against male domination. Young children are unable to organise, so it is about time socialists raised the issue of child oppression.

Correct

They should raise it not only because it is morally correct but because politically it is essential that children — through a more free and open upbringing — will be more receptive to wanting a free and open socialist society. It is time that we demanded that children be treated as human beings. It is important to raise women's issues within the working class and also children's, and the readership of Socialist Action is a start.

A lot of readers have children, so please Socialist Action, at least one article and more reviews on the subject of children.

TONY BREEZE, Kenilworth, Warks

The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists

'THE GREAT MONEY TRICK' a display of how capitalists get richer and the workers find themselves unemployed and begging is just one of the episodes from Robert Tressell's classic novel, *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*, in the new play of the same name by Stephen Lowe.

Owen, a house painter and the central character of the book and the play, shows his fellow workmen, how money is used to trick the working class into exploitative labour. He does this by using slices of bread to represent all the resources of the world, knives as factory machinery, three of his fellows as the entire industrial workforce and halfpennies as sovereigns. Then, once the capitalists have a glut of produce, the workers are made unemployed and turned into passive despair.

Colours

The labour theory of value has never before or since been shown with such clarity!! The play itself, whilst reducing a long novel of 600 pages to less than three hours performance, loses little of

the spirit of Tressell's story.

reviewed by Tim Rigby

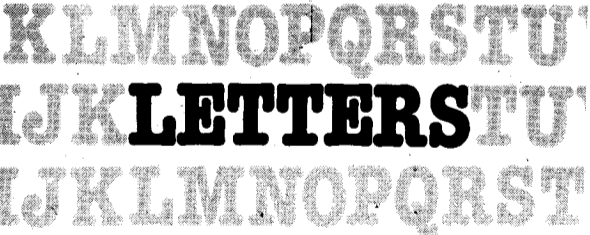
The obstinate acceptance, despite all Owen's arguments and demonstrations, by his fellow workers of the status quo, of the rightness of their poverty and of the bosses' wealth, comes across clearly.

The corruption of the class and the business system is an apt metaphor for the way in which the workers, with their various caricatures of bourgeois capitalists intriguing and slurping tea together. One of their lot mentions in idle chit-chat Darwin's theory of evolution, and they all howl with monkey-like shrieks their amused disbelief.

The play, as the blurb says, 'as Britain now fights its way through another depression ... strikes an all too familiar chord'.

The ending, as Owen is dying of TB and yet raises in hope his recently decorated banner of workers' unity, brings one close to tears. See the play at the Half Moon Theatre, Mile End Road.

THE RAGGED TROUSERED PHILANTHROPIST
A PLAY BY STEPHEN LOWE
BASED ON THE BOOK BY ROBERT TRESSELL
13 JULY
HALF MOON THEATRE
790 4000



Child oppression

I WOULD like to raise the issue of child oppression in your paper.

Other oppressed groups such as women, gays and black people have been well taken up by the far left but child oppression seems only to begin at school leaving age where the left are concerned.

However, I believe that children, another large group in society, are more oppressed than those mentioned above and yet receive no attention in the left press.

For example, the recent series of plays on education on ITV which

raised very important points with no mention in Socialist Action.

Not only do children have to contend with hypocrisy, and contradictions, psychological, physical and even sexual abuse from both parents, but also the scorn and derision from teachers at school. Then there is the general attitude within adult society that a child's 'place' is to do as they're told without objection and to conform to the stereotyped image of a boy or a girl — any deviation is rarely tolerated.

Marxists recognise that women and children are oppressed by the

DIARY

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

● **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.

● **Ethnic Switchboard** — a new telephone service offering information and advice on health services; a referral agency; translation and interpreting facilities in Arabic, Bengali, Cantonese, French, German, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Italian, Portuguese, Punjabi, Polish, Russian, Spanish, Turkish and Urdu. From 9am-5pm Tel. 01-933 6119.

● **Leggin' it for peace** East London Youth CND March, 17/18 September from Kelvedon Hatch Civil Defence HQ to London Fields, Hackney. For details contact East London YCND, 39 Albion Road, London E17.

● **GLC Women's Ctee Coordinating Group**, Weds 27 July, 7pm County Hall, SE1. Discussing nominations for advisory members to cover childcare, health, older women, planning and transport.

● **Free Nelson Mandela Campaign** can be contacted c/o 13 Selous St, London NW1. 01-387 7966.

● **The role of the left in the Labour Party** Camden Labour Left meeting with Jeremy Corbyn MP, Thurs 28 July, 8pm, Labour Centre, 8 Camden Road, London NW1.

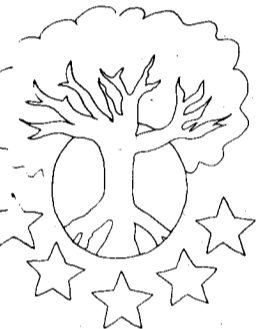
These listings are free for all major labour movement and campaign activities. Semi-display advertisements cost 5p per word and must be paid in advance. Send to: **Diary, Socialist Action, 328 Upper Street, London N1 2XP**, to arrive not later than Thursday, one week prior to publication).

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

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

● **Jumble sale** Sat 13 August, 2pm, St John's Church Hall, Grove Lane, Kingston-on-Thames. Proceeds to Grove Ward Labour Party.

● **Binlids and Barricades** a 75-panel exhibition on women and the war in Ireland, produced by the Armagh Coordinating Committee. Available for hire from the Armagh Ctee, 374 Grays Inn Road London WC1.



Women for Life on Earth 1983 Star Marches

● **Women for Life on Earth, 1983 Star marches** converging at Greenham on Hiroshima day, 8 August. Leaving County Hall, London on 29 July. Mixed. Contact 01-699 6712 for details.

● **Forest Peace Festival 1983** a major folk and jazz festival Sat 10 Sept, noon to 7pm. Friends Meeting House, Bush Road, Leytonstone, London E11. £1 50p unwaged/children free. Organised by Waltham Forest CND.

● **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.

● **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.

Socialist ACTION
Join the fight for socialism

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July-August 1983 Volume 8 No 1 75p

International FACING

1984

New issue out now!
Facing 1984 with articles by Alan Freeman on *Rebuilding the Labour Party, the 1983 Peoples March & the CP, John Ross on Facing 1984, Margaret Ward on women and Irish nationalism, George Kerevan on Scotland after the election, Charlie van Gelderen on the 50th anniversary of the Left Opposition.*
All for just 75p! Or subscribe for £5.50 inland, £6.50 overseas surface mail, £13 overseas airmail. Send monies to 'International', PO Box 50, London N1

Advertisement

NORTHERN COLLEGE TELEVISION AND RADIO STUDIO PART-TIME TECHNICIAN

In January 1983, Northern College, a residential college for adults, began the development of both practical and academic courses in Media Studies, assisted by a Tutorship from the British Film Institute. A small television and radio studio is now being established, and the College is creating a new, part-time, post, in October 1983, for a technician. The post is open to men and women.

The technician will be required to manage our studio, and audio-visual services throughout the College. He or she will: 1. Service and maintain all audio-visual equipment in the College; 2. Co-ordinate the availability of audio-visual equipment; 3. Demonstrate the operation of television and radio equipment; 4. Assist the Tutor in Media Studies in the teaching of practical classes and the production of student programmes.

We are looking for someone who combines technical expertise with an interest in media education. Experience of using television and radio equipment of all kinds is required, and an ability to work co-operatively with mature students is essential. Knowledge of photography and/or graphics would be an advantage.

Interviews will take place in September. For further details, please write to:
The Registrar, Northern College, Wentworth Castle, Stainborough, Barnsley, S. Yorks. S75 3ET Tel: (0226) 85426

THE OTHER BOOKSHOP

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Straight from the horse's mouth!

LAST WEEK in Kentucky — birth place of Colonel Saunders' fried chicken — a bizarre auction took place.

The object of the bidding was a horse. A horse which has never raced. A horse which is just one year old and doesn't even have a name.

Robert Sangster, the millionaire who last year paid over four million dollars for 'Empire Glory' (son of Nijinsky) initially valued the horse at about 5 million dollars.

The kidnapped Shergar was valued at £3 million after winning two classics, the King George IV and the Queen Elizabeth stakes. So this was good going for an unknown horse with no name.

When bidding started, observers searched in vain for the bidders who had shot off to the back of the hall where no one could see them. As each million dollars came up on the screen a cheer went up startling the poor horse. Four, five, six million dollars — it seemed like it would never stop.

Sangster had got the word that Col Dick Warden, who was acting as an agent for Dubai's minister for defence, Sheikh Mohammed, had been told to bring the horse back with no excuses, and obviously decided to start playing to the gallery. Only when the screen showing the current price bid would not handle the eight digit bid of 10 million dollars did Sangster lay off. A bid of 10.2 million secured the horse and a new record had been set.

Clearly horse trading is a profitable business. So we appeal once again — if any of our readers is sitting on top of such a horse — send it in! We will arrange the auction.

But please, just in case we don't get a reply, have a look and see if there isn't something left over in your wage packet to help us out over the summer. Cheques as usual payable to Socialist Action.

Thanks this week to:

SW London	£375.00
Matt Williams Copper Collection	2.00
Bristol	58.00
Glasgow	180.00
Portsmouth	22.00
Oxford	100.00
Cardiff	2.50
Hemel Hempstead	25.00
Middlesborough	40.00
Coventry	40.00
Swansea	40.00
Leeds	50.00
J Blanco White	40.00
Anon	5.00
G Carey	2.50
P FitzGerald	0.40

Total this week: £982.40

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● Please put me in touch with local readers

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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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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.

Israel trade union delegation criticised

THE LABOUR Committee on Palestine has written to the participants of a 'British Trade Union Friends of Israel' delegation which is currently visiting Israel.

The delegation includes Clive Jenkins of the Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs, John Price of the Post Office Engineering Union in Wales, Russell Tuck and Ken Cure of the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party and Herbert Morgan of the Welsh Labour Party.

The letter points out that their host, the Histadrut, is not an independent trade union organisation, but a state-run enterprise, the third largest employer in Israel.

Secondly, and most importantly, only part of the working population inside Israel is allowed to

join it. The Palestinian migrant workers from the Occupied Territories are debarred and the Histadrut does nothing to fight for better conditions and wages for them.

The LCP points out too that the Histadrut owns a huge construction company which is engaged in the building of illegal settlements in the Occupied Territories — the West Bank and Gaza.

These settlements are built on land stolen from Palestinians and yet the settlements are for Jews only.

The letter calls on the delegation to pose these questions when they are in Israel, while pointing out that their visit, despite being in a personal capacity, is against the spirit of resolutions passed by the TUC conference and the Labour Party conference last year.

Save the lives of Metris prisoners

ONE THOUSAND people have been on hunger strike in Metris Prison since 7 July.

This is the third hunger strike in this prison known for its atrocious conditions and brutal treatment of prisoners.

It was sparked by the prison administration's recent steps to remove 170 prisoners into isolation cells and force all prisoners to wear prison uniforms.

Recent measures of the prison authorities have already resulted in the removal of prisoners' pen and papers, their cell windows have been blacked out, exercise periods halted and visits by relatives limited to occasional brief telephone conversations.

All these add up to a combined effort to break the prisoners' resistance.

The strike is already in its third week and prisoners are reported to be in very poor health. Their condition has rapidly deteriorated given that few had fully recovered from the effects of previous hunger

strikes.

Relatives waiting at the prison gates have reported on scores of collapsed prisoners being carried away in military ambulances. Meanwhile the prison authorities have enforced a total news black-out from inside the prison.

There is very little that prisoners' parents can do on their own in today's Turkey. The regime is completely deaf to the plight of its own citizens.

Only international pressure can at this stage sway the rulers of the country (and its prisons) to release their deadly grip on the prisoners of Metris. It was such pressure that helped the outcome of previous hunger strikes. It is needed again today, urgently.

● Send protest telegrams to the Istanbul Martial Law Command at this address: Istanbul Sikiyontim Komutanligi, Istanbul, Turkey.
Copies to Turkish Solidarity Campaign, BM Box 5965, London WCI 3XX.

Advertisement

The Israeli Soldier Against War

Solidarism today

Debates with German Greens

The new situation in Chile

Subscription rates: 6 months £9 (95FF); 1 year £16 (175FF).

Payment in French franc if possible. Personal cheques to PEC and mail to: IV, 2 rue Richard Lenoir, 93108 Montreuil.

Postal orders to PEC, CCP Account no. 2-322-42T Paris. Bank transfers to PEC, BNP Robpierre, 153 rue de Paris, 93108 Montreuil, France.

Is feminism a luxury in the slump?

THAT WAS the title of an international conference on Women and Work held in Turin in April this year. Over 650 women attended, 499 from Italy and 156 from other European countries, America and Australia.

The bulk of women attending were activists in white collar unions. A representative of the Women's Commission of the EEC was also present.

Below we print the impressions of some of the delegates to the conference. ANNE SPENCER, an official of the Tailor and Garment Workers Union, was one of the three British women who attended. D. ERBA and R. CARBONI are members of the Italian section of the Fourth International, the LCR.

Anne Spencer

I OPTED to attend the 'Salaried or Wage-earning Women' workshop. It was very interesting to see that the problems of women were very much the same whether their national government was right-wing, left-wing or some other wing.

In Italy for instance, women were being forced back into the home, they were over-qualified often for the jobs they did, and women who had made progress were often masculine, taking on many of the worst traits of masculinity.

The common themes of this session was that 'part-time work was part-time unemployment'; it led to reduced pay, reduced bargaining power and that according to some people, the unions were happy with this situation.

The question was raised by one trade union official as to whether part-time work would be a problem if they got full-time salaries, but there was no real answer to this.

One of the major questions arising from this session was, could women defend the progress that they had made to date. Was the way forward by co-management, with more flexibility and a changed social structure, or was it by the traditional trade union methods of negotiation. But there wasn't a real answer to this ques-

tion.

A report from Fiat was interesting, where they spoke of the growth of women's employment during the recent economic period, but that given the recession, because the women were last in they had also been first out, and this had set back women a long way in Italy.

The picture from all European countries, and even from Australia, was one of women experiencing difficulties in employment, of women being sacked and of losing any progress that they had made. Jobs were difficult to find, and the attitude of governments did not support women.

Urgent

It was concluded that there was an urgent need to reduce the working day, although this was not unanimous, and that this reduction in the working day should be without loss of earnings.

We ended up debating whether in fact, given economic recession, to keep our heads down to maintain what we have in order to live to fight another day, or whether in fact progress could be made during the time of recession.

Many felt that given that lack of protection in collective bargaining, little progress could be made at the moment. Very often trade unions are not saying

'equal work for the same pay'. They are in fact saying 'let's have worker solidarity, let's share out what little there is'.

There is a need for a new approach for collective bargaining which would take into account all women's needs both at work and in the home. One of the few speakers not to speak against part-time work pointed out that in fact in a period like this it did help women retain their skill.

If women don't work at all then by the time the end of the recession comes, re-structuring will have done away with their jobs altogether, particularly with the development of new technology.

D. Erba and R. Carboni

A CLEAR PICTURE emerged despite the different political situations:

- there is a generalised attack on employment, which most severely attacks the weakest part of the workforce: women,

- there is an increase in part-time work under different forms (eg the 'free Wednesdays' in France, remaining at home but on call in Germany, the spread in job sharing schemes, or as in the commercial sector in Italy, working only those days of the week or times of the year when demand is heavy),

- the spreading concept of the 'family wage' through increasing dependents' allowances and unemployment benefits or favouring job opportunities for the 'heads of families'.

In Italy there is a severe attack on the inflation-indexing of wages and workers wages in general. Government decrees have increased allowances for dependents. The trade unions and political par-



Photograph by Michael Ann Mullen from a new book on photography *Committing Photography* by Su Braden, Pluto Press, £4.95.

ties have agreed to this trade-off. There are similar developments in Spain.

At the same time there are propaganda campaigns throughout Europe to 're-value' private and family life. In this context part-time work is often put forward as a means of women reconciling their role as mother/home-maker and worker.

Again, on a European-wide level there are cuts in public spending, with obvious consequences on jobs in the service sector — where many women are employed.

This puts pressure on women to return to the family and drop out of the active work force and social involvement.

Another common feature came out in looking at how the trade union leaderships respond to the effect of the crisis. They base their perspectives on

what is 'possible', what is compatible with the capitalist system.

The existence of the economic crisis was the basis for the proposals by some participants, particularly some trade union officials, to accept the crisis as a given fact, which cannot be changed by the present relationship of class forces.

The same basic facts were used to argue for a different approach. That now is the time to rebuild the women's movement as an active movement, starting with the groupings of women that already exist to try and broaden the struggle to involve new layers of women.

Accusations that this approach was 'out of date' and not oriented towards developing 'new theories' on which the women's movement should base its

discussions on productive labour and domestic labour, the division of labour within the family and the role of childbearing, came mainly from Italian intellectuals and trade union officials, who probably feel the most threatened by the dynamic that a strong independent active women's movement would create.

For us, the most significant proposal to come out of the conference was to launch an international campaign on the slogan 'Women against the Crisis'.

This proposal came from several Belgian women who have been involved in the Belgian women's campaign 'Femmes contre la crise' over the last three years.

The main themes of the campaign agreed at Turin are:

- defence of women's

right to work and economic independence

- opposition to governmental and employers' policies which discriminate against or particularly affect women

- opposition to part-time work, for a shorter working week with no loss of pay.

The proposed activities for this campaign were to hold an international Tribunal in Belgium in March 1984 on all forms of sexual discrimination women confront at work, and later a European-wide women's demonstration.

A secretariat for this campaign has been established in Brussels as an international reference point. A 'Women against the Crisis' organising committee has already been formed in Turin involving women who were at the conference.

Black workers fight racism in the unions

FOLLOWING its first conference in June this year, the Black Trade Unionists Solidarity Movement (BTUSM) has already begun to make its mark.

As a result of a picket of their meeting the national executive of the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education agreed to listen to BTUSM chairperson Bernie Grant explain why they should support NATFHE member John Fernandes in his battle against victimisation.

John Fernandes was a lecturer in multicultural studies at the Hendon Police College. He insisted that he be allowed to teach the police cadets from an anti-racist viewpoint, emphasising that racism was a white problem, not a black one.

He was sacked after he released examples of explicitly racist essays that cadets had written for him to the press.

At first NATFHE gave him lukewarm support, but then decided to back lecturers at the college who opposed him. The result

was an extraordinary situation where his employers, Brent Council, are taking a better stand in his defence than his union.

By Chris Guthrie

This is just one of the many instances where trade unions have not defended black workers. Black workers generally are recruited for jobs with the worst working conditions and find themselves in line for the sack first. Promotion usually passes

them by. They lack a voice in the trade unions that can protest against these conditions.

It is this situation that led to the formation of the BTUSM, an all-black (Afro-Caribbean and Asian) organisation dedicated to removing racism from the unions, but which does not see itself as a separate black union.

Its first conference, held at the beginning of June was attended by over 300 black workers from unions ranging from the National Union of Railwaymen through to the National Union of Public Employees and the National and Local Government Officers Association.

In some unions, particularly NALGO, the formation of black caucuses is well advanced. But the

presence of trade unionists from industrial unions is an indication that black caucuses may be emerging in these unions too.

Some trade unionists have claimed that the formation of BTUSM will divide the working class. The contrary is true. BTUSM has been formed because the working class is divided, because trade unions have not properly represented their black members.

By forcing trade unionists and white workers to correct this, black workers will begin to feel that the unions are genuinely their's as well, promoting unity of black and white workers.

- Black workers interested in joining can get more information from: BTUSM, Southwark House, Black Prince Road, London SE1 7SJ.



Workers at Grunwick had to fight for TUC support — through a hunger strike

A Socialist ACTION



Photo: AN PHOBLAcht

Welcome Gerry Adams MP

AFTER the previous day's massive military exercise at Heathrow airport, Sinn Fein MP Gerry Adams flew to London on Tuesday morning. Newsreports claimed that the heavily armed soldiers and tanks at Heathrow were to guard against a possible attack by the Armenian Secret Army.

But it brought home the reality of Britain's military occupation of the North of Ireland and the fact that Adams, although now an MP, is far from welcome by the Tory government and its allies.

The last time Adams visited London was on behalf of the IRA for secret talks with William Whitelaw in 1972. When he was invited by Ken Livingstone and others last December he was excluded under the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

Elected

Sinn Fein's other elected representatives, Martin McGuinness and Danny Morrison, are still excluded under this repressive legislation.

The visit has outraged the Tories and their press — on the one hand denouncing Adams for visiting London and daring to talk to MPs in the house of Commons — and on the other demanding that he takes his seat in the Commons as a 'sworn-in MP'.

Answer

Adam's answer on arriving was: 'I don't know why there should be objections to my coming to London when the Irish people have to suffer 30,000 fully armed British troops in their midst'.

After meeting with Tony Benn and coun-

with Joe Austin of Sinn Fein.

By Piers Mostyn

Adams said the purpose of his visit was to, 'open up a dialogue with the British people and their representatives, to try and offset and penetrate the wall of disinformation that the British government has thrown up.

'We will continue until the Irish people as a na-

tional unit can realise their right to national self-determination and the British people can for the first time in centuries commence to build a meaningful relationship with us.'

Explaining why he would not be taking his seat in the House of Commons, he said:

'The British parliament is a parliament for Britain — it is Britain's national legislature. In relation to Ireland it is a foreign parliament.

'It was elected on the basis of not taking up the seat, so I will not do so. I don't expect any British MP would consider taking a seat in the parliament of Ireland, France or Holland?'

Interests

And he added, 'The British government governs Ireland against the interests of Ireland, but in the interests of the British

ruling class.

'We don't have to take up seats to open up the necessary dialogue that will bring peace'.

He emphasised the plight of Irish political prisoners in Britain.

'The British government has always treated Irish prisoners as a different category to ordinary prisoners. We believe Irish prisoners here should be repatriated on demand.

Soldiers

'British soldiers in Ireland that are imprisoned for rape, theft and so on are repatriated back here. We also want an end to solitary confinement and the prison regime. All issues very close to the heart of Irish people.'

He added that many of the Irish prisoners in England are increasingly

being recognised as innocent because of the dubious nature of the evidence they were convicted on.

Optimum

Finally, when asked how a withdrawal movement might be built in this country he replied, 'We believe that the optimum situation is one where the British people accept that this long war, the division between Protestant and Catholic, between North and South, has got to end and they have the responsibility for ending it. It's a very slow process.'

'The Irish people have a right to freedom — what the British government is doing is wrong. Regardless of what motivation is behind people who want to change that, we would support them.'



Photo: CARLOS AUGUSTO GUARITA (Photof)

WHERE DID 1500 police turn out last week to meet only 400-500 demonstrators? No it wasn't to prevent an angry insurrection after the announcement of MPs pay rises.

On trotter and on hoof the cops were there to protect the Wellcome Research Laboratories in Beckenham, south London, from animal rights demonstrators!

Stop the fascists returning to Tottenham

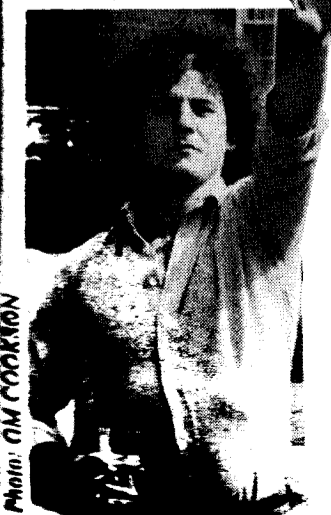


Photo: GIM COOKSON

THE NATIONAL Front have declared their intention to return to Tottenham on Saturday 30 July.

Earlier this year, in May, the NF held a by-election meeting at High Cross School in the south of Tottenham.

They were defended by hundreds of police and groups of their Instant Response Unit who violently attacked the 700 counter-demonstrators, making 35 arrests.

A few days later, an old fascist named Albert Marriner, who attended the meeting, died of a heart attack.

By Dave Palmer

The NF are claiming that he was killed by 'communists and black power groups' and have formed the Albert Marriner Committee for a Judicial Enquiry.

Their intention on Saturday is to hold a rally at the school and lay

a wreath in honour of their 'martyr'.

The NF have called a national and international mobilisation for the event. Martin Webster, addressing over 100 Loyalist fascists in Coleraine, in the North of Ireland, invited them to 'a riot in Tottenham'.

Posters

Posters up all over London call on 'all white patriots' to

assemble at Tottenham Hale tube station at 2pm on Saturday.

An ad-hoc organising committee has been established by local black and labour movement organisations to oppose the NF's attempt to return to Tottenham.

All anti-racists should publicise and support the counter-demonstration which assembles at 12 noon, Tottenham Hale, Station Road, N17 on Saturday 30 July.

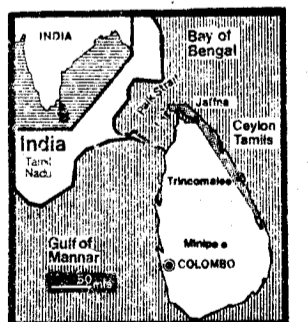
Government backs racist pogrom in Sri Lanka

RIOTERS went on the rampage in Colombo, Sri Lanka this week killing scores of the minority Tamil-speaking people and destroying their property.

Press reports indicate that government security forces did little to prevent the pogrom. Other reports indicated that there had been a massacre of Tamil prisoners held under the island's infamous Prevention of Terrorism Act at the Welikade prison.

The 3.5 million Tamils in Ceylon are demanding greater political autonomy. The government have met their demands, with repression, exposed in an Amnesty International report published this month, and by sanctioning mob violence against the Tamils.

The Tamils have fought back. Tamil youth have engaged in armed actions organised by the 'Tigers'. 'Tigers' ambushed and killed 13 government troops last weekend



after four Tamil women were raped providing the occasion for the Colombo riots.

It will take some time for the true extent of this week's killings to become known since police are able to bury or cremate bodies without enquiry or post mortem. Civil rights lawyers have described this as a 'licence to kill'.

The Tamil community in Britain is organising protests against the killings and against the repressive actions of the government.

More information can be obtained from the Sri Lanka Research and Information Group, 9 Grays Inn Buildings, Roseberry Avenue, London EC1.