

A Socialist ACTION

Inside

Ken Livingstone and Reg Race debate lessons of Kinnock's victory — page 3

Who is Neil Kinnock? — page 6

Why devolution has to be at the top of Labour's agenda — page 7

Abortion conference ends in split — page 4

DEFEND SOCIALIST POLICIES!

NO UNITY WITH WITCH HUNTERS!



'You can have unity or a witch hunt. You can't have both.'

IT SOON became clear why the Party leadership had refused to admit the television into Monday's debate on the expulsion of the *Militant* editorial board.

By Davy Jones
(Delegate, Islington South CLP)

The *Militant* editors, despite the brief time they were given to address the delegates conducted themselves with dignity and aplomb and won a standing ovation from the majority of the CLP delegates.

In contrast Jim Mortimer, the general secretary of the Party,

made a shambling defensive speech which repeated over and over again that the Party leadership was not interested in a large scale witch hunt.

Peter Taaffe made a fine speech in which he confronted the witch hunters:

The Party claims that we are a party within a party. We deny it. But, yes we are an organised group fighting for our own ideas inside the Party.

In 1939 Aneurin Bevan was expelled on the same grounds and Bevan replied that an attack on organised groupings in the Party is an attack on the Party itself and fatally cripples the forces of progress.

Why not move the expulsion of the Labour Solidarity Group of MPs who organise for their ideas? Why not expel Frank Chapple who broke the constitution endorsing an SDP candidate? Why not expel Ben Ford or Lord Lever who did the same?

This is a political attack. An attempt to get cheap electoral popularity and to curry favour with the capitalist press.

Comrades, I have been given 15 seconds to answer the NEC's charges for every year of my Party membership.

You can have party unity and you can have a witch hunt, but you can't have both.

We will be rehabilitated. We will be back.

By Jude Woodward, (Delegate, Manchester Central CLP)

A ROSE-WAVING Neil Kinnock accepted the leadership on Sunday night. By Monday morning the roses had gone and the knives were out. The first flash of the knives was at Party policy. On Monday morning the NEC document *Campaigning for a Fairer Britain* was rapidly pushed through:

- Britain will stay in the EEC, with 'options' open
- Industrial policy doesn't mention the 35-hour week
- On wages the question of incomes policy is left conveniently open
- By the time this paper is published the first steps towards junking unilateralism will probably have been taken through the acceptance of the section of the NEC's document on defence.

The second slash of the knives was against the membership. Firstly the *Militant* five were expelled against the wishes of the overwhelming majority of CLP delegates. Then all resolutions against further witch hunts were voted down.

John Maxton MP explained: 'It doesn't make much sense to say "no further witch hunts". You can't expel the editorial board of a newspaper without taking action

against the newspaper itself.'

Jack Straw MP brought the message home to those who hadn't understood. 'We should call it a witch hunt because it hasn't really started yet... *Militant* aren't the only ones you know.'

It's quite clear what's planned for the future. Anyone with illusions that the left members of the NEC can hold it back have to understand the real forces involved at this con-

ference.

The TUC conference should have warned us — the overwhelming majority of trade union leaders, including the TGWU, are now behind a policy of junking left policies and junking the left.

Those still hoping for a honeymoon with Kinnock have to wake up fast. Like all the best honeymoons it lasted just one night.

Policies

The result of the NEC elections and the vote on the witch hunt resolutions shows one thing clearly — never have the trade union block votes been so unanimously split from the constituencies. Left gains like the election of David Blunkett and Joan Maynard were nearly all in the constituency or women's sections.

The overall balance of the NEC has shifted little because of the way the trade union barons used

their votes. The conclusion is that the attack on the policies and the membership will continue.

MODERN TIMES



A FAIRER, BETTER BR ANK?



'Now that we're united we can get rid of those Militant bastards!'

Socialist ACTION

Will Kinnock solve the problem?

THE CASE of Neil Kinnock and his Euro-Communist outriders is simple. They say Labour was defeated in the last general election because the party was divided by internal bickerings and although the party had the right policies, it did not explain them in the language of ordinary people.

Their answer is to build a socialist party of the Western European type, acceptable to all layers of society. Neil Kinnock is the person to deliver this message. All those who cast doubt on

his announcement are now declared to be outside the mainstream of the left.

All this is given leftist respectability by the invocation of Eric Hobsbawm 'the most sagacious Marxist scholar' according to Kinnock.

Produce

But the problem is not correctly analysed, nor will it produce a Labour government to replace Thatcher. And the left will suffer grievous blows if they bend to the 'new realities'.

Thatcher won the last election because of her strategy of using North

Sea Oil revenues to boost consumer spending. Her image of forthright determination was enhanced and perhaps created by the craven retreat of the majority leadership of the labour movement.

The saying that the mighty only appear so because we are on our knees has rarely been so applicable. This was in contrast to the Labour governments of 1974-79 which were thrown to the right by the IMF and then proceeded to reduce living standards in the most savage way this century.

It was the attempt by the left to ensure that Labour never again would go through the same experience. This did not

result in electoral unpopularity. Labour's decline in the opinion polls only started when the right turned against the decisions of conference and began their campaign of sabotage.

Banks

The policies of the party were inadequate. As Ken Livingstone has pointed out they did not contain the vital element of an attack on the bastions of wealth and power in this country — the banks.

Those policies which did present a radical alternative to Thatcher — such as unilateral disarmament

were compromised and contradicted by the right wing leadership of the election campaign.

Furthermore Kinnock is lying when he says that he agrees with the left policies contained in the election manifesto. As already proven by the production of the *Campaigning for a Fairer Britain* document, their intention is first to blur and then to junk policies like withdrawal from the Common Market and unilateralism.

Finally the creation of a party along Euro-socialist lines will 'irritate the bourgeoisie and not satisfy the workers' as Leon Trotsky said of Ramsay MacDonald's

ILP-led Labour Party of the 1920s. Professor Hobsbawm prefers to learn nothing from the experience of the rightward shifts of the Mitterrand government and the attendant growth of the right except that we should repeat that experience here.

Left

The Bennite left must reject this line of argument. Instead it must draw its own balance sheet of the disastrous tactics it has followed since the notorious Bishop Stortford agreements. It must stop thinking that it can win through by such

manoeuvres and organise itself from top to bottom.

The organisation of the minority who voted for Heffer and Meacher in the Labour Party and trade unions, will soon draw to its side those who voted for Kinnock under the illusion that he would keep the party on the left.

On this basis the left can rebuild itself, as a vital precondition for beginning the fight against the Tories. It will be the defeat of the Tory government attacks on the working class and the oppressed from which a renaissance of Labour's prospects will come, not from the rhetoric of Neil Kinnock.

The 'Dream Ticket' tactic...

Phil Hearse reports from Brighton

THIS YEAR's Labour Chair, Sam McCluskie, caught the mood of the conference in his opening address, and succinctly summed up the 'Dream Ticket' project. The return of the Tories, he said, 'was our fault'. Three years of internal bickering had resulted in defeat. 'Words like "sell out" and "traitor" have been used in this party. That must end at this conference. We must unite around the new leadership and policies'.

The essence of this line of argument was, of course, that the Bennite left was responsible for the election defeat. But in counterpoint McCluskie stated: 'We didn't lose the election because of our policies — we didn't campaign for them' — an obvious swipe at the right wing.

McCluskie's message was exactly that put forward by Kinnock in his speech later in the day — an end to internal bickering, support for the leadership and the 'existing policies'. But the message has an important twist.

Under the guise of keeping the left wing rhetoric, a real change of policy is being prepared. Upon arriving in Brighton delegates found that a new statement of party policy has been prepared by the NEC — *Campaigning for a Fairer Britain*. Disingenuously stating that 'our programme is not static', the NEC have prepared a real shift on the crucial issues of the Common Market and defence.

On the EEC, under the rubric of 'A socialist voice in Europe', the NEC states that 'At the end of (the next) European parliament Britain will have been a member of the EEC for 15 years — and this will be reflected in our pattern of trade, the way our economy works and our political relations overseas' (?). In other words, barring catastrophe we should stay in.

On defence, instead of unilateralism, the document pledges to include Polaris in arms negotia-

obligatory quote from Nye Bevan.

But the core of the speech was that the kind of election defeat suffered by Labour last June must never be allowed again. The internal fighting has to stop — and the left has to keep quiet.

The election of Kinnock embodies the hopes of many people on the left of the party. There is no way, given the left shift of the past three years, that an open right winger could have won the leadership. But to unify the party, Kinnock and his Labour Co-ordinating Committee team are preparing a political shift to the right — they gave notice of that

tions, calls for a multi-lateral freeze and a change in NATO strategy to 'No first use' of nuclear weapons.

The shift on defence strategy was underlined at Sunday's meeting of the NEC where the TGWU resolution re-affirming the party's unilateralist stance was only carried by 14 votes to 11, with Kinnock abstaining.



Michael Meacher — voted for Kinnock not Heffer in leadership election

Kinnock's speech to the conference on Sunday afternoon aptly summed up the present situation in the party so far as the leadership was concerned. There is no way it could be called a right wing speech — indeed it was brimming with left wing rhetoric. The need to attack unemployment and the danger of nuclear war were central themes, as was the

through the document *Campaigning for a Fairer Britain*.

If Kinnock really wants unity, then the left has two preconditions. The first is that there are no further witch hunts, and the second that there are no further retreats on party policy. Neither of these preconditions seem likely to be met.



The 'dream ticket' takes charge — in order to prepare right turn

...and the failure of the Meacher tactic

THE STATISTICS of the leadership and deputy leadership elections need careful interpretation before conclusions are drawn. By giving all results as a percentage of the total electoral college, the tellers covered up some interesting facts. But even these opaque figures don't conceal the enormous Kinnock victory — and the fact that Michael Meacher got less votes in the constituencies than Roy Hattersley in the deputy contest.

Looking first at the leadership election, there is no doubt that Eric Heffer's 6.3 per cent of the total electoral college is a big disappointment for the left. But Heffer suffered from the tactics of the left itself.

In the trade unions he was virtually wiped out. In the CLPs in many places he was running a close second to Kinnock — but close seconds are not recorded in the vote, only victories. Assuming that 620 constituencies voted, Eric Heffer must have received the vote of around 40 as opposed to about 10 for Hattersley.

In scores of constituencies the left was split between Kinnock and Heffer, but in most the Heffer supporters remained a minor-

ty — a case maybe for allocating constituency votes according to the proportion received by each candidate in each constituency.

Eric Heffer did best, paradoxically, in the Parliamentary Labour Party — about 30 MPs voted for him as opposed to about 53 for Hattersley and 100 plus for Kinnock.

Most of all the Heffer campaign suffered from the failure of even sections of the 'hard' left to rally round his campaign. Tony Benn, for example, kept almost silent for a long period on his preference for leader. Meacher remained silent throughout, but emphasised his affinity with Kinnock.

The tactic in the Benn camp was to keep Heffer at arms length, and stake

everything on a big vote for Meacher. This tactic blew up for obvious reasons.

Having allowed the Kinnock steam roller through unopposed, the Benn camp was completely disarmed when Kinnock turned on Meacher and made it clear to the whole world that he much preferred Hattersley. The net result of this fiasco was that Meacher didn't even beat Hattersley in the constituency section, a massive reversal of the Benn-Healey result two years ago. This should be a lesson to the left — that you can't deal with fundamental problems by means of a manoeuvre. Loving-up to Kinnock resulted in a kick in the teeth.

Still, there were some positive results from Michael Meacher's campaign. Despite his failure to win the NUPE vote, on a branch block vote he received 209,000 votes. In COHSE, the vote split 50-50 between Meacher and Hattersley. This means that tens of thousands of low paid

workers voted for him.

His eventual failure to get the TGWU vote was doubtless a result of the late 'dream ticket surge'. More disappointingly still, the 6-1 vote against Meacher in the coalfields shows how deep the 'unity for victory' rhetoric has gone.

One last point about the results must however be made. The results of those candidates who have made no genuflections towards the left at all — Shore in the leadership elections and Dunwoody and Davies in the deputy leadership elections — were absolutely appalling.

Peter Shore failed to get a single constituency vote, and probably didn't come second in more than a handful either. Virtually all of his 3.17 per cent came from the PLP.

Without the votes of 20 or so MPs he would have received 0.033 of the electoral college. These figures show how far the right wing has to go to reassert its dominance. The problem is that Kinnock is likely to give them a helping hand.



Photo: John Harris

Protest against exclusion of women delegates

Delegates protest against "rigging"

THE WAY in which conference has been organised has appalled two of the few black delegates present at the conference.

MONICA JOHNSON, a Dulwich delegate, complains, 'The chairperson Sam McCluskey has pushed through what the right wing of the NEC wanted.'

'The calling of

speakers is rigged. McCluskey has deliberately offended women, who he refers to as 'girlie' despite protests from women delegates.

'As the only black woman delegate at this predominantly white male fiasco I protest at the fact that the only resolution calling for positive discrimination for black people does not appear on the conference agenda.

For me this is proof that the Party continues to ignore racism both outside and inside the party, except at election times.'

Michael Idun, also from Dulwich, agrees.

'The chairperson has rushed through the business particularly on the witch hunt debate. Delegates are now starting to organise to protest.'

The left debates Kinnock victory

OVER 300 people attended a Labour Briefing meeting at the Brighton conference to discuss the lessons of Kinnock's election victory. We reproduce below two of the contributions to the discussion.

'The left could easily isolate itself'

EVERYONE HERE shares the disappointment that the leader we have elected was not Tony Benn. But at any time in the 1950s or 1960s the election of Kinnock would have been seen as a major shift to the left.

Nye Bevan warned that we should never underestimate the desire for unity in the party and that desire has been shown in the vote for the leadership.

By Ken Livingstone

With over 90 per cent of the CLPs voting for Kinnock, they are wiping the slate clean and the left could easily isolate itself if we are seen to be wanting only to keep going over the battles of the past.

Neil Kinnock has both strengths and weaknesses. Unlike any recent leader he is aware that there are major areas of policy where he is ignorant, but as his recent visit to Bradford and his speech on

racism shows, he is willing to learn.

He wishes to see a purge of the dead wood in the Shadow Cabinet a shake-up of the party organisation in Walworth Road to drive the PLP outwards to campaign in the country.

All this we welcome, but there are also weaknesses.

He is too concerned with the feelings of the PLP and the right's obsession with expulsions and witch hunting. We must make it quite clear that any moves down this road will meet with total resistance.

He is also weak on the issues that women in the party have raised and the demands of blacks and gays. Kinnock may be well-placed to win back

the skilled working class voters who have supported Thatcher at the last two elections, but if he does not also carry those other groups whom the Labour Party has ignored in the past then we cannot win.

We must also avoid the trap of defending the manifesto policies as though they were a socialist programme. They were a compromise between the left and the PLP which fudged a whole range of issues.

The left also has to examine its own methods. By concentrating on winning control of wards and GMCs many socialists have not time left to build a base in the community. The lesson of Bermondsey is clearly that capturing a GMC without having built support amongst the local workers leaves us open to attack by the media. We can learn a lot from the Liberals in terms of time



Conference '83



Ken Livingstone

spent building support in the community.

One thing to notice in the Heffer vote is that for the first time ever the left did better inside the PLP than in the CLP. I believe we can win the next election and that would mean an influx of hard and soft left MPs into the PLP.

Later this week conference will debate the control of the PLP. But we must also begin a campaign to win control of a future Labour Cabinet by the PLP.

A Labour Cabinet is independent of the PLP and it is therefore of little use having MPs accountable to the local parties if they cannot in turn control the Cabinet.

The coming economic collapse gives us a chance to win the next election. But without fundamental change in our economic policies and control of the leadership we could again see a Labour government fail.



Photo: John Harris

Tony Benn addresses last Sunday's CND demonstration

Three thousand say: 'defend unilateralism'

THREE THOUSAND people took part in the eye of conference demonstration organised by Brighton CND and Labour CND.

Tony Benn told the demonstrators that some people might wonder why a CND demonstration was needed at the conference of a unilateralist party. The answer, he said, was given by the meeting of the NEC where support for the TGWU resolution re-affirming unilateralism was only given after a vote of 14-11.

In fact, at the meeting, Neil Kinnock made vigorous efforts to get the resolution remitted. Only after this year's Labour chairperson Sam McCluskie had insisted on a vote did the meeting decide to support the resolution.

The problem is that the TGWU resolution is in blatant contradiction to the watered down statement on defence in the *Campaigning for a Fairer Britain* document, which promises not unilateral

disarmament but 'putting Polaris into negotiations'. Kinnock is continuing his efforts to get the TGWU resolution remitted.

Benn argued that we should not be dismayed by the arrival of cruise missiles. 'Their presence will be the launching pad for our next campaign' he said.

Helen John, a founder of the Greenham Peace camp explained the court case which the Greenham women are bringing against the US government. She called for a final effort to stop cruise missiles. 'We have no alternative to civil disobedience' she argued.

Gavin Strang, secretary of the parliamentary Labour CND, argued strongly against any junking of the party's unilateralism, particularly in relation to Polaris. If we put Polaris into negotiations, he said, we have to allow for the possibility of failure. We should junk Polaris without preconditions.

'Plain impossible to sit on our hands'

SUGGESTIONS have been made that the left in the Party should reach an agreement or 'historic compromise' with the new leadership. Whether any such compromise is possible depends on our perception of the policies of the new leadership.

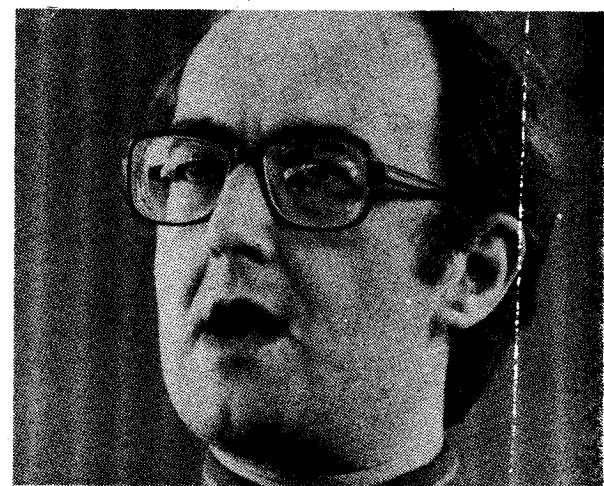
By Reg Race

In my opinion it is a centre-right coalition whose principle and primary aim will be to modify substantially the policies embedded in the 1982 programme and to rule at the behest of the block votes of the T&G, AUEW and the G&M.

They will probably seek to isolate the activists in the CLP, depoliticise the party and possibly continue the witch hunt if opposition continues.

If this view of their likely behaviour is correct, then it is just plain impossible to sit on our hands and ignore the reality of what is going on around us.

We must oppose continued expulsions and censorship. We cannot keep silent. We must defend policies such as unilateralism from those who seek to destroy it.



Reg Race

There is no choice and I for one am not prepared to shut up.

Yes, we must become a campaigning party. But surely we want to campaign for socialist policies and not for watered down policies similar to those of

the SDP.

The left must carefully consider what to do now. It is misleading to promise undying loyalty to the new leadership before we know precisely what they propose to do. We shall soon know.

Absent comrades

Notable among the left-wing who failed to vote for Eric Heffer in the leadership election were Michael Meacher, Tony Banks and Stuart Holland. As we comment in 'the Meacher tactic' article on the facing page, the failure of the left to link the Meacher and Heffer candidacies led to a splitting of left wing vote and put authority in Kinnock's hands to carve up Meacher. These three comrades owe an explanation to the movement of why they failed to vote for Heffer.

Photo: GM COOKSON

NAC conference splits

THE NATIONAL Abortion Campaign conference, meeting in London last weekend, ended in a split in the movement. The annual conference was faced with the task of resolving a long-running debate on whether NAC should retain its character as a campaign prioritising abortion or dissolve into a reproductive rights campaign.

ANN POTTER, a member of the outgoing steering committee of NAC and its Trade Union Liaison Committee, explains what happened.

The conference met at a time when all the signs point to a major new attack on abortion rights. Internationally in the US, Canada and Ireland there has been an offensive against a women's right to choose.

In Britain the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child and 'Life' have been conducting major propaganda rallies to reverse the limited gains won for women in the 1967 Abortion Act.

The Tory government have been restricting abortion rights through new Department of Health and Social Security regulations as well as decimating facilities through the NHS cuts.

So far, however, they have not attempted new parliamentary curbs on abortion rights since NAC played a leading role in building a campaign with the TUC to smash the Corrie Bill.

New support has come for NAC from the labour movement with the affiliation of the health workers union COHSE.

Unfortunately the 190

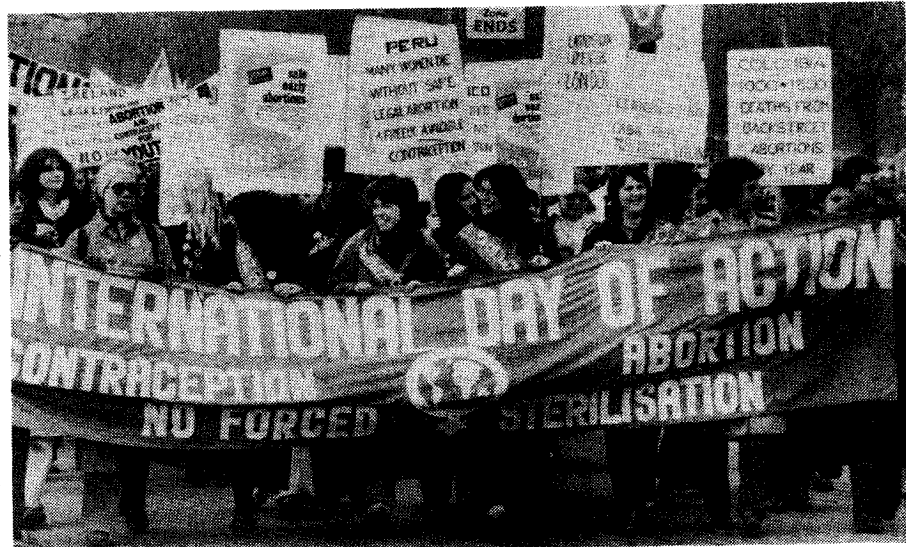
delegates who registered for the NAC conference did not devote their time to discussing these problems and opportunities, but to a proposal to dissolve the campaign into a reproductive rights project.

Marion Keogh, from Glasgow NAC and myself reaffirmed the case for an abortion rights campaign. We explained that the right to have an abortion was the bottom line for defence of all reproductive rights. If abortion rights were defended then so would the right to contraception.

Vote

We explained that NAC had been founded because the reproductive rights campaign from which it originated, the Women's Abortion and Contraception Campaign, proved unsatisfactory to fight for abortion rights.

Since then NAC had won wide support in the women's movement and labour movement as the leading campaign for a



NAC has always campaigned for all women's abortion rights

women's right to choose.

These arguments were opposed by Sarah Vickerstaffe on behalf of those who wanted a reproductive rights campaign. She argued that women did not see abortion as the main priority. However few ideas were put forward about how this campaign should be built or even what its name should be. It was also clear that the support of the labour movement was a low priority for these delegates.

Conference had decided that a 2/3 majority was required to either change or reaffirm the character of the campaign. This proposal, which we opposed, resulted in a deadlock.

The numbers of delegates dwindled and the

final vote was 54 for the campaign retaining its character and 57 for changing it.

While this vote was not decisive it was recognised that there was a fundamental split in the campaign. We maintain that NAC exists as it was originally founded, seeing abortion rights as its main priority. It is up to those who have tried to split the movement to define their positions.

Those defending the existing campaign stated their intention to continue campaigning for abortion rights and building support in the labour movement for a women's right to choose.

In particular the Trade Union Liaison Committee and Scottish NAC said that they would be organising to:

- fight the right's offensive against abortion
- organise a conference on abortion facilities
- campaign against the restrictions on time limits on abortion
- gain positive legislation for free abortion on demand and commit the Labour Party to carry this out
- enable women to have the right to refer themselves for abortions.

Those in support of this perspective will be meeting in the near future to push forward these plans.

IRELAND UNFREE

Colditz or Alcatraz?

'THERE ARE only two powers in the world ... the sword and the spirit. In the long run, the sword is always defeated by the spirit.'

The mass break-out of Republican prisoners from the Maze prison last week provides another startling demonstration of the truth of Napoleon's saying.

And of course it was this lesson which the British press then tried to immediately obscure with a deluge of headlines of which the *Daily Mail's* 'Top Men of Terror Free to Kill Again' was typical.

In their press statement Sinn Féin expressed the sentiments of the nationalist population:

'Sinn Féin congratulates the Long Kesh prisoners on their escape from the notorious H-Blocks. In contrast to the media and Loyalist hysteria, there is a feeling of jubilation in nationalist and Republican areas because people from these areas realise that the British government have no right to imprison anyone in Ireland. And by escaping the political prisoners have humiliated enemy security.'

'Establishment hypocrisy is once again obvious on this issue as it is on any issue related to their occupation of this part of Ireland. When British POWs escaped from Nazi prisons like Colditz they were hailed as heroes. Sinn Féin views Irish POWs in the same light.'

The immediate casualties of Sinn Féin's spectacular coup are the hapless Jim Prior and his Secretary of State for Prisons, Nicholas Scott Prior's only political initiative during his term of office was the Northern Ireland Assembly, doomed to failure by Sinn Féin's success in enforcing a nationalist boycott on the Social Democrat and Labour Party.

The Assembly has now become a forum for the internecine squabbles of the Loyalist factions. Prior has attempted to cover up this failure by boasting of the success of the supergrass policy, where nationalists are sentenced to heavy jail sentences by non-jury courts on the sole evidence of highly paid informers. But even this policy has come under fire from the legal establishment both in Britain and internationally as a device that would discredit British justice. Now it seems likely that Prior will, after a decent pause, join the long line of discredited Northern Ireland supremos with their discredited policies.



The Southern Irish government has joined in the manhunt for the prisoners with a gusto that has repelled even the most ardent of its supporters, by its willingness to ingratiate with the British government.

Garret FitzGerald, the prime minister for the Fine Gael/Labour coalition government, has also had his policy for excluding Sinn Féin from the All-Ireland Forum exposed by Sinn Féin's vote in the British general election which reconfirmed their status as a major component of the Irish political scene. They are dismayed by anything which further bolsters Sinn Féin's standing.

The reaction of the British labour movement has been difficult to discern. Undoubtedly Don Concannon, the Parliamentary Labour Party's spokesperson on Ireland, would have wished the manhunt 'godspeed' from the opposition benches had Parliament been in session, but there are signs that he is speaking for a diminishing number of the Labour rank and file.

The visit of Labour MPs to Belfast last month, the serious debate at the Labour Party conference this week on whether to dump the Loyalist veto and have talks with all Northern Irish parties including Sinn Féin, are signs of the labour movement starting to break from Concannon's craven support for Tory policy in Ireland.

But we are still a long way from the day that the British workers will see the events of last week not as murderers from Alcatraz, but as freedom fighters from Colditz.

NEW LABOUR & IRELAND

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- NEW INFORMERS CAMPAIGN
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New issue of Labour and Ireland. 40p. Copies from LCI BM Box 5355. London WC1 N3XX.

Campaign ATOM Defends Youth CND

AT A MEETING of the Campaign ATOM (Oxford CND) Council on 22 September a resolution was passed condemning the decision of the CND executive to declare YCND Conference invalid and not to recognise YCND's elected National Committee.

The resolution also rejected the so-called seven options for youth in the campaign — a document sent out to CND and YCND groups by the new, non-elected, CND youth committee.

The position of Campaign ATOM is that Youth CND should be

reinstated as an integrated but self-governing part of the campaign, with its own national conference, its own elected leadership and its own democratically decided policies within the aims of CND as a whole.

Dynamic

This decision of Oxford CND is particularly important given that many of the attacks on Youth CND have centred on the activities of Oxford YCND.

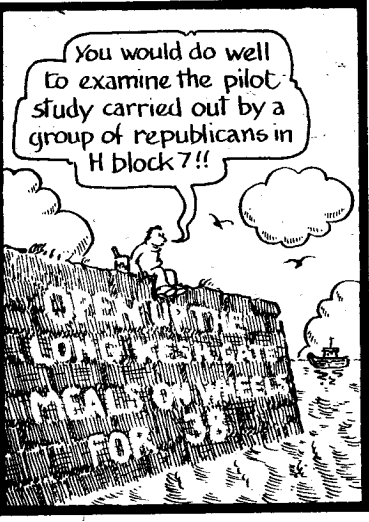
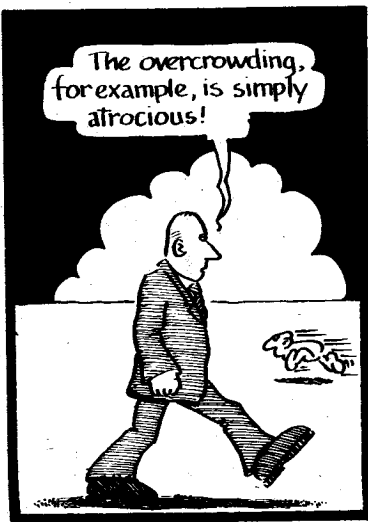
Socialist Action spoke to Cathie Brown, Secretary of Oxford YCND:

'I think that the decision of the CATOM Council represents a very

healthy reaction by ordinary CND activists against the recent decisions made by CND executive against Youth CND. They see no reason why moves should be made against Youth CND when it has been one of the most active and dynamic parts of the movement.'

'Oxford YCND is going to argue for Campaign ATOM to forward an emergency resolution to CND National Conference. This will call on Conference to condemn the decisions of CND Executive about Youth CND and to reinstate it as a democratically run section of the movement with a new national conference as soon as possible.'

BY 10/83 #27 CORMAC



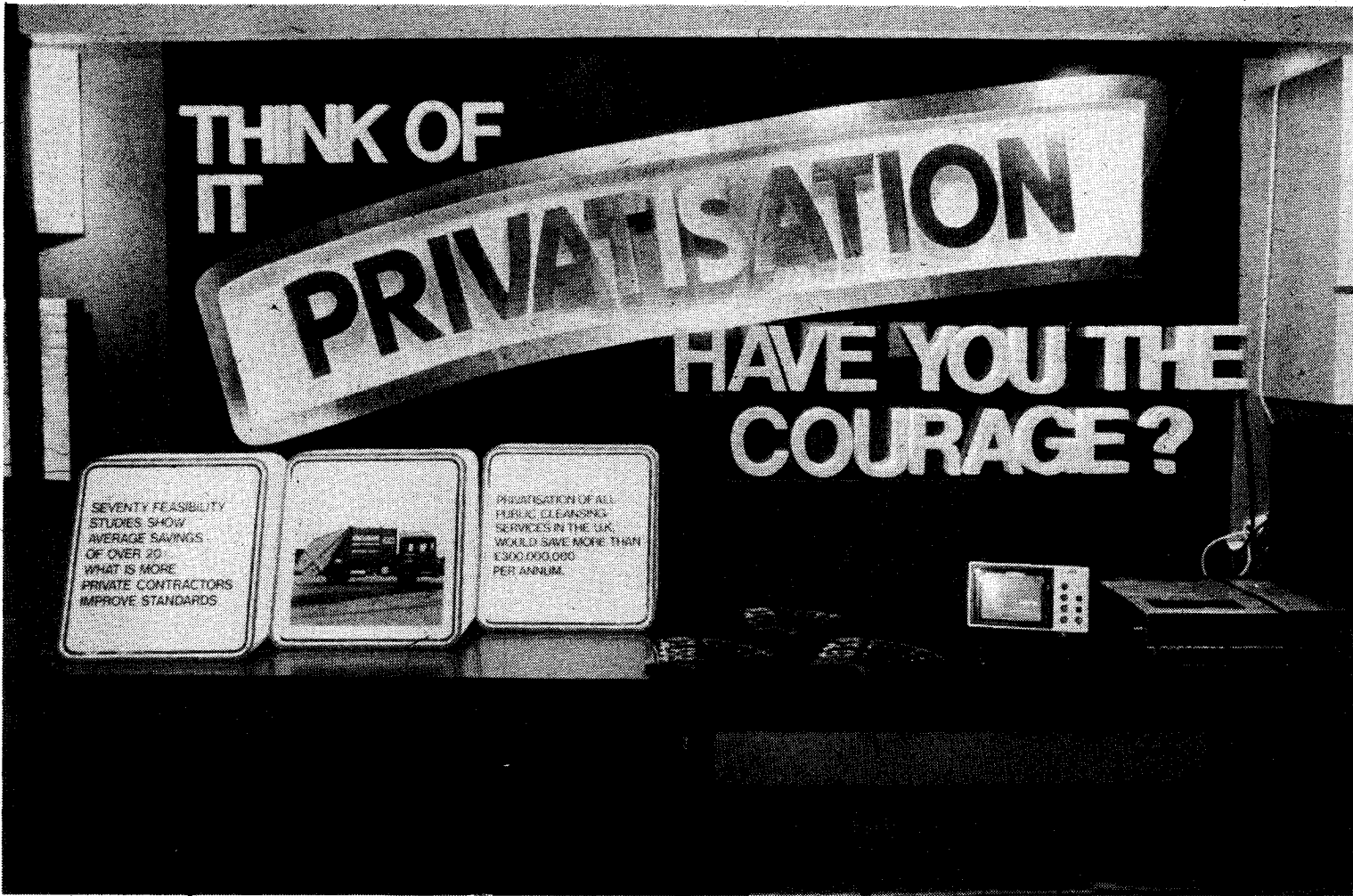


Photo: GM COOKSON

Brent goose not yet cooked!

BRENT Health Authority, whose symbol is the rare Brent Goose, has presented itself as no easy catch to the hungry Norman Fowler. The North London authority has refused to implement the health minister's cuts. These would have resulted in the loss of 300 jobs including 169 nursing staff and doctors.

that 'government proposals about "care in the community" are just empty rhetoric.'

The government is now changing the membership of the authority, no doubt in the hope that it will change its mind. To fight this the CHC has called a mass rally for Tuesday 11 October at the Methodist Church, Harlesden High Street at 7.30pm.

Support

It is also appealing for support at the next Health Authority meeting on 17 October, 5.30pm, Sisters' Sitting Room, Central Middlesex Hospital, Park Royal.

If the authority stands firm it will become a symbol of struggle for the deprived health services of the inner cities.

That means that, in the words of Rev. David Haslam, member of the authority, 'What happens now depends on whether or not people come out to defend the health service.'

By Ronan Brady, (Brent East CLP)

The authority was faced with a set of 'painful choices' which would have decimated local psychiatric, paediatric and geriatric services. Instead, by a margin of 10 to 4 it threw out revenue cuts, labour power cuts and privatisation proposals.

Jean Spray, chairwoman of Brent Community Health Council, said that these cuts meant

NHS up for sale!

AT THE BEGINNING of September, the government issued a circular demanding that local health authorities investigate private contracts for cleaning, laundry and catering in hospitals.

Authorities who do not try for the cheapest deal will be penalised.

The profit sharks have been preparing for this Tory handout for some time. Eighteen months ago the Contract Cleaning and Maintenance Association formed a separate health care section* with 57 members — including the largest cleaning companies.

Many of these outfits are backed by major national holding companies and the recent spate of takeovers and mergers on the Stock Exchange shows that they expect to line their pockets at NHS expense.

Local health authorities are being bribed to accept the Tory plans — if they bring in private contractors, VAT payments on services will be waived.

Between 1981 and 1982 the use of contractors in the NHS jumped by 18 per cent — with 32 per cent of engineering maintenance and 39 per cent of building maintenance covered by private firms. But in some areas like laundry and cleaning the proportion of contractors actually fell.

Between 1979 and 1982 the proportion of NHS spending on private laundry contractors fell from 14 to 11.7 per cent.

Tory arguments that privatisation is more efficient and cost effective proved to be false and many local authorities switched back to their own resources.

Major London hospitals like Central Middlesex and St Stephen's have replaced commercial cleaners with NHS staff because of poor quality of work and supervision. Stoke Mandeville hospital contracted out its cleaning only to discover that the

actual cost was £80,000 more than the cost of using their own staff.

Despite this evidence against Tory arguments of efficiency, the Department of Health and Social Security is driving ahead.

By Celia Pugh

They are intent on forcing down health workers' pay, attacking unionisation and softening the health service for a future in private hands.

Under private contract, cleaners, laundry and canteen workers are not covered by the 1974 Health and Safety at Work Act.

After 21 September the Fair Wages Resolution, in-

roduced in 1946 to protect pay, ceased and the Secretary of State for Social Services now refuses to set minimum pay rates for health workers employed by private contractors.

Cost cutting contracts will throw thousands on the dole heap and services will deteriorate in the push for private profit. Skills and expertise built up over years through coordinated planning in the NHS will be broken up as numerous private companies muscle in.

Union organisation will suffer with health workers dealing with a parade of different employers.

The TUC has launched a public campaign against these privatisation moves in the NHS. At a national conference on 29 September of TUC nominees on regional and district health authorities, a plan of national action

was drawn up. The regional and local coordinating committees formed during the 1982 pay dispute are to be reformed to produce briefings and checklists, leaflets and pamphlets, organise public rallies and workshops.

Pressure

Transport union official Jack Dromey explained, 'We must put pressure on the government. Every MP should get a postcard, there must be lobbies of MPs, phone-in programmes, motorcades, public meetings and petitions.'

'The Tories don't feel the pressure when we deal with them. We need muscle behind our mouth. The trade unions must take the lead and be the motor but we cannot do this by ourselves, we must do it with the public — and that

means being with some strange bedfellows who may not agree with us on Tebbit.'

Such publicity to explain the case, lobbies and public meetings are all a valuable contribution. But they are not enough.

The latest TUC talks with Tebbit show that good arguments and public opinion will not stop the Tories.

A delegate who is a member of the National Union of Railwaymen, hit the nail on the head when he explained 'the TUC must defend our class. We're at the sharp end and the only way to defend ourselves is through united class action — that means industrial action — of rail workers, health workers, miners steel and factory workers. This is the action we need from the TUC, not class collaboration with the Tories.'

MALE ORDER

Kinnock puts it crudely

THIS weeks *City Limits* magazine carries interviews with all the would-be leaders of the Labour Party.

Lucky Neil Kinnock, who won the competition, spoke out frankly about feminism in the home and in the Party:

'Did Glenys and Neil Kinnock talk about feminism?'

'Glenys is aware of the vestiges of sexism in my vocabulary. She doesn't think I'm sexist, but she says I misrepresent myself if I'm not aware of the need not to use certain words like "bird", for instance.'

'He had read bits and pieces, mainly articles, from women's liberation. Had it changed his ways as a man? Did he do any housework?'

'Honestly, I don't,' he conceded. 'Well, no, I tell you what, I do things like clean the fridge maybe in the holidays. Glenys is a full-time teacher, and I've spent years and years trying to persuade her to get somebody to help her, and for the last year we've had a smashing woman come in four hours a week.'

'That's a great help, mainly because it enables Glenys to spend more time with the kids, so that she doesn't come home to the wreckage at 4.30. But it took me years to persuade her.'

'She has a reputation as being very acute politically. Has he ever discussed the possibility of her, rather than him,



Neil Kinnock

going into politics?'

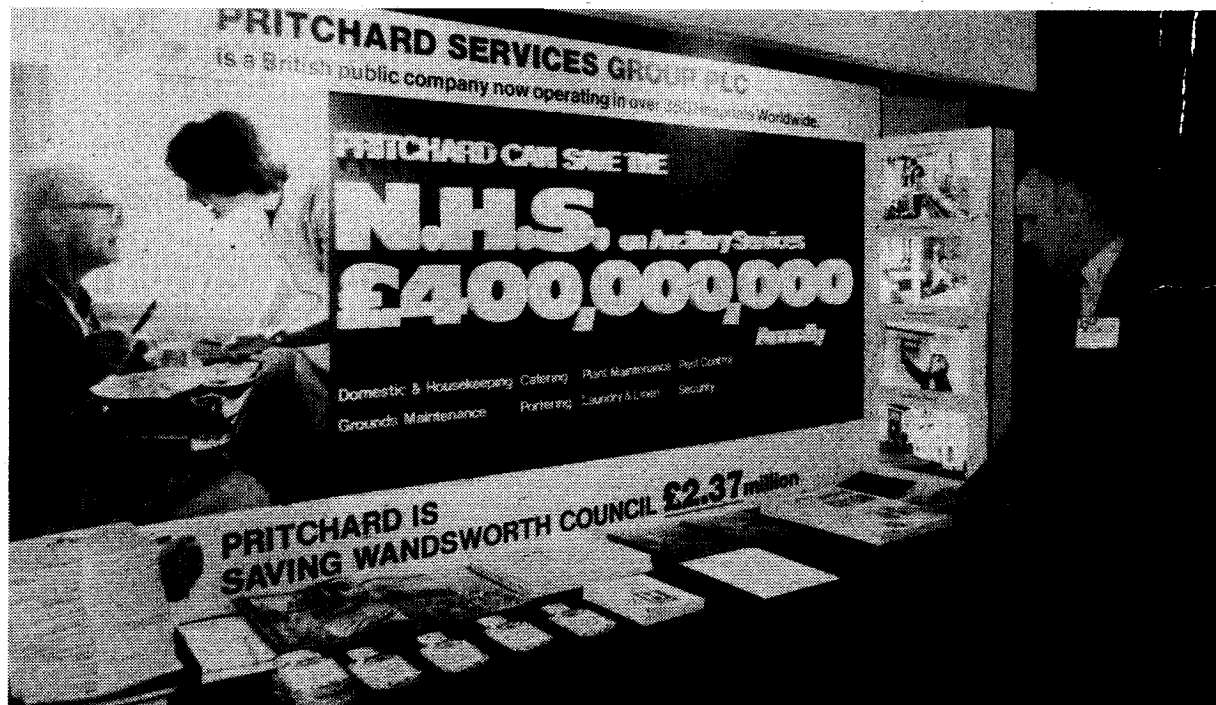
'No, not really, he hadn't. Nor had he sought out the Party's feminist lobby. It might be valuable, provided it wasn't thought patronising, he says. What he had done was thought about the implications for benefits, taxation, housing.'

'The women's sections and conferences, we suggest, are in transition, more combative and confident, and refining some of the policies that Kinnock was describing. The men pick it up from the atmosphere, but they don't do that work. What women are also asking for is that men change.'

'What men and women in the labour movement will distrust,' he observes, 'is any effort to use the women's movement to tactical advantage.'

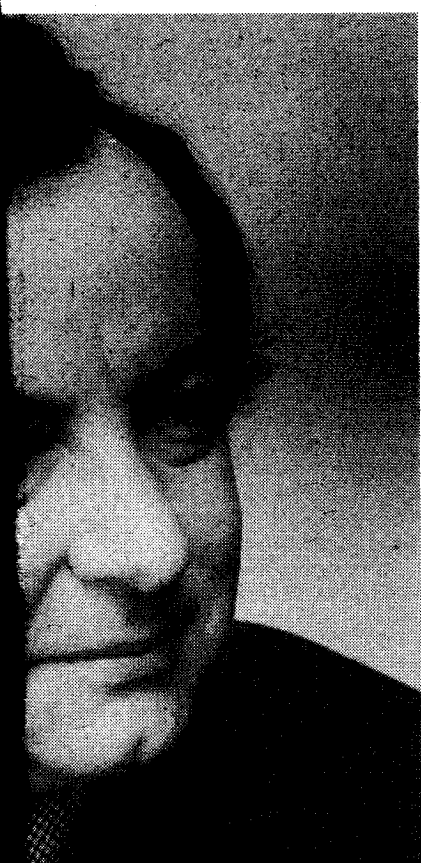
'To put it crudely, within the left-right and inter-left power struggles?'

'That's putting it very crudely but, OK, it'll do.'



Privatisation displays at the 1982 Tory Party conference

DEMOCRACY IN DANGER!



Cooperative MP
one Valley

success must appreciate that this objection can be applied to political opposition on almost every issue. Such an approach comes close to being a counsel of despair, and should have no place in a movement committed to radical social change.

Certainly we should not underestimate the problems we face in trying to wrest an Assembly or greater local democracy from an intransigent government, but in the immediate future we are still more likely to make some progress on this issue (even in the face of government opposition) than on almost any other.

Rightly, none of these critics use the same reasoning to suggest we tone down our opposition on other campaigning issues (such as unemployment, privatisation, steel, coal, shipbuilding). But these are all areas where our tactical position and the power to deliver is much weaker than in efforts to restore a degree of regional self-determination. There is even less justification for soft-peddalling on devolution when it is remembered that probably our best chance of making at least some progress on some of these other issues in the next five years is by direct action (of the kind most easily justified in a mandate campaign) or success in establishing a Scottish Assembly as a defensive bulwark against Thatcher.

An assertive campaign by Labour involving parliamentary and extra-parliamentary pressure to restore local democracy and establish an Assembly can attract widespread support from all sectors of left opinion, outflank the non-socialists in the Scottish National Party (SNP), and highlight the divisions in the Alliance on this issue.

Retreat

But much more important than electoral considerations, if we as the largest party in Scotland do nothing, if we retreat into low profile defeatism without putting up more than the occasional token fight we will not only be by-passed electorally, we will betray those people in Scotland who look to the labour movement for leadership, protection, and a sense of hope.

Even if we fail to achieve an Assembly, the campaign should be set up in such a way that it makes a major contribution to our performance in the local government elections, helps build up party membership, and does something to raise the level of socialist consciousness in Scotland. Of course, if and when we succeed, we will use the Assembly to demonstrate to the rest of Britain in concrete terms the relevance of socialist policies.

This is possibly the most useful contribution we can make during a period of UK opposition to restoring Labour's credibility and electoral fortunes outside Scotland. The party can be much more effective in increasing

Labour support in England and Wales if they can point to successful examples of socialism in action north of the border — with private schools and private medicine abolished, socialist experimentation in housing, social services, local initiatives to help industry and fight unemployment.

There are, of course, some areas where the type of campaign being discussed will overlap with and complement resistance in other parts of the UK too.

For example, the attack on local democracy in England and Wales. Co-operation with other regions is important and valuable and we should examine ways of linking any action we take in resisting Younger to take similar action in England and Wales, other industrial resistance and CND action.

But we must also press ahead on our own, and not lose sight of the fact that the mandate issue is much more clear-cut in Scotland. At the end of the day, that is our strongest card.

We must be clear too that the action proposed will go beyond more vigorous resistance to new legislation on Scottish affairs. In parliament we should not only be stopping all Tory measures coming out of St Andrew's House, but challenging the legitimacy of administrative directives and circulars which the majority of Scottish MPs have not endorsed, encouraging local authorities, individuals and

trade unions to disregard and refuse to co-operate with proposals which do not command majority support.

Outside parliament, proposals on what is possible and appropriate in the areas of local government and trade union resistance should come from those directly involved. Several ideas have already been floated, and the Party should establish working groups to examine these and come up with further suggestions. Particular attention should perhaps be given to what local authority and trade union representatives can do in their capacity as members of outside bodies (such as quangos like the area boards of the MSC and health boards).

Problems

The problems associated with industrial action in the face of a worsening economic situation and Tebbit's legislation are appreciated. Realistically, therefore, industrial action in support of this campaign should — at least initially — be geared to issues with an Assembly dimension where action might in any case have taken place. Issues such as selective action to boycott pay beds in the health service, or against privatisation in local authority services spring to mind as possibilities. These are both issues which directly threaten union



Conference '83

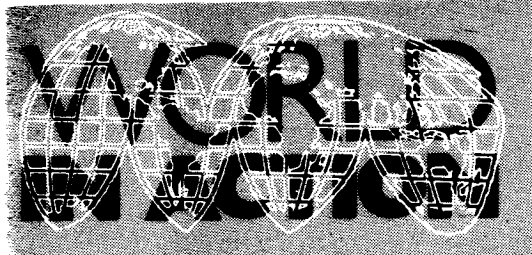
members' jobs, as well as being examples of government action in areas where they have no democratic mandate in Scotland for their policy.

A Joint Action Meeting of Scots Labour MPs, the Scottish TUC and the Scottish Council of the Labour Party has agreed to the production of a Devolution Bill by the opposition as a focus for this issue, and to exploiting all parliamentary means to attack the Tories on devolution including a Censure Debate on the government for its lack of action.

These are a few steps forward and, although some of us want to go further, the labour movement in Scotland is clearly, if cautiously, moving forward to challenge Thatcher in her weakest spot. Action which should receive the wholehearted support of the whole British labour movement.



Scottish workers never gave the Tories a mandate



Misunderstandings

RICHARD STONE, Reagan's special envoy to Central America, visited Britain last week in his campaign to build up support for US policy in the region in Western Europe. His entourage denied that their policy amounted to propping up bloody dictatorships. 'We have a much more sophisticated, much more nuanced policy', one of them said. However there are signs that the nuances are lost on the American people, a majority of whom now oppose Reagan's conduct of foreign policy. A *New York Times*/CBS poll shows that more disapprove now than at any time since he took office.

Filipino masses demand Marcos goes

SIX WEEKS after the assassination of Benigno Aquino, the main opposition leader, Filipinos are keeping up demonstrations to try and force President Marcos to resign. The novel sight of lines of riot policemen confronting executives outside the capital's stock exchange. The joining of the middle classes to the mass mobilisations against the regime in the sixth protest rally since the killing of Aquino marks a new and possibly final stage in the crisis of the regime.

El Salvador talks break down

TALKS BETWEEN the El Salvador government and the FDR being held in Bogota, Colombia have broken down. The 'peace commission' of the government presented an ultimatum to the representatives of the Salvadorean guerrillas to participate in the elections planned for next year or the talks would end. The proposal from the FDR was that the talks should continue in El Salvador marking the beginning of a national debate. Meanwhile Henry Kissinger, head of the bipartisan commission on Central America appointed by Ronald Reagan, will be visiting Guatemala on 13 October with a friend, who is no stranger to the regional war strategy being pursued by the USA. His name? Richard Nixon.

Black unionists defend Tamils

THE BLACK Trade Unionists' Solidarity Movement in Britain in a strongly worded letter to President Jaywardene of Sri Lanka has condemned his government for the continuing violent campaign of repression against the Tamil-speaking people. In a letter to Sir Geoffrey Howe, the British Foreign Secretary, the BTUSM urges the government not to supply arms to Sri Lanka. The BTUSM says, 'We have a duty as Black people to protest in the strongest possible terms when we see blatant injustices being perpetrated against Black people, regardless of the cause. In this instance the fact that the perpetrators are black makes it more important to be seen to condemn these atrocities.'

Blow for Kohl in elections

THE LOSSES suffered by the ruling West German Christian Democrats in last week's regional elections were described as a 'bitter defeat' by Chancellor Helmut Kohl. He ascribed the defeat to opposition to the austerity policy of his government. In the city-state of Bremen there was a decisive victory for the Social Democrats. A few weeks ago a decision was made to close the AG Weser shipyard in the city. The workers occupied the plant, joining other shipyard workers in Hamburg who had taken similar action. Since then the Hamburg workers have voted to end their occupation, but the Bremen occupation continues. These are the first significant occupations by West German workers since 1955.

Lebanon

A 'peace' that will not hold

LAST week full scale American intervention in the Lebanon was averted by a hair's breadth. The fighting around the town of Souk Al-Ghab was ended by a ceasefire which will lead to talks about a future 'national accord'.

The United States had interpreted the possible fall of the town to the Druze militias as heralding the fall of the Gemayel government. Without doubt, massive military action had been planned by the United States to prevent such an occurrence. Before the ceasefire US 'advisers' were seen in forward battle positions with Gemayel's army.

The issue at stake in the talks will be the future of the Lebanese state. The Israeli invasion last year was taken by the Maronite Christians *Phalange* party as the signal to remold a centralised state apparatus under their own control. But as soon as the Israeli army withdrew to the line of the Alawi river, the basic realities of Lebanon's class and confessional structure reasserted themselves.

to accept a Phalangist-Christian state, the writ of Gemayel's government never went much beyond Beirut's boundaries.

Forces

The only forces capable of ensuring continued Maronite Christian domination are the Israelis and the United States. But while the Israelis seem happy, for now, to allow Lebanon to be cut up into warring states, the United States wants a unified state dominated by the Phalange. However, given the inability of the US-trained army to defeat Jumblatt's militia, the US is prepared to contemplate a degree of Muslim-Druze 'participation' in a new national accord.

The problem is that this has been tried before. From 1943 until the civil war of 1975-6, Lebanon had an unwritten constitution which allocated offices, and seats in the assembly, on a confessional basis. Even if the Lebanese bourgeoisie was prepared to contemplate

By Paul Lawson

The Druze militias, led by Walid Jumblatt's Progressive Socialist Party, rushed to re-occupy the areas of the Chouf mountains lost to the Israelis.

Clashes developed between the army and the *Amal* Shi'ite militia as the army struggled to assert the authority of the central state in the southern suburbs of the capital.

The fact of the matter is that with the Syrians determined not to be removed as a key factor in Lebanon's future, and with the Muslim and Druze population refusing



Nasserite militiamen in West Beirut

such a solution again, the centrifugal forces acting on Lebanese society are too great to permit it.

Both the Israelis and the Syrians want to maintain their influence, and both have large armies in the country. The Shi'ite Muslims, now with their own powerful militia, *Amal*, want to cut in on the card game. And the predominantly Christian merchants and businessmen are going to have to face the fact that Lebanon is no longer a country

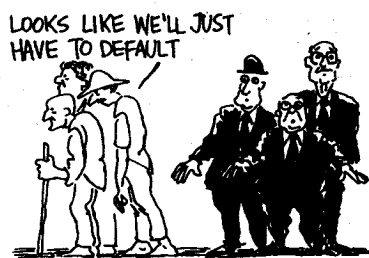
where the majority of the population are Muslims. Any national accord will not hold. Half a dozen contending forces can blow it up at will.

The future for Lebanon is bleak. Against the imperialist-backed attempt to impose a reactionary Gemayel government, the Druze and Muslim peoples have been forced into defending their communities on a confessional basis. The progressive and anti-imperialist forces are badly

split, and subject to the constant manipulation and division imposed by the Syrians.

When the proposed 'national accord' breaks down, the people of Lebanon will be the victims of imperialist and Zionist intervention once more. The campaign against imperialist intervention in the region is vital to any hope of freeing the Lebanese people from the horror and misery to which they have been subjected in the last decade.

Photo: CHRIS STEELE-PERKINS



'ECONOMIC recovery is under way in the industrial world'. That was the judgement of the International Monetary Fund managing director Jacques de Larosiere at its annual meeting in New York.

But the upturn will not resolve the problem of countries like Brazil which owes \$90 billion to the world's financial institutions, nor will it mean a lessening of

unemployment in Britain.

The recovery is real however. Industrial production in the world's seven biggest industrial nations is up 6 per cent since last year's meeting. Gross national product is growing between 3 and 4 per cent.

In Britain the IMF predicts that production will rise next year by 2.1 per cent. But according to secret forecasts revealed by the *Observer* (2 Oc-

tober) unemployment will rise from 12.9 to 13.1 per cent and inflation by 6 per cent. This contrasts with statements made by Chancellor Nigel Lawson at the IMF meeting that inflation would not begin to rise again and also with post election statements as follows:

'In my judgement — and you can take it for what it's worth — there is a very good prospect that by next year, we will see the start of a drop in unemployment.'

IMF 'recovery'

These figures indicate that the Tory government is determined not to concede to any demands to reduce unemployment during the period of recovery.

For the third world the recovery in commodity prices of 30 per cent stimulated by the rise in industrial production has come too late.

While the annual trade deficit has shrunk to one third that of 1980, the structural debt of countries like Brazil now threatens the whole international financial system.

The IMF accordingly agreed to lend Brazil \$11m to stave off its most immediate debts.

But this sum has only been obtained against the Brazilian government agreeing to an austerity programme which it will find hard to implement against a background of working class militancy.

Neither is the loan sufficient to squash the rumours of a unilateral moratorium on repayment or even total repudiation of Brazil's debt that are rife in the international community.

Such a step would be a dramatic example for the rest of the third world. It would sweep away institutions like the IMF who even now have their own problems of liquidity.

It demonstrates once again that despite the trumpeting of recovery, the international capitalist system cannot overcome its chronic instability. Neither can it provide for the millions of people who starve in the third world as a result of its operation.

Only when it makes way for a socialist economic system, where social need comes before private profit, will humanity begin to undertake a real 'recovery'.

Labour should support victimised workers.

I WRITE to add my signature to your national appeal against political vetting and victimisation.

Socialists and trade unionists should now especially be on their guard against the moves by employers and state agencies who pose some potential threat to the increasingly reactionary and anti-democratic policies of the Thatcher Government.

We should demand that the TUC General Council and the leadership of the Labour Party give not just token support to victimised workers but should come to the forefront in defending those who are penalised for carrying out trade union activities and for advocating socialist ideas.

After all, it is their total failure to effectively fight the Tories and combat the ideas behind Thatcherism that has allowed the general

political scene in Britain to shift sharply to the right.

It's not that Thatcher has won the arguments: the failure of the TUC and the PLP to mount a credible fight back since 1979 has allowed the New Right to present itself on the centre stage of British politics as though its ideas were mainstream, reasonable and 'moderate'.

Hence the ease with which workers at plants like Cowley are disposed of by the management. In the early 1970's it would have been unthinkable for the bosses to have done it without provoking a major shut-down of industry.

However, whatever the difficult cir-

cumstances trade unionists and socialists now find themselves in, it is important not to accommodate what some have described to me as 'the new reality'.

Thatcher's wrecking of the economy will ultimately be her government's downfall and we must be ready, and strong, to ensure that not only is there a Labour government, but no repetition of the betrayals of Wilson, Callaghan and Healey, which have turned millions from Labour, in desperation and disillusionment, in the past.

COUNCILLOR NEIL TAGGART
Member of Leeds City Council, Chair Leeds North CLP.



...but not with leaders like Healey and Callaghan.

Labour Party branch at Jaguar

WE WOULD like to inform you of the formation of the Jaguar factory branch of the Labour Party.

At the beginning of the year, Labour Party members in the plant felt there was a need to strengthen the campaign for Labour's socialist policies on the shop floor.

We believe we are the first factory branch

in the West Midlands and as such we are treading new ground.

We would welcome any correspondence from readers interested in setting up a factory branch or who have experiences they wish to share with us.

J McNICHOLAS,
Secretary, Jaguar factory branch.

KLMNOPQRSTU
IJKLETTERS
IJKLMNOPQRST

More power to your elbows!

I have read your recent centre page series on the history of the trade union movement.

I enclose a copy of a publication produced in the year of the General Strike. It is concerned with the production of the TUC paper the British Worker during the days of the strike.

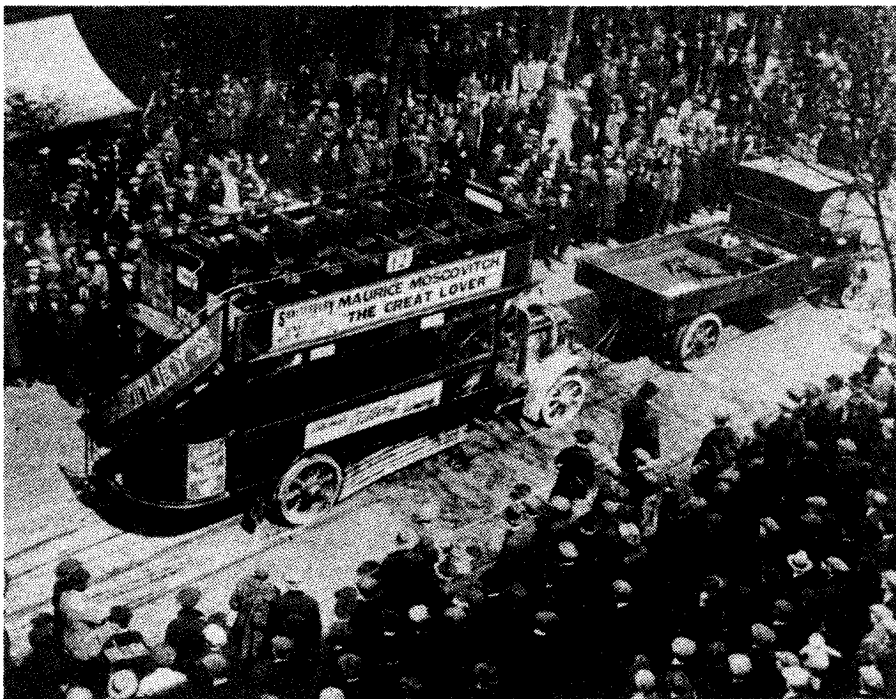
I was only six years of age at the time and the only recollection of events I have is of a wireless enthusiast in the street

Churchill and the Daily Mail were both evil influences against the workers and this is highlighted in this book — which I found among the papers of a recently dead friend who had a lifetime of involvement in the left of politics and with the Committee of One Hundred.

Like myself, my friend was threatened with expulsion from the Exeter Constituency Labour Party and was

I am in my opinion still a Labour Party member and am a socialist by youthful conviction, notwithstanding my affiliation through my membership of NUPE.

I shall shortly renew my subscription to Socialist Action as I find much of interest and make use of it by reproduction and quotation in the local CND group, which just will not



A bus, immobilized by the General Strike, being towed away.

where I lived who relayed BBC news programmes.

This bloke was the landlord of the pub and not many people owned radio receivers then.

driven out — when he opposed the official line on German re-armament and I only last year when I opposed local officers on the Falklands war.

recognise that 'Britain out of Nato' is national CND policy — unless Bruce Kent succeeds in playing it down!

More power to your elbows and best wishes.

CHRIS CHURCHWARD,
Exeter.

Chris's gift is very gratefully received. Other readers will find a welcome change in Socialist Action. BOOKSREVIEWS.

Write to us!

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

Television



The British army have not solved the crises but become part of it.

The Cause of Ireland

Lord Frank Longford in the days when he was a young Conservative once asked a Unionist leader how his party dealt with socialism. 'Oh, that is easy,' he replied, 'we just ran up the Union Jack'.

The state of the labour movement in the North of Ireland has always baffled its counterpart in Britain. The Cause of Ireland is a documentary film which looks at the history and background to this confusion. It is an incisive and moving account of a community divided, where fear and insecurity have been cynically fostered by a Unionist hierarchy to maintain a protestant ascendancy.

achieve basic democratic rights in the North and how this led to a situation of sharper conflict between the two communities and the eventual occupation by the British troops in August 1969.

The British Army far from solving the crisis in the North unsurprisingly became a fundamental part of it.

Early

The early 1970s marked the beginning of repressive legislation aimed at the nationalist community in the North and in March 1972 the British Army was sent to the streets to maintain the status quo in the nationalist community to

nored, even though at the time the average personal income in Northern Ireland was 28 per cent below the U.K. average.

This film is very much concerned with the politics of class in Northern Ireland because while there are real factors which divide workers in that part of the country the deprivation and despair are experiences which cut across those divisions.

Loyalists

The British government's attempts to normalise the conflict in the North have repeatedly failed and the machinery of ordinary civil law has been abnormally tampered with to meet the situation. A woman from Sinn Féin said she will talk to me when I visit the 'English' and she said she was a member of the Provisional IRA. She said 'next there'll be no taboos corpus, next

there'll be identity cards, next everybody will be filled on computers, and before they've time to say socialism, they'll all be filled and they won't be able to move'.

The threat of loyalist violence against Catholics is put forward as one reason why British troops have to stay. The Nationalist community is only too aware of these threats. But the majority of Catholics do not see British troops as their protectors, any more than Protestants see their enemy.

June Champion underlines this when she says, 'I would like to think we were coming to a stage where working class people from both sides, you know, North and South, would be able to meet us and discuss the problems we face and the way of affecting them. We're all being conned by governments and being used'.

DIARY

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

- Labour Movement Conference on Ireland — Peace through Democracy. Sat 26 Nov. Speakers include Tony Benn, Ken Livingstone, and Clive Soley.
● Hands off Central America South London labour movement Rally 28 Oct, Lambeth Town Hall. Speakers include: Tony Benn, Alan Sapper, Salvador Moncada (FDR/FMLN) and reps from Nicaragua and Grenada. Further details/leaflets from Vauxhall CLP, 01-582 2955.

- CND National Demonstration London, 22 Oct. Details: 01-272 8896.
● Sri Lankan Research & Information Group will provide speakers on the current situation there for meetings. Write to 9 Grays Inn Buildings, London EC1.
● Black & White solidarity social, Sat 8 Oct, Red Fort Club, High St, Smethwick, Birmingham. Theatre, music, disco & food. 8 till late with late bar. £1/50p unwaged.
● Jobs not Bombs workshops organised by Southwark Unemployed Centre and Southwark CND. Sat 15 Oct, 10-4pm, 83 Peckham High St, SE15. Social event in the evening at Dominica Centre, 69 Peckham High St, 8pm. The Republic plus disco. £3 admission.
● Southwark CND week of action, 15-22 Oct. Many events (see above) including rally Tue 18 Oct at North Peckham Civic Centre, Old Kent Rd, 8pm; free films at the Ace cinema, Peckham High St from 6.30pm, Fri 21 Oct; Feeder march for national demo with float & steel band starts 9.30am on Camberwell Green on 22 Oct.

- Anti-Privatisation Newsletter produced by Public Service Action. Fourth issue out now includes material on council house sales, failures by private contractors, and on privatisation of the NHS, British Rail, British Gas etc. 30p each from SCAT Publications, 27 Clerkenwell Close, London EC1, 01-253 3627.
● History Workshop 17 Manchester 1983 Industrialisation and after. Manchester Polytechnic, All Saints, Manchester 15. 11-13 November. Registration and enquiries to: History Workshop 17, 47 Albany Road, Manchester 21. Full fee £7, Students and low wage £3.50, unemployed and OAPs free. Cheques payable to 'History Workshop 17'.
● Midland anti-racist conference, Sat 29 Oct, 11-4pm, Digbeth Civic Hall, Birmingham. Organised by Birmingham Campaign Against Racism and Fascism, c/o Trades Council, 191 Corporation St. Speakers include Prem Singh, Avtar Johal, Muhammad Idrish and Clare Short MP.

● Wish you were here — an exhibition of radical posters, postcards, badges etc at the Africa Centre, 38 King St, London WC2 on Fri 7 and Sat 8 Oct, 10am-5pm. Workshops and talks. For details phone Cath Tate 01-671 2166. Organised by Card-Tel.



RED MOLE T-SHIRTS, red on yellow. £2.75 or only £2.15 each for orders of 10 or more (includes post). State size: S/M/L. From The other Printshop, 75 Piccadilly, Manchester 1.
● London's Health Emergency public meeting on the closure of the Highgate Wing, Whittington Hospital. Tue 11 Oct, 7.30pm, Caxton House, St John's Way, N19. Speakers: Jeremy Corbyn MP, Michael Meacher MP, Caroline Osborn (Islington CHC), Syed Boukhari (COHSE). Sponsored by London Socialist Health Association, 01-455 9621.

- Gay Young Socialists Future meetings on 'Gays and Central America' and showing of South London GYM video 'Revenge of the teenage perverts'. Further info from Martin Goodsell, 13 Buxton Rd, N19, 263 9484.
● 'Nationalism or socialism?' — lessons of separatist movements of the Indian sub-continent for the EELAM LIBERATION STRUGGLE IN SRI LANKA. Speaker: Tariq Ali. Thur 6 Oct, 6.30pm, City University, Northampton Sq, London EC1.
● Glasgow Labour Campaign for Gay Rights meeting, Thur 13 Oct, 7.30pm, AUEW Hall, West Regent Street, Glasgow.
● Exhibition on plastic bullets at Islington libraries: Central 3-15 Oct; Archway 17-29 Oct; Essex Rd 31 Oct-12 Nov; Manor Gdns 14-26 Nov; Finsbury 28 Nov-10 Dec. Organised by Islington TOM with Islington Council.

- Week of Action on Namibia Thur 27 Oct-Wed 2 Nov. Includes march and rally in London on 29 Oct; Benefit dance 29 Oct Islington Town Hall with The Republic & Supercombo. Details of these & other events from NSC, PO Box 16, London NW5.
● TUC Women's Action Day 'A woman's place is in her union', 29 Oct. For details of events contact your union, TUC region or write TUC, Congress Hse, Gt Russell St, London WC1, 01-636 4030.



'Redditch nine' picket THE National Society of Metal Mechanics have called a demonstration and picket of GM Plastics, Redditch, on Monday 10 October. The picket has been called in response to local labour movement horror at the hours and conditions at this factory and the victimisation of nine Asian workers who initiated union organisation in the plant. (See SA 30 September for background). Coaches leave from the Hall of Memory and Colville Road, Sparkbrook, Birmingham at 11am, Monday 10 October.

Victimisation victory WHEN Cleveland NALGO approached management to discuss forthcoming industrial action, management refused to recognise the action. They said it was up to individuals to notify them if they were going to breach their contract. Subsequently, a Deputy at a large assessment centre refused to admit a girl on remand on the grounds he was taking industrial action. He was given five minutes to change his mind and then 'taken off the payroll'. The 25 staff walked out the following morning. NALGO and NUPE were asked by chief officers of the Council to call off the action completely until a special Labour group meeting the following Monday. A picket was set up outside the centre and a second home came out in support. The strikers lobbied councillors before the Labour group's meeting and later the unions met with the Labour leader. It was agreed that the Deputy would be reinstated with no loss of pay, and that there'd be no victimisation of anyone involved in strike action. The action was successful because the two unions worked together, and the left of the Labour Party supported them. (Cleveland NALGO member).

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Socialist foreign policy Joy Hurcombe & Alan Freeman

The struggle for black rights Jenny Bourne & Unmesh Desai



Rally: Building socialism in the 1980's Jeremy Corbyn MP, Ernest Mandel & Stephanie Grant

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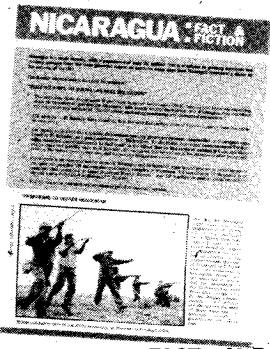
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Labour Party Conference fringe meetings and events

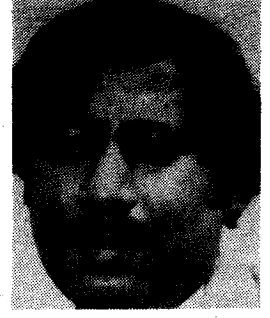
- Labour CND/debate on NATO, Thur 6 Oct, 5.30pm, Royal Albion Hotel, Old Steine. Chair Pat Arrowsmith. Speakers: Jo Richardson MP, Denzil Davies MP, Bob Cryer, Mary Kaldor.
● No socialism without gay liberation! Labour Campaign for Gay Rights meeting with Jo Richardson MP, Reg Race, Jeremy Corbyn MP and other speakers. Wed 5 Oct, 5.30pm, Pavillion Theatre.

- LPYS meeting 'Youth & the future', Thur 6 Oct, 7.30pm, Wagner Hall, Regency Rd. Speakers: Laurence Coates, Steve Morgan, Dave Nellist MP.
● Women Against Rape Thur 6 Oct, 7.30pm, Curzon Hotel, Cavendish Place. Chair: Ruth Hill. Speakers: John Tilley, Dawn Primarolo, Halimat Babamba, Dodie Seymour, Deborah Knight.
● Ireland Rally organised by Royal Arsenal Co-op & LCI. Wed 5 Oct. Speakers: Richard Balfe MEP, Jeremy Corbyn MP, Clare Short MP, Helena Kennedy, Angela Birtill.



NICARAGUA: FACT AND FICTION This pamphlet is a must for anyone active in solidarity work. Packed full of information, facts and figures. 10p each, 20 for £1 or 1,000 for £40 — plus postage. From Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign, 20-21 Compton Terrace, London N1, 01-359 8982.

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**MOLES
EYE
VIEW**



CARICAT. STEVE BELL

Sycophant needed

REAGAN KNOWS how to pick his man. The chair of his Commission on Central America is none other than Henry Kissinger. Seeing the job calls for a snide he couldn't have chosen better. In the 1968 presidential campaign he started off as a Rockefeller man, then switched to Nixon and when the tide looked like turning he promptly offered his services to the Democrat candidate Hubert Humphrey. He was up to his elbows in plotting to overthrow of the government of Salvador Allende and plotted with Nixon the secret and constitutionally illegal bombing of

Cambodia.

His recent biographer Seymour Hersh shows how he stoked up a war in the Middle East so he could be seen to make the peace. Just think, if a man will kill off a few thousand people for a little thing like his career, what he would do to wipe out whole populations in Central America to help his country.

Hersh says of Nixon that 'he had a consuming need for flattery' whilst Kissinger had a consuming need to provide it. Seeing that this dirty job calls for a snide and an arse-licker Reagan couldn't have chosen better than the worthy professor.

An unfair Brighton

AS DELEGATES to the Labour Party Conference scoured around on Sunday for Labour's Campaigning for a Fairer Britain they found the bureaucracy had been a bit fairer to the press than to the delegates. There they were the lads from the Mail, Express, Sun etc — passionately interested in campaigning for a fairer

Britain — walking around with their copies of the document.

The delegates? Oh they had to wait until the next day. One kind press guy from a far-left paper — guess which — meanwhile kept lending their press card out so nosy delegates could get clued up on Labour's newest policy statement.

The temperate drinker

THE SOCIAL Democratic Party has always hated intolerance and one sided approaches. This explains why Dr D. Mabon when he was an MP could represent the Scottish Whisky Association in parliament and in his spare time sit on the council of the

Temperance Association.

You might think that's hypocrisy. The good doctor insists he was just trying to see both sides of the bottle.

Moles Eye View is compiled by BOB PENNINGTON. Contributions sent to arrive by Thursday am.



Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Network)

Miners take on the Coal Board

A WAVE of angry strikes is building up in the British coalfield.

Last year, 185,000 striking miners were involved in 403 local disputes over productivity, bonuses and manning.

In the first six months of this year there were 179 similar stoppages, involving almost 20 per cent of mineworkers' union members.

In recent weeks these local actions hit the headlines when 15,000 miners from 14 of the 15 Barnsley pits downed tools in defence of a victimised worker.

three weeks against management bully tactics. The Coal Board imposed 300 voluntary redundancies without consultation, threatened 63 face workers with the sack for not increasing output and locked out a shift for returning from a union meeting five minutes late.

The Scottish area of the NUM fear that this is just the beginning of an attack on the pit aimed at its eventual closure.

Strike

The other strike to get national backing involves 1700 miners at Westoe colliery in South Shields where management has

imposed a new shift system.

Over recent years the NCB has picked off pits one by one, refusing to invest in new seams and using arguments about non-profitability and coal exhaustion to sign the death warrant.

In this financial year alone, seven pits have shut and this could rise to 16 by the end of the year. Over the last five years 34,000 jobs have been lost, with another 1500 expected to go in 1983.

Plans

If Tory plans are not resisted, up to 95 pits could go in the next eight years, with the loss of 70,000 jobs.

The NCB are trying new tactics to break the unity of the union and the confidence of the ranks to resist. It has changed manning and productivity without consultation and used provocation to

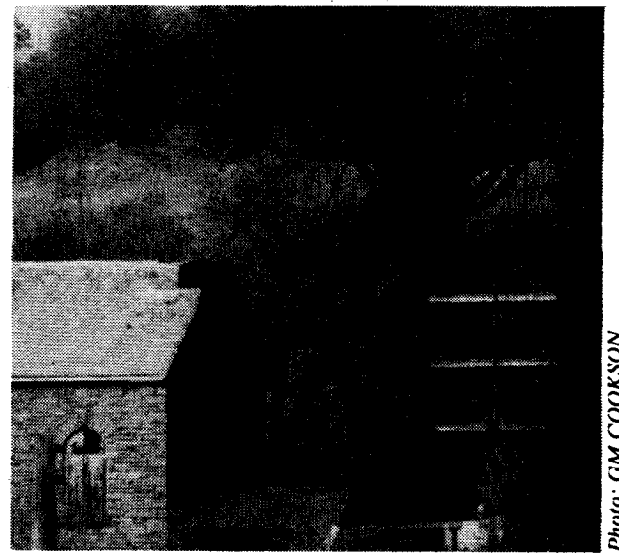


Photo: GM COOKSON

Pits like this one are being picked off one by one.

challenge the hard-won miners' control over pit conditions and procedures.

The new NCB chairperson Ian McGregor is well trained in these methods having tried them with some success in the steel industry.

confidence of miners to say enough is enough. Their anger and defiance could be built on to overcome the setbacks over recent national ballots for strike action against pit closures.

Sadly the actions of some NUM leaders cut across this. The Yorkshire area council voted 67 to 3 against supporting the Barnsley strike action.

Left wing area president, Jack Taylor, maintained that the strike was a diversion from the battle against closures.

Fear

These NUM officials fear that the growing confidence of rank and file miners could challenge their tight control over the union. They fail to see that victories over NCB bully tactics can only strengthen the battles to come on pit closures and pay.

With support for the Monktonhall and Westoe strikes growing, let's hope that the 21 October conference can undo some of the damage done by this abdication of leadership.

• Donations and messages of support to: Monktonhall strike fund, Dalkeith Welfare Club, Woodburn Rd, Dalkeith, Midlothian.

SOGAT '82 faces expulsion from TUC

LAST MAY, over 100 electricians working for Fleet Street newspapers resigned from their union, the Electrical Electronic Telecommunication and Plumbing Union to join the print union SOGAT '82.

They included Sean Geraghty who was threatened with court action last year for the support action taken by his branch to defend the health workers.

He argued that EEPTU officials, led by Frank Chapple, were preparing to wind up the branch and sell it to another union.

Other EEPTU members, including Broad Left, Labour Party supporters did not share this

view and argued that the left in the union should not run away. They should stay and fight for democracy and left policies against the Chapple leadership.

Head

This dispute has come to a head this month as the TUC refuses to recognise the SOGAT '82 recruitment of EEPTU members. In August the TUC insisted that SOGAT '82 exclude these new members, a decision rejected by the national executive of SOGAT.

This will be discussed again at the 26 October meeting of the TUC General Council. They have made it clear that if



Sean Geraghty

SOGAT '82 persist in defying the ruling, the union could be expelled from the TUC.

EEPTU member JOHN

AITKEN, who stood as the Broad Left candidate in the recent General Secretary elections told Socialist Action why he and

other Broad Left members disagreed with the decision of those who left the EEPTU.

'We support the TUC decision. As members of the Broad Left we have a responsibility to fight for progressive policies and leadership within the EEPTU. From the beginning we argued with those who wanted to leave to join SOGAT '82.

'We pointed out then that the TUC would rule this out as unconstitutional. We said that this would have serious consequences for the labour movement just at the time when we could do without these sort of problems.

'We should stay inside the EEPTU and oppose Chapple and his kind of democracy. We should not run away from a fight.

'The best thing that could happen now is for SOGAT '82 to comply with the TUC ruling and for the electricians to come back to the EEPTU.'

Led

These provocations led to more strikes last week when Scottish miners were attacked for organising solidarity for the Monktonhall strikers. John Mitchell, the NUM delegate for the Frances pit, was sacked on the spot for collecting money and miners at Polmaise colliery were laid off for holding a solidarity meeting.

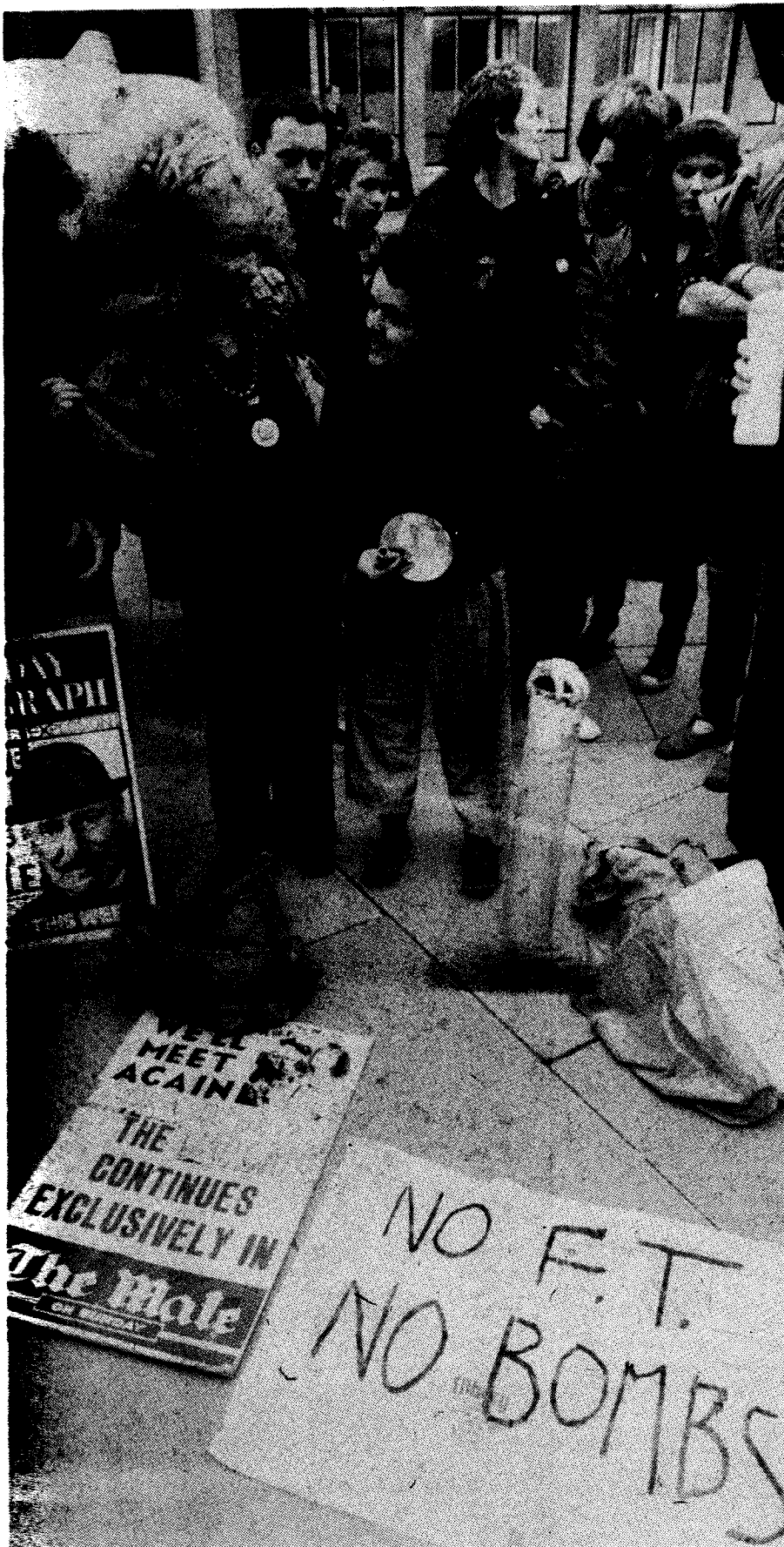
The national NUM executive is feeling the pressure of these strikes and has called a special national delegate conference for 21 October to consider action against the contraction of the coal industry.

Likely

The conference is also likely to discuss the national pay claim—for a substantial increase to restore pay to 1974 levels. This is estimated to involve a 20 per cent increase, with the NCB offer only worth 3 per cent.

The strikes of recent weeks show the increased

A Socialist ACTION



Part of last week's 'Stop the City' protest which aimed to highlight the connections between the profits made by financiers and banks out of the international arms trade. Over two hundred people were arrested during the day's demonstration.

Longbridge stewards condemn Cowley 13 sackings



Longbridge workers demonstrated against sacking of Derek Robinson.

AS THE VAUXHALL workers swing into action against the government the press is again sharpening its knives for the 'irresponsible' shop stewards, and inventing mass 'back to work' movements. In recognition of the role of the press the following resolution was passed unanimously by Longbridge shop stewards:

'That the Austin Joint Shop Stewards Committee regard the recent sackings at Cowley as further evidence of

employers using 'the recession as a cover to victimise workers for political views and trade union activity.

'The press treatment of the sackings was gravely disturbing and creates a McCarthyite environment in which the press and organisations like the Economic League provide the justice. The labour movement must reject attempts to censor ideas or penalise normal trade union activity.'

Hundreds of new signatures have come in for the appeal for a campaign launched by Alex Lyons against political victimisation.

Against political victimisation

The national appeal reads:

'WE ARE deeply concerned that the recent dismissal by British Leyland at Cowley of workers for their political views is merely one example of increasing evidence of the victimisation of workers who are considered radical or socialist. In our view an employer is not entitled to censor ideas or penalise normal trade union activity.

The press treatment of the Cowley story was gravely disturbing in assuming guilt where none was

proven. Yet few voices were heard in criticism. This is a new McCarthyite tendency to condemn people by association and, taken with the activity of organisations like the Economic League, it is a tendency which ought to be reversed. We would welcome your support in forming a committee to counter this tendency and to give support to those who are victimised at work for their political convictions.'

Initial signatories (all in personal capacity)

Alex Kitson, Assistant General Secretary TGWU
Terry Marsland, General Secretary Tobacco Workers Union
Geoffrey Drain, General Secretary NALGO
Alan Sapper, General Secretary ACTT
Jim Slater, General Secretary National Union of Seamen
Jimmy Knapp, General Secretary National Union of Railwaymen
Ken Cameron, General Secretary Fire Brigades Union
Jack Collins, Kent area NUM
Eric Clarke, NUM Executive
Maurice Jones, Yorks. NUM, editor The Miner
Ken Barlow, Midland Region UCATT
Tony Benn
Eric Deakin MP
Joan Maynard MP
Syd Bidwell MP
Eric Heffer MP
Jo Richardson MP
Martin Flannery MP
Tony Banks MP
Michael Meacher MP
Jeremy Corbyn MP
Harriet Harman MP
Dennis Canavan MP
Ron Brown MP
Ken Livingstone, leader GLC
Richard Balfie MEP
Frank Dobson MP
Bernard Renshan, National Union of Teachers Exec.
Oxford East Constituency Labour Party.
Ann Field, SOGAT 82
D.G. George, T&GWU Executive Committee.
Arthur Johnstone, TUC North West Education Officer.
Alan Fisher, NUPE, former President TUC.
Ken Livingstone, Leader GLC.
Ted Knight, Leader Lambeth Council.

Angela Greatley, Deputy Leader Haringey Council.
Frances Morrell, Leader of ILEA
Martin Coleman, Leader of Brent Council.
John Austin Walker, Leader of Greenwich Council.
Phil Davies, FTAT National Executive.
John Parkinson, Sec Lancashire Association of Trades Councils.
Tom Richardson, Sec Middlesborough Trades Council.
Gwynne Smith, Sec Lang baugh Trades Council.
John Gaines, National E.C., AUEW, Construction.
Cliff Hathaway, Sec North Staffs. Trades Council.
Dave Bean, Sec Leicester Taxes IRSF.
Keith Legg, Secretary Stockton taxes IRSF.
David Coote, Sec Luton Taxes IRSF.
Malcolm Tetley, Sec Nottingham Taxes IRSF.
Frank Giles, Sec Leeds Taxes IRSF.
Bernard Steer, President NALGO.
Cllr Mabel Goodwin.
Cllr Peter Troy, Southwark.
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Cllr Barnes, Islington.
Cllr Simpson, Islington.
Cllr Marks, Islington.
Cllr Worker, Islington.
Cllr Clifton, Islington.
Cllr Oliver, Islington.
Cllr Calman, Islington.
Mabel Goodwin, Southwark councillor
Peter Troy, Southwark councillor
Margaret Hodge, leader Islington Council
Penny Newell, Chair Peckham CLP
Alex Lyon
Les Huckfield, Tribune
Jeremy Hawthorn, Sec Peckham CLP

Lloyd Trott, Treasurer Peckham CLP
James Curran, editor New Socialist
Glens Thornton, secretary Political Committee Royal Arsenal Cooperative Society
Anstey Rice, Southwark Black Peoples Alliance
Peter Carter, Industrial Organiser, Communist Party
Prof. Sheila Allen
Prof. Hilary Rose, Bradford University
Prof. Steven Rose, Open University
Prof. Stuart Hall, Open University
Sue O'Sullivan, Spare Rib
Helen John, Greenham Peace Camp
Robin Blackburn, editor New Left Review
Anthony Arblaster
John Saville
Anthony Kendall, leader Hackney Council
Gultekin Bekdemir, executive member of the banned Turkish union DISK
Michael Bryant, Sec. NUPE
Norman Ellery, Chair NUPE
Camberwell Green
Danny McNamara, Chair NUPE
Cllr Noel Hayes, LB Waltham Forest
Dave Hayward, Sec. Ealing-Southall CLP.
Cllr Graham Stringer, Chair, Manchester City LP.
Cllr E. Newman, Manchester.
Dougle Daniels, Sec. Manchester District Committee AUEW.
Clare Short, MP.
Cllr Nigel Knowles, Haringey.
Narendra Makanja, Haringey Cllr.
Dave Ward, POEU National Executive.
Phil Holt, POEU National Executive.
Donald MacDonald, POEU National Executive.
Ken Coates

Ernie Roberts MP
Ken Loach
Reg Race
Dennis Skinner MP
Richard Balfie MEP
Andy Harris, GLC councillor
Margaret Hodge, Leader Islington
Gwynne Smith, Sec Langbaugh Trades Council.
Keith Legg, Secretary Stockton Taxes IRSF.
Beryl Hufflingey, Regional Sec Yorkshire/Humberide TUC.
Ken Smith, President Leeds Trades Council
Phil Bealey, Leader Bradford Labour Group.
Geoff Driver, Leeds City-Council.
Ray Mitchell, Leeds City Council.
Neil Taggart, Leeds City Council.
Trevor Park, Chair, Leeds District Labour Party.
Len Hodgson, Leader West Yorkshire County Council.
Bryn Glover, Secretary North East Leeds CLP and ASTMS NEC.
Gina Greenlay Sec Leeds District LP.
Peter O'Grady, Chair Yorkshire Region UCATT.
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