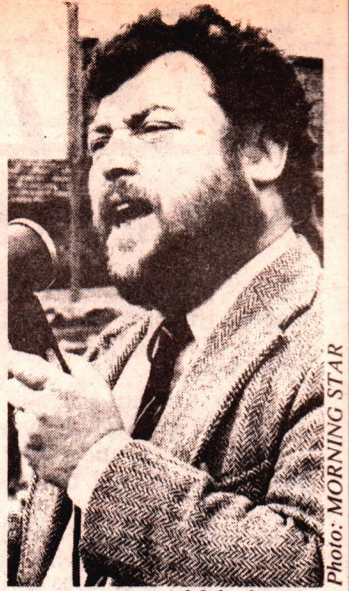


A Socialist ACTION

No. 59 25 May 1984 30p

Free Malcolm Pitt



Malcolm Pitt

Yorkshire strike

Murray's

shame

LAST MONDAY the labour movement in Yorkshire and Humberside did the right and honourable thing. As hospital workers, dockers, rail workers and bus workers, joined with teachers and local government employees in supporting the miners they showed how the government and the NCB can be defeated.

By their response to the call of the regional TUCs they also made it clear that they wanted nothing to do with scabs like Len Murray, who is more interested in getting an ermine robe than in defending the jobs and conditions of working people.

The banner from the Sheffield trades council spelt out the message that the striking and demonstrating workers wanted to make: 'Support the Miners — it's not just miners jobs they are fighting for'. That's the message that must resound through the whole of the British

labour movement. Not one more job should be sacrificed not one more workers must be tossed on the scrap heap.

It is the message that must be heard and heeded by every trade union member. The miners spearhead that fight for jobs and the right to a future. This is why there must be more Yorkshires and Humbersides because they can mobilise millions of people behind the miners.

The TUC general council instead of keeping silent about Murray's betrayal should denounce him and start building days of action in every region whilst planning a gigantic national day of solidarity with the miners.

Nothing less will do. If the right wing refuse to act then the left trade union leaders must call national action independent of the right.

Monday's day of action set the trade union movement on the right path now millions more must take the same course.



Photo: MORNING STAR

The jailing of Kent miners' President Malcolm Pitt is a disgrace. When they can't beat a strike any other way the bosses always turn to their tame stooges in the courts.

The last time they tried to break a strike through imprisonment was with the Shrewsbury pickets. That time round the whole labour movement rose up in anger, and the same must happen now.

The NCB and the government have failed to break the strike by any other means and so they are now relying more and more heavily on the police and the courts.

- They failed to use the division with the Nottingham and other scabs to destroy the strike.

- They failed to mobilise women and families of the miners against the strike.

- They failed to get a ballot to overturn the decision to strike.

- The print unions stopped them using the popular press as a platform to slander the miners with no right of reply.

- The attempts to build a 'back to work' movement in Yorkshire fell flat on its face.

Now all they have left is repression and starvation. The £15 a week cut in social security payments, balanced against non-existent strike pay, hasn't been enough to starve the miners back to work. Now they propose to cut a further £4 from any family receiving a food parcel!

And of course since the beginning of the strike they've been stepping up the repression. They have used the police in a national military operation against pickets. They've changed the law *de facto* so that miners travelling along the public highway can be stopped and arrested on the grounds that they might at some point in the future cause a breach of the peace.

They have turned Nottingham into a police state, setting up roadblocks, imposing curfews, cutting off phones, and raiding homes.

They have dug up medieval riot laws to get round the 'leniency' of present laws. And now they have jailed one of the miners' leaders.

Support committees up and down the country must take rapid steps to protest against this increase in repression. Labour councils should follow Merseyside's lead in refusing to pay for the increased policing costs of these military operations. Malcolm Pitt must be freed.

Repression and starvation won't defeat the miners if the rest of the labour movement doesn't let it.

Socialist ACTION

Now stick to it

FRANK FIELD in the *Guardian* on 14 May became the first Labour MP to publicly call for an alliance between Labour and the SDP/Liberals.

Even Austen Mitchell, who has been pursuing the lonely Labour furrow of campaigning for proportional representation, has not so far felt bold enough to openly urge a coalition.

More interestingly Field quite explicitly drew his arguments from what is by far the most coherent source of ideas for the Labour right — the writings of Eric Hobsbawm and others in *Marxism Today*.

Field approvingly noted that 'Hobsbawm's answer was clear; there was no more important political objective than the defeat of Mrs Thatcher and Hobsbawm was prepared to state the unmentionable. If necessary this may involve some arrangement with the Alliance.'

Kinnock's reply to Field on Sunday's Radio 4 interview was clear. Talk of a coalition was 'a little fad running at the moment.' Labour under his leadership would not enter any coalition with the Alliance. If Labour formed a government but was a minority in Parliament he would demand a new election that would clear up the mess by forcing a decisive result.

There are several points that could be made about Kinnock's statement — both the famous cases of Labour leaders doing U-turns and the fact that capitalist constitutional lawyers have made it clear the monarchy should prevent Kinnock's course.

There is no reason to doubt that Neil Kinnock's statement represents his real present position. Kinnock was not elected to lead Labour into a coalition. He was elected in a sense to avoid taking Labour into a coalition — the form that avoidance takes being one of moving Labour to the right on policies, attempting to rebuild working class support, and thereby making it unnecessary for the Labour leadership to have any coalition.

But where Kinnock, and his supporters, are wrong is in believing that what they face is 'a little fad'. Those forces with a line towards coalition in Britain today are not a few intellectuals or MPs of the type of Frank Field or Eric Hobsbawm. The real battalions with an orientation to a Labour-Alliance coalition are the right wing of the trade union bureaucracy.

Much more significant than the *New Statesman's* call for a vote for Liberal and SNP candidates at the last election was the similar appeal of Roy Grantham. Still clearer was Frank Chapple's complaint after the election that the unions had been too 'loyal' to Labour and should have voted for other 'anti-Thatcher' candidates.

The entire 'new realism' of the right wing of the TUC is not just about trade union policy — although the sell-out of the NGA, and Murray's stab in the front of the miners, bore the authentic stamp of the policy.

The new realism is also a whole political approach — one that is based on the distancing of the trade unions from the Labour Party. On this field it ties together large parts of the one-third of TUC unions that are not affiliated to the Labour Party with the right wing ones that are.

The coherent expression of this alliance both in politics and organisation is trying to seek some sort of accommodation between Labour and the Alliance. At the highest levels of the right wing trade union bureaucracy, in the plans of Alastair Graham, Frank Chapple and their ilk there should be no doubt but that this orientation is now quite conscious. Of course within the bulk of the Labour Party, as opposed to the trade union bureaucracy and parts of the PLP, such an orientation has little support today.

Neil Kinnock is certainly not the same political kettle of fish as Alastair Graham or Frank Chapple. But he rejects the only road that could defeat their coherent line — a massive turn of the Labour Party to the left and placing itself at the head of the struggles which are now erupting. The result is the present situation. Labour recovering from its June defeat but not even remotely enough to win a general election.

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Murray and company:

Scabs to the end

IT'S A NASTY and unpleasant experience watching the right wing leaders of the labour movement establishment joining Thatcher and the media against the miners. After weeks of sniping and off-the-cuff comments, suddenly an open right wing rampage has started.

First we had Eric Hammond of the EETPU sticking his knife in — but then what else could we expect from Frank Chapple's protégé?

Naturally enough Alastair Graham of the CPSA joined the fray and told his union conference that he rejected the 'use of crude industrial muscle'. What Mr Graham meant was that he hated to see trade unions striking to defend their members' jobs. He much prefers the Cheltenham way which lost jobs but did make him popular in Tory government circles.

Then on to the stage stepped Peter Shore — in case you have forgotten he was the lamentable also-ran in last year's Labour leadership election. He is also having a little bit of trouble convincing his constituency party that he is worth adopting as their next parliamentary candidate.

Mr Shore delivered a denunciation of the 'intransigence of both sides' which reads rather strange from a man in the shadow cabinet of a party that has called for a 50p a week levy from its members for the miners' strike fund. Perhaps Mr Shore sends his donation care of the NCB, Hobart House?

Then finally the silence at Congress House was broken. Len Murray, who sold out at Cheltenham and Warrington, decided he could no longer resist the temptation to sell out another section of the movement that pays him £30,000 a year. In a letter which gladdened the heart of every leader writer in Fleet Street he told the Yorkshire and Humber regional offices of the TUC that they had 'exceeded their powers' by calling the 21 May one-day solidarity strike.

Then just to ram the point home he wrote the same letter to the Wales TUC saying they had no right to take action on their day of solidarity called for 12 June. Hammond, Graham, Shore and Murray have moved into the fray at a time when the ruling class is getting more and more ex-

asperated with Kinnock.

The Labour leader has tried so hard to have a foot in both camps. 'Yes' he 'supports the strike' but thinks 'they should have a ballot'. That won't do for a situation which the *Sunday Times* describes as a 'watershed in British politics'. Speaking for the people who really run Britain, the same editorial says it must be made 'crystal clear to these miners that there is no prospect of compromise or concessions...'

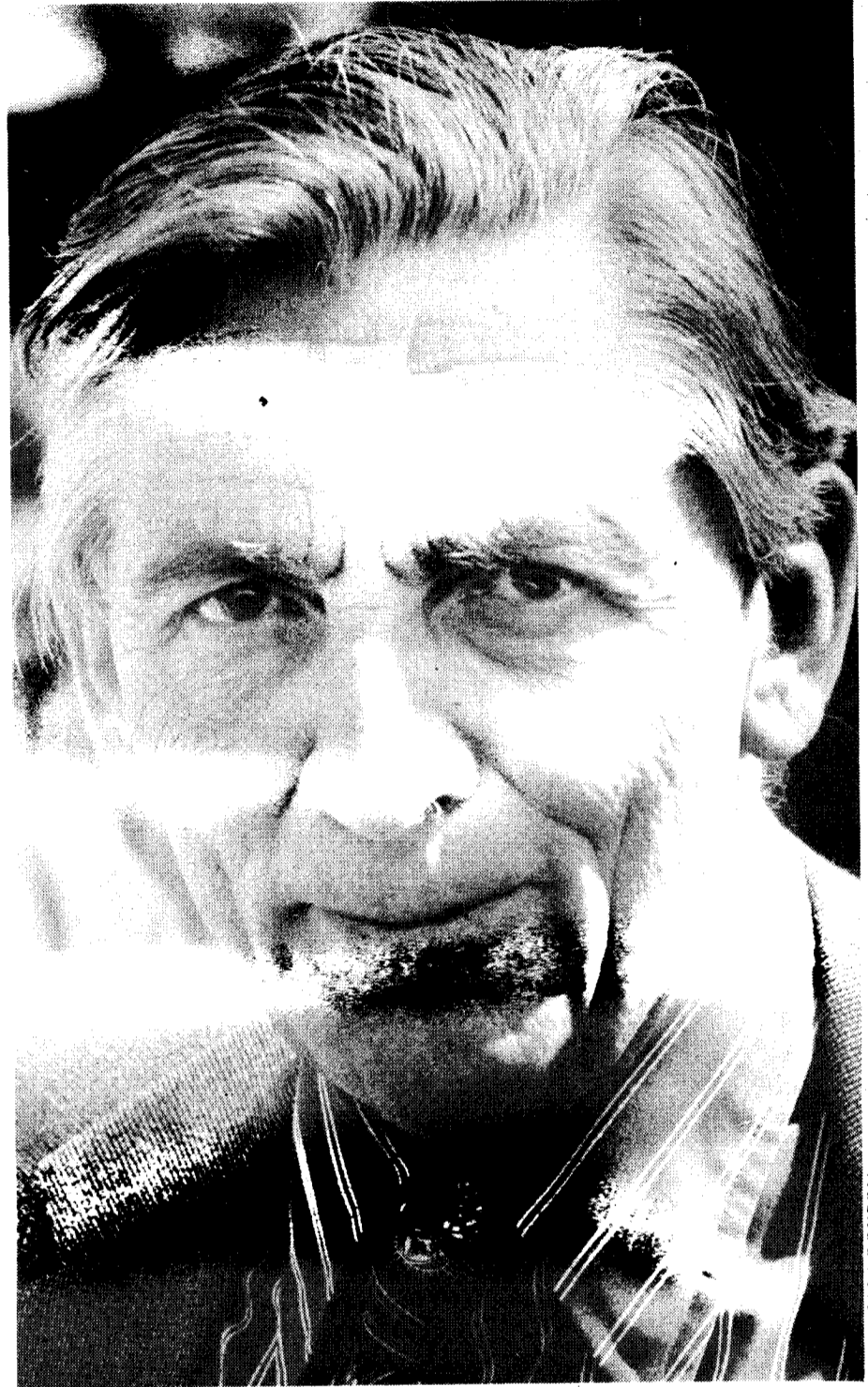
By Bob Pennington

It concludes that the strike 'offers the chance to end a disastrous era which gave the unions a veto over government policy...'. The right wing are answering that summons from their masters. They know full well, when the 'watershed' comes, which side of the line they stand on. This is why these people are buying for Arthur Scargill's blood and want to see the miners defeated. Even when faced with such an open betrayal Kinnock still tries to straddle the two camps.

He lamely explains Murray's scabbing by saying 'Mr Murray had merely been fulfilling his contractual obligations'. Then on TV he refused to say whether or not he agreed with Mr Shore, but simply insisted a ballot would have been best. Labour leaders who try and perform such balancing acts deserve only one fate — to fall flat on their face!

The left MPs and trade union leaders can't afford to equivocate like Kinnock is doing. The right wing are in the camp of the ruling class and that means they have to be opposed and disowned. Anything else is only to give them a cover.

The left must insist that the workers who came out in Yorkshire and



Len Murray, graduated from office boy to scab

Humber-side and defied Murray and his friends did the right and honourable thing. If the TUC and the Labour right refuse to give unconditional support to the miners then independent action must be organised.

More Yorkshires and Humber-sides is the answer to the betrayals of the right.

Meanwhile we have a bit of advice for Mr Murray. Why wait until the autumn — just go now! And a question to Neil Kinnock. Do you remember Neil, how Tony Benn got sacked from the shadow cabinet because he spoke up for Labour conference policy in parliament?

So why not send Peter

Shore winging back to Stepney with the suggestion that his local party finds someone just that bit more willing to support the miners? People like Murray and Shore have shown once again that the only unity they want is on their terms and is used as a convenient way to attack the left. It never means unity in struggle.

A PIECE of the ACTION



#58 5/84 CORNAG

THATCHER'S POLITICAL POLICE

THE ARREST and charging of 50 miners with offences under medieval riot laws marks a new stage in attempts to use police and state repression to crush the miners' strike.

From the beginning the Tories have used the police in new ways to break the strike. In the first couple of weeks we saw the police stop Kent miners travelling out of the county through the Dartford tunnel.

In stopping the pickets at Ravenscraig the police instituted a policy of mass arrests of miners on their way to the picket — before any offence had been committed.

Nottingham looks more and more like a police state. Last week parts of the Notts village of Blidworth were placed under curfew. Areas were sealed off and road blocks established. People were warned they would be arrested if they left their houses and it appeared that phones were cut off — lines went dead after the first few digits.

The excuse for this harassment was that families in the area were putting up Yorkshire miners on flying picket duty — 'harbouring criminals' as the police preferred to see it.

Door to door searches and questioning took place until the NUM was forced to lead most of the pickets out of the area. But the effect has been to harden attitudes against the police and for the miners.

The police force in Bri-

tain has always been an arm of the state and government, never neutral. But the last months have seen further steps toward making it directly a political police force. The county-based structure of the police has increasingly been eroded so that it acts as a national quasi-military force.

By Jude Woodward

Hampshire police were 'air-lifted' into Nottingham, by plane in a nationally co-ordinated military-style action against the miners. Like the troops of occupation in the North of Ireland, Nottingham is occupied by the police force from all corners of the country.

Now a new stage has opened with the use of ancient riot laws against the miners carrying unlimited fines and sentences. The value to the government of these laws is that the hearings are before a judge rather than a local magistrate.

It seems that the bosses are turning to their time-



Photo: PETE GRANT

honoured tactics of using prison sentences to crush the strike. If the existing law doesn't serve their purposes then they just dig up an old one or the judges make up a new one.

That's what they did with the Tolpuddle martyrs, when they used a law aimed at preventing sedition in the armed forces to deport the early trade unionists. And that's what they did with the postal workers when they tried to support the Grunwick strikers six years ago. The clauses of the law they used were originally aimed against highway robbery.

Now they aim to use medieval riot laws against the miners.

If miners are sent to jail the whole labour

movement has to respond. They've tried it before when they sent the Shrewsbury pickets to jail, using imprisonment and repression to smash the workers' movement.

The miners have shown that attempts to divide the labour movement, attempts to starve them back to work, attempts to mobilise women against them, attempts to slur and slander them (like with the 'Mine Fuehrer' picture of Scargill) won't work.

Now we all have to show that police repression and prison sentences won't work either. As the Shrewsbury pickets' banner said: 'If they take you in the morning ... they will be coming for us that night.'

Police violence is nothing new

POLICE VIOLENCE AND intimidation is not a new experience for Britain's black community. JOEL O'LOUGHLIN is a black member of the TGWU. He told Socialist Action why police behaviour during the course of the miners dispute should surprise no one.

THE EXPERIENCE of communities like Newham, Brixton, Toxteth and St Pauls are a brutal mixture of high unemployment, social deprivation and violent racist abuse — garnished with heavy-handed policing. The history of Britain's black community over the last 30 years is littered with instances of racial attacks.

During the 1970s white housing estates became centres of National Front activity. In the early '80s blacks were abused and even murdered in broad daylight in busy streets.

For years now blacks have warned of the trend towards increasing misuse and abuse of police powers.

Sadly, these warnings have not been heeded — even after such monumental events as the Swamp '81 police operation which led to the Brixton uprisings.

Blacks find it disturbing that white activists are sometimes surprised at the

and so on.

At the same time, we are baffled at the lack of opposition to the Police and Criminal Evidence Bill. Once passed it will give police even wider-ranging powers, which will be used to crush working class aspirations and terrorise communities.



Photo: CHRISTOPHER DAVIES



Picket beaten by police

Thugs in blue

WE'D JUST HAD a cup of tea in Littlewoods, after one of the biggest most determined demonstrations, we'd ever been on — Mansfield, 14 May, where 40,000 miners, womens support groups and other trade unionists had flocked in to show solidarity with the 10-week old miners strike.

As women trade unionists, what had impressed us most was the thousands of women organised in the miners wives support groups on the march. There had been little obvious police presence on the demonstration, nothing like we've got used to in recent London demonstrations or at Greenham.

The only aggro we'd had was from some of our brothers' sexist slogans. But us women tried to put an end to that with some success.

We came to the main shopping precinct, heading for our coach. The streets were swarming with police. As we got nearer to where the coaches were waiting, a long line of police, arms linked, greeted us. Behind them

scores of SPG vans. They were raring to go. I was terrified.

Eileen Stanford, chair, TGWU 1/208 branch

They charged into the growing crowd of understandably angry demonstrators. The police tactic was to grab, surround and beat us down, using small teams of snatch squads.

Next to me a member of my union was grabbed and we tried to help him, only to find ourselves dragged and kicked by police. I was hit on the back of the head by a foul-mouthed thug in blue uniform, and ended under

a pile of bodies. The police arrested my colleague, he's been charged with breach of the peace and rioting!

Minutes later I saw a man on his knees being beaten by five policeman. His head was pouring with blood. As we tried to get nearer he was encircled by more police to stop us seeing. We walked away shaken towards our coach, only to find even more police with batons, some on horses.

They were taking it out on us, for being on a successful demonstration for a cause the police will never understand. Still, it's what they are paid for — be it in Mansfield, Northern Ireland, Greenham or Brixton.

Over 100 arrests were made that afternoon — 52 have been charged with rioting, several with grievous bodily harm. No police have been charged for the intimidation and brutality inflicted on working people defending their right to a job.



Colin Roach demonstration: black people face harassment continually

Photo: GUY CROKSON

Photo: Morning Star



South Wales Women join the picket lines

AS THE MINERS' strike goes into its tenth week women's support committees are springing up across South Wales. Now virtually every lodge has a women's committee.

At first these were seen as simply providing a welfare service, but now many of the women are actively spreading the strike and getting involved in picketing.

By Carol O'Byrne, USDAW shop steward, Smiths Foods, Swansea

Hirwaun is a small mining community not far from Aberdare, where the Tower colliery is the chief employer. Women there have been doing about 110 food parcels a week.

One of them, Barbara Taylor, explained: 'We're trying to make sure that everyone gets eggs or meat. One egg per child per week. But last week we had to give out some parcels without either.'

But this isn't all they're doing. Twelve of the women came to Labour Women's Conference in Swansea and spoke at a Labour Briefing social and to the conference.

At a social in Hirwaun organised by the lodge rugby club women explained: 'We've got to get rid of that Thatcher. She's no good for us people. She's tried to grab back everything we've gained. And Neil Kinnock will have to get off the fence if he's going to be of any use to us.'

Last week women from Maesteg were picketing at the Margan entrance to the Port Talbot steelworks. Women from Hirwaun went up to the Point of Ayr — or Point of Shame as it is known — to attempt to stop the 60-odd colliers who are still working.

At Point of Ayr the women received abuse from the police: 'Welsh slags' and 'Welsh monkeys' were the taunts. 'One man told us that our mouths made up for our looks', said Barbara Taylor. But despite this the women will be going back.

This week a special women's picket is planned at Port Talbot with mining women and health workers.

The local leadership of the NUM has backed the women, and not only for the food parcels. Terry Thomas, vice president of the South Wales NUM, was asked what he thought of women joining the pickets: 'I'm all for it', he said, 'We couldn't survive without the support of the women.'

Hopefully the NUM backing will be extended and we'll see more women on NUM platforms. The sexism on picket lines and demonstrations must be publicly challenged. In Mansfield some miners were chanting the rugby song: 'Get your tits out for the boys.' This is hardly the way to win women's support for the strike.

The Tories want to weaken and divide us. If the strike is to be won it is vital that the NUM does not play into their hands.

MacGregor watch out! The women's army is marching and we have the NUM on our side!

By Ann Talbot, Bold Miners' Wives Committee

SUPPORT for the wives' committee is building up and after three weeks there are more than fifty women involved between ourselves, Sutton Manor, and Parkside.

For too long in this



Photo: FORMAT
LAST Saturday labour movement organisations in South East London organised a 'food convoy' for the Kent miners. Women from the local unemployed centre had been centrally involved in getting the food collections going.

Tricia, one of the Kent miners' wives, explained how, on the Friday before, she had been involved with women from the local area in going into the local Coop to spend £2500 on food. In the end 500 vehicles were involved in the convoy to Kent.

'I'll live in a tent if I have to'

strike we have been tied to the home and feeling the pinch. The money is stretched but the support that's coming from outside is tremendous. People are donating plenty of food, but we have to be careful.

If the DHSS find out that you've received a parcel they deduct £4 off

your social security.

One woman from Bold has five children and one more on the way. All she gets is £12.60 social. But despite these pressures our resolve is strong.

If I'm evicted I personally am willing to live in a tent. There's no way they'll break me.

Greater Manchester Confed
Daytime shop stewards' meeting
10am Friday 25 May
at
Salford University

Speakers: Mick McGahey, Sid Vincent (sec. Lancs NUM), Gerald Kaufman MP

(jointly organised with North West TUC)

'Kinnock should remember who elected him'

AFTER 11 weeks of the dispute the mood of the pickets is as strong as ever, despite the claims of the Tory press. Support from the rest of the labour movement has gathered at a rapid pace and for us the response from Merseyside and Manchester has been fantastic.

Rank and file trade unionists and Labour Party members understand full well that if the miners were to lose this fight then our class would receive a great setback.

Even pensioners, the least well off, are giving food parcels. The local Labour Party in St Helens has now set up a centre for the distribution of food.

Despite this solidarity

that exists in the movement, the leader of our Party is trying to sell us out. Neil Kinnock should remember that he was elected with the full backing of the NUM, and without that support he wouldn't have got the job.

By Colin Lenton, branch treasurer Bold NUM, Lancs

He's sat on the fence worrying that to give us support would lose him popularity and votes to the SDP in the Euro-elections. I say this to Kinnock — the only way to move Labour forward is to come out on the side of the miners, 100 per cent. And that means to join us on the picket

lines and to speak at our rallies.

At our area meeting in Bolton last week it finally came to light what we at Bold have known for a long time. The scabs at Agecroft are now on more bonus than ever before, and this in the middle of a bitter fight to save jobs. They are getting back-handers for crossing our lines.

But what they don't realise is that they are doing MacGregor's job for him helping to destroy our industry. They think their jobs are safe, but no-one's are.

Agecroft is now the only pit producing coal. With the help of the other pits in Lancs who've now joined the fight, and the Durham and Northumberland lads down here, we'll stop Agecroft too.

Women join the picket lines

AMONG the impressive display of banners swaying above last week's NUM demonstration in Mansfield was one which was not welcome. Above a picture depicting a shouting woman threatening to cudgel a miner with a rolling pin, were the words: 'The force that kept the Notts miners at work'.

In Notts, where there are some 12,000 of the coalfield's 30,000 workers on strike the truth is very different.

Having to cope with the stress of living in a divided community, getting little or no support from the local NUM officials — some of whom are still at work — joining the men on the picket line, and at the same time trying to scrape together the next meal has made life harder for the Notts' women than anybody else.

As soon as the first strikers came out the women started organising. They occupied community centres turning them over to feeding the strikers and their families. Then they went out collecting door to door and set up stalls in the

town centres. They approached the local Labour Parties and now many of the wards have 'adopted' a pit.

Women from well-established groups have gone to other areas to help them set up support committees. As a result there are now regular meetings of 17 Notts support groups. Last Wednesday women from Notts and Barnsley picketed the morning shifts at Sherwood and Silverhill collieries.

Ten women were arrested at Sherwood when they blocked the pit entrance. When others were leaving the Silverhill picket one woman was punched in the face and four others, including Ann Scargill, were arrested — she had obviously been picked out for arrest.

The police were determined to show that they don't deal lightly with women, either at Greenham or women who give militant support to the miners.

But later that afternoon even more women turned out on the picket line!

Miners' Support Committee

Bristol
c/o TGWU, Transport House, Room 1, Victoria St, Bristol BS 1
Tel: 0272 293001 ex 55

Manchester
c/o FTAT, 37 Anson Rd, Victoria Park, Manchester 14

Preston
c/o John Parkinson, Trade Union Centre, St Mary's St North, Preston

Huddersfield
c/o Friendly and Trades Club, Northumberland St, Huddersfield

Vauxhall
c/o Joan Twelves/Greg Tucker, 1 Alverstone Hse, Kennington Park Estate, London SE11

Southall
c/o 14 Featherstone Rd, Southall, London

Birmingham
c/o Trade Union Resource Centre, 7 Frederick St, Hockley.

Ealing
c/o West London Trade Union Club, 33 Acton High St, London W3.

Southampton
c/o NUPE District Office, 93 Leigh Rd, Eastleigh, Hants.

Cardiff
Room 219, Transport House, 1 Cathedral Rd, Cardiff. Tel: 0222 31176.

Hounslow
c/o Ian MacDonald, 220 Wellington Road South, Hounslow, Middx. Tel: 01-577 3429.

Medway
c/o Vince Drongin, Medway Towns Trades Union Council, 19 Randall Rd, Chatham, Kent

Bury
c/o Brian Marden, 061-76 9648

Oxford
c/o Claimants Union, Princes St, Oxford

Leeds
c/o District Labour Party, 9 Queens Sq., Leeds 2.

Major Public RALLY



Support the Miners Rally

Speakers include: Peter Heathfield (NUM General Sec), Jimmy Knapp (NUR), Ron Todd (TGWU), Dennis Skinner MP, Ivor Braggins (Convenor Cowley Assembly Plant), Kathy McKay (Sheffield Women against Pit Closures)

Tuesday 5 June, 7.30 pm
Oxford Town Hall

Organised by Oxford District Trades Council



Strike now with the miners



Photo: NEW STATESMAN

Rodney Bickerstaffe, NUPE general secretary

NUPE in conference 1984

By Dave Benlow, Wandsworth district branch secretary

TWO GROUPS OF workers both in struggle, dominated NUPE's 1984 national conference — the miners and even more so the striking cleaners at Barking Hospital. Both their delegations got rapturous applause and bucket collections were organised for them.

As conference progressed we found that Barking was synonymous with 'fighting' and the executive visibly flinched whenever the name cropped up.

NUPE's leadership, represented by Rodney Bickerstaffe and Ron Keating, are seen to be on the left of the TUC. Yet as the battle for the public sector has hotted up nationally in the last two years, they have actively discouraged national campaigns of action against cuts, privatisation and pay, preaching fatalistic conclusions from the council and hospital workers' national strikes of 1978 and 1982.

This year, a number of left-wing resolutions were blessed by the executive, so maintaining the union's left stance.

Direct action was called for to support a campaign to counter government 'nuclear war' propaganda and against the coercion of public authority workers into civil defence preparations. The executive was also called on to lead campaigns for greater membership involvement in the Labour Party and against the current witch hunts.

But the leadership's rightward shift was displayed whenever motions called for specific actions around public authority and industrial relations problems. Frank Fallan, for the EC, argued down a motion from Camden calling for supportive action for Liverpool, saying: 'Councils should have the "bottle" to put up the rates.' Criticism of the TUC for its role in the NGA dispute were attacked as 'divisive'. But it was the crucial issue of privatisation that most clearly expressed the leadership's drift.

On Sunday, the Barking strikers won their call for supportive national industrial action with no hand or voice daring to show against them. Yet the next day, a resolution from Wandsworth calling for national action to beat off the privatisation threat to all sections was branded by Keating as 'extremist' and 'impractical'.

He was assisted by anti-Wandsworth slander from some delegates in the Scottish Communist Party. This resolution duly fell, throwing into doubt the seriousness with which the union will treat the support for Barking voted the day before.

The executive also succeeded in introducing a new disciplinary procedure, withdrawing existing rights of expelled members to appeal to conference, and reading more like an employer's handbook than an amendment to union rule.

However the real left wing can emerge with credit and hope from the conference. For many NUPE branches, the left is seen to provide answers to the practical problems members face.

Its intervention forced, for the first time, a left-wing leadership into an unholy alliance with the rightist Communist Party, which was almost embarrassingly transparent to delegates.

The conference also saw the establishment of a new, non-sectarian national Broad Left, and more co-ordinated left wing interventions, support activities and policy than ever before. If these developments continue in practice there is no doubt that the shaky EC/CP alliance can crumble and important public sector victories can be won.

A NATIONAL OVERTIME BAN and work to rule begins on the railways on 30 May. This is the first industrial action by the Rail Union Federation (ASLEF and NUR) and marks a historic step away from the defeats of 1982.

The federation has turned down a four per cent pay offer which is dependent on big cuts in train crews jobs. The British Rail Board (BRB) wants to take guards off freight and passenger trains and to do away with the jobs of driver assistants. NUR and ASLEF are demanding a 'substantial pay increase' along with a 35 hour week plus increased holidays and a separation of pay and productivity. The last AGM committed the NUR to no further talks with the BRB on productivity.

Like the miners, railworkers are experiencing Tory vandalism on a massive scale. Thirty nine thousand jobs have been lost to the industry in the last three years, and the BR Corporate Plan proposes the loss of another 15,000 jobs in the next four years.

This will include 1036 signalmen, 1923 drivers, 2372 guards, 2188 other conciliation grades and 6000 salaried staff. Four thousand jobs are to be shed in the rundown of Swindon BREL works (British Rail Engineering) and a further 878 jobs are to go in the regional workshops.

The BREL workshops have been decimated with the closure of Temple Mills in East London, Horwich, Shildon and now the threats to Swindon and Glasgow works. Since 1979, investment in BR has been reduced by 36 per cent and the government grant for passenger services by 25 per cent. The BRB has a never-ending list of productivity schemes effecting all grades and is going ahead with wholesale privatisation and sale of assets. BR as a nationalised public transport system is being smashed to pieces and users will get an even rarer deal than now.

The overtime ban must make way for an all-out

strike which is the only action which can halt the destruction of jobs and public services. Every effort should be made to bring London Transport tube workers and the TSSA into the fight. In his letter to branches explaining the ban, Jimmy Knapp, NUR general secretary said that an urgent meeting of the federation was considering how to extend the action. It must call for railworkers to strike alongside the miners.

Railworkers are already linked directly to the struggle being waged

by the miners through the success of the 'no movement of coal' action. The BRB have admitted that less than 10 per cent of coal trains are moving. Strike action on the railways will increase the stakes in the miners fight and force the Tories into a retreat. It is also the only way to save rail jobs.

By Rose Knight
Kings Cross guard

Ray Buckton and Jimmy Knapp have said that railworkers have common cause with the miners. In the May issue of *Transport Review*, Knapp said, 'to stand aside and see them smashed for lack of support would be unforgivable and invite more of the same for our own industry. It is a test of strength and conviction that will decide the longterm future of both industries.'

If the miners get beaten, then, sure as night follows day, many thousands of NUR members will also go to the

wall. Hence our commitment to the NUM's struggle.'

The NEC's of both unions have called for joint ASLEF/NUR action committees at local level and special branch and district council meetings. They must go further than this and build mass meetings of railworkers in every area with federation and Triple Alliance speakers. These meetings should be open to all transport workers, and TSSA workers many of whom are against the divisive stand taken by their NEC.

Power

The power of the unions in the Triple Alliance must now be harnessed to aid both miners and railworkers and defend our industries and public services. Triple Alliance committees should be formed in every area to involve any union prepared to take united action in defence of the

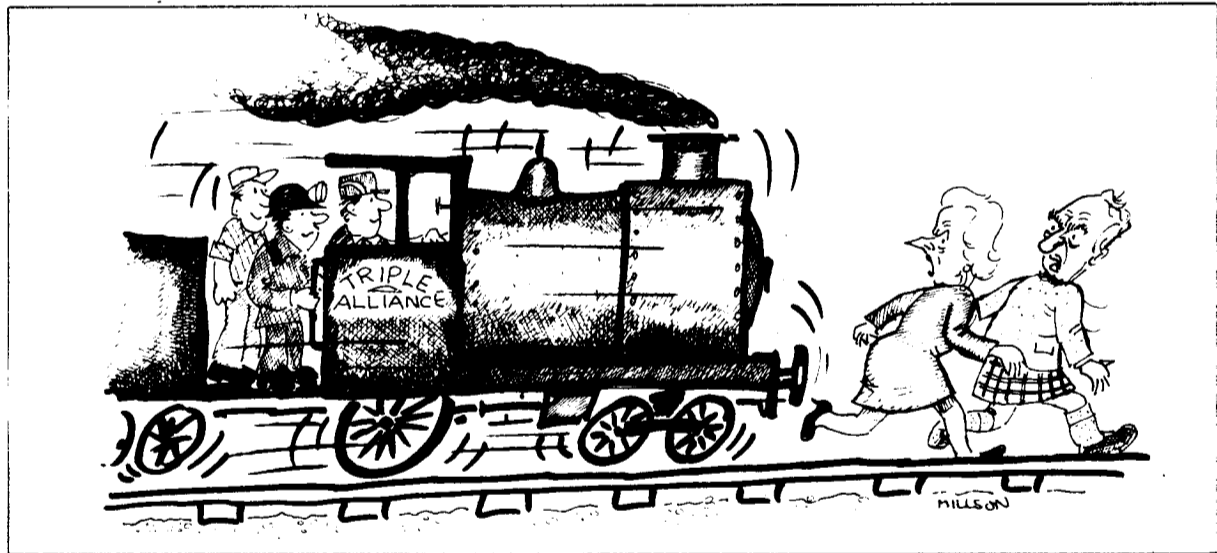
miners and the railworkers.

A Triple Alliance delegate conference should be called to co-ordinate all-out strike action and to plan a national demonstration this summer. These initiatives could give other workers the confidence to fightback and bring down the Tory government.

Appeal

An appeal should also be made to rank and file steelworkers. The ISTC agreed in April 1983 to a nine point Triple Alliance plan which said that 'joint industrial action would be considered if a serious matter involving any one union arises' ('Coal, Rail and Steel — Fighting for a Future', free pamphlet is available from ASLEF, NUR and NUM).

Now is the time to put the commitment of 1983 into action. As Arthur Scargill has said, 'if ever there was a time to join in, that time is now'.



Teachers strike over 4.5% pay offer

THE MINERS' MOOD is catching! Now teachers are taking strike action, this time over pay. The teachers unions have unanimously rejected a 4.5 per cent offer. The majority of teachers are on Scale 1 and 2, earning an average £7,895 p.a. Earnings have declined by 31 per cent compared to other similar workers since the high-point of 1975, and by 26 per cent in terms of buying-power. Sir Keith Joseph's opinion is that teachers' salaries must obey the law of supply and demand.

The strength of the National Union of Teachers (the largest teachers union) was shown in the day's strike action and the high turnout in the local battle in Birmingham, 3,000 teachers in the Rag Mover and voted for a ballot for further strike action, and most schools were closed. The picture was repeated

collections and donations.

The NUT leadership plan selected three-day strike action throughout the country over the next three weeks. But they are only allowing a maximum of 18,000 teachers out of a union membership of

By Rex Hatcher

230,000 to take part. Supporters of the Socialist Teachers Alliance (the main left grouping in the NUT) are arguing that this action is far too token, and falls well short of the level of militancy the membership has already shown.

They say we need a bridge towards real strike action. In their opinion the best way to do this would

be that every school, whose members vote by a two thirds majority, should take three-day strike action. Besides this we need another national strike day — or even longer — plus immediate extended strikes in the areas.

Pressure

Why is the NUT leadership pulling its punches? Because, as they have made clear, their aim is not maximum action to win the claim, but the application of just enough pressure to push the government into conceding arbitration. The STA oppose arbitration, but they were defeated at

conference this year on this issue. The union leadership say we can get what we want through arbitration.

A figure of 12.5 per cent has been named. The STA is arguing that, as a minimum condition, arbitration should not be entered into unless the employers have already made a substantially increased offer as a starting-point — at least making up for this year's comparability short-fall of 7.75 per cent — and unless all matters of conditions of service and restructuring of pay-scales are excluded.

In addition, any eventual settlement should be distributed on a flat-rate basis.

The future of Europe

THIS WEEK sees the final publication of the major party manifestoes for the Euro-elections. JOHN ROSS looks at the issue the Manifestoes don't discuss. The real future of Western Europe and the tasks of socialists within it.

Since 1975, every major capitalist state — the great imperialist centres of Japan, North America and Western Europe — have been hit by the greatest economic recession since the 1930s.

In the 'third world' — in the states dominated by imperialism — this crisis is beginning to be an element of really fundamental social dislocation.

In the last ten years revolutions or wars overthrowing capitalism, or replacing directly pro-imperialist governments, have taken place in Ethiopia, Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Angola, Afghanistan, Iran, Zimbabwe, Grenada and Nicaragua. Full scale civil war is underway in El Salvador and discontent is rising in Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

In Latin America the dictatorships of the 1960s and 1970s — Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Chile — have either been overthrown or are facing swelling mass social opposition.

In the Philippines the beginning of the break up of one of the longstanding Asian dictatorships is underway.

In India the violence in the Punjab, and now around Bombay, shows the beginning of the break up of social stability in the most populous state still under capitalist rule.

In the Arab world the last three years have seen huge actions of the working class and poor in Tunisia and Morocco.

Capitalism, in short, is showing its classic pattern in any crisis. It is first 'disintegrating from the edges' — with that open crisis then progressively penetrating into its centre. The trend of development is only too familiar.

The seizure of Korea and Taiwan from China by Japan in 1894, the clashes between Britain and France in central Africa in 1898-1900, the war of Italy and Turkey in 1911-12, the Moroccan crisis between Britain and Germany in 1911-13, and the Balkan wars of 1912-13 were the mounting series of events that led to the cataclysm which in 1914-18 broke out in Europe itself.

Frightening

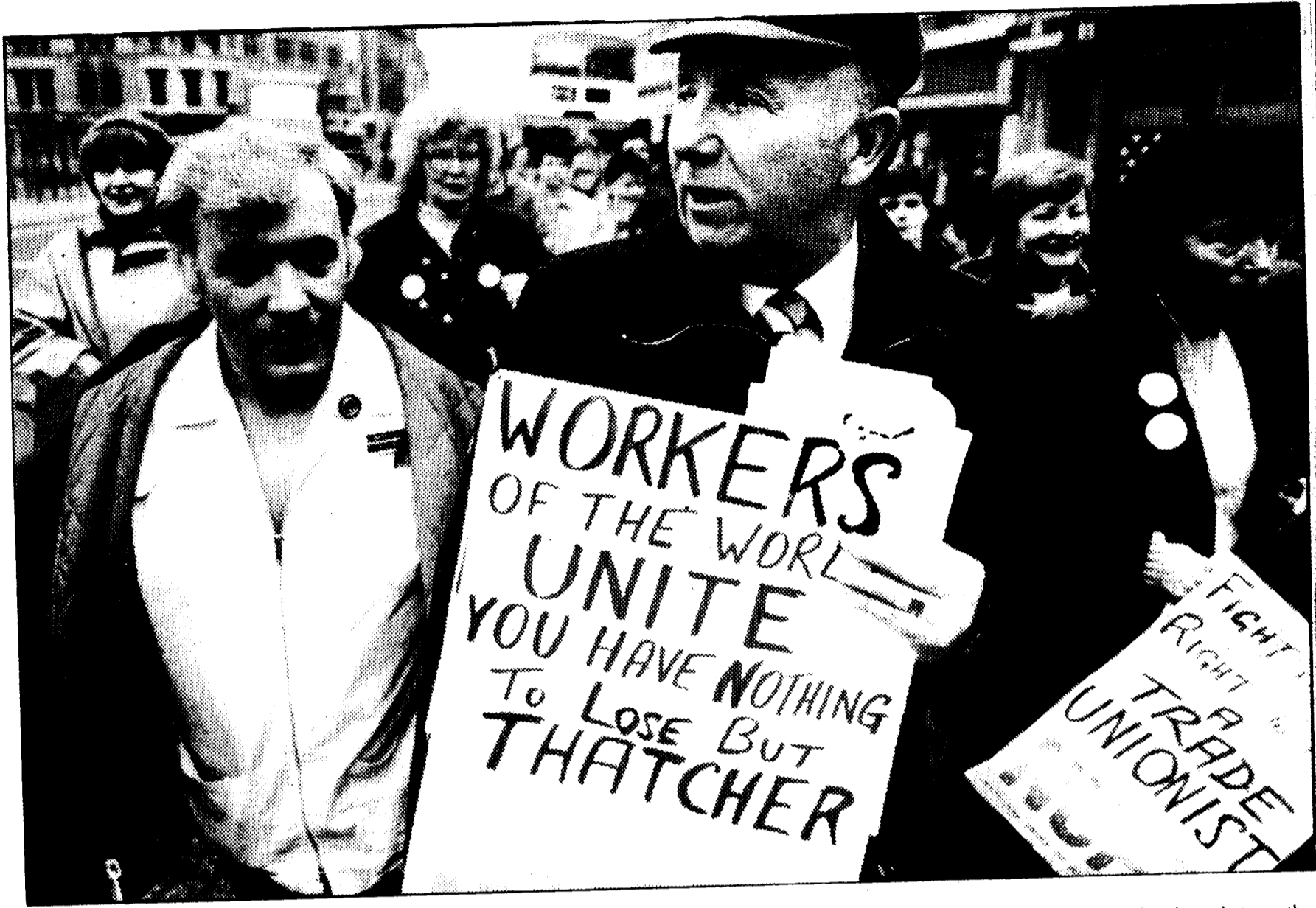
The Second World War was preceded, and prepared, by the Japanese attack on Manchuria in 1931, the insurrection in El Salvador in 1932, the uprising in Cuba in 1933, the Italian invasion of Ethiopia in 1935, and the Spanish Civil War of 1936-9 before finally the crisis which had been gathering its power in these events erupted with its full fury in the centre of Europe and Asia in 1939-45.

Every capitalist crisis necessarily has the same overall character — although the specific details vary enormously. Open crisis and disintegration commences in the periphery of the system and then gradually penetrates further and further into its centre until it culminates in a shattering overall crisis of the system. This pattern is what we are seeing within world politics today.

Within this general development of world politics Western Europe today holds a very specific place. It is simultaneously one of the strongest links of the world capitalist system as a whole — capitalism is far more strongly entrenched in Western Europe than in the 'third world' countries — but nevertheless the *weakest* link within the imperialist centres themselves.

The strongest fortresses of world capitalism today are the United States and Japan. The US and Japan have the fastest economic growth, the decisive lead in the most technologically advanced industries and the weakest labour movements.

Whereas since 1968, and that now means for sixteen years — successive waves of working class struggle have taken place in Western Europe. No such equivalent scale of struggle has taken place in the United States and



Japan.

In the US the working class has still not set up a mass working class party independent of the capitalist Democrats and Republicans.

Furthermore within Europe itself there are a series of cleavages which fundamentally weaken capitalism in that continent compared to the US and Japan.

Firstly Europe is split in two between a capitalist west and a series of non-capitalist societies, workers states, in its east. A non-capitalist society, the USSR, is today, and in contrast to 1939, the greatest military power in Europe.

Furthermore capitalist Europe is itself significantly divided between its northern heartland and its southern and western fringes. To the south Greece, Spain, and Portugal are the weakest imperialist powers and Italy the weakest of the major industrial states. To the west Ireland is not an im-

perialist state at all but a fundamentally neo-colonial society.

Finally, just to complete the picture, there is an unresolved national question right through the heart of the most central, the most populous, and the most economically developed nation of Europe — the division of Germany between its eastern and western parts.

In short despite its high degree of imperialist development, Europe is riven by fundamental contradictions which render its societies strategically weaker than Japan or the United States. These contradictions are going to be more and more exacerbated as Western Europe is drawn into the maelstrom of world capitalist crisis.

The trends of development are in fact already clear over the sixteen years since the May/June 1968 general strike in France shattered the post-war calm of Western Europe.

Permanent and acute political crisis

has gripped the North of Ireland — giving rise, in Provisional Sinn Fein, to the most advanced mass political force in capitalist Europe.

From 1968-75 in Spain, Italy and Portugal the biggest wave of working class struggles since the Second World War occurred. The Italian working class shows a continuing massive ability to struggle against what is now a thoroughly rotten Christian Democrat dominated political establishment.

Western Germany passed relatively calmly through the wave of struggles in the rest of Europe from 1968-75. But since 1979 West Germany has been increasingly shaken firstly by the sheer size of its anti-missiles movement — which flowed from West Germany's place in the front line of NATO — and now by the struggle for the 35 hour week.

All the fundamental cleavages in West European capitalist society are increasingly coming out in the open.

Given this situation what are the tasks of the West European left, not simply in the next few weeks of the Euro-elections, but in the next ten years of European politics?

The overall character of the situation can really be summed up in two fundamental features. Firstly there will be *no* return in Western Europe to any situation of stability of the type that characterised the 1950s and 1960s.

The great wave of working class struggles which started after 1968 itself suffered severe setbacks after 1975 in Britain, Portugal, France and Spain. But this decline in struggles was followed after 1979 by the movement against Cruise and Pershing missiles — the largest mass movement on any issue since the Second World War. Then, from the end of 1983 onwards, a new wave of working class struggles against austerity has begun in Western Europe.

Furthermore these largest clashes have been accompanied by ongoing mass struggles against women's oppression, racism, national oppression, and to defend the environment.

While the forms of struggles will change, basic underlying social instability has been unleashed in Western Europe since 1968 which is not going to be reversed.

However these struggles are *not*, in any short or intermediate term going to result in the overthrow of capitalism in any West European state.

One of the reasons the 'extreme left' broke its neck in Western Europe after 1968 was its belief that the French general strike of that year had opened up a period when the overthrow of capitalism was immediately on the agenda. The extreme left confused the *beginning* of a process with its end.

May 1968 in France, and what followed in the rest of Western Europe was the announcement that the era of post-war social peace was dead. It announced the *beginning* of the long process of struggles and cleavages that finally will place the overthrow of capitalism in Europe on the agenda. But it was the beginning of the process — not its end.

Outside a catastrophic collapse of the world capitalist economic system — which cannot be ruled out but which would in any case require a revising of every single political perspective —



Italian workers demonstration against abolition of the sliding scale of wages.

Europe

such an overthrow of capitalism in Europe is not going to take place in the next ten years.

What then are the perspectives for which socialists must fight in what is going to be a prolonged but progressively deepening crisis in capitalist Europe. They can be summed up in six points — although of course many others could be added.

Firstly, and most continuously, is the struggle to smash back the austerity offensives of the bourgeoisie. The struggle for the shorter working week against unemployment — the 35 hour week, the fight against inflation — struggles such as in Italy to defend automatic cost of living increases against price rises, the struggle to defend the welfare state — are the fundamental bedrock of any socialist perspective in Western Europe.

Secondly the West European working class must link up with the international struggle against capitalism. While capitalism is not going to be overthrown in Europe in the short term it is directly threatened in Central America and a series of other countries. Linking up with, and carrying out solidarity with these struggles, is a fundamental international perspective of the European working class. This applies also to the struggle of the working class in Eastern Europe — solidarity which opens up also the struggle for the socialist unification of Europe.

Thirdly, and integrally linked to the previous point, is the struggle against imperialist war — not simply in the colonial world but also against the nuclear build up inside Europe. The struggle against nuclear weapons not simply of the United States but also Britain and France. This involves also the fundamental and basic struggle to smash the NATO alliance.

Fourthly the working class has to champion the struggle and demands of every layer of the oppressed in Europe. Women's liberation, the fight against racism and for black organisation, the national liberation of Ireland, the Basque country, and other nations — in-

cluding, from a different angle the reunification of Germany — are fundamental tasks of the European working class and its allies.

Fifth the struggle for democracy. Every single attack being carried out by capital in Europe requires the erosion of democratic freedoms — you need only to look at Thatcher's actions in the North of Ireland, the miners strike, and against the cities to see that. The struggle to defend and extend democracy is inseparable from every other struggle in which socialists are engaged.

Sixth the European left must be organised. In 1914 the European working class suffered catastrophe because in only one country in Europe — Russia — was the left wing of the workers movement organised. In Germany international socialists such as Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht fought against the cataclysm of war but had no organisation to achieve it.

The right wing of the workers

movement in Europe is already organised. The Mitterrands, Soares's and Craxis internationally cooperate and even finance each others' operations. The left wing must be organised both in Europe and internationally. The fate of Europe finally will be decided by how much that task of organisation can be carried through before the increasing crisis which is gripping European society reaches its head.

Those six tasks — the fight against austerity, to defend the working class struggling throughout the world, to fight for peace, to forge an alliance of all the exploited and oppressed, to defend and extend democracy, to organise the left both nationally and internationally — are the key tasks of socialists in Europe.

They should and must form the core of any real socialist manifesto for the European elections. They are not a policy for participating in the EEC but for fighting to destroy it.

Making the EEC work for us

Women in Britain should be getting a lot more out of the Common Market. Millions of pounds are set aside every year to help women train for work in the modern industrial world. But in three years, the British government only claimed a total of £22 million. It has taken up only a fraction of the funds set aside to help in training for women in the Common Market. So where's the money going? To countries that have the sense to use the benefits of being in the EEC. Countries like West Germany and France, where they see that it's tougher for women who need to work — or it who haven't had the chance of proper training. Training that's vital if women are to be able to work on equal terms with men.

Things are tough for most women in the Common Market — and especially in Britain. Many of us know what it's like to be told your job is the first to go — because a woman's place is at home, after all.

And women are squeezed again when services are cut — the services we all need, like decent and free health care, proper support for elderly people, and nursery places for children.

When these services are cut, it's women who have to shoulder the burden — and stay at home.

Every cut in services, every lost job opportunity, hits women hard. And the government has done nothing to help. Just as they've done nothing through the Common Market to help women get a fair deal.

They sat back in 1982 while West Germany took over half the funds available for women's projects in the Common Market.

Britain took up only 5 per cent of the money. We need every penny there is, just so that women can get a foothold in the new technology industries of the future. But even then, like Common Market's funds aren't nearly enough to make any real impact.

That's why we need action in Britain and throughout the European Community to get our economies growing — and create many more jobs. Along with that, Labour is campaigning for special action through the Social Fund for the development of equal opportunities and women's projects in the Common Market. Instead of squandering millions of pounds a year on subsidies to big farms, the Common Market could be investing its funds in ways that will help the people of Britain and Europe — the working people and those who are out of work.

There are 13 million people out of work in the European Community. A government in Britain alone. We need a joint strategy for getting people back to work — and that has to take into account all the women who want to work, but never had the chance.

In the European Parliament, Labour is campaigning with other socialist parties for just that kind of strategy.

Every cut in services hits women. Hard. And the government has done nothing to help.



New technology at work in a West German hospital.



The new Kinnock line — reform the EEC, don't fight against it



German workers strike for 35-hour week.

Fighting for 35 hours

THE FIGHT being waged by West Germany's giant IG Metall engineering trade union for a 35-hour week with no loss of pay is escalating rapidly. Starting this week the employers' federation, the DGB, intends to lock out tens of thousands of workers in retaliation for the IG Metall strikes. The unions have responded by threatening a one day general strike in the industrial regions.

The struggle for the 35-hour week — a reduction of five hours — has been launched by the IG Metall leadership to combat unemployment, now rapidly moving towards three million in West Germany. Led by the union's new vice-president Franz Steinkuhler, the union has argued the case for the 35 hours on an explicitly anti-capitalist basis.

By Phil Hearse

Faced with total intransigence from the employers, who refused even to negotiate on the question, the union has responded by carrying out a series of ballots among its membership for strike action.

Under West German law unions need a 75 per cent 'yes' ballot to go ahead with a strike. In its first ballot in the industrial area of Baden-Wuttemberg around Stuttgart, IG Metall got over 80 ballot in favour of a strike.

As a result 60 thousand workers in the region, which includes several large car factories including the huge Daimler-Benz network, have been on strike for nearly two weeks.

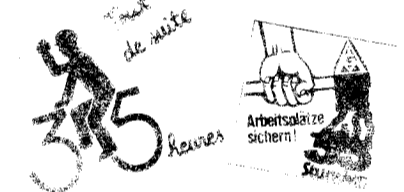
A total of 14,000 workers in the car and car components industry are on strike in the region. The employers, and especially Daimler-Benz have responded by saying that next week they will lay off thousands of workers in plants outside the region who will have no components to work with. Daimler Benz intended to lay off 21,000 workers at their Sindelfingen plant, but a total of 65,000 workers could be affected by the lockouts.

Already workers have been locked out of the BMW plant in Munich, holding a demonstration outside the plant on the slogan 'Who locks out deserves to be locked up'.

The right wing government of Helmut Kohl has intervened decisively on the side of the employers by getting the Federal Labour Office to announce that workers layed off as a result of the strike would not receive unemployment benefit. This, said the Labour Office, was to maintain their tradition of 'neutrality' in labour struggles!

The second of IG Metall's ballots, in the Hesse region around Frankfurt, also produced an 80 per cent majority in favour of a strike. From this week 32,000 workers in the region will be out on strike, including at the Opel car factory. As a result of the strike in this region, Volkswagen are threatening to lay off an incredible 60,000 workers from this Wednesday.

All in all, with the support of the printing union IG Druck, hundreds of thousands of workers will be affected



A co-ordinated European military effort is increasingly on the agenda.

by lock-out and strike. The toughness of the employers reflects the huge stakes involved in the struggle. The granting of a 35-hour week to combat unemployment will represent some sort of admission that the workers are not responsible for the economic crisis, but much worse will significantly lower the productivity of West German industry. Moreover, the employers realise that granting a 35 hour week to IG Metall will have a knock-on effect throughout German industry. A success for the workers would result in a rash of demands throughout German industry and the rest of Europe for a reduction of the work week.

Leaders of the SPD, Germany's equivalent of the Labour Party, have been calling for a 'compromise solution' at their annual conference in Essen. The appeal for a compromise is symptomatic of the desire by party leader Hans Jochen Vogel to 're-centre' the party after its recent swing to the left.

Vogel has called for moderation to win back middle class voters to the party. Only on defence has the SPD leadership maintained a left-wing position.

The leftward move of the SPD leadership in the last two years was widely interpreted as an attempt to head off the development of a left wing at the base of the party. Whether this new 'moderation' will lead to a rebellion at the base has yet to be seen.

The big German companies are now saying that they are not prepared to give a single hour off the working day but are prepared to offer 'work-time flexibility' on a company by company basis. It seems certain that this would not amount to any reduction in working without loss of pay, but rather shorter hours in return for a wage cut as proposed in Britain by Len Murray.

With hundreds of thousands of workers on strike or locked out, the IG Metall leadership could not easily accept such a climb down.

Salvadorean teachers fight repression

VILMA SOTO CAMPOS, the European representative of ANDES, the Salvadorean teachers union, was in Edinburgh two weeks ago. GILL LEE spoke to her.

Can you describe for us, Vilma, the conditions which exist for children in working class schools in El Salvador?

The conditions which exist in Salvadorean schools are very poor and very, very sad. Our schools lack even the most basic teaching materials. There are schools which don't even have desks at which the children can sit and we have classes of 40 or 45 pupils, packed so tightly together that they can't even write.

Salvadorean teachers have to work in really very difficult conditions. In the first place the salary is very low and so doesn't cover their basic needs. Secondly, teachers are faced with great pain because of the threats they face for the very fact of being teachers. They constantly have to take security measures just to survive.

Salvadorean teachers must avoid establishing a routine in their work. Each morning they must arrive at school five minutes earlier or five minutes later because the army is watching them. There have been several cases of teachers who have arrived at school every day at the same time and have been assassinated.

Teachers do not sleep peacefully at night — it's quite usual for the military to come and take you out of your house at night and you will simply disappear.

Can you tell us about the history of ANDES, 21 June and the work that it does?

ANDES was founded in 1965 and since the beginning one of its aims has been to gain for teachers the dignity which had been denied us and to establish rights for teachers. But ANDES has always been conscious of the need not to forget the problems of the people. Teachers in El Salvador are not a privileged class set above the people.

We come from families of peasants and workers and so we are well linked to the people. In our history these are the dates of the two national strikes of ANDES. 1968 and 1971, are very important. On these dates the teachers taught the Salvadorean people very important practical lessons about organisation.

We taught that the way to win our rights is through organisation, even though this has cost us dearly. 327 teachers have been assassinated. 54 have disappeared. Seven teachers are in prison and more than 3000 are in exile.

The price has been very high. But teachers are conscious of the need to go on fighting.

How do unions organise under the extreme conditions of repression which exist in El Salvador?

It's very interesting to see the way in which in El Salvador the conditions of the war itself have given workers, peasants and teachers ideas of ways to continue the struggle and to maintain union organisation.

Among any group of workers there is always someone who is more active and they will be the contact and in charge of distributing information. But this contact has to be careful because the enemy keeps watch. While being careful they keep the members informed, maintain union activity and keep the workers conscious of their role.

How important for ANDES is international solidarity, for example the 'Schools for El Salvador' Campaign?

For ANDES international solidarity is very important. By solidarity I mean not just economic support but also moral and political support by way of letters or telegraphs sent to the Salvadorean government or to the Minister of Education.

Economic support is also very important. For example we hope that the 'Schools for El Salvador' Campaign will allow us to create the basic conditions in which children can learn.

ANDES by itself just doesn't have the resources. That's one of the reasons I'm in Europe — to look for this help. So far the response has been very positive.

What is the position of ANDES on the elections in El Salvador? The British press has portrayed Duarte as a moderate and as the man who could end the war.

ANDES doesn't believe in the elections. We don't have any confidence in them because of the experience we have had with elections in the past which is that in El Salvador they are always fraudulent. We don't think that the present elections bring any hope for the Salvadorean people.

The candidates who are standing don't represent any kind of guarantee for us. Both D'Aubuisson and Duarte have shown in practice that they are not the least interested in the people. For ANDES as for the whole Salvadorean people the elections don't

represent any kind of solution to the problems because the problems lie much deeper.

Duarte has already been in power as part of the junta and in that period the most horrible crimes were committed and there were large numbers of deaths. Duarte did nothing to stop them. He is unconditionally at the service of the United States.

The solution in El Salvador is a dialogue. This shouldn't be seen as being just between two sides, the government and the guerrillas. The whole of the Salvadorean people, the oppressed and the working people are in struggle, not just a group. In the meantime, until we arrive at a negotiating solution, we have to continue on the military road, in which case the people have to continue fighting.



At play in Chalatenango province

Photo: SOLIDARITY PUBLICATIONS

Marcos regime under threat



President Marcos and wife Imelda

IN THE Philippines the US administration is desperately trying to bolster up the Marcos government and restore some stability to a regime hard hit by political and economic crises. As part of their effort the US actively promoted elections for a National Assembly which took place on 14 May. The outcome of the elections is unclear.

As in El Salvador a major target of the exercise is improving the regime's international image particularly in the US.

Within the Philippines, opposition groups both underground and legal denounced the May elections and called for a total boycott. They argued that free elections are not possible under Marcos and that the real issue is the dismantling of the dictatorship.

The Philippines has been in continuous political turmoil since last August when ex-senator Benigno Aquino was assassinated at Manila Airport. Within the country the Marcos regime is

held to be responsible for the killing. Both the assassination and the blatant manner of its execu-

By Joe Hampton (Philippines Support Group)

tion led to an outbursting of the pent up hostility to the regime. Three millions joined Aquino's funeral march and on 21 September 500,000 joined the country's largest ever anti-government protest.

Protests have continued since that time and it is expected that well over

half the population will boycott the elections.

Since last August the opposition has become increasingly vocal and radical in its political demands. Major sectors of even the middle class opposition now openly support the underground left's demands not only for the overthrow of the Marcos dictatorship but also the removal of US military bases and economic domination.

it continues to back Marcos. He is the only person able to hold together the military and so defend US interests.

In a recent speech to a Manila business club American Ambassador Micael Armacost referred to US private investments, worth \$2 billion and assured his audience 'We have a large stake in the future of this country'. The Americans also have major naval airbases and more than 1500 troops stationed there.

Since the killing the US has also kept Marcos afloat through his worst ever financial crisis. Two devaluations in six months dropped the exchange rate from nine pesos to 16 pesos per \$1US. In December the Philippines defaulted for the first time on even the repayments of its \$25 billion foreign debt. Yet also in December the World Bank released \$350 millions in emergency loans.

Because of the default on payments the IMF is due to reschedule repayments and impose a stringent package of economic measures. This will almost certainly include further devaluation. However to help the regime the package will not be announced until after the May elections.

Through its support for elections the US now hopes to rebuild some of its links with the elite opposition and wean them away from their alliance with the left. This policy has met with some success in encouraging some associates of Aquino to add credibility to the election by running against the government party candidates.

But this does nothing to solve the long term problem for the US posed by the rapid expansion of the revolutionary forces. The New Peoples Army, has strength in the last two years and by the end of 1983 had 16,000 full time guerrillas operating in 45 fronts in 56 out of 73 provinces.

In the cities revolutionary underground networks are also growing rapidly. On the industrial front economic recession is being met by increased workers militancy. In October 1983 union busting activities and attacks on pickets in a British company (Astec Electronics, a subsidiary of Midlands based BSR) led to a general strike of 14,000 workers in the major Free Trade Zone.

Recently the US has given signs that it is prepared to become 'militarily' involved. The 1983 renegotiated US bases agreement provides for US troops to engage in military operations even outside the perimeter of their bases. Also in 1983 the US and Philippine Armed Forces engaged in joint military exercises involving more than 15,000 troops.

The Philippines National Democratic Front that represents the revolutionary forces and other opposition groups have appealed for international solidarity and action to isolate the discredited Marcos regime particularly by ending the military and economic aid on which it depends.

● For information about the Philippines Support Group, write to PSG, BM Box 758, London WC1N 3XX.



Kent miners wives who visited Greenham last weekend

Mining women visit Greenham

KENT MINERS' WIVES visiting Greenham Common last Sunday met with an enthusiastic response from women at the camp and others down for the day. The women from the mining communities had never visited Greenham before. They were immediately struck by the militarisation of the area.

'It's like the Berlin wall,' was the response of Tricia, one of the Kent women. Others were shocked to see soldiers carrying rifles patrolling the gates. 'It seems unbelievable that this is happening in Britain,' they said.

Sue addressed a gathering of older women who had come down to Greenham for the day. 'Grannies for Peace' was the theme, though some of the women objected to this: 'I'm not just a grannie, I'm a woman in my own right.' Sue told those gathered to meet the Kent women: 'Mining

women and Greenham women are fighting for the same thing — a future for our children.'

Later in the afternoon the Kent women participated in a spontaneous sit-down in front of the Orange gate. Women sang songs that have become traditional at Greenham, until some of the women asked the miners' wives to sing one of their songs.

Everyone joined in as they sang: 'We're fighting for the miners' jobs, tar-rah, tar-rah/We're fighting for the miners' jobs, tar-rah, tar-rah/We'll picket and we'll

organise/The bosses won't believe their eyes/The miners' wives will organise/To kick MacGregor out, to kick MacGregor out.'

Women staying at the Orange gate camp explained they were sending half the money they received to the miners and other groups in struggle. Offered blankets they said: 'Send them to the miners, they need them more than us.'

The visit, organised by Labour womens sections, will help draw out the links between the miners' fight for jobs and the other struggles against the Tory government, including against the missiles. Now the Kent wives will help fight for a big contingent of miners on the CND march against Reagan on 9 June.

Out with US Euro-missiles!

PRESIDENT REAGAN's visit for the World Summit on 9 June has helped bring about a determination and unity in the peace movement that has been missing for six months. Coaches and trains have been booked by CND groups and regions around the country.

All socialists committed to building a mass campaign against nuclear weapons must throw themselves into building 9 June as a massive demonstration of opposition to Reagan's Euro-missiles and for a nuclear free Europe. But the June demonstration has also shown the deep crisis of strategy that has hit the peace movement.

By Dick Withecombe, CND national council member (personal capacity)

The widely held sentiments against US foreign policy has prevented a decline in the movement. In fact the Easter actions against US bases helped to mobilise tens of thousands of CND activists. But the big question being asked around the country is what do we do now cruise has arrived?

CND's leadership has floundered for months. They understand that it will take big social forces to get rid of cruise. However the forces they look to aren't the radical wing of the labour movement but the 'broad popular' alliance with the SDP, Liberal and Tory wets of Professor Eric Hobsbawm.

Fortunately the peace movement threw out the new realism of a freeze at CND conference in December. Since then the right in CND have been regrouping. These discussions will slowly emerge in the build up to this year's CND conference.

For the last six months however, CND's leaders have simply failed to lead. The response to the movement of the cruise

convoys and to the evictions from Greenham Common has been uncoordinated. Worse, CND's January national council decided not to organise any protest against Reagan's visit.

Pressure from CND groups, Action '84 and, in particular, London region CND's decision to organise a demonstration on 9 June eventually forced a reversal. It was only in April that a national demonstration was decided on. And national publicity has only been available since the beginning of May.

As a result it is likely that 9 June may well be smaller than the quarter-million demonstration during Reagan's last visit.

Peace movement activists have scored a big success in fighting for the future of CND by this demonstration. But it must not stop there. It will be in the CND groups that the march will be built. And the future policies of the movement must be decided by grass roots activists as well, not in secret meetings in Goodwin Street, or the edited pages of *Sanity*.

It is the mass sentiment against US foreign policy which is understood by millions as bring a nuclear holocaust closer, that fires CND's continued growth. Further actions must key into that sentiment.

At the same time, we have no interest in replacing US Euro-missiles with *force de frappe* and independent European nuclear deterrents. That is why the slogan 'For a nuclear free Europe from Portugal to Poland' is now one that must be taken up by the whole peace movement.

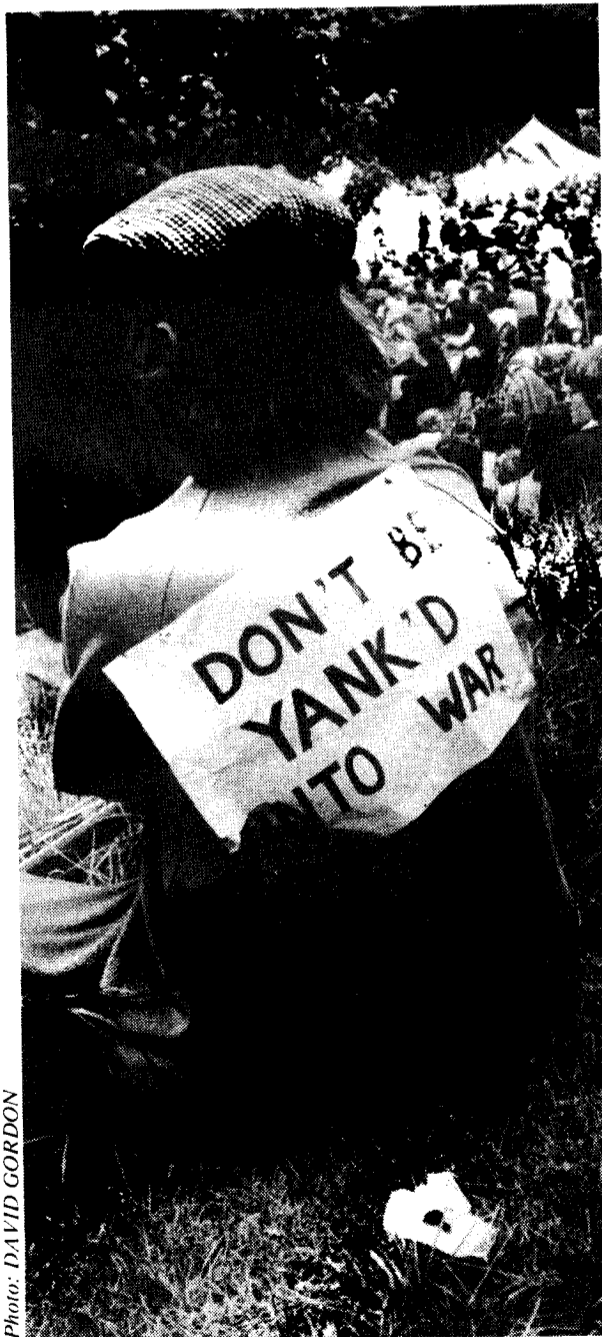


Photo: DAVID GORDON

Next Week

Jack Collins, secretary of the Kent NUM, continues the debate on *Labour's alliance for socialism*.

The view from Westminster

THE MINERS strike is leading a whole lot of challenges to the Thatcher government. The NUM is fighting to save jobs, pits and mining communities from the decimation that the Tory aggressors want to impose.

Closing Cortonwood colliery only five days after assurances were given that it would stay open was a provocation, part of the Tory plan to inflict a quick defeat on the miners using police intimidation, press vilification and attempts to starve the miners back to work. It has failed.

The government is getting desperate, while miners' morale is high, and solidarity is growing. The latest figures show 87 per cent of miners out on strike. Even areas which weren't sure originally — like the Staffordshire miners who came down to my constituency recently — have come out.

Morale is high because the miners can see that the government is rattled: the fact that they won't give coal-stock figures, that more and more imported oil is having to be burned in power stations. Hence the latest attempts to present Arthur Scargill doing a Nazi salute, and the use of the riotous assembly charges.

Throughout all this, the government's 'official' stance of non-interference has become ridiculous. MacGregor has slipped out of the picture. It's more and more

obvious that he's doing the government's bidding.

By Harry Cohen (MP for Leyton)

At grass roots level the constituencies are helping out in a big way. But there hasn't been enough support in parliament. The Labour front bench have shirked getting a proper debate on the dispute. There hasn't been one in the 10 weeks of the strike.

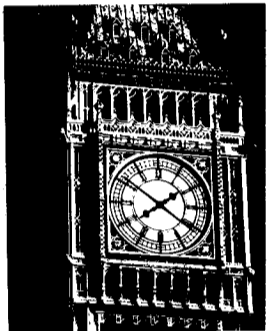
In desperation the Campaign Group has tabled a resolution giving full support to the NUM in its justified dispute and saying we have no confidence in the government's handling of it — though a debate is unlikely because of the House of Commons' ridiculous rules. This has been supported by over 60 Labour MPs.

The Campaign Group has made all the running in parliament. We discuss the dispute at our weekly meetings, and regularly have miners leaders along. We have imposed a £5 a week levy on our members, and have successfully fought for the whole Parliamentary Labour Party to do likewise.

The fact is that the dispute is escalating. And the miners' determination is having its effect throughout the whole labour movement.

Take the teachers for example, coming out for their justified pay claim. The original offer was insulting. Their pay is miles behind the 1974 levels of the Houghton Report.

They're suffering job



losses as well because the government is closing schools up and down the country, instead of taking advantage of falling rolls to improve education by better pupil-teacher ratios.

The teachers' action is unusual for them. Their militancy is increased. It's the same with the rail workers' claim, and with opposition to abolition and local government cuts.

The working class is saying we won't be legislated out of a job, we won't be put under Thatcher's iron heel: we will resist.

The Tories might have won some tactical victories recently, but the working class fight — against enforced unemployment, against cuts in public services, against the decimation of whole communities, in short against the redistribution of wealth from working people to the rich — will continue and intensify.

During these struggles we've got to begin to win people over to the socialist measures vital to turning the Tory tide. Now we've begun down the road of sweeping away the Tory myth that theirs is the only solution. They've got away with it for too long. Soon they're going to get their come-uppance.

Oxford Rally

Cruise Missiles Return to sender

Speakers, Pat Arrowsmith, Helen John, Ernie Roberts MP, Tracey Doyle (YCND), Chair: cllr Phyllis Starkey

Wednesday 30 May 7.30pm

Oxford Town Hall

Organised by Oxford Reagan Reception Committee



"You can always tell when the Special Branch are in — they're the ones dressed as pickets."

Taking Liberties

Tory MP Keith Hampson did us all a favour by getting arrested for importuning a policeman in a gay bar in Soho. Although presumably it was a coincidence that the news should break at the same time that the Police and Criminal Evidence Bill was having its Third Reading in the House of Commons, it nonetheless provided a perfect demonstration of the hypocrisy of the British state in all its tawdriness.

Peter Purton

Alliance MPs rapidly cobbled together an amendment to the Police Bill to reduce the powers of arrest that the police presently have under the 1956 Sexual Offences Act. They proposed that in future only police in uniform could make arrests for 'importuning' or 'gross indecency', and that the evidence would not be admissible unless a third person would testify to having been offended.

Needless to say, the government defeated it. But the debate publicised the widespread and fierce persecution of lesbians and gay men by the police, and the connivance of most MPs of every party in this, until one of their own number fell foul of this repressive and discriminatory law.

Mr Eldon Griffiths denied the London police had any conscious policy of harassing gays. Events in recent months suggest otherwise. Following on from the spate of cases involving the entrapment of gay men by 'pretty police' in Earsl Court last summer (most of them subsequently acquitted) there have been numerous other cases of clearly organised harassment, the most significant being the raid by Customs and Excise officers on the London lesbian and gay community bookshop, *Gays the Word* on 10 April and the descent of 60 police on the gay disco at 'The Bell' in Kings Cross, London. Since plain-clothes operations against 'male oppor-tuning' have to be authorised at a very high level, we can conclude only that either the police on the ground are out of control — or that there is a high-level police conspiracy to crack down on lesbians and gay men.

Indeed, the government's concession in the debate that the police will re-affirm their rules against acting as agents provocateurs can only be interpreted as an official admission that such behaviour takes place.

Lesbians and gay men have been prominent in the opposition to the massive consolidation and extension of police powers represented by the Police Bill. If the sudden display of concern in the House of Commons wakes up the Labour movement to the threat, then perhaps Keith Hampson will have made his best contribution to the defence of democratic rights.

Black sections

DIANE ABBOT is a Labour councillor in the Paddington area of London, and one of the few black women elected as a delegate to Labour women's conference in Swansea two weeks ago.

The women's conference overwhelmingly endorsed the call to give constitutional rights to black sections of the party. Diane spoke forcefully in the debate. JUDE WOODWARD talked to her about why black sections are so crucial.

"When I was first selected as a Labour councillor in my area, Paddington, I was very concerned not to fall into the trap that many other black people elected to such positions had fallen into. That is to become cut off from other black people.

"I wanted to be accountable to black people in the area. But when I looked at my local party there were no black people there, even though the majority of voters are black.

"So I organised a black caucus of party members in Paddington constituency, as it was then. The main thing that we found was that there were actually rather a lot of black Labour Party members. They came out of the closet so to speak and became active for the first time.

"The organisation of the black caucus helped channel black people into the mainstream of Labour Party activity. People who wouldn't have had the confidence to do that without a group of black people to relate to.

"Since then Westminster North, as it

now is, has become one of the CLPs fighting for the formal recognition of black sections.

"In my view there are four main aims to black sections. Firstly, as I've said, they encourage black people to feel confident and able to talk. Secondly it gives them a framework to discuss and form policy on things of concern to black people.

Force

"Thirdly they allow black people to organise to fight for those things in the mainstream of the Labour Party. And fourthly through them we can organise for more black councillors, MPs, school governors and so on. But to get more in a framework where they are accountable to black people.

"I don't think white people are going to give black people anything in the Labour Party. If black people want power they will have to take it. And all the waiting for the paternalistic whites to help us, as we are constantly urged to do, has got black people nowhere.

Kollontai:

"Motherhood not a private matter"

SO MANY MYTHS surround Alexandra Kollontai. This edition of *Selected Writings*, compiled and introduced by Alix Holt, is a very welcome format, helping to guide the reader through her work.

Kollontai had a very rich political experience. First woman member of the Bolshevik Central Committee; present at the Reichstag when they voted for war credits; imprisoned in summer 1917 and supporter of the Workers Opposition. But the greatest contribution she is remembered for, certainly in today's women's movement, is her unique writings on the connection between personal relationships and social change, and her insistence that socialists recognise the importance of this question.

I prefer her writings on women, sexual liberation and socialism — they are precious and rare, only achievable in the conditions that were generated by the Russian Revolution, the potential unleashed by the working class seizing power.

So I turned straight to *Morality and the New Society*. But for new Kollontai fans, don't miss out *Women and the Revolution*. It contains Kollontai's pamphlet *Working Woman and Mother* which is simple and brilliant (a word of warning though — it doesn't mention contraception once!) Her ability to project images of the new socialist society in easily accessible propaganda made her, together with Trotsky, the most popular

speaker of all the leaders of the revolution.

The pamphlet was one of the gains coming out of the Women's Departments in Soviet Russia which were eventually agreed in 1919, and which organised 6000 delegates and 3 million women by 1921!

review by Steph Grant

The message, repeated time and again, was that 'motherhood is not a private matter, it's a social obligation'. The extent to which this has been distorted in present Soviet society, with medals for multiple births, shows the dangers of this statement, if not backed up by a society which guarantees women equality, economic

"I think it is very important that women's conference has passed the resolution on black sections. It adds to the force being brought to bear on the leadership on this issue.

"It appears that the leadership of the party is against black caucuses. They seem to be saying they'll be infiltrated by the left. It's funny that *Militant* are against them because they think they are a diversion and will be taken over by the right!

Activists

"But the real issue is about white power in the Labour Party and people never give up power willingly — whites, men or the ruling class. That's why it is important for black people to organise.

"There is a national conference in June for black activists in the Labour Party who are interested and want to find out more about black sections.

"As I said in the debate: black sections are not a separatist thing. The idea is to maximise black people's contribution to the mainstream of politics. It is very hypocritical of people who have not been bothered about an all-white conference and all-white CLPs for years to start saying that black sections are separatism. We've got de facto separatism already."

'If blacks want powers, they should take it!'



'A forum for black people to form policy'



Published by Allison and Busby, price £4.95.

class and therefore serve as a new weapon in its social struggle'. She spoke out in a world that still could not come to terms with what this potential meant for a new society.

It will touch a sensitive spot in the innermost part of any socialist — the question that socialist women are beginning to confront — how does a socialist act in their 'private life', in their personal relationships with other people and in particular, one other person?

The only real criticism I have of her writings is that she never deals with relationships between women and women, men and men.

But Kollontai is a source of inspiration. Women, politically active in a time of acute economic and social crisis, have it fairly tough. We always have the extra burden of raising our voices to be heard, to be counted, to be taken seriously.

Liverpool budget:

Cracks in government line?

BENEATH THE DIPLOMATIC language in which comments on last Thursday's meeting between Liverpool city councillors and Environment Secretary Patrick Jenkin were couched, some cracks look likely to appear in the government's hard line on city spending. Between now and Jenkin's visit to Liverpool in early June, Department of Environment and city council officers will get together to find possible ways of resolving the irresolvable.

They will seek to discover 'a way that avoids any difficulties in relation to job losses and loss of services' but which also produces 'a lawful and balanced budget'. After Labour's recent electoral victory, reflecting the anti-Tory vote in local elections everywhere, it is doubtful that the Labour council is thinking of backing down.

More likely is that minister Jenkin is somewhat persuaded to do some backing down himself. In view of the Tories' embarrassment at the local polls and their unsuccessful strategy to smash the miners' strike as quickly as possible, government advisors must now be reconsidering the desirability of tackling Liverpool head on at this time.

The strong stand of Liverpool council has won support from the whole labour movement. This popular pressure has been enough so far to force the

Labour Party NEC to support the council, despite leader Neil Kinnock's reserved position.

By Carol Turner

Speaking at a press conference following Liverpool's meeting with Patrick Jenkin, deputy leader Derek Hatton described the spirit of that meeting as 'probably the most hopeful yet seen'.

This was reinforced by newly-elected Councillor Tony Mulhearn who said: 'Patrick Jenkin recognises that the electorate has given us the most overwhelming victory in the May elections. There was a definite spirit to find a solution. But we made it absolutely clear that the position regarding any further redundancies, any further cuts in public services are not up for grabs as far as Liverpool



Eric Heffer with council leader John Hamilton on 29 March demonstration

city council is concerned.' After all, why should they be? Liverpool's stand has been consistent. The council has always said it is prepared to consider anything beyond its bottom line: no loss of jobs and services and no

massive rate increase. Left Labour councils can practice diplomacy too. Liverpool have held off setting their illegal budget for which they now have a clear majority, to make perfectly clear that concessions must come

from the originators of Liverpool's current problems — a Tory government hell-bent on squeezing the poor by cutting public service funds and abolishing those local councils they can't control.

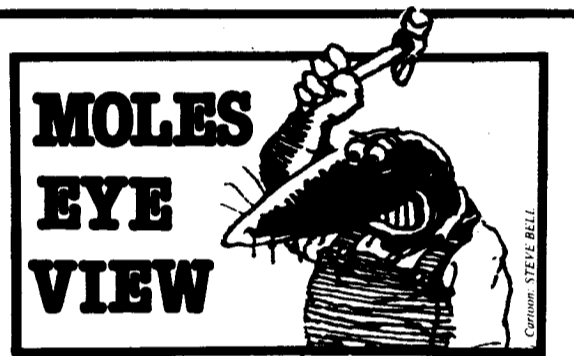
Right wing boycott Manchester Labour Group

FOLLOWING the national executive decision to reinstate Manchester city councillors expelled from the Labour Group, party chairperson Eric Heffer last week convened a meeting of the new, official Labour Group of Manchester city council.

In line with city party policy, the meeting nominated Cllr Graham

Stringer as council leader and John Nicholson as his deputy. Nominations for committee chairs and vice chairs were likewise those agreed by the city Labour Party.

These appointments will be decided at the full council meeting this Wednesday. As only seven of the right wing Labour councillors turned up for the group meeting, it still remains to be seen how things will go on Wednesday.



Policeman gives to strike fund

THERE they were on the picket line at a midlands pit. The branch chair of the Welsh miner's lodge doing the picketing, noticed the fair-haired young picket with an impeccable Welsh accent buzzing around like a busy bee.

Being a friendly chap he asked the lad where he came from and got the reply 'lodge', which oddly enough was where the chair was from. Our picket when asked couldn't remember the names of any of 'his' lodge officials, 'I am too tired to remember' he explained.

The other pickets immediately did a 'workers enquiry' in to the matter. He was stripped of his clothes, up turned his warrant card, his wallet was taken over to help the strike fund and he was dipped into the canal.

As far as I know he hasn't asked for his money back nor has he reported the 'assault' to his superiors! The branch chair and his helpers are too modest about their fund raising activity to let us publish their names and lodge. The wet and skint 'picket' is also too modest to want his name published.

Top Stud Farm

IT HAS now been officially confirmed by no less an authority than

Burke's Peerage, that all those chinless wonders aren't human beings at all.

Mr Brooks-Baker the publishing director of Burkes describes them as 'blood and gold stock' because they guarantee ancient lineage, lots of money or both. Apparently our peers have cottoned on that Burkes are 'continually getting requests from Europe ... as well as the United States and Canada' about 'marriageable stock'. What the enquirers want are 'the most eligible wealthy heiresses and unmarried heirs to titles'.

Imitating Robert Sangster who has made millions by buying brood mares and stallions in the horse racing game, Britain's aristocracy are turning their stately homes into a stud farm with an eye to flogging off their siblings later on the international marriage market. I am sure under socialism we will put these lads and lassies to far better use, than simply being marketable commodities.

RCP speaks the truth

IN ITS May 1984 edition the *Next Step* paper of the Revolutionary Communist Party says: 'The left met the RCP's call for a national campaign to win a ballot for an all-out national (miners') strike with derision.'

Who am I to quarrel with such a profound comment?

Moles Eye View is compiled by Bob Pennington. Contributions should be sent to arrive by Thursday am.



Riot squad police prepare to escort NF student Patrick Harrington through mass pickets

The Nazi at North London Poly

LAST THURSDAY 200 police, many in full riot gear, stormed into the Polytechnic of North London's Kentish Town site over barricades of tables, chairs and lockers put up by students protesting at the presence in the college of a top NF organiser, Patrick Harrington. This attempt by the police to bring to a head three months of peaceful picketing of Harrington's lectures by the students fortunately ended without any arrests.

The barricades will continue to go up every time Harrington wishes to enter the Poly. The college Directorate still refuse to expel him, the NF to climb down or the law courts to go back on their decision that the protest is illegal.

Indeed, Harrington is now moving an injunction against the Director of the Poly, David Macdowall, for a panic move in which he temporarily closed the college last Thursday, thus also perhaps making him in contempt of a court decision that Harrington must be allowed to attend his lectures.

Harrington first attended PNL two years ago when, quite by accident, his NF connections were discovered. Picketing then brought about his swift departure, but last March he returned, granted readmission on a philosophy course by the director.

The pickets, which like the barricades, were drawn from a wide section of stu-

By Jan Gorvett (PNL Labour Club)

dent opinion were then brought before the courts by Harrington's NF

friends who sent a photographer to the picket line to help them identify those prominent in the protest — 20 photos eventually being produced. However, due to the sudden amnesia of many lecturers asked to identify the students by the court, only two students have so far been named — by right-wing, non-union lecturers.

In addition to these two, all 13 members of the students union executive are to have injunctions served on them for organising the protest. A successful prosecution here would lead to the sequestering of union funds and thus the collapse of the students union.

Faced with the prospect of arrest and six months imprisonment for obstructing Harrington (Justice Mars-Jones had specially cleared his court of business last Thursday to deal with the expected

arrests) the students had no option but to barricade themselves into the Poly when Harrington appeared last Thursday and provoked the ensuing chaos. With a personal police bodyguard of 20 and with all the students shut off in a different part of the building, Harrington did finally make it inside to sit in the library for 20 minutes.

Action

The police action and the threat of arrests has done nothing to deter the students though from their protest. Mass meetings at Kentish Town have consistently voted by overwhelming majorities to continue the action despite the increasing judicial threats. It seems then, that due to student and staff solidarity, student action, administrative incompetence and draconian

police measures the dispute is set to continue and escalate with the possibility of violence and mass arrests coming ever closer.

In these circumstances the students need as much support as possible in their efforts to deny this person a platform to spread his twisted views through the Polytechnic. Mass actions are now planned for every Tuesday afternoon and Thursday morning when Harrington is due to turn up for his lectures.

There are wide-ranging implications not only for the student movement but for anti-fascists and anti-racists everywhere in this dispute. If Harrington is successful he could easily bring down a Students Union and send many of his opponents to jail — quite possibly in line with his original intentions when seeking readmission to the Polytechnic.

Photo: TIM RIGBY

Photo: MORNING STAR

Socialist ACTION

£50,000 Development Fund Drive

Off to a flying start!

SOCIALIST ACTION's development fund drive is off to a flying start. Last week we received an anonymous donation of £450 in the post to push us towards the first £1000 — a flying start, but still just a beginning.

Last week we received a dozen new subscriptions. A regular flow of subscriptions is exactly what we need to sustain the paper. If you don't have one already, why not have Socialist Action delivered every week?

Socialist Action's development fund drive is being launched for two reasons. First, the rent and rates in our present building are becoming astronomical: this means that it is imperative for us to move to cheaper premises — a move which is bound to cost a lot of money. Under capitalism you have to spend money to save it.

More importantly, our printshop is now not nearly big enough to meet the needs of not only designing and laying out our newspaper, but also for printing the dozens of leaflets, posters, and pamphlets which we produce for our own supporters, the labour movement and the peace movement each week.

So we have taken a difficult decision — to move to new premises and to give priority to expanding our print shop. To achieve this will be difficult, but will pay off in the long term, putting us on a much firmer financial footing and securing Socialist Action — the indispensable voice of Marxism in the labour movement — for the future.

Most of our supporters sacrifice a great deal of their income on supporting and building the socialist movement. In the middle of the miners' strike, this sacrifice is all the greater. It is unrealistic therefore for supporters to imagine that they can raise their targets from individual donations alone.

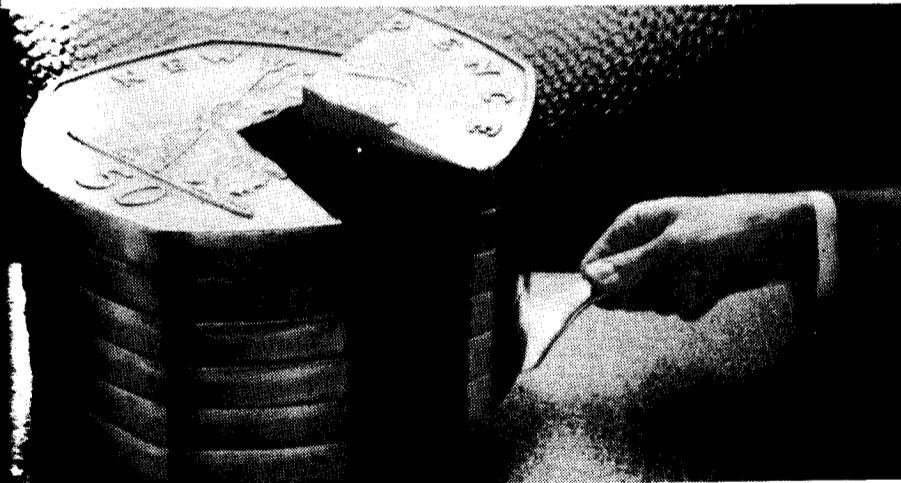
Fund raising events are absolutely essential, as well as donations from occasional readers of the paper. Big donations will be raised by the newspaper's journalists.

All our plans for the future depend now on this fund drive. For our supporters it is the number one task.

Last Saturday supporters from all over the country met and decided on area targets to be raised by supporters. We aim for around £20,000 to be raised by supporters, and to get £30,000 from large donations by individuals. It's a tough target but one which can be achieved. Supporters in every area should be discussing these targets in the coming week and laying out plans for fund raising events.

Area targets:

Aberdeen	£360	E London	2280
Glasgow	560	SW London	1120
Edinburgh	200	SE London	1080
Dundee	80	Camden	640
Birmingham	1000	Islington	920
Coventry	200	Hounslow	320
Leamington	160	Haringey	480
Nottingham	560	Ealing	520
Leicester	200	Brent	1300
Stoke	80	Manchester/Bury	1760
Cardiff	600	Oldham	360
Newport	360	Liverpool	280
Swansea	600	Sheffield	840
Oxford	360	Huddersfield	160
Southampton	120	Wakefield	240
Swindon	160	Leeds	680
Bristol	600	York	120
Bath	80	Middlesborough	120
Exeter	120		



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2 June

Demonstrate against Botha

ON 2 JUNE the South Africa prime minister PW Botha arrives in Britain for his state visit organised by Thatcher. The same day the English rugby team plays the first match of its South African tour — another sign of the changing official attitude to South Africa.

This is also the day on which Anti-Apartheid has organised its protest against Botha's visit — a protest which must lead to a huge repudiation of the apartheid boss.

Whatever the official position, of course, South Africa is an integral part of the Western alliance. But under Reagan and Thatcher there has been a strong push by the leading Western powers to give much more open support to South Africa. Botha's visit is symbolic of this drive to bring the apartheid regime back into the international fold.

By Phil Hearse

During Botha's visit there will be discussions with the British government on arms supplies to South Africa, especially anti-submarine planes. Also under discussion will be the South Africans' request that the ANC office in London be thrown out by Thatcher — on the grounds that it is a 'terrorist' office. Whether, in the aftermath of the Libyan siege, Thatcher will be prepared to go along with this demand remains to be seen.

Botha's request on the ANC office is highly ironic in light of the proved activities carried out from the South African embassy in Trafalgar Square. Two years ago the ANC office in London was bombed — an act which was widely suspected of having been organised by BOSS, the South African security service.

Other dirty tricks organised from the South African embassy include a series of burglaries organised against anti-apartheid campaigners; the theft of documents from the Anti-Apartheid movement and the ANC and SWAPO offices; and the organisation of illegal arms shipments to South Africa.

Activities

The Foreign Office and the British government as a whole know full well that these activities have been carried out, but has done nothing to stop them.

Botha's visit comes at a time when the full meaning of the apartheid system is becoming even more apparent through a series of utterly barbaric moves by the South African government. The 'bantustan' system of internal exile for 'surplus' blacks is now being rigorously enforced. In

effect, this means that blacks other than those needed by the white employers are being shipped in hundreds of thousands to impoverished black 'homelands'.

In most of these areas the women, children and elderly relatives of male black workers are left to scratch a hopeless existence in areas without the most basic resources and facilities.

In Natal, the police and security forces are removing 100,000 'illegal' squatters from the Ladysmith area. A total of 3.5 million people are being transported in the frankly-named 'Surplus People Project'.

At the Cross Roads squatters camp near Cape Town — a town of homes made out of cardboard and corrugated iron — the tens of thousands of residents have been subject to constant police attacks. Now the camp is to be bulldozed and the inhabitants transported.

Symbol

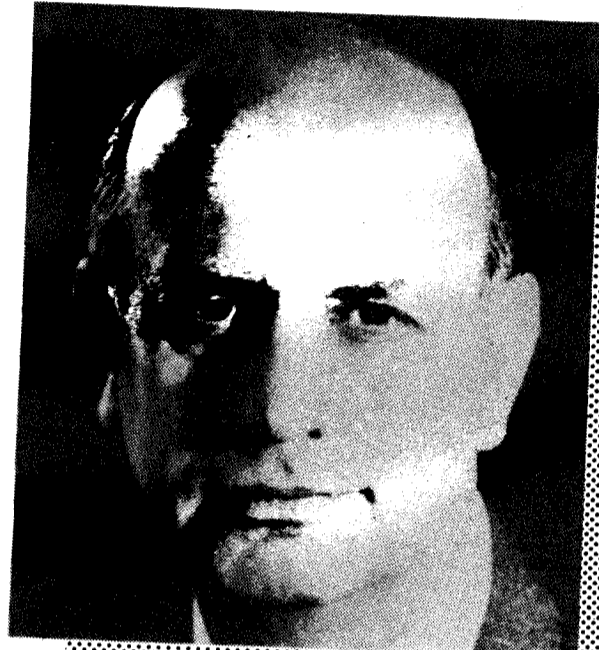
Cross Roads is symbolic of the fate of black people in South Africa. Harassed and constantly attacked, they only have use if they can find the kind of jobs that the whites will give them — and if not are left in the wilderness to starve.

The 'Surplus People' project is reminiscent of Nazism and the transportation of the Jews. But its overlord is feted by Thatcher as a staunch western ally.

Externally, the apartheid reich is engaged in a systematic campaign of destabilisation of its black neighbours. With military aid from the West, and especially the United States and Israel, South Africa wants to cow its black neighbours into acceptance of apartheid and taking measures against exiled South African freedom fighters.

Despite the enormous police and army repression, black workers are beginning to fight back. Over the last two years, according to the ILO, 200,000 workers have been involved in 730 strikes.

The South African regime is one of the most evil on the face of the earth. The British labour



South African prime minister, Botha

movement has a particular responsibility to fight it, given the huge amounts of British investment in that country. 2 June must be the occasion for a huge turnout to show that PW

Botha is not wanted here. Among the speakers at the demonstration will be David Kitson, held in a South African jail for 18 years for supporting the ANC.

March against Botha

Saturday 2 June 11.45 am
Assemble Hyde Park Corner — march via
Downing St and Whitehall to Trafalgar
Square

