

# SOCCIALIST ACTION

## Defend our unions

# Defend the NUM!

MONDAY'S High Court writ against Arthur Scargill and the NUM was brought by two isolated scabs in Yorkshire. But it shows the entire road onto which the Thatcher government is now being forced.

The aim of the writ is not to imprison Arthur Scargill. That would be a grotesque miscalculation by the government. The real threat is to seize the assets of the NUM.

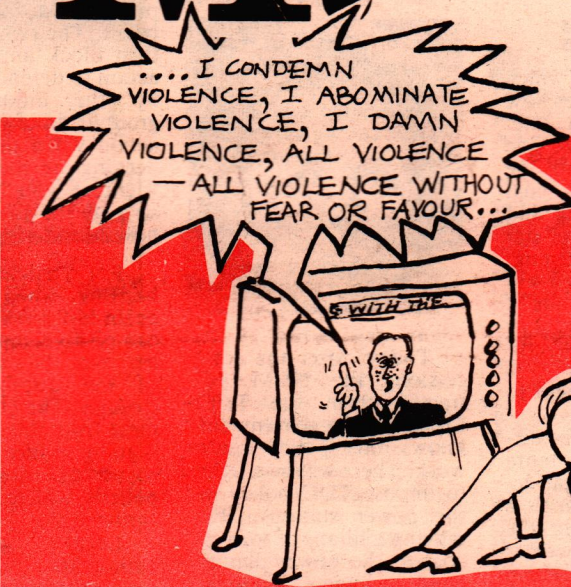
For Thatcher now feels the grip around the power stations inexorably tightening. If she cannot stop the NUM in the next few weeks she is faced with the threat of the greatest defeat ever suffered by a British government at the hands of the working class.

The entire British capitalist class is determined that this must not occur. That *everything* must be done to prevent it.

And despite the huge pressure the TUC and Labour leadership is trying to bring to bear for a 'compromise' solution the NUM leadership has still not moved one inch on the central issue of pit closures. With the tide of the militants in the movement swinging strongly behind the NUM Thatcher simply may not be able to create enough pressure to force the TUC to impose the type of defeat she needs on the NUM.

That is why the ruling class is now turning to the courts. They want the full majesty of their law, their courts, and their judges to back up their police and their violence. And all before *their* government is humiliated.

Because if the courts can impose their law on the NUM it would be a gigantic defeat for the entire labour movement. And if the NUM defeats a legal attack on it, it is the beginning of the end for the Thatcher government.



Against this scale of attack not even the financial and material help of the last seven months is enough. A legal attack on the NUM, the sequestration of its assets, *must* be met by industrial action by the entire working class. As Denis Skinner says on this page a legal attack on the NUM must be met with a general strike to defeat it. Such a threat is also the best way to head off any legal attack of Thatcher on the NUM.

Whatever occurs in the next few days militants must fight for

- An emergency meeting of the General Council of the TUC to decide that any legal attack on the NUM will be met with a general strike.

- A declaration by left wing union leaders and leaders of the Labour Party for industrial action to defend the NUM against any legal attacks.

- Pledges from every possible group of workers — starting with key sections such as Fleet Street, dockers, transport workers — that any legal action on the NUM will be met with all out industrial action.

## Establishment in a panic

By Dennis Skinner MP

THE WRIT on Scargill shows that the state is beginning to panic. The important thing now is the trade union response.

In 1972 the Pentonville Five dockers were jailed for contempt of court in not dissimilar circumstances. The TUC threatened a one day general strike and that got the dockers out, putting the Industrial Relations Act into cold storage at the same time.

### Writ

The writ served yesterday will put the TUC recommendations of support seriously to the test.

The establishment's panic has been building up recently. Thatcher visited the Yorkshire police and told them that they had to get scabs through the picket lines; judges were brought back from holiday

over the summer to deal with miners' cases; the Home Secretary made savage references to life imprisonment for miners fighting for the right to work. All of the upper echelons are panicking as they see coal stocks diminishing as winter approaches.

### Lied

Thatcher lied over the Belgrano, and the nation knows it. Soon the people will know the full catalogue of lies which have been told over coal stocks. Thatcher wouldn't know truth if it was sprayed onto her eyeballs. There is no other way now to defeat the establishment on the rampage than the TUC calling a general strike if NUM funds are sequestrated or their leaders are thrown into jail.

(Reprinted from the conference issue of Labour Briefing).



Photo: JOHN HARRIS

# PREPARE A GENERAL STRIKE!



# The scabs, the courts and the TUC



Photo: JOHN BIRDVALE

## Scargill: 'I plead guilty of contempt'

ON MONDAY evening Arthur Scargill spoke at a Labour Herald rally — one of the fringe events at party conference.

At the meeting he gave his first response to the delivery of the writ which demands he appears in court on Thursday. His charge — that he is in contempt of court in declaring the miners' strike is still official.

We reproduce extracts of his speech here.

The ruling class have encountered something they never thought they would encounter.

They thought that this strike, which they deliberately provoked, would be over in two or three weeks. When Margaret Thatcher goes and speaks to the South Yorkshire constabulary and explains that there will be no compromise, then I can tell her and her government that there will be no compromise on the central issue of pit closures...

The ruling class have seen the way our class has responded to this attack. We have seen their fear and anger coming together. It is a formidable force.

But it is coming up against the most formidable force in history — the organised working class.

The ruling class is in deep trouble. If you remember, they started with a low key approach. The majority of miners were out well before the flying police pickets moved in. We have seen the consequences...

It is not the civil liberties of miners we are fighting for but the civil liberties of all. When they come for miners today they'll come for you tomorrow...

We have seen the use of helicopters over our villages. The use of searchlights to attempt to spot pickets moving in the early hours. We have seen saturation policing and denial of access even to our motorways.

I have been told time after time to condemn violence. I know the facts. Just under 8,000 miners have been arrested. Three thousand have been injured. Two are on life support systems. Five have died for the right to work.

There is no way I will criticise these young miners and women who have been fighting for their jobs.

They have used police, anti-union laws, the judiciary, and the media. The state's intervention has been becoming increasingly hysterical.

At 4.30 today (Monday) a High Court representative, with no delegates badge on, simply walked into the conference hall and issued a writ against Arthur Scargill seeking his committal to Pentonville Prison on Thursday unless he purges his contempt in the High Court.

If its contempt we're talking about I plead guilty. But the only contempt I've committed is to fight for my class. Not only Arthur Scargill, but the vice-president, the general secretary, the Yorkshire area general secretary and the Derbyshire area general secretary have also received writs.

At the NUM special executive committee tonight the executive — in full recognition that if we continued to call this strike official that we would be in contempt of court — reaffirmed that the strike is official and that we call upon no miner to cross picket lines.

THE GOVERNMENT is now pursuing a 'twin track' strategy for dealing with the miners' strike. On the one hand it is trying to force the TUC to impose a compromise on the miners. On the other hand it is threatening massive legal action to try to smash the NUM. JOHN ROSS looks at how these moves are connected.

Right from the beginning of the miners' strike a fundamental dilemma has existed for the government over whether it can try to use its new anti-union laws against the NUM.

The fight over the NGA at the Stockport Messenger showed that these laws could be used against small groups of workers who were deserted by the TUC. But the use of these laws around a dispute in a local newspaper group is one thing. Using them against the dockers, car workers, or miners is quite a different thing.

It was because he did not understand this difference that the government stepped in sharply against Ian MacGregor's attempt to use the courts at the beginning of the strike. On 18 March MacGregor obtained a High Court ruling that the picketing carried on by the Yorkshire NUM was illegal. The Yorkshire NUM refused to back down. MacGregor dropped his action.

Exactly the same line was pursued by the government over the blockade of steel plants in June and July. British Steel's management was advised by the government not to take legal action against the NUM. The successful writs taken out against the South Wales NUM were gained not by British Steel management but by small independent road hauliers.

This government rejection of using the courts against the NUM throughout the summer was in spite of constant calls for legal intervention from David Owen and the more fanatical layers of Thatcher supporters such as Paul Johnson in the Daily Mail, and the editorial writers of the Times.

The reason for the government's refusal to back any decisive legal action was obvious. A legal attack on the NUM must succeed, it is the government's last throw. If the NUM successfully defeats, or defies, an all out legal attack on it, then the government's entire position will crumble both on the strike and on the anti-union laws.

That is why the government persuaded MacGregor to back down in March. The cabinet reckoned, rightly, that a legal attack on the Yorkshire NUM at that time would have been successfully defeated. It would have created more support for the miners — not less. That calculation is why the government was forced to rely on the ineffectual 'back to work' movement throughout the summer.

## Dwindling

But the situation which the government faces now is a very different one. Time is today on the side of the NUM, and not the government. The coal stocks are dwindling and the grip on the power stations slowly tightening. The government must win quickly or it is not going to win at all. And faced with that choice the government's attention is necessarily turning back to the courts again.

It would in fact be difficult to think of a more perfect plan for legal action than the one which is going to develop in the courts over the next weeks. This week the Durham miners face legal action as an area — a perfect opportunity for the government to judge the resistance to another seizure of funds of an area of the NUM.

And coming up at the beginning of October is the key case. The writs brought by Ken Foulstone and Bob Taylor against the Yorkshire NUM. The timing and tactics are perfect for a rapidly mounting legal attack on the NUM.

Why does the government now believe it may have a chance of suc-



ceeding with this legal assault? Because Thatcher is prepared to match every escalation by the TUC with an escalation of her own.

Three weeks ago the government hoped the strike would be defeated because the TUC would refuse to support the NUM's action at the power stations. The government was actively drawing up plans for a movement of millions of tons of coal from the striking pit heads to the power stations.



Today, after the concessions the NUM extracted from the TUC Congress, the government knows this policy can't work. There will be a fight to impose TUC policy in the power stations. But moving millions of tons of coal to the power plants, amid huge physical violence at the pits to stop it, and getting power workers to use it, is just not on in the new situation today. Therefore the government must find another way to break the strike before it wins.

Thatcher's chosen weapons are the TUC and the courts. The government is first trying to get the TUC, and other unions such as NACODS, to impose a 'compromise' settlement, in reality a defeat, on the NUM. That is her chief policy today. But after that there is another

alternative — and another government tactic.

Frank Chapple, Eric Hammond, John Lyons and the other right wingers have been explaining their strategy for defeating the miners right from the beginning. The trade union bureaucracy must first isolate the NUM — as they tried to do at the TUC. Then the government can step in with massive repression — the seizure of the funds of the Yorkshire NUM. Cover should be given to the entire operation through propaganda about a ballot. The right wing will then block any solidarity action to defend the NUM by other unions on the grounds unions can't take action when the NUM is denying its members the 'right to vote'. It is this strategy the government is now considering.

For Thatcher was not bluffing when she said again last week that there can be no compromise for her over the central issue of the dispute — pit closures. The Tory government from this autumn on is going to face the biggest round of threats to its policies which it has ever confronted.

Local government authorities, teachers, and car workers are just some of the groups in line for the biggest battles with the government since 1979. If the Tory government in that situation were to suffer a defeat, or even be forced to make an unsatisfactory compromise, at the hands of the miners then the situation could rapidly become disastrous. Thatcher's government must defeat the miners if it is to retain its credibility.

And on that Thatcher is calculating that if the TUC cannot impose a 'compromise' on the NUM it can be counted on

to desert it if the courts step in. She estimates that the TUC will back off from a confrontation that literally would be on the scale of 1926. Because, of course, if the trade unions did not back off then any move to use the courts against the NUM would result in disaster for the government.

For the first time in this dispute there is now a real risk — not a certainty but a definite risk — that the government is going to adopt a legal attack on the NUM as its central strategy. To stake everything on crushing the NUM through legal repression — and rely on the TUC to block any response. If she does not do that Thatcher faces the danger of a slow and inevitable slide to defeat.

The next weeks are the most vital of the entire strike. The knot on the power stations has to be tightened by implementing TUC policy. The financial aid to the NUM stepped up. But the movement must prepare for a legal assault on the NUM.

The demands must be clear. Only a massive response by industrial action will roll back the scale of legal attack the government would contemplate to break the NUM. Such action has to come whether the TUC supports it or not. This means fighting for

● A declaration by the General Council of the TUC that any legal attack on the NUM will be met with a general strike.

● Pledges by key groups of workers and unions — Fleet Street printers, dockers, transport workers, car workers — that any legal attack on the NUM, any seizure of its assets or other similar moves, will be met with all out sympathy strike action.

## A PIECE OF THE ACTION

THE THEOLOGICALLY SOUND COMIC STRIP

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# State of siege

FOR THE LAST seven months Labour Party activists have been prominent in miners' support committees up and down the country. Despite the obvious support for the miners from the party's rank and file, leader Neil Kinnock has sat weak-kneed on the fence.

Week after week he has appeared in public to dole out even-handed, high-minded condemnations of violence 'whatever its source'. Time and again he has played right into the hands of Thatcher and her media sycophants, adding his weight to the criminalisation of the mining communities.

On the first day of annual conference, he was knocked off that fence, when it voted two to one on a card vote to condemn the state-organised violence of the police.

That vote put the record straight and the blame squarely where it belonged. Anyone with any involvement whatsoever in the miners' strike has no doubt on that score.

## Intimidation in Kent

EVENTS AT Snowdon pit in Kent last week shed new light on the causes of 'picket line violence'. A lone miner from Folkestone was bussed in on Monday, following a well-organised and financed meeting at the MacGibbon's house. The police refused to allow the union to speak to him, and virtually occupied the pit — including the NUM offices.

NUM officials then saw the pit manager to protest at this unnecessary police presence, and again asked to speak to the miner. The manager agreed. After a short talk, the miner was persuaded to stop working, and to return home in another miners' car — strange behaviour from an 'intimidated working miner'.

Once the NUM were allowed to speak to him he said that he had noticed how plush and well furnished the MacGibbon house was, and said 'I really learnt a thing or two. This has really opened my eyes'. He expressed regret and said that he would not be going in to work again.

Wouldn't the whole thing have been simpler, less intimidatory, and less expensive if miners had simply been granted the normal right to speak to people crossing the picket lines?



Cartoon: THE MINER  
"And then the accused rolled on the floor and proceeded to repeatedly strike his head against my boot."

**SPEAKING AT** the Campaign Group of MPs' rally on the eve of Labour Party conference, NUM general secretary Peter Heathfield threw down a challenge to Labour's leaders. 'I am unwilling,' he said, 'to debate with anyone who talks about miners' violence on picket lines unless the accusers are also willing to talk about police violence.'

His speech was peppered with examples of how the mining community is being criminalised during the course of this dispute.

- A miner's son was brought before the magistrates' court for an offence unconnected with the dispute. The prosecuting police officer referred to him as 'the son of a family known to harbour pickets.'

- An unlucky parish priest in Yorkshire found himself stopped and frisked by police recently. They accused him of being a miner in disguise!

**WHO CREATES** the violence in mining areas? For anyone who had any doubt the evidence is now clear.

The police are not 'acting to protect the working miners' but to create the violence, with a conscious strategy aimed at branding miners as criminals. Police tactics are illegal and outside any direct political control.

Martin Walker and Susan Miller, of Greenwich and Islington Police Committees, have documented the evidence in two pamphlets called 'State of Siege'. A third comes out soon.

By Alan Freeman

Anyone who doubts the NUM's accusations against the police should read these pamphlets. They show that a parallel, centralised, and politically motivated national police apparatus has been assembled with government consent. It operates in secret, accountable to no one, and committed to breaking the unions by any means necessary — legal or illegal.

Senior Home Office officials met the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) as long ago as 4 April, 1972, to prevent a repeat of the NUM's victory at Sallley gate that year.

The ACPO, a shadowy body with no legal status, has master-minded police political strategy. For example, it began the practice of issuing crime statistics broken down by the race of the alleged criminal — not of course the race of the known victim.

This meeting agreed to bypass the 1964 Police Act, which specifies policing must be local in character. A 'national recording centre' was set up, run by the current president of the ACPO. The semi-military policing of the miners strike has been run from this centre.

Local Authorities and police committees have now found that they have no control over use of police resources, which are now deployed at the dictat of an unappointed official.

## Fooled

Many people have been fooled into thinking that this situation is necessary to combat miners' 'criminal activity'. But it is the police who are breaking the law, for the simple reason that mass picketing is a crime.

The police manufacture charges at will; obstruction, breach of the peace, etc., all of which have one thing in common — miners are never charged with picketing. The police are effectively inventing laws to bypass the legal right to picket. They have not only become a law unto themselves, but because they are out of control, they have become the principal agents of violence.

The pamphlets document:

- the police kidnap of a Notts NUM branch official in Blidworth from his own home, for the crime of billeting peaceful pickets.

- Indiscriminate attacks on miners on and off the picket lines using Latin American methods.

One young miner, attacked outside the miners welfare in Rainworth was part of a group followed and attacked without reason. 'A truncheon was brought horizontally from the back, over my head and across the bridge of my nose', he testified.

## Torso

'My head and torso were then levered up from the ground with the truncheon. Some kind of foreign body was inserted into each nostril, and stuffed up my nose. The truncheon was then placed under my nose and this was used as a levering point. It was lowered back to the ground and my back was jumped on several times... I remember thinking how organised it was. They must do this quite often and must be confident of getting away with it. Finally my head was turned sideways to the ground, and something soft like a cloth was put under it, then someone jumped on my head.'

- Fabrication of laws to prevent movement. For six months now the police have besieged Notts and pit villages, turning back miners for simply travelling from one part of the country to another. This has no legal foundation whatsoever. And whenever miners are accompanied by qualified legal personnel the police have been forced to let them through.

- State of Siege is available from Paul Holmes, Greenwich Branch NALGO, Staff Side Office, Borough Treasurer's Department, Wellington St, SE18. Each volume is priced £1.95. Please make cheques payable to 'Greenwich branch NALGO'.



Orgreave — police violence on the picket line

## Police riot at Armthorpe

THOUSANDS OF HEAVILY equipped police are being deployed at pits in South Yorkshire to escort a handful of scabs to work. The number of police used is not just to get the strikebreakers into the pityard. The aim is to terrorise the pickets and the people of the mining communities.

One such incident occurred already at Armthorpe, near Doncaster, on 22 August. Guy Bennet, a young striker from Markham Main explained why Armthorpe was singled out. 'When we go picketing there are certain pits from the area that always turn out, and are very militant — Armthorpe, Rossington and Hatfield. The police are trying to tie us down to our own areas, and stop us going to Notts or the wharves.'

Wayne Frost, another Armthorpe striker told me what happened. 'We were determined the scabs wouldn't get in. The video cameras that overlook the pityard had been knocked out so that no one could be identified. A barricade was built across the gates with concrete blocks, which had been lifted into place with a crane that had been left in the yard. The crane was set on fire along with the rest of the barricade.'

By Clive Turnbull

'There must have been 2000 people who had come out, and there are only 1400 miners at Markham Main — there are women,

pensioners, unemployed, kids. When the police arrived it was an invasion. The whole village was sealed off. No traffic, not even buses was allowed in or out. There was an army of police, with riot shields, padding, helmets, truncheons and long clubs.

'The pickets tried to fight back with stones and sticks, but were forced to scatter. I ran into someone's house, and watched the riot squads running up and down the street. One of the cops dropped a canister which looked like CS gas. Another cop quickly picked it up.'

'I saw the police drag a guy back from the wood, his head was streaming blood. He was taken through 60-odd riot police, who laughed at

him, thinking his injuries were funny. He was marched up and down the streets for three-quarters of an hour, to show people what was in store for them.'

'There were riot police on every corner, stopping everyone and arresting everyone with dirty hands, or who was sweating, and charging them with affray.'

## Injured

'Miners were being kicked and truncheoned — one by six police outside an old folks home. More than 30 were arrested and most of them needed stitches. Not only miners were injured. An elderly lady, Mrs Kennedy tried to stop police entering her house. As they tried to force their way through her back door her head was trapped, and the police banged it between the door and the frame. Four or five days later she was still in a state of shock.'

'A lot of people have had the role of the police in this strike brought home to them. It's one thing to see it on TV, it's another to see it with your own eyes, in your own village. We're more united now, determined to win'.

Photo: JOHN HARRIS/DEA



# The 'peoples' alliance' in Scotland

THE BACK TO WORK movement in Scotland, never more than a trickle, has now gone into reverse. The number of scabs has been shrinking in the last three weeks from 90 to 63.

One miner, David Brown, has told Dalkeith strike centre that he was offered a £200 bribe to join a working miners' association.

Despite NCB provocation and intimidation — turning off power at pits, sacking NUM officials, and now bribes — the strike is still solid in Scotland.

Earlier in the strike Scottish workers were given the opportunity to show their support for the miners by taking solidarity action. On Wednesday 9 May the Scottish TUC called a day of action, when tens of thousands of workers stopped for the day.

Most major engineering, shipbuilding and manufacturing workplaces in Glasgow went on strike, and they were joined by rail, hospitals, schools and factories throughout Scotland. Twenty thousand marched through Glasgow and rallies were held in six other Scottish towns.

Since then, railworkers have moved no coal to Ravenscraig. Dockers have struck twice. Yet this potential for building real solidarity action to back the miners has not been developed.

The most recent STUC demonstration was held on a Saturday; no stoppage was asked for; and Ravenscraig continues at full production.

This contradiction — that the Scottish miners are solid, the evidence for support from other Scottish workers is there, and yet solidarity has not been built up — is explained by the influence of the Communist Party in the Scottish trade unions, and the Scottish NUM leadership.

Their record in the strike compares unfavourably with the inspiring example of Arthur Scargill. The first test was, and is, Ravenscraig.

By Matthew Forde

The miners' mass pickets were defeated, not by the police but by a deal between the Scottish NUM and the ISTC-BSC which allowed 12,000 tons per week — enough for 70 per cent production — into Ravenscraig.

Not surprisingly the BSC and ISTC, after this display of weakness, broke the agreement and have had 25,000 plus tons per week delivered by convoy.

The TUC's decisions, especially no crossing of picket lines, could find wide support among Scottish workers, but the CP-influenced STUC leaders have returned to the failed strategy of talks and 'agreements' on coal 'quotas' for Ravenscraig.

The track record of the Scottish NUM leadership has earned praise from proven enemies of the miners. Jimmy Reid, in his disgusting Monday morning column in Maxwell's *Daily Record*, has consistently attacked the miners, repeating Tory charges of picket violence, calling for a ballot, and denouncing the leadership of Arthur Scargill, contrasting his 'irresponsible' line to Mick McGahey's approach.

Maxwell's *Sunday Mail* has pursued the same theme, combining their anti-miner material with

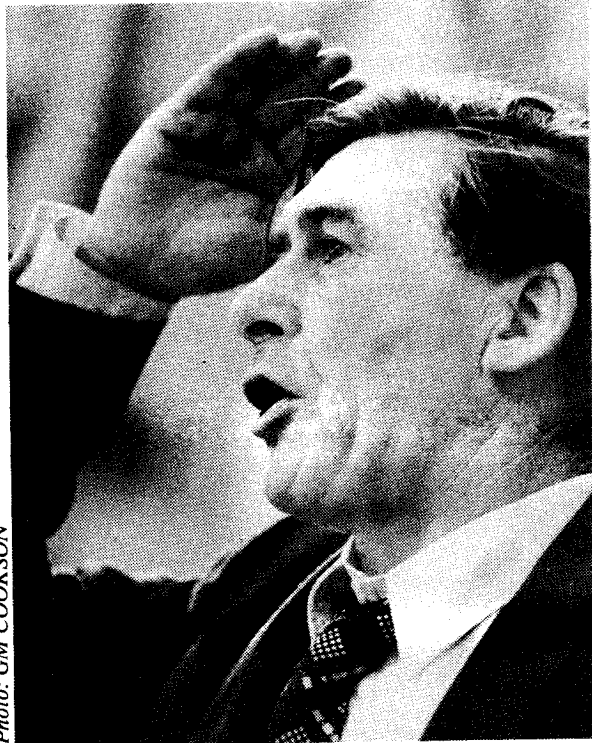


Photo: GM COOKSON

MICK MCGAHEY, Scottish NUM leader

claims that McGahey and the Scottish NUM are trying to divert the strike from the extremist line pursued by Scargill.

Underlying this is the view held by the CP that militant struggle against Thatcherism cannot succeed. In the miners' strike this means a perspective of compromise and sell-out, instead of a determined struggle to win the solidarity necessary for victory.

Mick McGahey's formula — repeated in speeches from 9 May onwards — is for a settlement favourable to both the miners and the Scottish economy. The Bishop of Durham, interviewed in the current *Marxism Today*, who insists that the miners must not win outright, could agree with McGahey.

In Scotland, the situation following the TUC opens new opportunities for the miners to win vital solidarity. Key events — the 9 May strikes, the strength of the dockers' strike in Scotland — show that important sections of Scottish workers will take action to back the miners.

Scottish miners can take initiatives translating TUC decisions into action which will assist solidarity throughout Britain. Scottish miners could now

- appeal direct to power station workers;
- mount pickets to stop all coal;
- call for a further one day strike;
- organise a Scottish shop stewards conference to plan and build solidarity action.

## Fading Star★ Morning Star

FOR TEN years now the old role of the Communist Party as the 'militant trade union' wing of the labour movement has been in sharp decline. The rise of the left wing of the Labour Party, and of Arthur Scargill in the NUM, has seen the CPGB consistently outflanked in militancy and left wing politics by forces within Labour.

The miners' strike is therefore a revealing example for anyone who has illusions that the *Morning Star* represents any type of militant alternative to *Marxism Today*.

Right from the beginning of the strike the *Morning Star* has been carrying the extraordinary line that Neil Kinnoch is backing the miners.

Immediately following the TUC, Communist Party industrial organiser Pete Carter gave his overall assessment of this congress.

Carter claimed, 'The trade unions emerged more united than for some time. And they agreed on the need for a militant response to the corporations, the state and the mass media.' (*Morning Star* 19 September).

This referred not simply to the decisions of the TUC on the miners' strike, where there was an open fight with the extreme right, but to other decisions of the Congress.

Carter in fact talked of, 'the atmosphere of mutual confidence flowing from the Brighton discussions.' This was a report of the most bitterly divid-



ed TUC since the Second World War! Of course Carter himself is on the 'Eurocommunist' wing of the CPGB. So perhaps the editors of the *Morning Star* corrected his analysis of the TUC? Quite the contrary. The line pursued by the Chaterites was equally extraordinary.

The now famous speech of the Bishop of Durham, which clearly included a call for the NUM to back down on pit closures as well as its much reported call for MacGregor to resign, was hailed by the *Morning Star* under the editorial headline 'A bishop of courage and compassion.' (*Morning Star* 24 September).

Bishop Jenkin's statement was greeted as an example of the policy needed 'to mobilise this reservoir of support in a broad democratic alliance led by the working class.'

Even more extraordinary was the *Morning Star* headline on the role of ACAS in the dispute. The

18 September issue carried the front page lead 'MacGregor climbdown on ACAS role.'

Apparently the intervention of ACAS into the dispute, which is designed by the government and right wing of the TUC to attempt to impose a sell-out deal on the miners, is a positive development.

In reality throughout this dispute, it has been the Communist Party and *Morning Star* which has formed the right wing of its leadership, Scargill and the Labour left which has been its militant core. Despite differences on tactics there has been no fundamental difference of line between *Marxism Today* and the *Morning Star*.

The real course for militant members of CPGB is to leave that Party and join the ranks of the fighting left wing of the Labour Party. There they'll find the type of politics that neither *Marxism Today* or the *Morning Star* will provide.

## Plans for Coal

THE PLAN FOR COAL has formed the bedrock of the NUM's argument in its battle with the NCB. First drawn up in 1974, the plan aimed at 40 million tonnes (metric) new capacity by 1985.

The plan was revised in 1977 with a target of 200 million tonnes by the year 2000. This meant adding four million tonnes of new and replacement capacity each year. The plan has not worked. PAT HICKEY looks at why.

IT IS NOT a new experience for miners to have 'plans for coal'. There have been many since nationalisation in 1947. In 1950 there was a plan based on production reaching 240 million tonnes in the mid-60s.

In fact production has fallen continuously since nationalisation. In 1947 there were 704,000 miners producing 200 million tonnes. Today, there are 180,000 producing 105 million tonnes.

The various plans have done little to protect miners' jobs. Under successive plans, usually of an expansionist nature, job loss has continued. The 1974 plan slowed down, but did not stop, this decline.

A new turn was taken in 1980 when the Tories introduced the Coal Industry Act — which was the first attempt to make the coal industry break even. The Plan for Coal, however, remained the formal basis of the board's strategy.

In reality however a completely new policy was being unfolded. In June 1980 a western economic summit in Venice

'borderline', and over 15 per cent was 'unprofitable'.

The conclusion was that the EEC and EEC member states should encourage expansion of coal production outside the EEC. The main beneficiaries of this policy are firms like Wimpey, Rio Tinto Zinc and Powell Duffryn.

This policy determines the direction that Thatcher wants to take the British coal industry. According to a Monopolies and Merger Commission report in 1982, using 'profitability' as its yardstick, a staggering 141 of the 198 pits being worked at the end of 1982 were unprofitable.

Only 57 collieries were operating at a profit, and these accounted for 42 per cent of output and employed 64,000 miners.

Seventy-one pits were operating at a loss of up to £10 per tonne, while a further 70 were losing more than £10. These are the 70 pits and 70,000 jobs which Arthur Scargill has consistently claimed were on the NCB's hit-list.

The NCB has denied the existence of the list. But the truth is exactly what Arthur Scargill has always claimed it is.

MacGregor's plan to sack 20,000 miners is only the start in a long-term plan to restructure the British coal industry, in line with the EEC's plans. Once

such a process starts, it is almost impossible to stop.

If the 26 pits in Wales were to close, the remaining pits become less viable because of the infrastructural costs involved. Similarly with Scotland and the north east. The result would be an industry concentrated on the super-pits of the east Midlands, which are ripe for privatisation, and tempting targets for firms like Rio Tinto Zinc.

The argument about closures on economic grounds is therefore central — and has been made still more so by the economic crash imposed by Thatcher since 1979. The issue is whether the jobs and communities of the miners are to be sacrificed in the interests of the multi-nationals, and whether an unsafe energy source, nuclear power, is to replace coal.

A new plan for coal is needed, one which aims at replacing nuclear power, which is based on the expansion of the economy, and which shares the benefits of technological advance with the miners. It will need concrete plans for liquefaction and gasification of coal.

Central to such a plan must be the NUM demands for earlier retirement, longer holidays, and for the four-day week.

The latter demand was in fact first raised in the Sankey Commission in 1919! It is time a plan for coal made it a reality.



Scottish workers on the march on 9 May day of action



# 'The NUM should finance a women's organisation'

**MINERS' WIVES** up and down the country are deeply involved in every aspect of the struggle to win the strike. But at the same time the tremendous success of their own movement is making them consider how they will organise after the strike.

A second national delegate conference of the miners' wives is likely to be called soon. **JUDE WOODWARD** talked to **KAY SUTCLIFFE** and **MARIE COLLINS** from the Kent coalfield about how they saw the organisation of women developing.

*Kay:* Over the summer things have gone rather quiet and each women's group in Kent has been doing its own thing. The regional meetings have broken down. So we want to get them going again. We are determined to carry on after the strike.

committee properly set up. It should be on the same basis as the NUM itself with delegates to an area committee and from that to a national committee.

If each group sent a delegate to a national meeting it would be too big — we've got six women's groups in Kent alone.

*Kay:* There is going to be another national women's conference. The national steering committee is meeting next week to organise it. Nothing much has been decided about it yet, but I think it will discuss future plans.

We want some definite body set up that will continue after the strike.

It is difficult to keep things going when the groups are so spread apart. But we can't organise exactly like the NUM, mainly because we do not have the finances.

But it's also because many of the women who are on the organising bodies have jobs and commitments elsewhere. This makes it even more difficult to organise

nationally.

*Marie:* We certainly need finances. I'd like to see something like a situation where the men pay their union money and part of it — or a small extra amount — should go towards the wives' organisation.

Of course the argument would be that not all the wives are involved, but I don't think that's really the point.

*Kay:* It is very important that any ongoing organisation is set up properly. I am the Kent delegate to the national steering committee, but I was asked to go at a week's notice with no time for elections.

We must have elections and so on, otherwise we will be open to the accusation of being self-elected and not really representative of the women.

For the national conference we will have two delegates from Kent. The only trouble is that we have three pits. But that's not bad when you realise there will be only four delegates from the whole of Wales.

*Marie:* I suppose it's not too bad, as at the beginning we only had one delegate. It's not one delegate from every group, because there are literally hundreds of groups and it would make the meeting too big, and accommodation impossible.

*Kay:* Also the conference won't be just miners' wives' groups. It will be 75 per cent miners' wives' groups, and the rest other women's groups that support the miners.

**What is happening around the 'back to work' movement? I know there has been quite a bit of trouble in Kent.**

*Marie:* Well at Tilmanstone there are about ten going in or so

## NALGO special conference on miners

**WHILST THATCHER** attempts to carry out the plan devised by **Nicholas Ridley** in 1978 to smash the NUM, the strongest union in Britain, through massive police repression and the threat of starvation, sections of **NALGO** have squandered **£250,000** in an attempt to ensure that she is successful.

These people, civilian employees in the police force, white collar power workers, and some local government employees, are furious at the support given to the miners by **NALGO**.

This support amounts to a paltry **£42,000** at national level. They have organised 100 of **NALGO's** 1000-plus branches to call a special national conference at a cost

of **£250,000**.

The first response of the left to this challenge was complacency. It was thought that the call for the special conference would be smashed out of court. This left the initiative firmly with the right.

As a result, the response of many national and branch leaderships was to keep their heads down, in the face of a rumour campaign that many members were resigning in protest. The daily barrage of anti-Scargill propaganda in the media also helped the right.

The right will be attempting to win a resolution forcing a national ballot before any further national funds are donated to the NUM. Such a ballot would cost another

**£250,000**. The police defend the scabs too. Some women put in a complaint that

they had been fired on with a shotgun. The bloke's still got the gun, but the police came round to ask them to withdraw the complaint.

The funny thing is that it's never Mr MacGibbon that gets up and speaks, it's always his wife. They talk about the striking miners hiding behind their wives. But it's Mr MacGibbon and his like that really do that.

**What's the attitude to the Labour Party among the miners' wives?**

*Kay:* Right from the start **Kinnock** has failed to come out right with the miners. The Labour Party was born out of the trade unions, so it should have more allegiance to the trade union movement than **Kinnock** has shown.

It's alright to condemn violence on picket lines. The NUM does that itself. But you have to say where the violence starts, and condemn the police violence as well.

*Marie:* I'll tell you what a lot of them are saying around here. **Kinnock** should be put in a donkey jacket and stood on a picket line where no one can recognise him. Then we'll see after that what he thinks about violence, when he's seen what is really going on.

The left in **NALGO** must learn from the right. They organised nationally, and fought for their position. They will no doubt do the same again.

The only way to combat the right on this issue is to deepen activity in support of the NUM. The most successful approach in **NALGO** is the adoption of a pit.

In **Newham Branch** this has allowed miners and miners' wives to attend union meetings and meet the members face to face. The left will follow this course at the special conference, on 10 October.

A lobby has been organised for 8.30 am in the morning, and a meeting with a leading NUM speaker on the evening before, at **Friends Meeting House**, **Euston Road** at 6.30 pm.



Photo: JOHN SMITH (JFL)

**GRAHAM ATWELL**, of **Cardiff Labour Party**, reviews 'The Miners' Campaign Video Tapes'.

TO COUNTER media bias, a group of **ACTT** technicians and the **Film Video Workshop**, working with the NUM, have made a series of six films: 'The Miners' Campaign Video Tapes'.

While all the tapes can be highly recommended, by far the most interesting and provocative is *Only doing their job? — the police, the law and the miners*.

Most of the film's commentary is provided by a group of Yorkshire miners who give their personal experiences of the police on the **Orgreave** picket line.

Women relate how they are harassed and attacked by the police, and tell of their admiration for the **Greenham** women who have endured such condi-

tions over four years.

The video shows how the **National Police Reporting Centre** has created a national, government-directed police force. It shows the brutality of police attacks on unarmed pickets, and then switches to film of **RUC** and army operations against demonstrators in the North of Ireland and police fighting black people during the riots of 1982.

### Telling

One of the miners tells how the strike has opened his eyes to the oppression of others. The miners are convinced that life can never be the same again after the strike.

The most telling points of the film are made by **Dave Douglass** from the Yorkshire NUM executive. 'People who think that class is a matter of cloth caps or tops hats,' he

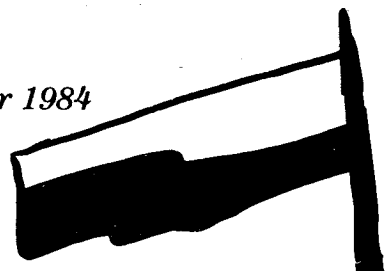
says, 'are living in cloud cuckoo land. The real deciding point is ideology. Policemen, whatever their background, have — just like the Orange men — crossed class lines. To think that the police are just workers in uniform is ridiculous.'

The film also takes up the question of violence and intimidation by NUM members during the dispute. Rather than duck the issue, it explains why, when threatened with loss of livelihood, attacked by police with riot shields, batons and horses, miners fight back. They have no choice.

The film makers have done a fine job. It's now up to us to use the videos.

• The videos are each about 10-15 minutes long. They can be obtained from your nearest NUM head quarters, or from **Plat-form Films**, London (01-278 8394), or **Trade Films**, Gateshead (0632 775532).





# Solidarność says:

# Stop all coal!

IMPORTS OF POLISH coal are likely to double this year. The Polish government has abandoned an agreement between Arthur Scargill and Polish officials limiting Polish exports to Britain to 765,000 tonnes. Already, by the end of August, 900,000 tonnes of Polish coal had been shipped to Britain.

By the end of the year the *Financial Times* estimates that Polish coal imports will have doubled from last year's 548,000 tonnes to 1.2 million tonnes this year. These Polish coal imports play a significant role in undermining the miners' strike.

By Redmond O'Neill

But the documents that we reproduce on these pages demonstrate that the Polish government doesn't at all have the support of the Polish workers in its strike breaking activities.

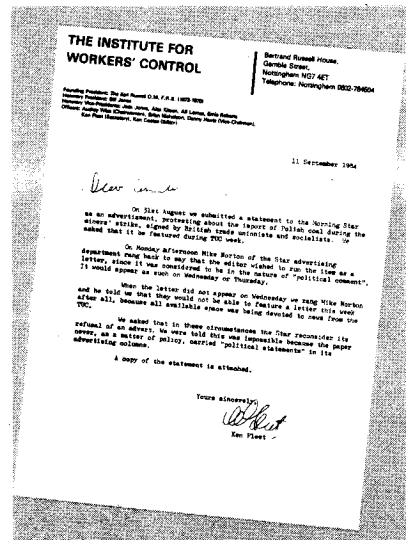
There is now sufficient evidence, both from Upper Silesia which accounts for 80 per cent of Poland's coal production, and from other sources, of the support being expressed for the NUM by the underground organisations of Solidarnosc.

The statements printed here bitterly condemn the scabbing of the Polish government, which claims to support the British miners yet takes advantage of their strike to pump additional coal into Britain. These statements point out the hypocrisy of the official so-called trade unions that the Polish government has reestablished since the suppression of Solidarnosc.

These official unions have claimed to support the miners and yet done nothing to prevent coal exports which undermine the miners struggle. The evidence is now overwhelming: the

Solidarnosc underground both in Warsaw and the key mining areas of Poland stands with the British miners, General Jaruzelski does not.

However, the views of Solidarnosc have been systematically concealed by the British press. After building up Solidarnosc as the champion of freedom in Poland, the hacks of Fleet Street are extremely reluctant to publicise Solidarnosc's support for freedom and workers' struggles here in Britain.



They prefer to try to portray Solidarnosc as anti-socialist and the fight to defend trade union rights and jobs here as totally unrelated to the struggle of Solidarnosc in Poland.

Fleet Street covers up Solidarnosc's support for the miners because it would strengthen the miners and undermine their own efforts to portray Margaret Thatcher as a champion of everything Solidarnosc stands for.

But it is not only Fleet Street that

covers up and lies about those in Poland who support the miners and those who organise scabbing against them.

The *Morning Star* has managed for seven months to turn a blind eye to increasing Polish coal imports during the strike. Most recently the *Morning Star* has banned an advertisement signed by 24 leading labour movement figures and MPs, and supported by the Yorkshire NUM, protesting that: '...if the independent trade union movement, which might have been expected to black (coal) exports, is no longer permitted to operate, a double burden falls on the Polish government which claims to have installed itself the better to defend "socialism".'

That statement goes on to call upon the Polish government to declare a moratorium on coal exports to Britain for the rest of the miners' strike.

The *Morning Star* refused to print this statement, signed by Dennis Skinner and Eric Heffer among others, on the grounds that it does not print 'political' advertisements! It has to suppress the truth about the Polish regime's coal exports and the true positions of Solidarnosc in order to justify its support for the Polish bureaucracy's repression of the independent trade union movement.

When the truth about the role of that bureaucracy, not only in Poland but in relation to the British miners, is too embarrassing, then the *Morning Star* adopts the same methods of lying and concealing the truth as the Fleet Street hacks.

For British trade unionists, the lesson is quite clear: if Solidarnosc were a mass legal organisation in Poland today, the British miners could rely on a force which would take the same stand as the most militant workers here and *Stop All Coal!*



On 17 June the Underground Provisional Co-ordinating Committee of Solidarnosc miners issued this statement in solidarity with the British miners.

The statement was read out at 10am on Sunday 17 June by the Solidarnosc underground radio station called *We Will Win*, based in Upper Silesia, the country's main coal-mining region.

The Underground Provisional Coordinating Committee of Solidarity miners vigorously protest against the present policy of the Polish People's Republic on the management of our major source of wealth — coal. Selling it on foreign markets at competitive prices (ie, at less than world market prices) is first of all a violation of the Jastrzebie Agreements (August 1980) in which it was clearly established that coal is a national resource which must be used rationally. The above-mentioned pricing policy transforms investment in the mines into a straight economic loss.

Secondly, the Polish government's policy blatantly contradicts official propaganda which declares respect for the miners'

dignity and endeavour. Thirdly coal distribution and trade is organised outside of any social control. The Polish government has no right to behave like a mine-owner and to dispose of the national wealth as it pleases. Only the damned capitalists and dictators act in this way. Fourthly, the Polish governments policy in this field affects the basic interests of brother miners from other countries who lose their jobs as a result of it.

We hope the Party authorities and parliament — who say they represent the people — explain what is really going on.

To the striking miners of Great Britain: The Underground Provisional Coordinating Committee of Solidarity miners sends you fraternal greetings and our support and solidarity for your struggle for the right to work. We know from our own experience what it means to lose a job. For this reason we will do everything possible to support your struggle, including in action. The protest we have sent to the Polish government and parliament is an initial measure taken in support of your struggle.





To the striking miners of Great Britain

The leadership of the provisional coordinating committee (of Solidarnosc) of the region of Upper Silesia is mandated to send you a motion of support for your struggle and your fight in defence of an elementary human right — the right to work.

After a discussion and an exchange of points of view, our organisation send you full support for your struggle. We are full of admiration for your stance and your unfailing willingness to struggle. We believe you will achieve your goals.

Neither the British government's mounted police charges nor its truncheon blows, anymore than the Polish junta's tanks or rifle fire, can break our common will to struggle for a better future for the working class.

We appeal to all members of Solidarnosc to support your struggle. Only the international struggle of the mass of workers can decide our fate.

David Jastrzebski (President)

For the Underground Provisional Coordinating Committee of Solidarnosc in the Region of Upper Silesia

Translator's note: Upper Silesia is the chief coal mining region of Poland.

The miners' strike in Britain has now been going on for four months. They are fighting for their jobs. At the same time the Polish government is massively exporting coal to Britain — as usual it is taking the side of the employers in a struggle with the workers.

The appeal of the British dockers to the Polish dockers unfortunately went to the wrong address. The Polish neo-trade unionists' are strong on words, but they have carefully hidden the dockers' letter.

We do not accept that the miners and dockers of Poland involuntarily contribute to breaking the strike of their British comrades. We call for the halting of exports of coal to Great Britain. We call for full victory to the British miners who are fighting for their rights and we send them our trade union solidarity.

Political group Robotnik (The Worker) Editorial Board of Robotnik, journal of the MRKS (Inter-factory Workers Committee of Solidarnosc) Emmanuel Goldstein group Robotnik, no 64, 25 June 1984, Warsaw.

1. translator's note: the official trade unions.

To the President of the National Union of Mineworkers on strike in Great Britain

Dear Comrade,

Allow me to send you the expression of my support and my enthusiasm. For many weeks you have represented the interests of your trade union with dignity.

At the same time I ask you to consider our own difficult situation — activity which is clandestine and under totalitarian threats — which means there are many things we cannot resolve rapidly, often for security reasons. In the coming weeks we will send you greetings from other organisations [of Solidarnosc] which support your struggle.

I wish you the best, and above all victory. I ask you to send our greetings to all British miners and our best wishes.

Personally I am convinced that thanks to the attitude of your trade union victory is within your grasp, with best wishes.

David Jastrzebski (President)

For the Underground Provisional Coordinating Committee of Solidarnosc in the Region of Upper Silesia

Letter to Arthur Scargill, leader of the British miners

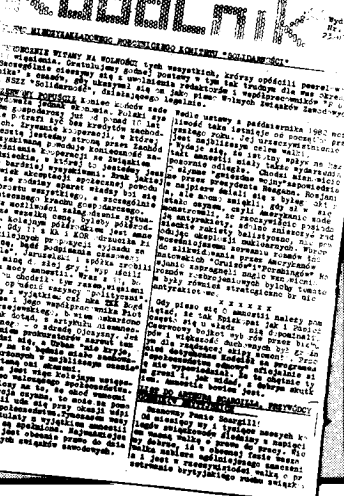
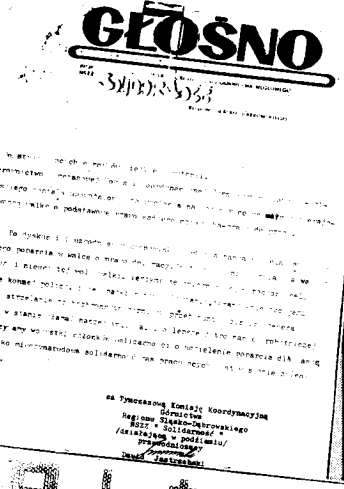
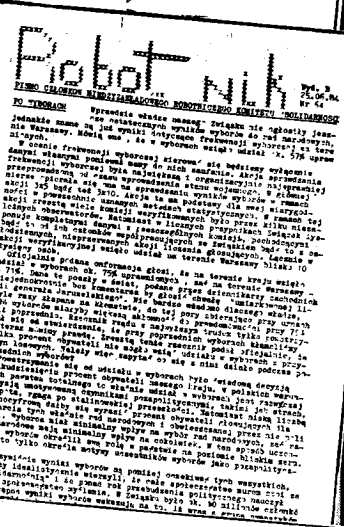
Dear Mr Scargill,

For months ourselves and thousands of our fellow trade unionists have anxiously followed your struggle for the right to work. We know that at the present time your struggle is taking on a new importance and that it is in fact a struggle for the survival of the British trade union movement.

We have already condemned, and we repeat vigorously our condemnation, of the export of coal to Britain by the Jaruzelski regime.

Given that Thatcher gets on so well with Jaruzelski we think that it is time to draw some lessons. We hope that in the name of workers solidarity you will change your negative attitude to our movement. We ask you to make known to the British miners, and to all the trade unionists of Britain, our solidarity and our support.

Political group Robotnik (The Worker) Editorial board of Robotnik, journal of the MRKS (Inter-factory Workers Committee of Solidarnosc) Emmanuel Goldstein group Robotnik, no 68, 23 July 1984, Warsaw.



Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill meet to divide the world after WWII.

# What attitude to Eastern Europe?

THE UNITED STATES world war-mongering has begun to break up cold war attitudes. People no longer accept without question that the threat of war comes from the East.

However, when Jaruzelski crushed Solidarnosc, he put a spotlight on repression and dictatorship in Eastern Europe, and thus exposed one of the left's principal dilemmas. Is it right, and is it possible, to fight for freedom in Eastern Europe, and still defend it against Reagan's warmongering?

The left often seems to face both ways. It knows what the US is doing in Central America and it knows the Soviet Union gives aid (often limited) to liberation struggles. But it instinctively backs those, like Solidarnosc, who are fighting for freedom in the East. This leads sometimes to two contradictory approaches.

One approach, not confined to the Communist Party, says that Solidarnosc and the independent peace movements in Eastern Europe must be wrong because they threaten governments under attack from Reagan.

Others back Solidarnosc and believe that since the West is 'freer', either one must support Western alliances such as NATO or, at best, one must demand that the Russians disarm before Western disarmament can be contemplated.

There are two issues at stake. The first is a failure to distinguish between what should be defended, and what should be destroyed, in Eastern Europe. The second is a failure to understand who can bring freedom to the peoples of Eastern Europe and how to create the best conditions for their success.

If Eastern Europe is approached by asking how Solidarnosc could best achieve its aims, most of these apparent contradictions can be resolved in a consistent, single policy.

Where does the most potent threat of war and repression come from? It is the USA that has a military alliance stretching across the globe. The USA that ringed the Soviet Union with missiles and bases before the Warsaw Pact was created.

The USA made the first atom bomb. It made the first hydrogen bomb. Only the USA has used the

bomb in war. The USA stands behind every third world dictatorship from Turkey to El Salvador. It imposes economic blockades on every country, such as Cuba or Nicaragua, that throw off their dictators if the United States considers they represent the slightest threat to US interests.

This is not just because Reagan is a warmonger, it is a consequence of the USA's economic system, a result of private capital's insatiable thirst to dominate all markets at whatever cost to human life and welfare.

The suppression of the people of Eastern Europe by the Kremlin leadership follows a different economic logic from the USA's. It flows not from economic need but from the bureaucracy's obsession with protecting its borders, its 'sphere of the world', and its political domination over the working class in Eastern Europe. Far from opposing this domination the West connives at it and fears any really independent mass movement in Eastern Europe.

Moreover, the excuse for militarising Eastern Europe, and repressing its peoples, is the war threat from the West. This is a real threat, and assists the bureaucracy. Disarmament of the West would deprive the bureaucracy of its most powerful political and ideological weapon, but it is the West which has consistently opposed any moves even to minimal arms reduction in Europe. It is this constant military pressure which provides the excuse for the USSR's continued military presence in Eastern Europe.

If the aim is to support the working class of Eastern Europe then we have to build a force which is independent of Reagan and Thatcher — and directed first and foremost against them. It is the anti-missiles, anti-war, and labour movements in Western Europe which are the greatest allies of Solidarnosc in the East. A movement that backs Solidarnosc against Poland's rulers but which also defends the rights of Polish, Russian and East European peoples to defend themselves against US military aggression.

Jaruzelski overthrown by Polish workers — that's a great step to socialism. Jaruzelski and the Polish workers both crushed by Reagan's war machine — that's the counterrevolution and the strengthening of reaction the world over.





Hong Kong

# Hauling down the flag



Mao declaring the founding of the Peoples' Republic of China, 1 October 1949.

THE RETURN to China of Hong Kong, stolen by British imperialism at gun-point a century and a half ago should be welcomed by every socialist. The reunification of China and ending imperialist control of both Hong Kong and Taiwan has been an objective of the Chinese Communist Party since 1949.

The terms of the deal with Britain, however, represent a significant deepening of the Beijing government's rightward move over the past ten years. Ironically, this deepening of a reactionary course comes almost exactly on the 35th anniversary of the victory of the Chinese revolution itself.

The Chinese-British agreement's main aim is to preserve the capitalist domination of Hong Kong's economy. The Chinese leadership sees this as essential to its own development plans — which involve an increasing element of capitalist penetration of the Chinese economy. For world capitalism, the agreement offers fresh opportunities for exploitation of the most populous market in the world.

But important though such profit and loss calculations are, the core of the agreement is political. It is aimed at strengthening the existing agreements between imperialism and the Chinese bureaucracy against the revolutionary struggles in Asia.

For the past ten years the Chinese regime has followed an open counter-revolutionary course, in Asia and on a world scale, on the pretext of fighting Soviet 'social imperialism'.

The Chinese government's record in that time is eloquent. In Africa, China supported UNITA in the Angolan civil war

(which placed it alongside South Africa!). In the Middle East it gave support to the Shah of Iran, and in Latin America to Pinochet's dictatorship in Chile. In Europe support was given to the EEC. In Asia, Beijing congratulated the Sri Lankan regime on its repression of the left wing JVP.

By Pat Hickey

The significance of Beijing's orientation in Asia can hardly be overestimated. This region has been at the centre of world revolution since 1945. There have been five successful revolutions there since World War II — in China, Korea, Vietnam, Kampuchea and Laos. It remains an area of great instability for imperialism, most notably at present in the rising political struggle against the Marcos dictatorship in the Philippines.

The Chinese Communist Party's alliances in the region for the last ten years have been with the United States and Japan against the liberation struggles. The Hong Kong



Photo: LAURENCE SPARHAM (IFL)

agreement underpins these alliances both politically and economically.

Economically the guarantees to Britain that Hong Kong's economic system will remain unchanged for 50 years after 1997 are designed to retain imperialist firms and capital in the colony — and to link that to existing capital investment in China itself.

China has already four Special Economic Zones (SEZ) open to foreign

capital in the cities of Shenhan, Xuhai, Xiame and Shantou. The government has announced 14 more SEZ's are to be opened. Corporate taxes in these zones are the lowest in Asia.

The Chinese government hope that these links with the US, Japan and Britain will enable it to speed up the pace of industrialisation. The capitalist states see juicy pickings in the export of iron, steel and heavy in-

dustrial goods — sectors of the economy which have been hard hit by the recession — and in the exploitation of cheap Chinese labour in light industry.

Agreements with capitalist powers that assist in the development of China's economy are, of course, perfectly acceptable. But not when they are accompanied by a reactionary foreign policy.

The present agreement was hardly necessary.

Thatcher could not have 'done a Falklands' on Hong Kong. The people of Hong Kong had nothing to expect from British rule — and it is a delight to see Britain thrown out of one of its last colonies. But unfortunately those same people have also been cynically bartered over by the Beijing regime.

Joy to see the British flag hauled down in yet another part of the world has to be tempered by that fact.

South Africa

# Thieves fall out

LAST WEEK saw the unusual sight of the British and South African governments trading insults. On the one hand this arose when six oppositionists took refuge from the regime in the Durban British consulate on 13 September.

In a tit for tat response the South African government then refused to extradite four 'businessmen', including a colonel in the South African Defence Corps, who were due to stand trial in Coventry for arms smuggling.

They are accused of illegally exporting sophisticated parts for an anti-missile radar system, working on behalf of Armscor, the South African defence production and procurement agency.

The Coventry magistrate originally confiscated their passports. But this decision was overturned and they were allowed to leave the country by High Court justice Leonard, who doubled bail and accepted assurances they would come back to stand trial.

The South African government explained the four were not returning because of Britain's refusal to expel the six from the Consulate.

British foreign office minister Baroness Young said that the government deplored the attempt to link the two issues and ex-

plained that the situation at the Durban consulate was not of the British government's choosing. She reaffirmed that the six would not be asked to leave against their will.

By Tony Southall

Obviously the South Africans used the consular occupation as a convenient way of avoiding embarrassment through detailed revelations in court about its arms' smuggling activities. Certainly a few collaborators in Britain would have been exposed.

By the weekend, South Africa seemed to be seeking a rapid resolution of the affair.

On Wednesday last week five of those accused with the refugees were released from detention. This led to speculation

that the six in the consulate might themselves be freed if they were prepared to come out.

Attention focussed on this affair somewhat overshadowed the continuing social crisis in South Africa. The miners' strike, scheduled for the second week of the month, was settled by an offer half way between the original claim of 25 per cent and the Chamber of Mines opening offer of 12 per cent.

Given the present depressed price of gold that was a good result for the union which held intact throughout the negotiations. It will now doubtless spread its membership beyond the present 20 per cent of South Africa's half million miners and be back for more next year.

Meantime the Vaal townships, scene of the big protests against the elections earlier in the month, have now been hit by a 90,000 strong high school boycott and the beginning of the new term.

Some commentators have speculated that last weeks diplomatic stand-off heralds a new 'tougher' approach by Britain to South Africa. It's



true that political and economic developments over the past few months have shown white supremacy in the Republic has a potentially very short life.

In such circumstances the leading imperialist countries will aim to cut their losses and manoeuvre for influence with the country's future black leadership. At a certain stage that could even mean backing them against the minority regime.

But this would be a far more dangerous enterprise in South Africa than it was in Zimbabwe. Firstly the leadership of the struggle is deep in the townships, mines and factories rather than based outside the country. Within South Africa it daily comes up

against the weight of imperialist capital. It would be very difficult to convince black South Africans that Thatcher's government suddenly becomes their friend by harbouring six refugees for a fortnight.

Secondly exactly because British capital is still the biggest investors in South Africa it has the most to lose through the collapse of the racist structures that ensure its profit.

To that extent it's the behaviour of Justice Leonard, not the embarrassed reactions of Baroness Young, that will be typical as apartheid goes to its grave — dragging with it one of the most profitable sections of British overseas capital.

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# IRELAND UNFREE



## And after party conference?

IT WOULD be bickering to claim that Labour policy on Ireland has not advanced over the last two years, it has. When the 1981 Labour Party position of 'unity by consent' for Ireland was first put forward, it was another banal ritual.

'We believe in unity by consent'; Paisley says, 'there will never be consent'. So we say 'it is going to be a long hard slog to win consent. Maybe the Irish should make some more concessions to the loyalists to reassure Paisley about future intentions.' That was the line.

Meanwhile 'any weakening of the security forces will threaten Paisley', 'any talks with Dublin threaten Paisley'; 'more or less anything apart from what Paisley says will threaten Paisley'. And so the logic of the loyalist veto dragged the labour movement into the rut already scratched out by Rees, Mason and Concannon.

The new team of Peter Archer and Clive Soley have begun to evolve in a different direction. They have said firstly that they are no longer waiting for the consent of Paisley, Powell or Molyneux — that is, for the Unionist politicians. They hope that some protestants will support their policy and that a larger number can be persuaded not to resist it by force of arms.

## Veto

In the long run of course, it is a practical question of politics. The loyalists will attempt to resist a united Ireland by waging civil war and appealing directly to sections of the British ruling class 'over the heads' of any government embarking on a withdrawal policy. They will also appeal to British workers, and union leaders, who are more 'loyal to the Crown' than their own class.

Will their resistance and appeals be successful? The key question in Ireland and, it must be said, an important one in Britain will be what sort of united Ireland is being fought over?

The vast number of Irish workers have no wish to exchange Douglas Hurd's direct rule for that of a subservient Garret FitzGerald. There is no chance whatsoever of even a section of the North's protestant workforce 'consenting' to a home rule which really is Rome rule.

The second development of Archer-Soley is that the loyalist veto will not stand in the way of implementing any agreement that can be made between London and Dublin. But as Sinn Fein and generations of nationalists will testify, the capitalist parties in the South are not the best friends of a democratic socialist republic. They will do all they can to crush it.

## Reaction

A Dublin-London pact will inevitably give London the decisive voice. London has the economic and political power to ensure it. The only basis for agreement between London and the Dublin capitalist parties is for a new Ireland with jointly backed security measures against militant nationalism, joint pro-NATO military policy, joint measures to protect the profits of British and multi-national investors, measures to protect the 'protestant ethos' which allow discrimination in the North to continue, and an 'ecumenical' agreement which will separate government from the catholic church but retain all the church's reactionary social policies — particularly those on abortion, homosexuality and the family.

Such an agreement, if pursued, would make civil war an inevitability. It would weaken and confuse nationalists, and give credibility to Paisley's protestant crusade.

The only force for social change and unity of Ireland is that of the working class. Our policy in this situation must be to win British Labour to support for an immediate and unconditional withdrawal which means withdrawing troops, and renouncing sovereignty.

In this we must be guided by the Irish. There is a drawing together of the strands of a movement for Irish liberation: the left women of Sinn Fein, the strengthening of the Irish women's movement, and the determination of trade union leaders to speak out for 'unity and independence'. All deserve a listening audience in Britain. That is why the extension of the dialogue between Labour and the republican forces in Ireland remains a central task of the solidarity movement in this country.

# Central America: Calm before the storm

AT LABOUR'S 1983 conference, the party united against US policy in Central America and in defence of the Sandinista government in Nicaragua. But this summer Central America has moved off the front pages of the newspapers.

This is not a sign that peace is about to break out. Already the United States has denounced the Sandinistas' support for a peace plan drawn up by a group of Latin American states headed by Mexico — the 'Contradora group'. Instead the US has declared this plan to be a fraud and repeated blackmail proposals of its own.

Labour Party activists should be under no illusions: defence of the Central American revolution remains an urgent task. PHIL HEARSE looks at the calm before the storm.

CENTRAL AMERICA is awaiting elections — the US and Nicaraguan elections at the beginning of November. The FSLN has put forward Daniel Ortega for president. For the US ruling class the re-election of Ronald Reagan has to be out of the way before there can be a new open stepping up of the war in Central America.

But no one doubts that in 1985 the United States will redouble its assault on the Central American revolutionaries. The last four months of diplomatic manoeuvres are just a filler while we await the main show.

## Catch 22

In July, in a surprise move, US secretary of state George Schultz flew to Managua for talks with the Sandinista leaders. The talks were followed up by meetings between US special Central American envoy Harold Shlaudeman and Nicaraguan deputy foreign minister Victor Hugo Tinoco in Mexico.

The US is apparently demanding four conditions for an end to the contra war against Nicaragua — that the Nicaraguans stop arming Salvadorean guerrillas, hold elections, expel Cuban advisors and cut back its armed forces.

Since Managua hardly arms the Salvadoreans at all and is holding elections in November anyway, the

key demands are the cutting of the armed forces and the expulsion of the Cubans.

In effect the US demands are 'Catch 22' proposals — as the only reason for maintaining a large army and having a substantial number of Cuban military advisors is precisely to prepare for any possible US or US-backed invasion. The US is saying 'make it easy for us to cut your throat and we'll stop kicking your shins'.

In any event the US must know that there is little incentive for the Nicaraguan FSLN to meet their demands.

The contra war is going from bad to worse. Neither the Honduran nor Costa Rica-based contra groups have managed to capture any significant amount of territory, hold a town or inspire rebellion in the civilian population.

In early July the US senate voted by 88 to 1 against a \$21 million aid request for the contras. To many it seems as if the contra war is on its last legs.

The failures of the contra war do not mean however that the Nicaraguan revolution is now secure from military intervention. All it means is that the United States has to up the stakes and take a more direct hand in



Nicaraguan coal miners march on May Day

any counter-revolutionary attempt.

But given the general unpopularity in the US of the contra war, the Reagan government has to prepare the ground properly.

While the talking goes on, Washington's propaganda war is becoming more strident. The latest accusation is that Managua, and in particular the nine leaders of the FSLN junta, are deeply involved in 'international drug smuggling'.

This preposterous accusation has been spearheaded by General Paul Gorman, the US military commander in Central America, who refused to give any evidence but stated that it would come out 'sooner or later'!

Reagan's real approach to relations with the Sandinistas has been

clearly if somewhat farcically, revealed by the Sandinistas' discovery of a CIA comic book entitled *A Freedom Fighters Manual*, which advises Nicaraguans to slack at work, leave lights and taps on, smash windows, clog up toilets, damage books, cut telephone lines, make false hotel and plane reservations, and spread rumours.

The booklet has become a topic of popular hilarity in Nicaragua: clogged up toilets are not expected to bring the Sandinistas down in the near future.

## Duarte

Meanwhile the relative lull in the fighting in El Salvador came to an abrupt end in early August when 1000 FMLN guerrillas attacked the Cerron Grande dam which generates over 20 per cent of El Salvador's electricity.

After putting the dam out of commission the FMLN held off a helicopter-led counter-attack, and ambushed several army units making their way to the battle on foot. At the end of the day up to 700 government soldiers had been killed, one of the most severe and demoralising army defeats of the war.

The FMLN military attack comes in the wake of their much-debated peace proposals to the newly-elected president Napoleon Duarte. The proposals include the demand for a 'broadly representative government' which would 'clean up the army, dissolve the criminal police bodies, create a single unified army which would integrate our (the FMLN's) fighters,' and be based on 'the necessary socio-economic transformation' and 'honest and democratic general elections'.

It comes as no surprise that Duarte has rejected these proposals, and the FDR's offer of negotiations without preconditions. Washington's open support for Duarte in the recent elections was based precisely on their knowledge that Duarte's 'liberal' image would act as a cover for the stepping up of military intervention in the country.

Reagan and the State Department calculated that the election of the extreme-right candidate Roberto D'Aubisson would make their task exceedingly difficult, but that Duarte could to some extent disarm the liberal opposition to the war in the US. This calculation was confirmed by the collapse of Democratic Party opposition in the congress to new financial allocations to the Salvadorean government.

## Danger

For the moment, Duarte and the United States have continued to reject any dialogue with the FMLN-FDR. Their sole objective is to escalate the war behind a rhetoric of the need for peace.

The main danger of US intervention is that major bombing raids against the guerrillas will be organised, either from US aircraft carriers or from military bases in Honduras. For the US such attacks would have the major advantage of not involving their combat troops on the ground, while inflicting major damage on the guerrillas and their civilian supporters among the peasantry.

After the presidential elections in November, the scene will be set for a major clash between Reagan and the Sandinistas and for an all out attempt at military victory for counter-revolution in El Salvador.



Photo: M GOLDWATER (Network)

Photo: CHRISTIAN POVEDA (Visions)



## Local government debate

# 'Our emphasis is on money from government'



Cartoon: JIF

LAST WEEK Ted Knight, leader of Lambeth council, argued that the best strategy for confronting the government was not setting a rate for 1985. This week, HILDA KEAN, leader of Hackney council, explains her reservations about such a strategy and why a real fightback rests on mobilising local people in support of Labour councils' struggle.

**THE ATTACK** on local government through rate-capping legislation is analogous to Tebbit's anti-union legislation.

The Tories are attempting to destroy the traditional base of the Labour Party. This is particularly obvious with the attack on the Greater London Council, because of its powers to wage a political battle against Thatcher.

There's been lots of legislation to impose financial stringency on local authorities. But rate-capping is the final straw.

Abolition of the GLC and metropolitan counties is a structural attack on local government. Rate-capping is more subtle.

Councils will still exist, but their traditional rights have disappeared. Conse-

quently, the Rates Act is both about democracy and about jobs and services.

The Tories intend to chop £2½ billion off Hackney's budget in two to three years. When the figures were announced in July, things didn't look bad for Hackney. There was £1 million difference between the Department of Environment figures and our budget for 1984-85.

### Fight

However, like all councils, we have creative accounting, and our real budget this year was £106 million. To maintain expenditure, we need £112 — 115m next year. The Department of Environment figure is £82 million. To comply with the

Rates Act would mean redundancies and massive cuts across the board. Hackney, unlike other areas, doesn't have balances to draw on — there is nothing in our coffers. We have no way of getting by, so we have to fight.

The strategy for fighting was outlined at

the Sheffield local government conference in July. Now we must have a tactical discussion about how to implement that strategy of confrontation with the government.

The most important thing to understand is that the outcome of this battle will depend on whether we can mobilise

local people, not what manoeuvres take place in local council chambers.

Take Liverpool. They didn't refuse to meet Patrick Jenkin, but they realised the outcome would be determined by the action of people on Merseyside.

The other factor to consider is the way Labour councils are seen by people. Many do not have the popularity of the GLC.

People have become cynical about Labour promising the world and delivering very little.

I have reservations about the strategy of not setting a rate. I feel it doesn't contain a clear policy for mobilising people, neither does it deal with the credibility of local councils.

Whatever we decide, we have to take seriously the question of loan repayments. This is the single biggest expenditure of all local authorities.

### Loyalty

It seems to me totally absurd that, if we have no money to pay the local workforce and to run services, that we should continue to finance the City.

Our loyalty is to those who elected us, not to Maggie's friends.

Having said that, I think if we adopt deficit budgeting, and set a rate that doesn't cover our budget, then it's clear that

we are demanding money from central government. We would deal with rates by setting the smallest possible rate.

Last July, every Labour councillor in Hackney agreed this policy: 'We will not pass either in the form of rent or rate increases to the people of Hackney any additional grant penalty the government may levy on Hackney.'

We have reconvened a borough-wide conference for the end of October to discuss our tactics. The Labour group has stated its position — it's up to the local parties and the unions to say how they want us to implement this.

### Repayments

The effect in Hackney of not setting a rate would be that tenants would be subsidising ratepayers.

By not setting a rate, the whole campaign is concentrated on rates. But this is not what the Rate Act is about.

The Department of Environment statement nowhere refers to rates; the concern is expenditure.

I'm not sure if Ted Knight proposes not setting a rate as a final position or a negotiating one. Some councillors have argued that April to July 1985 should be a period of negotiations.

Right from the word go, our emphasis should be on getting money from the government, not the power to levy more rates.



Hilda Kean

Photo: GM COOKSON

# Labour's nuclear con-trick

WHATEVER THE outcome of Labour's annual conference, the debate on defence policy will rage in the months to come. It is only in the final few weeks before conference that party members have even begun to think about the implications of the new policy statement, *Defence and Security for Britain*.

So far the response has been muted. Many prefer to let sleeping NATO commitments lie, rather than risk jeopardising hard-won nuclear disarmament policies.

But are they right? More and more the answer is an obvious no.

By Carol Turner

From the start, Labour's so-called multilateralists have happily thrown in their lot with the statement — pointing out that 'firm support' for NATO membership is the most positive aspect of the defence document, and hinting at their future intentions to exploit the 'ambiguities' of Labour's unilateralist commitments.

What exactly is a nuclear base, asks Mr Healey? And just what does 'decommissioning' Polaris really mean? Soon the answers will begin to emerge.

After an initial flat refusal to support Labour CND's conference amendment, calling for a reduction in military spending within the lifetime of the next Labour government, the Labour Defence Liaison Committee is now supporting an open fudge of a composite on defence.

The composite tries to square the circle between the LCND amendment and that of the TGWU which 'abhors the fact that the Conservative government is destroying Britain's conventional defences and sacking thousands of defence workers to pay for its costly and suicidal escalation of the nuclear arms race'.

The new composite gives a commitment to reduce arms spending — but without saying by how much.

Whether passed or not, the process by which such a composite was arrived at shows how supporters of the defence policy will play things from now on.

### NATO

TGWU general secretary elect, Ron Todd, is making his position more than clear. He has publicly welcomed the defence statement as something 'I and others have struggled for many years to achieve' (*Tribune*, 28 September).

Mr Todd supports the document hook, line and sinker.

He insists that a cut in conventional spending could only be achieved within five years at the expense of defence workers' jobs. He doesn't believe we can overcome 'at a stroke' the British people's long-held view that the

Soviet Union is the main threat. And, far from thinking the document soft on NATO, the policy of changing it from within seems to him 'more fruitful than leaving America in control of NATO, with its finger on the button....'

### Misinform

Ron Todd raises many of the contradictions that lie at the very heart of Labour's new policy.

How do we change people's minds about who the enemy is if the defence document panders to the very propaganda of which Ron Todd complains? How can party activists challenge 30 years of cold-war rhetoric when their 'campaigning tool' takes as read that very same Soviet threat?

Not only are Labour's leaders afraid to challenge such widespread misinformation, but many of them actually go along with it. If the Greenham women had started from the status quo, there would be no majority in favour of ridding Britain of nuclear missiles today.

### Confusion

As for the view that NATO is to be changed from within, this simply misses the whole point of NATO's existence. From the moment of its inception, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation has been a war-fighting alliance, with nukes at its core.

At best, Labour's

NATO policy is a naive daydream; at worst a device to confuse debate and silence opponents of NATO within Labour's ranks.

Until those voices speak out, Labour will be saddled with a pig in a poke defence policy, sold because it repeats our nuclear disarmament commitments, but in reality advocating a policy of non-nuclear defence which fails to challenge NATO's plans.

Any discussion of defence must begin from

the question who are we defending ourselves against? Any solution lies in the direction of developing a socialist foreign policy that refuses to take as read the conventional wisdoms of Margaret Thatcher, Ronald Reagan, and the rest of the ruling class in the so-called free world.

In the months to come, Labour activists must start the ball rolling. We must press for, and win, a foreign policy that is genuinely in the interests of the working class as a whole.



Photo: DAVID GORDON

## Labour Under Attack: Defend Union Political Funds

Campaign Conference  
Saturday, 1 December 1984  
Central Hall, Westminster, London

The latest Tory trade union law aims to end trade union political funds and affiliation to the Labour Party by March 1986. The conference will plan a campaign of rank and file resistance, and consider ways of strengthening Labour Party-trade union links.

Registration: £3 per delegate  
More details: Labour Coordinating Committee,  
9 Poland Street, London W1V 3DG  
(phone: 01-439 3749)

Copies of a new broadsheet and other publicity material for the campaign are available from the LCC. Speakers for Labour Party and trade union meetings can also be supplied on request.

Campaign sponsors include:  
Arthur Scargill Alan Sapper Tony Benn David Blunkett  
Harriet Harman Eric Heffer Ken Livingstone Michael  
Meacher



# THE LABOUR PARTY

## Conference round-up

**There is a lesson from the miners' strike, and it applies to the whole labour movement: IF YOU FIGHT YOU WIN, IF YOU FUDGE YOU FAIL**



Photo: GM COOKSON

### RESELECTION

**DAY ONE** of the Labour Party conference was a real success for the left. The NUM's victory — over the heads of the Kinnock leadership — was swiftly followed by a defeat of the Evans proposals on reselection, by a card vote of 3,592,000 to 3,041,000

Reselection, more than any other single issue debated this year, is the barometer of party opinion. Kinnock's defeat is a serious setback for all those who sought to protect the seats of Labour's most unpopular MPs and to remove them from the democratic control of their local parties.

By Carol Turner

Moving emergency resolution no4 — which referred back the proposal on one member one vote — NUM general secretary Peter Heathfield expressed his and other unions' concern that they would be deprived of political representatives 'at the level where it matters'.

When trade unions and the party are facing the Tory onslaught against the political levy, we should not be adding to that problem 'by dividing among ourselves ... Conference should be about maximis-

ing unity in order to build a party more able to deal with the needs of working people.'

Conference didn't refer back the proposals. Instead it voted to throw them out — with the support of the TGWU whose delegation voted 17 to 12 against the Evans amendment, but who didn't speak during the debate.

The first day of annual conference was a victory for all those in struggle against the Tory government. It was a victory for all those in the party who have fought to win, and to protect, democratic accountability of Labour's representatives and Labour's policies.

That victory must be followed through. The dream ticket's honeymoon is over. The left must organise to protect its gains. It must begin to map out the policies which will take Labour forward in the fight on behalf of all the exploited and oppressed.

### DEMOCRACY

**Tony Benn on the next steps...**

**HOW DO WE** get a Labour government that's different next time? It's very simple: you elect the cabinet and the shadow cabinet by the electoral college. That's the only way you have a different government.

Michael Foot's book, *Another Heart Another Pulse*, spells out the alternative so clearly. He says the Labour Party is like the Holy Roman Empire. It has two heads: the Pope and the Holy Roman Emperor.

And that is what's wrong with the Labour Party. It is that you can go to conference, you can elect an executive you like, you can pass resolutions and get a two-thirds majority, you can get them into the

manifesto — but they will be implemented by ministers who are themselves there by patronage and not by election.

In the old days, a leader was elected only by Labour MPs. Now the leader is elected by the electoral college. If it's good enough to elect the leader and the deputy leader by the electoral college, then it's good enough to elect the shadow cabinet by the electoral college.

Until that is done you have no guarantee that you're not simply pushing a bit of hard — you can push as hard as you like at one end, but it doesn't move at the other. Democracy is about having accountability at the top of the party, at the top of the government, direct to the grass roots.



Photo: JOHN HARRIS

### NEC

**THE RESULTS** of the NEC elections means no major change in the political complexion of the executive this year.

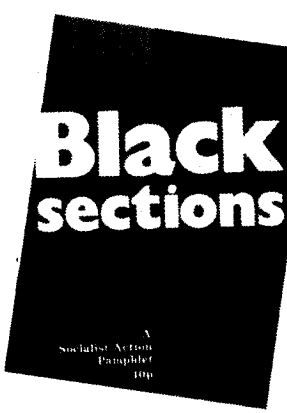
MP Robin Cook's attempt to climb the dizzy heights, under the guise of left credentials, met with the success it deserved — he missed by over 150,000 votes. If he stands next year, delegates should ensure that his vote is even

lower. It came as no surprise that Diane Abbott and late-comer Keith Vax didn't make it either, showing the lack of real commitment to positive action for women and blacks. It is further proof, if such is needed, that the battle to win the WAC demands and to establish black sections must continue.

**Black Sections Yes!**  
A Socialist Action pamphlet. Price 40p (plus 17p p&p), from PO Box 50, London N1. Why Labour needs black sections, with articles by Russell Proffitt, Ben Bosquet, and others...

**Black Sections Here to Stay: the Vauxhall Experience**

A Vauxhall Labour Party pamphlet. Price 35p (plus 17p p&p), from 1 Alverstone House, London SE11 5TS. Produced by Vauxhall party members as a contribu-



tion to the debate on black sections and how to set them up...

## 'Women and Blacks will win'

**THE RECORD** of Labour governments since 1945 is not an inspiring one. Government after government have failed to implement policies which have been agreed by the movement as a whole.

We saw at the last general election an erosion of working class support for Labour. The reason is very much the party's failure to deliver for its class as Thatcher is delivering for her class.

I am a councillor in an inner city area, where a third of people are black, and a third are Irish. I live in it, I represent it, in fact I was born in it.

What I hear from ordinary working class people there is 'you're all the same'. It is that feeling which lost us support. But the tide is beginning to turn, especially in London over the GLC issue.

I believe we'll win the next election and get a Labour Party into power. But it is important what sort of Labour government we get.

First that it should have the right politics. The



Photo: ANDREAS NICOLA

**Diane Abbott, speaking at a Briefing meeting**

involvement of women and black people must be maximised because it is they who can build a richer and better socialism. And it must be accountable.

When you talk to people about having more women and black MPs, they don't say it's a bad idea as such. But they talk about needing the right people, and about tokenism. What they are trying to say is that really and truly they don't think women and black people are up to it. They don't

think we are up to the exact standards set by white men in the party.

Let's talk about these standards. I voted for Neil Kinnock as leader but I was really taken aback when the miners strike got underway and Kinnock was still wittering on about a ballot.

This isn't what I was expecting of the Labour leadership. Imagine if Kinnock had been backing the strike right from the beginning, might it not have had an effect on Nottinghamshire?

In the same way Neil Kinnock jumped up to condemn black sections out of hand, and it is parallel to the way he's trying to force the Evans amendment on reselection. He is not listening to the rank and file but feeling that he knows best.

It is the left in this party, the grass roots activists, who want to build this party. When the next general election comes we'll be the ones on the doorsteps.

Let nobody question our will win. We will win as women and as black people, and we will win as socialists.

### WAC

**THE LABOUR** leadership is feeling the pinch from the demands of women in the party for more power. The NEC voted to reject all the proposals for constitutional change adopted by this year's Labour women's conference.

Despite the fact that 14 members of the executive voted against the proposals, initially not one of them was prepared to speak from the platform on the NEC's behalf.

Gwyneth Dunwoody was left to step into the breach. Her approach to positive action for women in the party is quite straightforward — she has the same line as Margaret Thatcher. 'If I made it without any help, so can you!'

It is that kind of attitude that has made her a universal hate-object among women in the party. The fact that Gwyneth Dunwoody seems to relish this simply underlines her rather anti-democratic and elitist approach to other women.



Photo: JOHN HARRIS

Gwyneth Dunwoody: a hate-object for Labour women

But the real scandal of the week was Neil Kinnock, talking to Robin Day on Monday night's *Panorama*. 'Why are we talking about this issue?', he asked, 'I know the woman who raised it. No one else is interested.'

The absurd claim that there is only one woman in the party interested enough to lobby on these points is bizarre. Especially as the conference of Labour women, representing all the women in the party, voted overwhelmingly for every single one of the constitutional changes!

Neil Kinnock is rattled. Labour women will win, and Neil Kinnock will have to eat humble pie. It may not be this week, but his next defeat is already clear.

## Maxwell's choice

**SOCIALIST ACTION** succeeded in provoking rage in Robert Maxwell's *Daily Mirror*.

Opening up its coverage of the Labour Party conference on Monday with an editorial rant entitled 'Facing the Future'. The *Mirror* proceeded to wade into the usual targets — the NUM, Arthur Scargill, Tony Benn, Ken Livingstone, and 'the piranhas of the hard left'. But the *Mirror* then passed on to conclude its editorial with a less well known target.

'One hard left newspaper, Socialist Action, filled its front page last week with the headline:

'Kinnock or Scargill. The choice for Labour.'

'That would be the choice between living and dying. To the sane and sensible it is no

## Mirror Comment

... issues which ... through the needs of the people.

**ALL THAT CAN CHANGE UNDER MR. KINNOCK.**

He is the new face of Labour compared with June, 1983. Not Tony Benn. Not Arthur Scargill. Not Ken Livingstone.

What they represent are the disasters of the past. They speak loudly but for a minority. They do not speak for the voters Labour needs to put Mr. Kinnock in No. 10.

**Choice**  
One hard left newspaper, Socialist Action, filled its front page last week with the headline:

'Kinnock or Scargill. The choice for Labour.'

That would be a choice between living and dying. To the sane and the sensible it is no choice at all.

When the time comes, the only choice for Britain will be between Neil Kinnock and Margaret Thatcher.

Mr. Kinnock is determined to present a real alternative. And he can do it. But only if his party will face the future and not retreat into the past.

**choice at all.**  
Well it is certainly no choice for the *Mirror*. But we think its attack means we hit the choice confronting Labour

right on the head with our headline.

As Chairman Mao-tse tung used to say, 'To be attacked by the enemy is not such a bad thing.'



# A Socialist ACTION

## Scargill shows Labour how to win

THE NUM have rammed home the lesson already taught to the labour movement this year by Liverpool and the GLC. As Tony Benn put it, 'If you fight you win, if you fudge you fail.'

Derek Hatton explained the same thing in the debate on campaign strategy when he said that Liverpool had smashed the myth that the left was an 'electoral liability.' Ken Livingstone has done the same in London.

People vote for a party that defends their interests. Strong socialist policies, and a determined fight against the Tories, have proved their ability to win support. It is the 'blow hot, blow cold' policy of Neil Kinnock, or the SDP-type policies of the Labour right that lose support.

That is the real lesson of the opinion polls that have come out recently. Kinnock's popularity began to fall drastically not when the miners' strike began — for it has been going on for seven months — but after his mealy mouthed attack on 'miners' violence' at the TUC. For if the miners, not the police, are the problem then who needs a Labour Party?

The *Sunday Express* had the same shock last weekend. It had commissioned an opinion poll among miners which it

obviously intended to make its front page lead. Believing its own rhetoric the *Express* expected to find Scargill deeply unpopular among the NUM members and huge demand for a ballot developing. Instead it found 57 per cent of miners against a ballot and only 41 per cent in favour.

What is more if a ballot had been held 63 per cent of miners would have voted for a strike and only 31 per cent against.

### Struggle

It is a long determined struggle, policies that meet peoples' needs, that is the way to victory for Labour. That is why the policies which Neil Kinnock and Roy Hattersley are trying to impose on this weeks conferences are all the more criminal.

For after Monday's victories the full scale of the fight which is going to face the left is being unveiled. A defence document which commits Labour to a conventional weapons build up. An economic policy document that abandons any commitment even to renationalise the major industries privatised by Thatcher. And behind that Kinnock has made it clear that he is not going to abandon the attempt to overturn the democratic gains of the party.

### Victory

Because the challenge which the left faces in the next year is to turn the successes it gained on Monday into much more permanent victories. To organise itself, and to adopt the policies, that can throw back the Kinnocks and Hattersleys.

Arthur Scargill is showing Labour how to win in the fight against the Thatcher government. The left must consolidate that victory inside the Labour Party itself.

# WORK FOR PEACE



**BEGIN AT BARROW**  
SATURDAY • OCTOBER 27  
CND NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION

BARROW-IN-FURNESS • CUMBRIA  
Assemble Trident Dock 1pm • Rally 3 30

## STOP TRIDENT

## More police violence at Greenham

THOUSANDS OF WOMEN have been staying at Greenham during the 10 days' action against the NATO war games. And tens of thousands arrived for the last weekend. The police and US soldiers were kept busy mending holes in the fence which was breached many times.

Exploiting the fact that women peace protestors will not retaliate, the police stepped up their violence and harassment. As women pulled at the fence at Orange gate, a police horse galloped straight at a woman photographer, who was taken to hospital with concussion.

Around the base women were randomly arrested for criminal damage. Angry crowds of us saw two women dragged through a hole in the barbed wire, into the base to comments of: 'You wanted to get through, so now you can.'

Meanwhile horses were used along a steep, narrow and muddy path at the perimeter to block the holes and press women in-

to the fence. Lucky no one was killed.

An eye-witness report from Ilona Aronovksy, London Region CND

All this won't keep women away. The response to the call for the 10 million women has been terrific.

But the action raises important questions. Camp women are under big pressure in the face of the coming evictions. How can the massive support that undoubtedly exists be mobilised to ensure continuity of the peace camp? A national meeting of Greenham groups is urgent.

Given the violence and the abuse from police and soldiers alike that any women faces who goes to Greenham, what is the way forward for the camp? This women's peace movement has the strength and mass support not to be marginalised, but we must use our militant stance on unilateralism, NATO and direct action tactics, to confront and make demands on CND and the Labour Party for real support.

### Blocade

For instance the Labour Party campaign bus, which visited Greenham last week, should have been used to support the women blockading the main gate, not just driven around.

And why has CND nationally avoided building this action, and missed a golden opportunity to campaign openly and directly against NATO?

To build the support that the Greenham women need and deserve, we have to confront attempts within CND to water down CND's unilateralist policies, and the contradiction between Labour's unilateralism and its pro-NATO defence policy.

The Glasgow-Cathcart composite to this week's party conference — calling for an end to all US bases, nuclear or otherwise — is one step towards this. Continued support for the women at Greenham is another.

• The concussed woman referred to in our article on Greenham Common action is Dana Schuerholz, a 20-year old student of photographic journalism, who was charged by two police on horseback. She is making an official complaint against the police and taking up her case with the National Council for Civil Liberties.

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