

# A Socialist ACTION

**BUILDING AN ALLIANCE FOR SOCIALISM**

## INSIDE

Heseltine's war machine p6

When scabs get together p2

Labour women p4

Labour's witch-hunt p5

Kingsley Abrams on the LPYS p3



# Tory cabinet crisis: 1 down 21 to go!

'WHAT HAD been a squall only six weeks ago has now turned into a cyclone for the government.'

That was one Tory cabinet minister's response on Tuesday to the Westland's fiasco. With the resignation of Michael Heseltine being followed by the public disgracing of Leon Brittan in the House of Commons, the Thatcher government faces the biggest internal crisis since it came to office.

The reasons which have brought the Tory splits to a head are clear.

- Westland's is an important issue in itself. Military production is the area where the EEC countries have achieved the greatest cooperation with the United States.

The 'pro-American' and 'pro-EEC' lobbies within the Tory party, and within British industry, are bloodily fighting it out over Westlands.

- Thatcher's economic position is being undermined by the fall in the world price of oil. Interest rates had to be sharply raised to 12.5 per cent last week, hitting industry, to prevent the slide in the exchange rate of the pound which was caused by the decline in the price of North Sea oil.

The fall in tax revenues from North Sea oil has already cut half the £3 billion in tax cuts which Nigel Lawson intended to give away in his March budget.

- Following the miners' strike, and last autumn's inner city rebellions, sections of the establishment continue

to fear that Thatcher's policies will finally lead to some sort of social and political explosion. This fear is increased given the new problems with the government's economic policies.

Put all these things together and you get not only a sharp fight within the ruling class but a struggle breaking out within the Tory party for the successor to Thatcher. That Tory fight is likely to get worse and not better.

What is criminal in this situation is the policies being pursued by Neil Kinnock and the parliamentary leadership of the Labour Party. This is the moment when Labour should be smashing into the Tories in a totally united fashion. Not only is there the Westland's crisis, mass unemployment, the welfare state, and the other attacks of the Thatcher government, but lurking in the background is the still smouldering Johnson Matthey banking scandal.

But in this situation the party leadership has instead turned the party inwards for a witch-hunt. As Arthur Scargill said, speaking in Lambeth's on Sunday: 'It is almost criminal while the Tories are turning on each other to divert our energies in an inward attack on ourselves. We should be fighting for nationalisation.'

The response of the party to Kinnock's failure must be clear. The next meeting of the NEC must drop the witch-hunt. It must turn the party outwards for mass campaigning against the Tories.

Only by doing this can Labour make the gains which are now possible from the Tory crisis.



# Socialist ACTION

## A threat to every union

THE TUC was right to take a hard line against Hammond and Co's proposal to negotiate a legally binding no-strike deal with Rupert Murdoch's News International Wapping plant. The partial back-down by the electricians leaders at Tuesday's meeting amply demonstrates that point.

Murdoch's ultimatum went far beyond what other newspaper barons have secured. Indeed, it went beyond any union deal which exists in Britain today. Legally enforceable contracts of the type Murdoch demanded are nothing more than a proposal that human beings should be placed on the same legal level as animals or inanimate objects.

The idea of legally binding contracts has been a key part of the Tories' union strategy for almost 20 years. It was the 1968 Tory policy paper, humorously entitled *Fair Deal at Work*, which first called for: 'putting collective agreements on a par with any other type of contract — no more and no less.' Three years later the Heath government's Industrial Relations Act tried to practice this.

That Act made all union agreements, including dispute procedures, legally binding unless there was an explicit clause to the contrary. That was defeated at the time. First by the fact that almost every agreement concluded while the Act was in operation *did* include such a clause. Second by the action of the dockers and the threat of a general strike when the Pentonville Five were imprisoned, and finally by the resistance of the engineers to the judgement against them by the National Industrial Relations Court which had been established under the Act.

Thatcher raised the whole issue again in 1981 with a 'consultative' green paper on trade unions. It extolled the 'benefits' which legally enforceable agreements 'appear to have brought to other countries (and which) could be realised here.' But she didn't yet dare attempt to make union contracts legally binding.

At the beginning of this year, the *Financial Times* surveyed the problem again. The best way to introduce them, it thought, was on new sites. It singled Wapping out.

The reason for the pressure is simple. Legally binding agreements have been shown internationally to be a tremendous weapon with which to weaken union organisation and power. British unions stand almost alone in resisting them. To introduce them here would totally alter the basis of industrial relations. And that is exactly what the EETPU leadership tried to do.

All along the electricians have proclaimed their defiance of TUC policy. In a letter to Norman Willis on 7 January, Hammond wrote: 'the advice (given by Willis against the EETPU's stand on Wapping) is a massive extension of TUC, indeed your own, authority over local negotiations... Our members cannot be made to conform to decisions of other unions, even with the backing of your "advice". I fear your letter is the beginning of an attempt to do so.'

Far from opposition to legally binding deals with employers being a new development in British trade unionism, in fact it is a bedrock of the union movement in this country from its very beginnings. Maintaining that status quo is a prerequisite to defending working people against the onslaught of the ruling class. The TUC position on this *must* be upheld.

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# When scabs get together

LAST Friday's 'energy conference' between the EETPU leadership and the UDM was a calculated insult to the entire trade union movement. The EETPU leadership have had not only private but official links with the UDM since the latter's foundation. Prendergast, co-leader with Lynk of the UDM organisation, is vice chair of 'Mainstream' — the right wing organisation whose founding chairperson was Terry Duffy. The UDM is working in practice, at least in the Midlands, with the pit deputies union NACODS and the colliery management union the BACM.

## Rules

But the holding of an open conference between the EETPU leadership and the UDM leadership was a move to openly flaunt and legitimise those links. The meeting, held at the EETPU's conference centre at Cudham Hall Kent, was attended by 12 representatives from the EETPU and 12 from the UDM. The UDM delegation included its general secretary Lynk and its president Ken Toon. The EETPU delegation included its general secretary Hammond and its president Tom Breakell.

The meeting was also attended by representatives of the National Coal Board and the Central Electricity Generating Board. It is worth noting that Hammond, who was meeting with a non-TUC organisation the UDM, is chair of the TUC energy committee.

The meeting was condemned not only the left wing but even by Norman Willis — who expressed 'serious and grave concern'. The right wing AUEW executive unanimously refused to support the meeting.

The NUM executive last Thursday decided to call for TUC action against the EETPU under TUC Rule 13 on disciplinary measures.

Arthur Scargill, speaking after the executive meeting stated: 'We will be asking the TUC to look at the involvement of the EETPU in discussions and support, both publicly and privately, for the breakaway organisation from the NUM, and the continued involvement they are apparently having with the leadership of that organisation.'

'It is our view that the activities of the EETPU are contrary to TUC rules, and we shall be asking the TUC to investigate the matter and take action... The very fact that the electricians are inviting people who were previously in membership of this union and are not recognised by the TUC is one of the issues that will form part of our complaint.'

## Right

UDM president Toon outlined wider goals for the relation of the UDM with the EETPU, and the right wing of the TUC. He announced on 4 January: 'We've already got a relationship, with the electri-



LAST WEEK the EETPU leadership mounted an open attack on the NUM, and the entire trade union movement, by holding a well-publicised 'conference' with the UDM. ALAN MURRAY looks at the significance of the link up between Eric Hammond and superscab Roy Lynk.

cians and friends in the engineers and with other union leaders in powerful positions. I'm not prepared to meet in secret. We intend to try to create an energy union.'

Toon added: 'It is natural that the UDM, which is associated with coal mining, should get

together with the electricians, who also have interests in energy, and perhaps form some kind of amalgamation in the energy sector.'

Eric Hammond, speaking the same day, declared that the EETPU leadership had a close friendship with the UDM. 'We find ourselves having

a great deal in common with them. We will be having an exchange of ideas,' he said.

Questioned on 10 January on the possible violation of TUC rules that might be involved in the meeting with the UDM, Hammond openly stated: 'Any rule that prevents our friendship with the leaders of another democratic organisation would not be worth observing.'

Hammond appeared at the well-publicised press conference following the Friday meeting flanked by Lynk and Toon. Hammond argued that what had taken place was: 'an innocent meeting between two democratic organisations trying to deal with the problems of their industries.' More bluntly he stated that: 'It's important that the UDM recognise that they have friends inside the TUC.'

Hammond made it clear that he was against any attempt by the TUC to isolate or crush the UDM. He declared: 'I don't believe there is a chance of there being a mending of the breach without the UDM seeing that it has friends inside the TUC.'

'The only other way to deal with the UDM is to destroy it. I don't believe the TUC or the NUM have the means to destroy the UDM.'



Toon echoed Hammond, stating that: 'Both the TUC and Labour Party will have to acknowledge the UDM.'

Lynk used the platform of the press conference to declare that: 'Everything we have done is in the open.' He added that the conference was 'just the physical manifestation of our friendship' between the EETPU and the UDM.

The conference decided that meetings between the EETPU leadership and the UDM would continue. It specifically determined that further conferences of the same type would be held. This will be one of the bases of the NUM's call for TUC action against the EETPU leadership.

## Crush

But the real significance of the meeting was admitted by Breakell at the press conference when he said: 'Some of us saw in the mining dispute, not completely and directly, images of the communist dictatorship of the electrical trades union. We are beginning to think that perhaps we ought to start fighting again.'

The meeting, in short, was based on the EETPU leadership's hostility to the miners' strike and the type of fight for its members' jobs the NUM waged. All the stuff on 'com-

munist dictatorship' is just piffle. The EETPU leadership has ruthlessly suppressed democracy in the union just as the UDM leadership has in that organisation.

Significantly the UDM is not the only scab organisation with which the EETPU leadership is alleged to be talking — although it is by far the most important. Last August the no-strike, anti-union Professional Association of Teachers announced that it was to have discussions with the EETPU leadership. These were to cover how to apply no-strike deals and 'pendulum arbitration' to teachers. This announcement was directly motivated as flowing out of the no-strike agreement the EETPU had signed with Eddie Shah.

Jimmy Knapp and Ray Buckton have also written to Norman Willis asking for enquiries into reports



that Hammond and the non-TUC scab Federation of Professional Railway Servants had been talking to each other. Hammond denied this accusation.

The significance of the EETPU's 'conference' with the UDM is clear. The UDM sees it as a way to gain an 'energy union' which would bolster their organisation, protect it from the fight back from the NUM, and take it into the TUC. The EETPU sees its links with the UDM as a crucial part of organising



## Hostility

extreme right wing, pro-management forces inside and outside the trade unions. This also provides part of its plans for an alternative TUC if, or when, this should become necessary.

Last week's meeting between Hammond and the most significant scab organisation in Britain shows just how far the EETPU leadership is now prepared to go.

Kingsley Abrams on

# Black youth and the LPYS

## "Why I'm standing for the NEC"

**THE LABOUR PARTY** Young Socialists must be turned into the radical campaigning wing of the party that it has the potential to be, argues **KINGSLEY ABRAMS**, the black section candidate for the LPYS seat on Labour's national executive. But for that to happen the LPYS has to learn to build links with young people in struggle. That means championing the cause of black youth, he explained to **ANNE KANE**. The LPYS will never be able to do this until it comes to grips with the demands of black people and women for self-organisation.

The Labour Party Young Socialists has the potential to be an active, progressive wing of the party. But that means challenging the current YS leadership which is *Militant* dominated. That is the first reason why I am standing as the black section candidate for the YS place on the party's national executive committee. We must turn the youth section of the Labour Party into a progressive, radical and socialist movement.

The second reason is because since black sections movement started our main opponents on the left have been *Militant*. Black sections have to be active within the youth movement in order to take up the issue of black self-organisation within the youth section.

The official position taken by the LPSY leadership on the rebellions of black youth show their backwardness in addressing themselves to struggles going on. Instead of looking at the wider aspects of the rebellions, seeing them as a consequence of what has been going on for years in terms of police racism, and state racism and victimisation — instead of looking at those aspects of the struggle of black youth, they condemned looting etc.

### Ballot

The same goes for other struggles. For example, the miners' strike. The YS leadership supported the call for a ballot instead of looking at events within the mining community. The failure of the youth leadership to address themselves to the struggles within our movement bears comparison with the Labour leadership, who also refuse to support such struggles.

The black section has long recognised that if we are going to get black self-organisation within the Labour Party, then we must be as strong inside the party as is the self-organisation of black people within the community. That is why we have stressed the need for building our links within the black community, with the defence campaigns and also with international struggles.

Black sections have been involved in those defence committees because we see our role as helping to organise and mobilise black youth in struggle. And we recognise that these defence campaigns are a very important aspect of that.

The basic problem with attracting black youth to the party is the way the LPYS leadership reduces

race oppression to class oppression, and hence fails to address itself to racism. Because of that, it does not see the need for black self-organisation.

Unless the YS understands that need for black self-organisation there will be no way it can come to grips with the wider problems black youth face — and no way it can campaign to get black members into the party and get them as active as they ought to be. And the same goes for young women.



Another aspect of the right to self-organisation is the situation in Ireland. The position of the black section is first of all for British withdrawal from Ireland and for a united Ireland. We support the right of Irish people to decide their own destiny. That is what the leadership of Sinn Fein talks about, linking that to the historical aspects of Irish oppression.

That also applies to black people. We recognise the parallels between us and the position of Irish people and Sinn Fein. We must both know our history and know where we are going. We must both be able to decide our own destinies.

These issues would be priorities for me to take up as the youth member of the NEC.

### Government

Youth in general and especially black youth face high unemployment. Black section gives full support to the Campaign group of MPs' position as expressed in the pamphlet by Andrew Glynn — which talks about the need to create a million jobs a year, to create jobs for everyone. Economic policy is another important issue for any NEC youth member to take up.



The YS representative must oppose the position of the party leadership who are saying that a Labour government will not be in any position to make jobs available for everyone.

But standing as the black section candidate, I am particularly concerned with the politics of forming alliances. We have to recognise that we need to build a broader movement for socialism, that the Labour Party is a federation which should have a broad appeal: to gay men and lesbians, to women, to black people, to Irish people. That is a question which the Young Socialists leaders have not addressed themselves to, because they are reductionist in their approach to politics. I mean especially the way they argue class politics. I am standing to challenge that position.

### Model

What happened in the miners' strike is a model for the Young Socialists. I must say I have lots of heroes, — and NUM leader Arthur Scargill is one of them.

He has taken a principled position in supporting black section at the last two Labour Party conferences. We didn't tell him how to organise his strike, and he's not going to tell black people how to organise.

The YS as a whole should take that same position of recognising and giving support to people's struggle. That



means going to them to find out what they are about — and then supporting what they are doing.

The miners recognised the support they received from the black community

during that historical period — and from women as well. In recognising that, they have seen the need to link struggles and make alliances. We in black sections too have seen that need for a long time now. I would contrast that with the approach of the YS leadership.

### Racism

Racism and sexism are not separate from class politics. The reason why Arthur Scargill is one of my heroes is because he is one of the best class fighters in this country. He led the miners' strike, one of the most important class struggles.

This is what I mean by the backwardness of the LPYS leader. The miners can see the need to build alliances and the YS leadership can't.

To build those sorts of links, the YS first of all has to address itself to struggles that are going on — and support them. Recognising the need to build links takes the YS away from the *Militant* reductionist position.

Just imagine if we'd had the miners' struggle at the same time as the rebellions in the inner-cities. Think of the impact that would have had, and the way it would have stretched the resources of the state. They wouldn't have been able to provide enough police for the strike and the inner-cities. That is a simple example of the potential that making alliances has.

### Alliances

These links are crucial to building support for socialism within the party and especially in the youth movement. Instead *Militant* have allowed themselves to be part of an alliance with the right wing in the party, to attack black sections and others on the left. But the right wing have used *Militant*, for example to attack black sections, then turned on *Militant* and attacked *Militant*.

The enquiry into Liverpool District Labour Party is basically a front for more expulsions. The black section is totally opposed to witch-hunts. We think that everyone should have the right to express their opinion within the



Labour Party. In fact, we were the first people to write to *Militant* to propose working with them in opposing witch-hunts.

Those witch-hunts against *Militant* and others on the left are going to continue. But I don't believe that *Militant* has yet grasped the need to work with the rest of the left in opposing witch-hunts. We have seen black section supporters being witch-hunted as well as *Militant* supporters. Yet *Militant* has failed so far to work with us to organise against the witch-hunt of the right wing.

The left of the party doesn't witch-hunt. It has never split the party. Looked at historically, it is always the right who have divided the party. The SDP is only one example, even though a major one. The same goes for the unions. It is the right who are splitting the unions. The Eric Hammonds and the like are splitting the NUM by giving support to the UDM.



So I would call on *Militant* to recognise the need to organise with others on the left to oppose the right wing offensive. Black sections will defend anyone who is witch-hunted. The best defence against the witch-hunt is to join forces with others who are under attack: that means organising with women and black sections, CLPs and trade unions.

The LPYS is also under attack through the withdrawal of its funds. Combatting that means a change in direction — a change in policy and ideology for the YS. We must build a bigger youth movement by building the sorts of links with youth in struggle that I have referred to. The bigger and stronger Labour's youth movement is, the better it can combat witch-hunts and other attack.

Obviously, we're not

going to change the YS leadership overnight. My campaign is only the beginning in terms of changing the direction of the LPYS. As the black section candidate I am appealing to YS members on the need for a united campaign to challenge the policies now being carried out in the LPYS.

So far, I have been nominated as NEC candidate by Manchester Gorton, and supported by Dumbarton, Huddersfield and others. My campaign is also supported by *Youth Action*, the Chartist,

and NOLS. And also the Labour Coordinating Committee are supporting me.

It's high time that Young Socialist activists began to confront the problems of building a mass, radical movement of youth — and that means a dramatic re-think about the sort of leadership the YS has and the policies it has pursued till now. Standing a black section candidate for the youth place of the party's national executive is simply one way of beginning to do just that.

## Black section round-up

**VAUXHALL LABOUR PARTY** voted last week to uphold its decision that the local black section should be fully involved in reselection, despite a call from party headquarters to reselect without their participation. Early last year the constituency confirmed sitting MP Stuart Holland as its candidate with black section votes.

Vauxhall's refusal to toe the line is not considered likely to affect Holland's position. He called on party members to reaffirm their original decision and their support for black sections.

By Carol Turner

'Sanity has prevailed once more,' said Marc Wadsworth, black section vice chair and himself a member of the Vauxhall party. 'The NEC's call to reselect was a further attack on black sections, thinly disguised as trying to get parties to abide by the sanctity of conference decisions.'

'As far as we are concerned, our full participation in all the processes of the local parties is non-negotiable. My answer to the "constitutionalists" is that when the party leadership abides by Clause IV of the constitution — then we're in business.'

But the situation for black sections wasn't so good in Newham North West however. The reselection meeting there was stopped last week by Janice Muir on behalf of the NEC. She ruled that the meeting couldn't go ahead because black section delegates were involved.

Newham North West MP Tony Banks said afterwards that his first

loyalty' must be to the decisions of the local party. As one Newham delegate aptly commented, with one-third of Newham's residents from ethnic minorities, the argument is not about the constitution but 'the representation of all sections of the local community within the party'.

Things are looking up though for the black section in Tooting. An anti-racist conference held by the local party last Saturday overwhelmingly confirmed its support for black section delegates to be given full voting rights on the general committee.

Despite the fact that a black section has existed in Tooting for over a year, the party has only offered it fraternal, non-voting delegate places on the GC. This has been described by some black section supporters as 'bantustan tokenism.'

Tooting's next GC will be rediscussing the position of its black section.

The demand of the black section national committee is for parity with the women and youth sections of the party that is, two GC and one executive committee delegate with full voting rights. In view of the continued attack on black sections, this will be an important issue to press at the 1986 round of constituency annual meetings.

# Women's Action 'Shadow' election campaign launched

THE ANNUAL general meeting of the Labour Women's Action Committee, (LWAC) meeting in Manchester last weekend, launched its most important campaign for a number of years.

In the fight for the Labour Women's Conference to elect the women's section of Labour's NEC, this year the women's conference will hold elections anyway, LWAC will then campaign for support for the women elected throughout the labour movement.

The LWAC AGM took place at the end of a year which has seen come of the most important struggles of women, but at the same time, virtually no reflection of these struggles in terms of recognition of the leading role of women by the Labour Party.

The Women Against Pit Closures movement showed that women can lead the working class. Since the strike ended WAPC has played a key role in fighting for justice for sacked and imprisoned miners and in defending the NUM against the scab breakaway.

It has transformed the attitude of thousands of trade unionists to the role of women in the labour movement. Unfortunately it made no impact at all on the Kinnock/Hattersley leadership of the Labour Party, except to reinforce their view that women were as dangerous to their Labour Party as Arthur Scargill, Liverpool council, the black section and so on.

Within the unions there is the beginning of a real shift in the influence of women. In the recent election to the National Executive of the Tailor and Garment Workers Union women swept the board taking 11 out of the 14 national executive posts.

At Labour Party conference this year a resolution opposing the traditional 'free vote' of Labour MPs on abortion was passed overwhelmingly.

However, alongside these successes — and an enormous amount of rhetoric by Kinnock and others — no progress has been made in making the Labour Party more accountable and representative of women.

The number of women selected to stand in safe Labour seats is truly a disgrace. Party conference even rejected the modest proposal that at least one woman should be included on every short-list for parliamentary selection.

The next parliament will show no significant change in the number of women in the PLP. And we can be sure that the failure to represent women will be accurately matched by a failure to support and defend women.

This is why the demands of LWAC are so decisive, not just for women but for the whole future of the Labour Party.

Fundamentally there

are two different approaches to the Labour Women's Organisation. There is the approach of LWAC, supported by some other sections of the Party — Tony Benn, the

**By Jude Woodward,  
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NUM, the black section, some other MPs, trade unions and constituencies — that the potential impact of the women's section of the party is as a powerful instrument to organise women, give them a collective voice, and to forge an alliance based on mutual support between women and other sections of the party.

The approach of Kinnock, the majority of the PLP, the majority of the unions and many constituencies, is that the Labour Women's Organisation is a way to get women out of their hair, a place where the 'little women' can get together and discuss their problems without interrupting 'real' politics, which takes place in the rest of the Party. While the women's section of the NEC is just a mechanism to get some more of their supporters and 'yes' people onto the executive to ensure a built-in majority for the Labour right.

LWAC's platform, which now has overwhelming support in the Labour Women's Organisation, is aimed at achieving two main goals. Firstly to ensure that women are represented at every level of the party, including in the PLP and the NEC. And alongside this to turn the women's organisation into a real campaigning instrument, a real source of collective strength for women, with a real say in the Labour Party as a whole.

The precise demands echo many of those that have been raised by women in the unions at the Women's TUC since the mid '70s — for five resolutions to go directly on to the agenda of party conference from women's conference, for the women's conference itself to elect the women's section of the NEC, for democratic control by women's conference of the running of the conference itself and over the Labour Women's Committee, and a fight to get more women selected for parliamentary seats.

All of these demands are bitterly opposed by the bureaucracy of the Labour

Party and trade unions, because they see their control deeply threatened. It is also opposed politically by the Party leadership in particular which sees the consequences of the women's conference — the most radical national conference of the Labour Party — electing five of the members of the NEC. The demands also threaten the careers of many individual MPs, leading to real hostility from many sections of the PLP.

It is the issue of the NEC that the LWAC AGM decided to confront head-on. This year the women's conference will go ahead and elect the women's section of the NEC anyway, so that the labour movement can clearly judge the difference between the women chosen by women, and those chosen by party conference as a whole.

This will undoubtedly put the women's organisation of the party on a collision course with the party leadership.

In the months between now and the women's conference in May, LWAC will be campaigning for support from every section of the labour movement for women's right to choose their own representatives. All those unions, constituencies, campaigns and organisations that have committed themselves to support for LWAC's demands will be asked to stand up and be counted by putting their weight behind the 'shadow' elections, and the women who are elected at conference.

The LWAC AGM took account of the importance of this decision, understanding clearly the pressure that both LWAC and its supporters are going to come under in the next months. The issue must be raised at every regional conference. The campaign should be begun by a discussion in every constituency now, to prepare for nomination time in the summer to ensure the women's conference position is supported.

The greatest and most difficult task in the immediate months ahead is going to be persuading the unions which support LWAC's demands to participate in the elections.

From this point of view there was a real set back at the LWAC AGM when women organised by London Labour Briefing successfully persuaded the meeting to remit a resolution proposed by the executive on trade union participation in women's conference. The resolution proposed implementing LWAC's policy for trade union women to have bloc vote at women's conference in accordance with

the size of their female membership, by campaigning for a rules conference to change the constitution.

Various excuses put forward for refusing to vote for this — that the trade unions aren't democratic, that it would mean trade union men controlled women's conference, that there had been insufficient consultation. These arguments carried weight with a small majority of the women at the meeting — a result that is obviously due to the appalling record of the trade unions on women's issues.

This vote is major blow to LWAC's ability to work closely with the unions around the crucial issue of the 'shadow' elections. The incoming executive will have to work fast to produce a revised resolution for women's sections to consider in time for the deadline on 7 February.

Women from Labour Briefing also attempted to organise to change the entire leadership of LWAC by presenting a 'slate' for the officer posts of the campaign. They hoped to base themselves on some genuine concern among women active in LWAC about the lack of a hard campaigning edge in the last year to sweep into control of the campaign.

In light of the fact that Briefing had no answers for LWAC — their 'open letter' to the AGM did not even mention the 'shadow' elections — it was not surprising that this attempt was roundly defeated.

Following the AGM all women in the Labour Party have to rally round the 'shadow' elections campaign — agreed unanimously at the meeting — to ensure that a new unity can be forged around LWAC through a well-fought fight.

## New attack on abortion rights

ON FRIDAY 24 January the second reading of Kenneth Hargreaves' Unborn Children (Protection) Bill takes place in parliament. Hargreaves is Conservative MP for Hyndburn and admits that his private members bill is modelled on the one unsuccessfully introduced by Enoch Powell in 1985.

Neither Bill explicitly mentions abortion, but they give legal status to the foetus from the moment of conception and seek to stop research on the human embryo. The debate on Powell's Unborn Children (Protec-

tion) Bill in parliament revealed its supporters' aim to attack abortion rights and outlaw some forms of contraception, such as the coil and morning-after pill.

Hargreaves' Bill will virtually halt the practice of in-vitro fertilisation (IVF), which enables about one in ten women undergoing it to have children. IVF is also used to screen embryos, which is a great relief to parents fearful of hereditary disease.

The National Abortion Campaign has made an urgent appeal for supporters of a woman's right to choose to pressure MPs to vote against the Bill. There seems little danger that the Hargreaves Bill will become law. But its appearance, so soon after Powell's Bill and the attempt by Victoria Gillick to stop young women getting contraception, shows that the anti-abortionists are piling on the pressure.

Tory conference speeches applauding the sanctity of family life have laid the ground for further at-

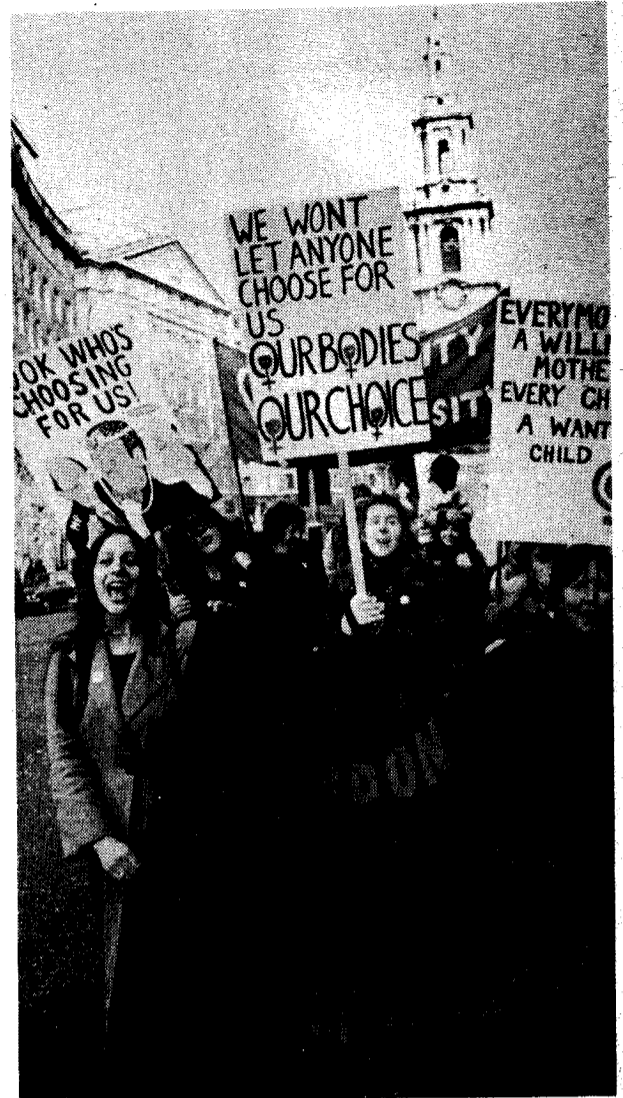
tacks on women's rights, including the gains of the 1967 Abortion Act, which celebrates its twentieth anniversary next year.

If MPs and the labour movement show disinterest over the Hargreaves Bill, this will give added confidence to the anti-abortionists to take the offensive. At the second reading of the Powell Bill, only 41 out of a total of 267 Labour MPs voted against it.

Forty four Labour MPs voted for the Powell Bill, an act deplored by the 1985 Labour Party conference. In response to these MPs' betrayal of women's rights, the Labour Party conference abandoned the free vote on abortion rights — which previously left MPs free to follow their conscience.

On this page we publish parts of this resolution — which was carried by over 5,000,000 votes to 611,000 — and the names of the Labour MPs who need to be instantly contacted to carry out conference decisions.

● NAC has called a lobby of parliament on Thursday 23 January and a demonstration on 24 January to oppose the Bill. They are asking for letters of protest to be sent to all MPs and to the minister for health, Barney Hayhoe at the DHSS, Alexander Fleming House, Elephant and Castle, London SE1. NAC, tel 405 4801.



## Labour's conference policy:

This conference believes that the freedom to decide whether or not to bear children should be a woman's fundamental right and is committed to protect, restore and extend the provisions of the 1967 Abortion Act. This conference deplores the decision of 44 Labour Members of parliament to vote for Enoch Powell's so-called unborn Children (Protection) Bill when it was introduced in the House of Commons on 15 February 1985... In the meantime, abandoning the idea that there can be 'conscience clauses' or free votes on such matters, the National Executive Committee to mount a concerted campaign... on the clear attacks on a woman's right to express her individual conscience as to when and whether to have a child.

1967 Abortion Act. This conference deplores the decision of 44 Labour members of parliament to vote for Enoch Powell's so-called Unborn Children (Protection) Bill when it was introduced in the House of Commons on 15 February 1985... In the meantime, abandoning the idea that there can be 'conscience clauses' or free votes on such matters, the national executive committee to mount a concerted campaign... on the clear attacks on a woman's right to express her individual conscience as to when and whether to have a child.

## Labour MPs who voted for Powell:

Allen Adams (Paisley), Donald Anderson (Swansea), Jeremy Bray (Motherwell), Dale Campbell Savours (Workington), David Clarke (South Shields), Tom Clarke (Monklands), Michael Cocks (Bristol S), Harry Cowans (Tyne Bridge), Jim Craigen (Maryhill), Eric Deakins (Walthamstow), Donald Dewar (Barrhead), Don Dixon (Jarrow), Richard Douglas (Dunfermline W), Albert Duffy (Attercliffe), Harry Ewing (Falkirk E), Frank Field (Birkenhead), Norman Godman (Greenock), James Hamilton (Motherwell), Peter Hardy (Wentworth), Norman Denis Howell (Small Heath), David Lambie (Cunninghame S), Ron Lewis (Carlisle), Terence Lewis (Worsley), Tony Lloyd (Stratford), Geoffrey Lofthouse (Pontefract), Hugh McCartney (Clydebank), Kevin McNamara (Kingston upon Hull), David Marshall (Shettleston), Michael Martin (Springburn), Bruce Millan (Govan), Austin Mitchell (Gt Grimsby), Gordon Oakes (Halton), William O'Brien (Normanton), Robert Party (Riverside), Tom Pendry (Stalybridge), Peter Pike (Burnley), George Robertson (Hamilton), Smith (Monklands E), Nigel Spearing (Newham S), James Tinn (Redcar), James White (Pollock), David Young (Bolton SE).

# Fighting the Witch hunt

## Why not shut-up and wait for the evidence?

THIS is the second leader that *Tribune* has felt obliged to devote to the Militant problem in seven weeks. That in itself is comment enough on how embarking on a purge generates its own momentum to the point where it can dominate all issues.

The problem created by the Militant expulsion is

## Tribune backs Liverpool expulsions

LABOUR Party activists have been shocked at mounting evidence of the breadth of disciplinary actions being taken against the left by an emboldened right wing.

In response to this growing opposition to the witch-hunt opened up by Kinnock, the *Tribune* newspaper has come out clearly in defence of expulsions after the Liverpool enquiry.

Last week's *Tribune* editorialised: 'But neither can the left naively call for "no expulsions"'. If the enquiry into Liverpool comes up with hard evidence of practices unacceptable in a democratic party, then disciplinary action must be taken against those found guilty. Depen-

ding on the nature of the evidence, that action may well include expulsions.

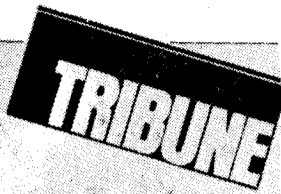
By Redmond O'Neill

'The enquiry must meet the standards of natural justice and fair play. That means no frame-up, no pre-judging the enquiry and exactly the number of expulsions which the evidence justifies.'

Contrast this with *Tribune's* claim, seven weeks earlier, to support the Liverpool enquiry but not expulsions: 'Yet criticism, even of the abusive and uncomradely style employed by Derek Hatton, was never a reason for expulsion. Disciplinary action against individuals would be inappropriate at this stage, not

clearly some on the Right who see the enquiry as the means to a preconceived end. They probably already have a list of those they want expelled. Such an approach must be opposed by a party which is just about to launch a "freedom and fairness" campaign.

But neither can the Left naively call for "no expulsions". If the enquiry into Liverpool comes up with hard evidence acceptable in a democratic party, disciplinary action must be taken against those found guilty. Disciplinary action against individuals would be inappropriate at this stage, not



DESPITE ASSURANCES at the 1982 Labour Party conference that the NEC was only seeking to deal with the editorial board, the persecution of supporters of *Militant* has spread to those who sell the paper. Cases have come to light in Coventry, Cardiff, Isle of Wight, Wrexham, Liverpool and elsewhere. The recent vote, by 14:13, to expel Sheffield councillor Paul Green for selling *Militant* was condemned by David Blunkett as foolish despite the fact that he voted for the Liverpool enquiry.

By Kevin O'Reilly, CLPD Executive Committee

The atmosphere created has encouraged the right to use administrative means to exclude dissent in the constituencies they control.

Supporters of *Briefing* are being disciplined in Exeter and Dagenham for articles they have written in their journal. Membership applications and transfers are being refused following allegations of support for *Militant* in Newcastle-under-Lyme and Mansfield, and *Socialist Action* in Birmingham-Yardley. Former members of the Communist Party in Rhondda have been refused membership.

Supporters of CLPD have been expelled for repeatedly raising questions of procedural irregularities in Central Fife and Warley East. In Middlesbrough CLP, Andy Williams questioned the credentials of GMBATU delegates who were not eligible to be members of that union. He was ruled out of order when he raised the matter, and expelled when he subsequently spoke to the press.

In Dudley East 33 delegates names were sub-

mitted to the GC between 22 March and 2 April 1985. When the CLP discovered that three unions submitted the names of persons who were not bona fide members of those unions they refused to accept them as delegates, and now risk expulsion if they refuse to obey a direction from the NEC that they must accept them.

The position of full-time officials in some of these cases has been deplorable. They have been convicted in unjust decisions and breaches of Labour Party rules. Those accused have often been given insufficient time to prepare their cases and inadequate details of the allegations, as well as being faced with evidence by letter or word-of-mouth from persons who would not attend and allow an opportunity to question their allegations.

The report which the local enquiry prepares for the appeals and mediations committee, and ultimately for the NEC, is not shown to those concerned and in at least one case left out relevant facts.



An early meeting of Labour Against the Witch-Hunt, set up by constituencies to defend socialists from expulsion

Local party members who have given evidence against the person being disciplined, or whose credentials have been questioned, have been allowed to vote — thus being judges in their own cause.

Irregularities such as this cannot be glossed over by allowing an appeal. As the courts have stressed, a person has a right to a fair hearing as well as a fair appeal. Despite this David Hughes, the senior national agent, claims that the CLP and NEC enquiries carry out their procedures fairly.

Most seriously the NEC has failed to carry out its obligation to report such cases to conference in accordance with clause IX(2)(d) of the constitution. This has denied conference, and the individuals concerned, the right to seek to change the NEC's decision by ensuring that a reference back is moved.

In view of the intolerant atmosphere now developing in the party and the need to fight back, a conference has been arranged by Labour Left Coordination with sponsorship from the Greater London Regional Council of the Labour Party for 7.45pm on 21 January in the GLC's main hall. The speakers include Joan Maynard, Diane Abbott, a trade union leader, and a speaker from Liverpool.

● The Labour Left Coordination and CLPD, in cooperation with the Campaign group of MPs is producing a monthly *Witch-Hunt News* as a service to the labour movement. Copies of the first issue are now available (details alongside this article). Information about expulsions or other matters which come to light in your area should be reported to Kevin O'Reilly, 36 Melbourne Road, Walthamstow E17.

## Birmingham councillors back Amir Khan

THE DECISION of Birmingham-Sparkbrook Labour Party to expel city councillor Amir Khan isn't at all popular among his fellow councillors. Khan was expelled by the constituency party recently for his involvement in setting up a local black section on Roy ('My Asians don't want black sections') Hattersley's patch.

Kevin Scally, a Labour Committee on Ireland activist, was expelled along with Khan for attempting to expose the corruption of the constituency's right wing. Another Asian party member — Mohammed Rafique, a county councillor who is no supporter of black sections — was expelled the following month, after accusing Hattersley of racism.

The Birmingham city Labour group have subsequently discussed Khan's

expulsion from the party. They unanimously decided that he would continue to be a member of the city

By Annie Brady

Labour group.

The group have now written to the national executive pointing out that Khan's record as a councillor is unimpeachable. As far as they are concerned there are no grounds to



Roy Hattersley

question his loyalty to the party.

Amir, who has been a councillor for the Sparkhill ward since 1983, told us: 'I feel great that the comrades have unanimously decided to support me.'

'I have received loads of letters and phone calls in sympathy. And 200 peo-

ple turned out in the pouring rain to lobby the GC meeting after my expulsion.

'The Labour Party will lose a lot of loyal supporters in Birmingham if the expulsions continue. Kinnock claims to want more black MPs and councillors, but Birmingham shows that all he wants is yes-men.

'I appeal to all comrades in the party to write to the NEC calling for an independent enquiry into the corruption in the Birmingham party.'

● Messages of support and copies of resolutions passed by parties should be sent to: Amir Khan, 56 Phipson Road, Sparkhill, Birmingham B11 4JH.

Amir Khan and Kevin Scally are available to speak about their case at any Labour Party meeting and can be contacted at the above address.



Amir Khan

## Defending unilateralism...yet again!

LABOUR'S campaign strategy committee is the body which decides the political campaigns that the party will mount nationally. And recently it has taken two pretty serious decisions.

The first is that, starting this spring, Labour will mount a 'Freedom and Fairness' campaign. This will tackle issues of the run-down of the welfare state. But if the recent *Guardian* report is to be trusted, it will at all costs avoid the use of those two nasty emotive words.

The second is a decision to follow up the 'fairness' campaign with

an even vaguer one: 'A Modern Britain in a Modern World'. This is likely to begin at the end of 1986.

By Carol Turner, Secretary, Labour CND (personal capacity)

Those two decisions only received a few column inches worth of comment in the daily press. But they should alert all unilateral nuclear disarmers in the party that composite 21, passed overwhelmingly at last year's annual conference and calling for a campaign on Labour's disarmament

policies, looks as if it has been brushed under the carpet.

The resolution was quite specific. It instructed the NEC to: 'develop a coordinated campaign...to start in 1986 (the International Year of Peace of the United Nations).'

As far as Labour CND knows, no explanation or comment has been given as to why this demand for a campaign on disarmament policy has, yet again, been ignored.

Labour CND is preparing a model letter which will go out to all constituency parties by the end of this month. It should be supported, and returned

to headquarters (with a copy to ECND) post-haste.

Campaigning will be the theme of the Labour CND annual meeting scheduled for Saturday 12 April in London. In view of the campaign strategy committee's recent decisions, it is more important than ever that anti-missiles activists get their parties along.

● Copies of the model letter and details of the LCND annual meeting are available from: Carol Turner, Secretary, Labour CND, 29 Stodmarsh House, Cowley Estate, London SW9.



Photo: PETE GRANT

## Witch Hunt News — Out Now

Labour Left Coordination and CLPD, in cooperation with the Campaign group of MPs, is producing a monthly newsletter as a service to the labour movement. Order your copy now!

Cheques and POs should be made payable to 'Witch-Hunt News' and sent c/o 36 Melbourne Road, London E17

Witch-Hunt News costs 20p per single copy, or £1 for 10 (including postage in both cases)

## Stop the Witch-Hunt!

Public Meeting — 21 January

7.45pm, County Hall, London SE1

sponsored by Labour Left Coordination, Campaign group of MPs and the London Region Labour Party

speakers include:

Joan Maynard, Ken Livingstone, Diane Abbott, Amir Khan and others

## A Million Jobs A Year

A Socialist Society conference on the theme of the pamphlet sponsored by the Campaign group of MPs

Friday 21 February, 8pm and Saturday 22 February 10.30am till 5pm County Hall, London SE1

Speakers include: Andrew Glynn (author of the pamphlet), Tony Benn, Ken Livingstone, Hilary Wainwright, Bernie Grant, Narendra Makenji, Audrey Wise, and others

Conference pack, including a copy of the pamphlet, costs £3 from The Socialist Society, 9 Poland Street, London W1 (phone 01-734 8501)

## Europe and the left

Westland's crisis, and Heseltine's resignation, have posed a stark question for the left: what is the left's attitude to the EC and to European military integration?

The Labour front bench, the SDP, and the Liberals have all followed Heseltine's lead in backing the European bid for Westland. That was to be expected. But equally striking has been the logic those sections of the left who support the EC and 'European integration' have been forced into. DICK CARTER looks at some of these actions

Neil Kinnock's first policy step after Labour's election defeat in 1983 — which was announced before any other political move, and even before he became party leader — was to declare himself in favour of abandoning Labour's pledge to withdraw from the EC.

To many on the left this may have seemed a small question. But in reality it signifies an entire political orientation for the Labour Party. The subordination of Labour to the imperialist powers of the EEC has now become the underlying political basis — implicit and explicit — both of Labour's 'realigned left' and of its political advisers in *Marxism Today*.

Anyone who picked up last week's issue of the Communist Party weekly *7 Days*, for example, would have received a considerable political education in some of the consequences of this line.

According to *7 Days*, writing under the headline 'Thatcher strategy goes in a spin', the following was the situation facing us: 'whether it is in civilian airliners, with the Airbus consortium, space with the Ariane (rocket), or in new technology, West European governments have sought to encourage co-operation agreements between firms, public or private. They have backed that encouragement with public funds and orders for the product. Not so the Thatcher government.'

The article concluded: 'If the British government would happily allow its independent helicopter capacity to go down the drain what sort of gumption will it show in the fight to defend the great European Airbus project from White House pressure in support of Boeing?'

*7 Days* however, simply carried to its logical conclusion the argument of an article by Jon Bloomfield in the December issue of *Marxism Today*. This posed the choices facing the left: 'clinging to a special relationship with Washington or participating in a more independent Western Europe.'

In the 'realigned left' of the Labour Party others draw the same conclusion. Frances Morrell, in particular, has been actively campaigning for the left to adopt a policy based on support for the EEC.

In his book *For a Pluralist Socialism* Michael Rustin goes further and argues explicitly in favour of European nuclear weapons, stating that greater European autonomy and influence will only come about if the West European governments retain some control over a minimum nuclear capability.

The reasons for these positions of *Marxism Today*, *7 Days*, and the 'realigned left' are not hard to find. The fundamental axis of Communist Party policy since the rise of Stalin, in particular, has been the subordination of the working class to making pressure on one or other group of supposedly 'progressive' imperialists in competition with another set.

Since 1947 that Communist Party policy has been consistently to support European imperialist powers against the United States. For all its alleged 'anti-Stalinism' the policies of *Marxism Today* — which is the leading force in

all the currents we have mentioned — fits perfectly in this framework. *Marxism Today* stands unequivocally for supporting the supposedly progressive capitalists who look to the EEC against the United States.

But more interesting in terms of development has been the line taken by the *Morning Star*. A key part of the split between the *Marxism Today* and *Morning Star* wings of the Communist Party was their attitudes to the EEC. The *Morning Star*, following the line of Moscow, stood for supporting purely local European capitalists against the United States. It remained resolutely opposed to the EEC.

But under the pressure of the Heseltine crisis the *Morning Star* has moved distinctly closer to *Marxism Today* in its orientation — although its position may also be influenced by the fact that Gorbachev for the first time is alleged to be considering giving Soviet recognition to the EEC.

The *Morning Star* began to give at least implicit support to the Heseltine/European position on 8 January when it noted approvingly on its front page: 'Westland directors are facing a growing shareholders revolt after continuing to back an American take-over bid instead of an improved European offer.'

The paper then began to mount its real campaign around the position adopted by TASS general secretary — and expelled Communist Party member — Ken Gill, supporting the European offer.

The *Morning Star* started this campaign in the issue of 8 January when it noted: 'TASS, the engineering technicians union, yesterday published a booklet *Westland in Crisis* which put the case for the forgotten people of the case — the Westland workers. The American option would cause redundancies with more to come, warns TASS general secretary Ken Gill.'

By 9 January the *Morning Star* had become unequivocal declaring that: 'Despite frenzied efforts by British diplomats abroad, international opinion pressure is building up to reject the American take-over.'

By 10 January Heseltine himself was beginning to get a favourable press from the *Morning Star*: 'Mr Heseltine favours more state intervention, closer links with Europe and a degree of industrial recovery sharply contrasting with the prime minister's subservience to the US, faith in a "free market" economy and backing of finance capital.'

But pride of place in the *Morning Star's* coverage came on 9 January with a prolonged and glowing presentation of the position of Ken Gill. Gill spelt out, with the *Morning Star's* approval the ultimate logic of the 'support European capitalists against America line. The *Morning Star* reported: 'The Sikorsky offer "does not guarantee Westland's ability to design and develop helicopters." Mr Gill outlined "Neither does it provide jobs in the coming year."'

Instead 'Choosing the European option — "an equal partnership" — was based on tried and tested work with European aerospace industries. This has produced the Tornado, Airbus and now the European fighter aircraft, for which TASS had fought, Mr Gill said.'

Here the line is spelt out with total clarity. British trade unions, with Communist general secretaries, lobbying for European fighter planes and armaments to be built.

If anyone on the left wanted an explanation of why it is so vital to totally oppose the EEC, and the entire line of supporting European capital against the United States, they need simply follow the development of the pro-Common Market left during the Westland's affair!

# EUROPE'S



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# WAR MACHINE

## Behind the news

### Who's backing Europe?

AS THE Westland saga unfolded, labour leaders from Neil Kinnock to Sheffield council leader David Blunkett and AUEW-TASS general secretary Ken Gill sided with the 'Britain needs the Eurobosses' brigade. In press statements, letters and special television appearances, they joined the chorus of those conning British workers to back the bid of the five European aerospace manufacturers for the ailing Westland company.

The European consortium includes the French state-owned Aerospatiale, Italy's state-owned Augusta, Messerschmitt-Boelkow-Blohm of Munich, British Aerospace and GEC — whose chair, James Prior was responsible for anti-union laws when he was a Tory minister. The battle line of statements for the European bid included Italian prime minister Bettino Craxi, the Dutch defence minister, the West German defence secretary and the French defence minister. The European commissioner for industry — who oversaw the carve-up of the European steel industry, with its devastation of British steel jobs — described the Sikorsky-

Fiat bid as 'a trojan horse'.

The governments of these European countries have threatened to freeze Westland out of the five nation collaboration to produce the battlefield helicopter, the NH90 military transport helicopter and an Augusta model — all tipped by Heseltine as the core of the British armed service fleet. Lord Gregson, president of the Defence Manufacturers Association added his name to the defenders of the European deal.

In an effort to block the Sikorsky offer, helicopter operator Alan Bristow put money behind his mouth with a £5 million swoop on the stock exchange to secure a decisive 10.5 per cent of Westland shares.

In his younger days, Bristow became a mercenary and flew helicopters for the French foreign legion in Indochina, for which he won the Croix de Guerre. This is a fitting reminder that, whoever produces the helicopters, they will be used to crush liberation struggles across the world.

With Euro-friends like this, working people owe Kinnock and Gill no favours for ramming the European deal down their throats, with the ment that the only enemy is American big business.

### What the editors said

THE *Daily Telegraph* of 10 January observed: 'The government is less secure, less happy about itself than most people suppose. There is blood on the moon and Mrs Thatcher must try to wipe it off.'

Under the headline 'A very good resignation', *The Times* editorial said of Heseltine: 'His choice of ground was good ... Mrs Thatcher's style of government is a subject of widespread concern among the Conservatives at Westminster ...'

'The prime minister's mode of

government was more widely tolerable when her administration had a sense of urgency, to control the unions, to bring down inflation, to win the Falklands war. It is less acceptable if the momentum is seen to be slowing down.'

The *Financial Times* editorial on 11 January remarked: 'These muffs and onfusions reflect a serious underlying problems. The government is no longer clear about its own ideas ... It is really becoming urgent for Mrs Thatcher to work out a clear set of objectives for the rest of this parliament.'

### South Africa connection?

TUCKED away in the 'miscellany' column of the *Guardian* letter page of 7 January was an observation from a Cambridge reader which is worth investigation. He noted the limits forced on the American government over the supply of military equipment to South Africa.

He then claims: 'If Sikorski buy

Westland, it can manufacture helicopter gun platforms here and ship them legally to South Africa. That's why Sikorsky wants Westland and why Thatcher is keen to secure it.'

If this is true, than all the more reason to step up the campaign for total British sanctions against apartheid South Africa.

### What do Scargill and Heseltine have in common?

A DAFT question you might think. But AUEW-TASS general secretary Ken Gill complained on television that the vultures of the press were treating poor Heseltine like they did Scargill in 1985.

Multi-millionaire Heseltine must be cheered by such support. Heseltine is head of a £50 million publishing empire and has three homes — a £750,000 mansion in Oxfordshire, a

£500,000 house in London and a modest holiday home in Cornwall, worth £100,000

His Oxford hire house stands on 400 acres of farm land, with a lake and stables. The whole complex is estimated at £2 million. Last year he forked out £350,000 for another farm in the area and his publishing company paid £500,000 for a farm a mile away from his home.

CRISIS over Westland Heseltine's resignation forced out into the open of the key developments in European British politics. ALAN

FREEMAN looks at the European military integration that lie behind Michael Heseltine's EEC backers. DICK CARTER looks at how major sections

of the left became lined up behind Heseltine — and the consequences of support for a 'European' military policy.

ESLTYNE's spectacular resignation has flushed out the close but diverse links between European industry, the military, and growing tensions towards West European in these fields. Many people know how the military-industrial complex dominates Washington. They know far less, however, about its shadowy role in Europe. FREEMAN reports.

Kinnockite left see the EEC as a less aggressive alternative to US nuclear war. They claim that European integration is the key, not just to peace but to peace — so they turn a blind eye to its military implications.

These champions of a middle of the road 'non-aggressive' alternative find themselves virtually in the same camp as Britain's answer to Ramon Barzan Heseltine himself. It is asking why.

The EEC is not Europe. It is an artificial creation which unites the main industrial nations of Western Europe. It is moving towards greater unity and integration among these powers designed to give a capitalist alternative to growing economic competition with the USA — and military protection from the USSR. Unfortunately, the only language of competition is concerned: the language of force. European unity, and the forging of a more united European military apparatus, cannot be avoided.

Westland illustrates this. Eighty per cent of Westland's work is military. This is no accident. Nearly the world's market of 35,000 helicopters is accounted for by the US market alone. In Europe 4000 helicopters are required every year. Helicopters, as George Orwell noted, are indispensable to modern war.

The European consortium claims to offer Westland guaranteed sales from four European governments for helicopter projects. These are: the medium-weight NH90 NATO helicopter currently under study by Britain, France, West Germany, Italy and the Netherlands.

A new lightweight battlefield helicopter which would merge two current projects — a Franco-German project and the PAH2 Anglo-Italian project.

The military development of the new naval and utility EH101 helicopter, the fruit of previous collaboration between Westlands and Augusta. Failure to develop the military application of this helicopter is considered one of the main reasons for Westland's present difficulties.

Such guarantees, given the present of the 'free' market, can only be given by governments, and EEC agreements can only give such guarantees because of the increasingly military coordination they — and the line — have promoted.

Thus, as soon as the threat of a US nuclear war became clear, Heseltine summed up a meeting, which took place on 11 November 1985, between the arms manufacturers directors of Britain, France, Germany and Italy. The Euro-consortium was born from the declaration they made. This declaration was in line with a policy

they had operated since 1978, which was to cover their needs 'solely from helicopters built in Europe.'

Broad agreements in principle of this type were being concluded as early as 1978 and before. Joint civilian projects such as the European Airbus have gone hand in hand with joint military ones such as the European fighter project. The interrelation between civilian and military projects is obvious.

However, it is only in the last two or three years that European governments began creating political institutions to oversee and coordinate this collaboration. The fact that Heseltine felt moved to call a meeting of defence ministers from no less than four nations, to discuss the fate of a small bankrupt helicopter firm, shows how seriously these institutions are taken.

The framework for such bodies is not outside NATO. The idea is not at all to break with Reagan's military diplomacy: it is to compete with it on more equal terms. Heseltine has been absolutely clear on this. Moreover, Spain, which joins the EEC this month, has been under extraordinary pressure to join NATO, and it has more or less been spelt out that this is the price which must be paid for any real economic integration into the EEC. Therein lies the folly of any notion that 'European' defence represents a soft alternative option to the Atlantic alliance.

### Defence

The main bodies which coordinate Europe's defence activities are NATO bodies. In mid-1984 the EEC member states revived a largely defunct NATO body, the Independent European Programme Group, which specifically excluded the USA and Canada. Last autumn this body identified six specific projects for collaboration on weapons development.

At the same time a second moribund body, the European Defence Union, was revived to assist the European member states in an objective which was first outlined as a policy goal at the June 1985 Milan EEC summit — namely, to begin to ensure that the European states would formulate common foreign policy positions, particularly on defence matters.

Nor is such collaboration confined to the battlefield weapons industry. The Franco-German Eureka project, a programme which aims to fund and coordinate basic research among EEC countries and was initiated as a direct response to Star Wars, is often proclaimed as non-military. Strange, therefore, that its prestige project — a European supercomputer — has found, as its principal backer, to the tune of £6.5 million, no other than the Ministry of Defence.

What is the reason for all this? And is a 'non-aggressive' Europe a real possibility? The simple answer is that as long as Europe is divided, a non-aggressive Western Europe is a contradiction in terms. Its whole function and purpose is to present a united capitalist front against the USSR, so that aggression is written into its very constitution.

However more specific and immediate causes lie behind the recent acceleration of the European arms race —

as well as these long term considerations. Of these the most important is the present economic situation of the EEC member states.

As Reagan's Star Wars has shown, keeping up the arms race is not just a matter of building bigger guns. Armaments are always in the vanguard of technological development. Virtually every area of hi-tech research targeted by the 'Eureka' project planned by the EEC states has military applications, and the Eureka planners know full well that in order to build an independent arms capacity they have to stay ahead in these hi-tech areas. To guide missiles you need genetic engineering and a sophisticated chemical industry. To put up space weapons you need space rockets. And so on.

### True

But the converse is also true. In an economic climate in which private capital is unable or unwilling to invest in basic research, the only way that capitalist governments can keep their economies afloat, let alone stay ahead of their competitors, is to use the military machine to bribe and stimulate them. Their aversion to government interference, which drives them to a frenzy of privatisation when it concerns health, education, housing or any ordinary people's needs, just melts away when the magic word 'defence' — that is, war — is mentioned.

European governments have been forced to come to terms with the economic consequences of Reagan's militarisation drive. Military expenditure is the one side of government spending which has not been cut by Reagan. On the contrary it is now the highest percentage of government expenditure since the Korean war. Military spending, at the same time that social spending has been cut to the bone, has been the investment pump which reflate the US economy. In this sense, as well as socially, the capitalist world has gone back to the 30s. The arms race is part of its hope for economic survival.

### Policy

Reagan's new economic policy also used the USA's military predominance to squeeze its capitalist rivals. Reagan pumped billions of dollars into his war machine, but his machine was a closed and protected market. US defence contractors enjoyed the benefits of huge economies of scale. Where French manufacturers make ships in batches averaging at most 13, their US rivals can count on orders averaging 40. British firms produce an average of 800 aircraft per run: US firms 2000. US unit costs are therefore nearly 40 percent less.

To match this threat, European capital understood very quickly that it had to transcend national boundaries and create a Europe-wide military market.

When John Maynard Keynes launched the idea of the welfare state on the world, he believed that the Western nations could save their economies if they put the same economic resources into peaceful construction that they had previously put into war. The 'salvation' offered by today's heads of state — whether in the USA or the EEC — is to reverse this equation.

# The anti-imperialist united front

**THE POLITICAL alliances which are being forged in the struggle against apartheid in South Africa are very different to those which socialists are faced with or familiar with in Britain — although they would be recognised by a socialist in Ireland for example. The difference arises from the alliance in struggle between the organisations of the working class and a revolutionary nationalist organisation, the African National Congress (ANC).**

**JOE GREEN looks at a key idea for understanding the basis of united action of working class and revolutionary nationalist organisations, and the struggle in South Africa — the anti-imperialist united front.**

In South Africa the leading mass organisations of the working class and oppressed are evident. The strongest organisation of the black working class is the Confederation of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). The most powerful political organisation of the oppressed in the country is the ANC. The main organisation which brings together the different forces is the United Democratic Front (UDF), which has 1½-2 million affiliated members.

These latter include trade unions, supporters of the ANC, who play a decisive role, and a whole series of other organisations.

What differentiates the UDF from the more familiar united fronts which socialists see in Britain is that it is based on a united front between organisations of the working class and a revolutionary nationalist organisation, the ANC.

The most powerful mass actions in South Africa have been those which involved, and brought together, these two forces. The Transvaal general strike of November 1984, the highest point of mass struggle in South Africa so far, was based on the united action of the Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU) and the UDF.

The reason why the united front in South Africa takes the form of united action between organisations of the working class and a revolutionary nationalist organisation is due to the nature of the objective tasks which face the working class and oppressed in that

## UDF demands

**SOME 400 delegates attended the three-day annual conference of the General Council of the United Democratic Front in Azaadville, near Rantfontein, in early April 1985. The UDF general council issued the following platform of demands:**

- ★ The immediate scrapping of the 1913 and 1936 Land Acts and all Group Areas laws, and an end to any form of forced removals.
- ★ The dissolution of the bantustans and the ending of the migratory labour system.
- ★ The scrapping of the tricameral parliament and all other puppet bodies created under the Black Local Authorities Act and other instruments of racist rule.
- ★ A unified and democratic education system.
- ★ The repeal of the pass laws and all other restrictions on freedom of

country. In an imperialist state such as Britain, which had its bourgeois democratic revolution centuries ago, British nationalist organisations are reactionary.

But in a country dominated by imperialism, or one which has not had its bourgeois democratic revolution, nationalist organisations have a quite different significance. Even in these countries, there can be, and sometimes are, totally reactionary nationalist organisations. But fundamentally the struggle for national demands in a country dominated by imperialism, or which has not had its bourgeois democratic revolution, is an entirely progressive struggle.

In Ireland the struggle to secure the unity of the country, and throw out British imperialism from the north, is completely to be supported. The fight for democratic demands against apartheid in South Africa, as well as that to constitute a single nation in that state, is totally progressive — and the main axis of the struggle in the country.

Confronted with progressive nationalist struggles an obvious question which is posed is what alliances working class organisations should make with bourgeois and petty bourgeois organisations waging a struggle for these national and democratic demands.

This question was particularly sharply posed for example, in Ireland at the beginning of the twentieth century. Here James Connolly, following Marx, pursued tactics which prefigured those which were later adopted by the Communist International after its founding.

Connolly set about organising the Irish working class independently of all other classes of Irish society — through the formation of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union and the Irish Socialist Republican Party.

But Connolly simultaneously argued for the independent organisations of the working class in Ireland to enter into united action with the revolutionary nationalists. The outcome of this alliance was the most important event in Irish history: the 1916 Easter rising against British imperialism. Accompanying this was the 1916 Declaration of the Republic — which formed the political basis of the rising.

When the Communist International was formed in 1919 it placed the struggle against imperialism at the centre of its politics.

At its second congress in 1920 and its third congress in 1922, the Communist International discussed rela-

movement.

- ★ The right of workers to freely organise in trade unions, to collectively bargain and the right to strike without being penalised, the right to security of employment, housing, social welfare, pensions and maternity benefits, as laid down in the UN Human Rights Covenants and Charters of International Labour Organisation.
- ★ The release of all political prisoners, the unbanning of the banned individuals and organisations, the return of exiles and the lifting of all restrictions on the freedom of speech and assembly.
- ★ The disbanding of the SADF (South African Defence Force), Koevet (a special counterinsurgency force in Namibia), the SAP (South African Police), and all other repressive apparatuses.
- ★ The scrapping of all barbaric security laws which violate the fundamental freedoms set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.



tions with bourgeois and revolutionary nationalist organisations. These arrived at, in theoretical form, essentially the same conclusions on alliances Connolly had developed practically in Ireland. The conclusions were adopted in the position on the anti-imperialist united front adopted at the fourth congress of the Communist International.

The outline of the position for those countries which had not had their bourgeois democratic revolutions, or were dominated by imperialism, was clear in terms of its class alliances.

- A revolutionary working class party had to be created to fight for the political autonomy of the working class.
- The working class had to be organised independently of all other classes through trade unions and other mass working class organisations.
- These organisations of the working class had to enter into united front action with the revolutionary, and where a basis exists for this bourgeois nationalist, organisations — this constituting the anti-imperialist united front.
- As long as the working class was not able to fight directly and immediately for soviet power it had to fight for radical democratic demands and political democracy — this of course constitutes a basis for united action between the working class and revolutionary nationalist organisations.

This framework allows the dynamic of the struggle taking place in South Africa, and the tasks and tactics which flow from it, to be clearly understood. United action between the organisations of the working class — above all today the trade unions and COSATU, — with the revolutionary nationalist ANC is developing. The UDF is precisely the most developed form of this united front. The demands of the ANC Freedom Charter — and more partial demands which flow from it in the struggle against apartheid such as are taken up by the UDF — are the demands on which this united front can be based.

A revolutionary working class party must be built in South Africa. This however must have, and can only be built by having, a correct united front approach to the ANC, the trade unions and the UDF.

In order to help understand the dynamics of the struggle in South Africa we are printing the resolution of the Communist International on the anti-imperialist united front and the platform of demands of the UDF.

## Resolution of the Comintern

**THE FOURTH congress of the Communist International passed a 'Resolution on the East' dealing with tasks in the colonies and those countries still facing the tasks of national democratic revolutions. This resolution contained a specific section on the tactics of the anti-imperialist united front. This is printed in full below:**

THE workers united front is the slogan advanced in the West during

the transition period, characterised by the organised gathering of forces. Similarly in the colonial East at the present time the key slogan to advance is the anti-imperialist united front. Its expediency follows from the perspective of a long-drawn-out struggle with world imperialism that will demand the mobilisation of all revolutionary elements.

This mobilisation is made all the more necessary by the tendency of the indigenous ruling classes to make compromises with foreign capital directed against the fundamental interests of the mass of the people. Just as in the West the slogan of the workers united front has helped and is still helping to expose the social democrats sell-out of proletarian interests, so the slogan of an anti-imperialist united front will help to expose the vacillations of the various bourgeois nationalist groups.

This slogan will also help the working masses to develop their revolutionary will and to increase their class consciousness; it will place them in the front ranks of those fighting not only imperialism, but the remnants of feudalism.

The workers movement in the colonial and semi-colonial countries must first of all establish itself as an independent revolutionary factor in the common anti-imperialist front. Only when its importance as an independent factor is recognised and its complete political autonomy secured can temporary agreements with bourgeois democracy be considered permissible or necessary.

Similarly, the proletariat supports and advances such partial demands as an independent democratic republic, the abolition of all feudal rights and privileges, and the introduction of womens rights etc., insofar as it cannot, with the relation of forces as it

exists at present, make the implementation of its soviet programme the immediate task of the day.

At the same time the proletariat seeks to put forward slogans which further political links between the peasant and semi-proletarian masses and the workers movement. Explaining to the broad working masses the need for unity with the international proletariat and the Soviet republics is one of the most important functions of the anti-imperialist united front. The colonial revolution can triumph and defend its gains only if accompanied by a proletarian revolution in the advanced countries.

The danger of a deal between bourgeois nationalism and one or more of the rival imperialist powers is much greater in the semi-colonial countries (China, Persia), or in the countries gaining state independence thanks to inter-imperialist competition (Turkey), than it is in the colonies. Every such agreement means a wholly unequal division of power between the indigenous ruling classes and imperialism; though it may be disguised as formal independence, it leaves the country exactly as before — a semi-colonial buffer state, the puppet of world imperialism.

While the working class may and sometimes must make partial and temporary compromises to gain a breathing-space in the revolutionary struggle for liberation from imperialism, it must be absolutely opposed to any attempt by the indigenous ruling classes to maintain their class privileges by agreeing to open or tacit power-sharing with imperialism. The demand for a close alliance with the proletarian Soviet republic is the key-note of the anti-imperialist united front.

This slogan must be accompanied by a determined struggle for maximum democratisation of the political system, which will give the workers organisations the freedom to fight for their class interests (the demands for a democratic republic, agrarian reform, a reform of the tax system, the organisation of the administrative apparatus on the basis of popular self-government, labour legislation, the restriction of child labour, maternal and child welfare etc). Even in independent Turkey the working class does not enjoy freedom of association, which is a good indication of the bourgeois nationalists attitude to the proletariat.



International

# Reagan snubs test ban offer

ON 28 DECEMBER the Pentagon conducted its latest nuclear test about 100 miles northwest of Las Vegas, Nevada. The explosion produced a blast 10 times stronger than the bomb dropped on Hiroshima in 1945. The objective was to try out an X-ray laser powered by a nuclear explosion, with a view to using it in the Pentagon's anti-satellite weapons system. This is part of its Star Wars programme.

There was nothing exceptional about this nuclear test. It was one of a long string of underground tests Washington has been conducting at its Nevada site as part of its development of a \$4 billion anti-satellite weapon.

But what is noteworthy is that on the very same day as the 28 December test, a statement by the government of the Soviet Union was printed in the *Washington Post* calling on the US government to join it in a moratorium on nuclear tests. The statement, which originally appeared in the 19 December *Pravda*, the principal Soviet daily, was published in the *Post* as a paid advertisement by the Soviet government.

The statement noted that on 6 August 1985, the Soviet Union began a unilateral moratorium on all nuclear tests until January 1986. 'But it can be extended beyond that date,' the document affirmed, 'if the United States joins the moratorium as well.'

## Joint

The statement noted that 'a joint Soviet-US moratorium on any nuclear explosions would become a major landmark on the way toward eliminating the nuclear danger

The political significance of such a joint step by the USSR and the United States would be great.' It would also give a signal to other nuclear powers, the statement said.

France, for example, is currently engaged in a massive testing programme in the Pacific that has provoked widespread opposition from Pacific islanders. A US-Soviet moratorium would give a big boost to the struggle to halt French tests in the region.

The proposed moratorium would apply to underground tests. In a

1963 treaty, the US, Soviet, and British governments agreed to halt

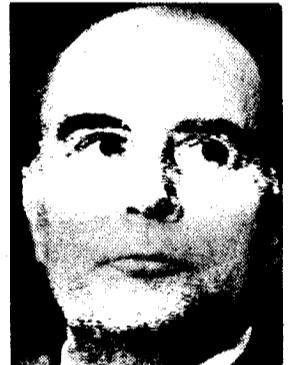
By Doug Jenness

nuclear testing in the atmosphere, underwater, and in outer space. The



Gorbachev

French government continued to carry out atmospheric tests in the Pacific until 1974, when a strong international campaign forced it to stop.



Mitterrand

Reagan responded to Gorbachev's offer on verification with a letter proposing that experts from both countries get together to discuss it. But this is simply a stalling tactic, as Washington pushes ahead with its nuclear testing programme.

The real reason for Reagan's obstinate refusal to agree to a moratorium — a move that would have widespread support both in the United States and internationally — was referred to in an article in the 25 December *New York*

*Times*. The *Times* noted that US officials pointed out last summer: 'that they rejected a moratorium even if it could be verified because it would interfere with the development of new weapons for the proposed space-based missile defense programme.'

The Pentagon is driving full speed ahead with its Star Wars missile system. It has already spent \$1.2 billion on the programme and has fired two test weapons into space.

When congress voted 18 December to bar funds for two tests against satellites in space projected for 1986, a defense department official declared: 'We'll find a way to go ahead.' Another Pentagon spokesperson said continuing the programme 'will keep the Soviets' feet to the fire in arms-control talks.'

The Reagan administration has been barreling ahead with its Star Wars programme despite the Soviet government's 1983 halt on anti-satellite weapons tests.

Moscow's statement in the *Washington Post* said that if Reagan continues to reject a moratorium on underground tests: 'this

will lead to the Soviet commitments under the unilateral moratorium being no longer valid after the announced deadline, which is only a short time away. For obvious reasons, in the face of military preparations overseas, the USSR cannot sacrifice the interests of its security and the security of its allies and friends.'

## Expand

As has generally been the case with nuclear arms, Moscow is forced to develop and expand its weapons systems in order to defend itself from threatening imperialist armaments.

Washington's determination to push ahead with nuclear testing and Star Wars is part of its ongoing military build-up. It continues to reinforce its arsenal of nuclear-tipped missiles, which it is deploying in an ever tighter ring on land and sea around the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, Cuba, Vietnam, and other countries where capitalism has been abolished.

The publication of the Soviet statement in the *Washington Post* was part of a series of initiatives by

the Kremlin to encourage Washington to join the moratorium. Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev reiterated this proposal in his statement at the conclusion of the November summit meeting with president Ronald Reagan and again in a 5 December letter to the US president.

At every juncture the White House has turned down the Soviet offer. When it isn't simply calling the proposal a 'propaganda move', the Reagan administration contends that it would be difficult to verify Soviet compliance.

The Soviet government has responded by pointing out that immediate verification could be achieved by agreeing to a proposal by the governments of Argentina, Greece, India, Mexico, Sweden, and Tanzania to set up special monitoring stations in their countries. Moreover, the Kremlin has stated that it is agreeable to on-site monitoring of nuclear weapons in the Soviet Union. In August the Soviet government permitted the first international inspection of its nuclear reactors.



Reagan

Moreover, Washington is stepping up its assistance to counter-revolutionaries who are attempting to topple the governments of Nicaragua, Angola, Kampuchea, and Afghanistan. And it is beefing up its conventional military forces, which are being readied for bigger interventions, including the massive use of US combat troops, in Central America and other areas of the world.

● This article is reproduced from *Intercontinental Press*, Vol 24, No 1, 13 January 1986.



# Haiti: dictatorship in crisis

A COMBINATION of mass demonstrations, opposition from the army and church, and pressure from the United States has produced the deepest crisis in the 28-year history of the Duvalier dictatorship in Haiti. On Sunday leaflets calling for a general strike to overthrow the regime of 'Baby Doc' Jean-Claude Duvalier, were being circulated in the Port-au-Prince capital.

Haiti is the poorest country in the western hemisphere. Duvalier took over the government from his infamous father in 1971.

The current crisis of the regime, which was installed in 1957 by the notorious 'Papa Doc', erupted on 27-28 November during two days of demonstrations in the northern city of Gonaives. The army opened fire on the crowds killing four students and a Protestant clergyman.

mediately by protest demonstrations in the southern town of Jeremie. During the first week of December further demonstrations took place in Jacmel, Les Cayes, Petit-Goaves, and Cap-Haitien. A memorial mass for those killed in Gonaives was held in Port-au-Prince and attracted 5000 protesters.

These demonstrations helped exacerbate differences within the repressive forces when a further wave of protests broke out in Gonaives at



the beginning of January. On 7 January the 7000 strong army threatened to overthrow Duvalier. The official army is however outnumbered two to one by the armed secret police — the notorious Tontons Macoutes.

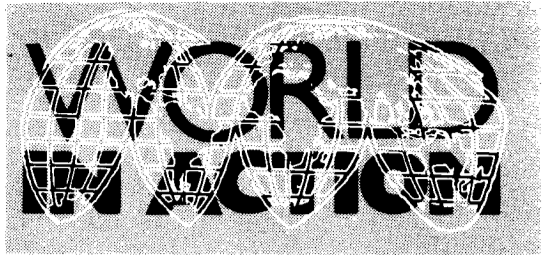
The United States, alarmed by the growing discontent, started to put pressure on the Duvalier regime to make concessions. At the beginning of the month the US forced Duvalier to release from prison the leading bourgeois opposition figure and former govern-

ment minister, Hubert de Ronceray. US warships are stationed off Haiti's coast.

The Catholic radio station, Radio Soleil, also began broadcasting anti-government propaganda. Last Sunday they were joined in the protests by the normally conservative Protestant church leaders.

Duvalier has survived so far because the rising disorder has not yet reached the capital. By Monday, however, discipline among the Tontons Macoute was reported as beginning to break down in the capital where anti-Duvalier literature was openly distributed.

Haiti looks set to become another hot spot on Reagan's Central American doorstep.



## Philippines:

Open civil war looms in the Philippines as the 7 February elections draw near. The New People's Army, the main guerilla organisation, is reckoned to have at least a millions supporters. The KNU (the First of May Labour Centre), with a membership of half of million workers, has called for a 'broad, militant and sustained boycott' of the elections, backed by the Filipino student association.

On 29 November last, 60 prominent political figures published a list of demands for 'free democratic, fair and meaningful elections'. They are unlikely to be met. Three hundred and eighty four people died during the 1984 elections, because of government terror. After 27 months of trial the Marcos regime has just acquitted General Fabian Ver, the murderer of Benigno Aquino who was Marcos' last challenger. Aquino's widow may well be the only candidate in the election apart from Marcos.

## Star Wars:

Laser space weapons being developed for Wars could more easily be used to incinerate cities, says a report just issued by a Los Angeles defence research association. 'A laser system powerful enough to cope with ballistic missiles can also destroy major cities by fire,' it reports. 'The attack would proceed city by city, the attack time for each city being only a matter of minutes. Not nuclear destruction but Armageddon all the same.'

Government physicist Caroline Herzenburg adds that the smoke and dust generated in such a war could also bring about climatic changes on the scale of a nuclear winter. 'This is not a problem we are addressing at this time,' said a Star Wars spokesperson when questioned.

## France:

Thousands demonstrated against racism in Paris on 7 December. The demonstration was the culmination of three months of anti-racist activity.

'Alas, since 1983, nothing has really changed. Racist crimes are growing. That's why we're still here together in the streets,' said Kaissa Titous, a veteran of the first French anti-racist march of 1983, opening the rally in Paris at the end of the December demonstration.

## Angola:

Early in December the *New York Times* reported that the Reagan administration is to supply \$11 million in covert aid to the UNITA forces fighting against the Angolan government. UNITA has the active support of the South African government.

Earlier in 1985 the US congress repealed a law barring US aid to anti-government forces in Angola. Since then bills have been introduced into the congress to provide \$27 million in military aid and \$27 million in 'humanitarian' aid to UNITA.

On 22 November last year Reagan openly stated for the first time that the US government will be supplying aid to UNITA. Reagan's remarks came in response to a question asking why his secretary of state George Shultz was opposing aid to the South African backed forces.

Reagan responded, 'I'm glad you asked me that. He isn't.' He added, 'We all believe that a covert operation would be more useful to us and have more chance of success right now than the overt proposal than has been made in the Congress.'

Shultz himself made his views made known during his trip to Western Europe at the beginning of December... Speaking to the Pilgrim's Society in London on 11 December Shultz noted that, 'covert action has been part of the arsenal of states since time immemorial, providing a means of influence short of outright confrontation.'

## South Africa:

Did you know? The country with the highest number of sponsored visits from British MPs is South Africa according to a recent report.



# Reviews

## Kiss of Spiderwoman: new food for thought.

### Letter to Brezhnev: rehabilitating romanticism



'THE ONLY thing I dream about,' says Teresa from Kirby at the end of *Letter to Brezhnev*, 'is drinking Vodka, getting fucked and stuffing chickens...that's all.' The dream of postwar capitalist progress, ever onwards and upwards along the yellow brick road of mass consumption, is 10 years dead. Visions of the future turn nasty, nostalgia becomes a cultural language, and dreams take unexpected forms.

Reviewed by Paul Atkin

There's nothing nostalgic about *Letter to Brezhnev*. For Elaine, unemployed and living out a life sentence in Kirby, Liverpool — like millions of us do, in dead ends from Hartlepool to Stoke on Trent — her ship comes in literally with a soulful Russian sailor called Peter Mayakovsky.

With a name like that, he has to be a poet: Peter stares at stars and ponders deep thoughts about seagulls. His 24-hour shore leave 'on the town' turns Liverpool into a different place for Elaine.

It becomes a city of mystery which glows in the dark. They watch the petty rows in the alley and the late night chippy, between couples who fight each

other to pass the time, with new eyes.

From Peter's departure on, it's a question of having the bottle to live the dream. Elaine must overcome the resistance of family, friends, cynical journalists, and creepy Foreign Office officials to get to Russia and her freedom.

The idea of trying to escape the dead end of decaying industrial Britain by fleeing to the Soviet Union is not widespread. 'In Russia,' says Peter, 'if you don't work you don't eat.' 'It's a bit like that here too.'

This is not a hymn to Mother Russia, the promised land in the East. It emphasises the emotion between the two central

characters.

It is also a comment on the widespread notion that whatever else you do with Russians, falling in love with one is just not socially acceptable behaviour. 'Why do you think Brezhnev sent you the ticket?' asks the man from the ministry. 'I don't care,' replies Elaine.

*Letter to Brezhnev* isn't just a story of 'passion conquering frontiers'. It's about not accepting the way we are — not accepting the lies they tell us, not accepting that we have to be what we've always been because we're good for nothing else. This film is about dreaming our own dreams and not getting ground down. It is done with a sharp humour that rehabilitates the romanticism.

*Letter to Brezhnev*, directed by Chris Bernard, stars Alexandra Pigg, Margi Clarke, Peter Firth and Alfred Molina. It is currently on general release across Britain.

REALLY GOOD films tend to create controversy, and *Kiss of the Spider Woman* is that kind of movie. In New York, it's been playing to capacity crowds, and most people seem to like it very much. While hastening to concede that, like many things in this world, it's not perfect, I do think it's an exceptionally good film.

Reviewed by Harry Ring

It's about two men in jail. One is a revolutionary, the other a homosexual. Raul Julia plays Valentin, the revolutionary, and William Hurt plays Molina, the homosexual. Julia's good performance is overshadowed by Hurt's spectacular performance as the homosexual.

*Spider Woman* is the story of the complex relationship that develops between these two very different cellmates — different not simply in the sense that one is gay and the other straight, but in their makeup and personalities. Molina can be silly and petty. But he's a very sensitive, creative person who relies heavily on a rich imagination to survive the blows he suffers as a gay in a repressive, homophobic society.

Valentin is a strong, resolute person, committed to his comrades of the underground. Actually, there's room for speculation as to whether he's a revolutionary or rather if he found himself involved with revolutionaries as a result of an act of human solidarity on behalf of a leader of the underground.

Molina seeks refuge from the harshness of life in the make-believe world of film. Valentin scolds him for escapism, but finally succumbs to his marvelous skill as a storyteller and actor.

Valentin as the revolutionary, emerges as something of a stereotype. He is an honest, dedicated person with a not unreasonable quota of inhibitions and repressed emotions.

Molina's character is much more successfully drawn. The audience is attracted to him as a very complex but immensely human person. His sometimes affected mannerisms — perhaps the basis of the criticism that the film is anti-gay — are simply that, mannerisms.

Because Molina is so uniquely individual, I doubt that many leave the cinema thinking: 'That's the way homosexual's are.' But the depiction of Valentin could leave people with the idea that's the way revolutionaries are.

Almost provocatively, Molina insists on re-creating for Valentin a movie romance about a woman in the World War II French underground who lures a Nazi officer into an affair only to fall in love with him and decide he's really a noble person.

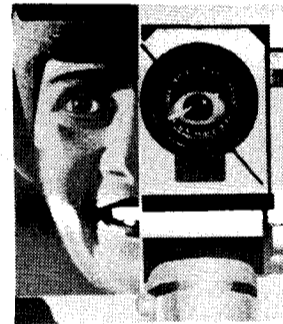
Early in the telling, Valentin spots this piece of tripe as a Nazi propaganda film and angrily berates Molina. Doesn't he know

what the Nazis did to homosexuals?

With a flash of equal anger, Molina responds: 'Of course I do!' But he insists on enjoying the film as pure camp — or perhaps more precisely, enjoying his obviously superior recreation of it. He insists on the right to indulge his imagination without restraint.

Valentin finally gets him onto another film, *The Kiss of the Spider Woman*.

## CINEMA



It has been argued that the film is anti-communist. Putting aside the fact that I don't believe it is, I would offer one strongly held opinion. That is, simply, in terms of a film's artistic merit, the point of view of the filmmaker is beside the point. The only valid criterion for a creative work is the extent to which it succeeds in capturing and conveying an aspect of reality, without regard to form or to the artist's opinion of that reality.

To insist otherwise about films with social themes would lead to the idea that only Marxists can create such works. I know that's reducing it to the proverbial absurdity, and that no one would argue for such a notion, but I do think that is the logic of it.

Meanwhile, I warmly recommend *Kiss of the Spider Woman*. I enjoyed it immensely, and it provided me with a lot of food for thought. These days that adds up to a pretty good movie.

*Kiss of the Spider Woman*, directed by Hector Babenco, stars William Hurt and Paul Julia. It goes on London release on Thursday 16 January at Screen on the Hill (Haverstock Hill), Gate Cinema (Notting Hill Gate), and Lumiere (Covent Garden).

# IRELAND UNFREE

## Irish trade unionists reject Accords

THE TRADE unionists for Irish Unity and Independence (TUIUI) organisation represents a significant body of opinion within the Irish trade union movement. In a statement issued recently they slammed the Accords.

'Does this agreement advance the cause of Irish unity?' they asked. And answered with a resounding negative. In their view, its intention is to create a situation in which the alienation of the minority in the North can be deflected and brought under control.

Without addressing the basic problems of supergrass trials, Diplock courts, strip-searching, the use of plastic bullets, and the widespread harassment of the nationalist population by the army and police — that is, the problems of partition — the disaffection of the minority in the North cannot be overcome. The deal represents, they believe, a repudiation of the New Ireland Forum position for the establishment of a unitary state in Ireland.

TUIUI sees the Anglo-Irish Accords as: 'the culmination of a drift in Irish government policy towards closer political and security cooperation with Britain, the EEC and NATO. The offer of money from president Reagan and the orchestrated support from other American politicians, the EEC commission and likes of chancellor Kohl, indicate the strategic and military interests of the US and NATO in closer Anglo-Irish cooperation.'

'The members of TUIUI believe in a united Ireland as a necessary step towards achieving a united working class, thereby facilitating the advancement of Irish workers. Our desire to see a united Ireland is hard-headed and practical and is not based on sentiment. We desire a united Ireland so that we can progress towards a 32 County workers' republic, the cherished aim of Connolly and Larkin.'

'This agreement will not advance the cause of Irish unity and it must, therefore, be rejected. Instead, the Irish government and those within Ireland who believe in unity, must assert this belief in a positive and vigorous manner and should develop the alliance with progressive forces in Britain and internationally, in a new campaign against London and Belfast unionism.'

• Trade Unionists for Irish Unity and Independence is sponsored, among others, by: Des Bonass (Amalgamated TGWU), Gerry Fleming (National Painters and Decorators), Phillip Flynn (local government and public service workers), Eddie Glackin (Federated Workers Union of Ireland), Ben Kearney (Amalgamated TGWU), John Mitchell (Irish Distributive and Administrative workers), Daltun O'Ceallaigh (higher education union), Seamus de Paor (post office engineers), Seamus Redmond (marine and port workers).

# Other Books

The Other Book's mail order service offers a wide selection of socialist, anti-imperialist and radical literature. The following selection on and by women is available by post:

**Women Under Apartheid**  
International Defence and Aid Fund, 120pp black and white photographs plus text, £3.50 + 46p p&p

**For Their Triumphs and For Their Tears: Women In Apartheid South Africa**  
Hilda Bernstein, 136pp, IDAF, £3.50 + 34p p&p

**Part of My Soul**  
Winnie Mandela, Penguin, 164pp, £2.95 + 28p p&p

**South Africa: The Struggle For A Birthright**  
Mary Benson, IDAF, 314pp, £4 + 59p p&p

**Shifting Horizons: a testament to women in the miners' strike**  
Lynn Beaton, Canary Press, 265pp, £5.65 + 40p p&p

**Women and the Cuban Revolution**  
Edited by Elizabeth Stone, Pathfinder Press, 156pp, £3.95 + 28p p&p

**Women and the Family**  
Leon Trotsky, Pathfinder Press, 78pp, £2.25 + 18p p&p

**The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State**  
Frederick Engels, introduction by Evelyn Reed, Pathfinder Press, 190pp, £2.95 + 34p p&p

**Reform or Revolution**  
Rosa Luxemburg, Pathfinder Press, 79pp, £2.25 + 18p p&p

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2nd Feb. 1986

Bring your banners!

'Bloody Sunday' commemorates the killing of 14 peaceful demonstrators by the British Army on the streets of Derry 14 years ago. The struggle for British withdrawal still continues. Every day for the past 16 years Irish women have had to look on as the British army's occupation of their country.

- with physical, emotional, and sexual harassment of themselves, their mothers, their sisters, their daughters.
- with humiliating strip searches if they are remanded in Armagh prison, and now in Brixton prison.
- with threats of rape if they are 'lifted' for interrogation.
- with arbitrary street questioning, arrests, detentions, nighty raids on their homes.
- with constant intimidation and provoking of their children and harrowing visits to imprisoned relatives.

But Irish women are fighting back. It is women who have frequently led the resistance to the British occupation. They are as determined as ever to get Britain out and to defend the nationalist community.

# Defend the surcharge Councillors

'WE GO INTO court this week with our hands tied behind our back,' said Felicity Dowling, secretary of the Liverpool District Labour Party and a councillor facing surcharge. She was speaking to a packed hall in Lambeth last Sunday on the eve of both councils' court cases.

'We took over an authority which was a wreck,' she explained. 'There are now more than 23,000 workers in employment who would not be otherwise. There are more than 3000 houses which would not otherwise be there.'

'Over 300 affiliated bodies support us,' she told the audience. 'But the district party is not allowed to meet. We are not allowed to organise.'

'We have the support of all but one of the wards in the city — and that one does not allow people to join because it says it is full up! But while I am in court, next Wednesday the Labour Party will send in its enquiry.'

'We need a united response from the party. Kinnock should be defending us, as Thatcher will be there defending the bankers when they go into

crisis.'

Felicity Dowling put the problem for Liverpool and Lambeth councillors in a nutshell. They are facing surcharge and disqualification in a situation where the party leadership have made it more than clear that they will throw them to the wolves.

**By Carol Turner**

Deliberately and publicly, Kinnock has done all in his power to assist the Tories and the courts to smash those councillors prepared to stand up for the interests of the working people who elected them.

Speaking at the same meeting, NUM president Arthur Scargill pointed to the hypocrisy of Kinnock's position. 'Liverpool and Lambeth councils are being attacked,' he said, 'for carrying out the policy on which they were elected in



an individual ballot. Where are the advocates of ballots now?

'The saddest thing is those who join the dawn chorus of jackals from Fleet Street and attack anyone, black or white, woman or man, who dares to stand and fight against central government

policy.' 'It has been the policy of my union — adopted under my predecessor, because we saw the evil of witch-hunts and what they did to our movement in the '50s — that if there's one thing we don't want, it is to turn a witch-hunt on our own class. We should fight the

class enemy'.

That same message came from the 800-odd trade unionists and party members who marched on the Strand law courts last Tuesday morning for the beginning of the Lambeth trial.

These court actions are a stitch-up. Liverpool and

## Message of support from Haringey

'GREETINGS FROM the black young people of Tottenham,' said Haringey leader Bernie Grant. 'As disadvantaged people we recognise what you are going through.'

'You are in this position because the Tory government has stolen over 100,000,000 in revenue and over 150,000,000 in capital. Without that money we can't provide jobs and we can't build houses. In Tottenham we will have to put up tents in fields to deal with our homeless.'

'Liverpool and Lambeth councillors didn't set out to be martyrs, but to carry out their manifesto commitments to support the poor people and oppressed who had no one else to champion their cause.'

'Our job is to support you, not to tell you what to do. The Labour Party must be the party of the oppressed.'

Lambeth councillors have already been found guilty of fighting for the interests of their class.

Combatting the policies of the Tory government must be made synonymous with defending all councillors now under attack.

● Messages of support and donation to Liverpool councillors' court case should be sent to: Cllr Tony Hood, Room 42, Municipal Buildings, Dale Street, Liverpool L69 2DH. For Lambeth contact the town hall on 01-274 7722.

## Drift back to the NUM

**THE MISNAMED Union of Democratic Mineworkers (UDM) got off to a shaky start in 1986. UDM efforts to sink roots outside its Nottinghamshire stronghold suffered set backs across the country.**

Last October, South Derbyshire miners voted by a tiny majority of 26 votes to join the UDM. The NUM have now won back a majority of the South Derbyshire miners. This is no small achievement as miners have had to take an active step to re-join the NUM and be identified by management for doing so.

On 10 January, 89 per cent of the miners at the North Wales Point of Ayr colliery voted to stay with

the NUM. Although only a third of the Point of Ayr miners joined the strike, a mere 68 voted for a split to the UDM. Before the vote, 50 men who had previously joined the UDM rejoined the NUM.

**By Celia Pugh**

This followed a pre-Christmas rebuff to the UDM at the other North Wales colliery. During the strike, miners at the North Wales Bersham pit return-

ed to work en masse in a blaze of gloating press publicity. But this time it was the NUM who smiled as miners voted ten to one to stay with the national union.

UDM general secretary Roy Lynk has been forced to comment on this drift back to the NUM, trying to brush it aside as 'less than 1000'. Even if we accept his figures, that's not a bad start.

In Durham, six UDM members rejoined the NUM last month and the breakaway organisations' membership is being further eroded by members taking redundancy.



## NCB: dirty tricks to aid UDM

**NOTTINGHAM members of the National Union of Mineworkers have accused the National Coal Board of intimidation, misappropriation and dirty tricks against the union.**

The NCB insist that Notts miners must register NUM membership with them before dues can be deducted at source and sent to the national union.

Henry Richardson, former Notts NUM area secretary, reports that 4800 signed NUM forms were sent to the Board, but these were rejected on the

grounds that they could have been forged.

NUM members have to suffer the indignity of counter-signing the forms, or signing their name on blank pieces of paper, at NCB offices, in the presence of a management witness.

Joe Mohammed of Cotgrave colliery said that 200 NUM members at his pit have been subjected to this procedure. He said: 'They want to intimidate members by getting them to sign in front of management representatives. It's a dirty business.'

Some of the Cotgrave miners have turned up many times to sign the

forms, to be turned away with claims that a witness is not available.

Barry Smith a Sherwood NUM member protests that the NCB is delaying the registration of NUM members. While there is a hold up, NUM members accuse the Board of 'misappropriation of employees money'.

Some NUM members who turn up to counter sign the NUM forms are being interviewed by management to get them to join the UDM. This is proof that the UDM is a bosses outfit and that the NCB is determined to give NUM members a rough ride.



## Forge-masters

**STRIKERS at Forge-masters in Sheffield stepped up their action with a hundred strong picket of the company's River Don plant on Monday 6 January.**

Only a handful crossed the picket line, where workers voted to join the strike over Christmas.

The dispute began at the Forge-masters Atlas site three months ago over the right to centralised trade union representation and an elected convenor.

● Send donations to Forge-masters Strike, AUEW House, Arundel Gate, Sheffield.

## Teachers plan more action

**NEARLY A YEAR ago teachers began a pay campaign to restore the 34 per cent loss suffered over the last 10 years. On 18 January, the two biggest unions — the National Union of Teachers and the National Association of Schoolmasters-Union of Women Teachers — are holding special conferences to plan for the 1986 pay campaign.**

These conferences come at an important time. The Tory government is anxious to blunt the teachers action and last year changed the teachers' side of the Burnham negotiating body to remove the NUT's majority. It hoped this would lead to a rapid settlement.

The NAS-UWT were prepared to line up with headteachers' organisations and the anti-strike Professional Association of Teachers, to strip the NUT of its leadership role in the pay body. But they have been forced to pull back from a sell out deal. This is because of the

unity created at a local level between the two unions. In London for example, the Inner London Teachers Association and the London NAS-UWT officers put out a joint new years' greeting to members, expressing their intention to work together in the pay campaign.

At first the majority of the NUT leadership were opposed to this development but in December they adopted a call for joint talks on the claim between the TUC affiliated unions. This call was initiated by Socialist Teachers Alliance supporters on the national executive committee.

The government's declaration of cuts in education spending of five per cent in real terms has exposed their attitude to education. This has spurred their fight.

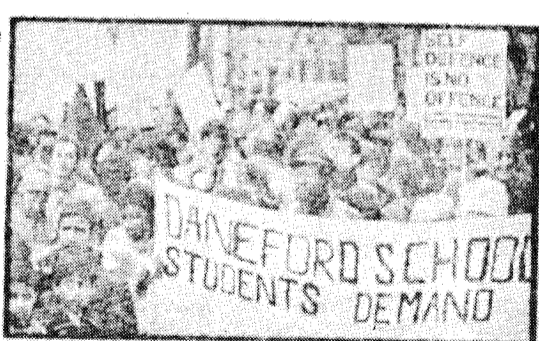
The Labour Party, which now dominates the employers side of the negotiations, has made little attempt to back the teachers. Labour spokesperson on education, Giles Radice has only made milk and water statements calling for an independent enquiry.



**By Bernard Regan**  
(NUT Executive member, personal capacity)

The union conferences will have to take up these problems. The NUT executive resolution has a routinist, business as usual approach. The conference must make sure that the current selective strike action and sanctions are intensified and that teachers are not left to fight alone.

A number of local associations have put amendments to the NUT conference to tackle these tasks. One of them calls for local branches of the NUT and the NAS-UWT to get backing when they work together and instructs the executive to aim



for a joint caucus of TUC affiliated unions to take forward the campaign.

Another amendment aims to broaden the campaign by calling for solidarity from other unions, linking up the fight of the Scottish teachers with that in England and Wales, and calling together all public sector unions who have pay claims in the pipeline to discuss a co-ordinated fight against the government.

Action must be taken which will put the squeeze on the government. The biggest impact of the campaign was before Xmas

when the NUT adopted guerrilla strike tactics based on members coming out for half a day a month.

In many schools this resulted in virtual closure for a week or so and led Thatcher to call on local authorities to lock out teachers. So far the local employers have held back from this as they are unsure of the teachers response to this provocation.

The Inner London Teachers Association is calling for these half day actions to be increased to upto one a week. This would escalate the action and result in the virtual

closure of many secondary schools for weeks on end.

Unable to intervene directly, Thatcher has now turned to her allies in the press. The attack is led by the Daily Mail and Daily Express following an article in the Times Educational Supplement.

These articles are inspired by Anne Sofer, an SDP representative on the Inner London Education Authority. They are a gutter attack on Socialist Teachers Alliance officers of the Inner London Teachers Association.

The STA officers are attacked for manipulating the London members and

for their support of anti racist activities. The Daily Express article is written by Nick Woods, a declared supporter of Thatcher. It attacks progressive resolutions submitted for the NUT's Easter conference.

The main story on the Express front page is under the headline 'Class war in the classroom' and is designed to drive a wedge between teachers and the public, with a view to splitting the union and perhaps creating a 'back to work' type pressure via discontented parents. More needs to be done to get the teachers' case over to parents.

Scores of meetings have been organised and a good example is the All London Parents Action Group. This activity will be vital when teachers refuse to invigilate public exams for the boards, which run them as profit making concerns.

● Messages of solidarity to the ILTA officers from trade unions and Labour Party branches should be sent to ILTA c/o Hamilton House, Mableton Place, London WC1.

# A Socialist ACTION

## DEFEND PRINT UNIONS

'WE EITHER fight now or not at all.' That was the truth which Brenda Dean, general secretary of SOGAT, told print workers at Rupert Murdoch's News International on Monday.

The Murdoch management is now openly putting into operation its long publicised plan for the biggest attack on the print unions since World War II — a fight organised around News International's new £100 million Wapping plant. Murdoch himself flew into London last week to personally supervise the fight.

News International carried out an open provocation last Sunday when they unilaterally announced in the *Sunday Times* that 16 pages of the paper's colour supplement would be printed at the Wapping plant this week.

It was only on 29 December that News International for the first time publicly admitted what SOGAT and the NGA had known all the time — that the Wapping plant was to be used to try to smash union organisation on Murdoch's Fleet Street papers *The Sun*, *News of the World*, *Times*, and *Sunday Times*. Until then Murdoch had claimed that Wapping was simply to be used to print his proposed new London evening paper *The Post*.

Now that its positions are out in the open Murdoch's company is revealing its plans for the most brutal possible attack on the print unions. Asked on Monday's *World at One* radio news over whether News International was seeking a confrontation with the print unions, the companies' managing director Bruce Matthews

declared: 'If we are forced into it then, yes, that is what it will be.'

Elaborate preparations have been made by News International for the fight. The Wapping factory is protected by barbed wire and guards. Electricians on short term contracts have been brought in to operate the presses. News International has been seeking to sign a legally binding, no strike, one union deal with the EET-PU in clear violation of TUC policy. The EETPU executive was still meeting to take a final decision on this as we go to press.

News International has also been setting up an alternative distribution network for the plant. It was reported at the end of December that the TNT distribution company had purchased a fleet of extra lorries for paper distribution. SOGAT also reported that the company was taking on extra staff for handling newspapers.

TNT shares with News International the ownership of Australian Ansett commissioned by News International last summer to

international last summer to undertake a feasibility study about establishing an alternative distribution network for newspapers to existing ones.

Murdoch has legally separated his companies in order to prepare for court action against the NGA and SOGAT. It would be illegal under the Tory anti-union laws if, for example, *Sun* workers took action against the use of scab labour at Wapping.

The NGA and SOGAT have balloted News International workers for industrial action. The results should be known at the end of this week and the beginning of next.

So far the print union leaderships have been retreating before Murdoch's offensive. Brenda Dean's reaction to Murdoch's demand for a legally binding no-strike deal was to reject this but say 'What we are saying is that we are prepared to break new ground.'

But now the NGA and SOGAT have their backs against the wall. Robert Maxwell's Mirror Group Newspapers have already pushed through 2100 redundancies. If Murdoch succeeds in his attack it would be a body blow to the print unions from which it would be difficult to recover.

Total labour movement support must be given to the NGA and SOGAT '82.

● See 'A threat to every union' p2.



## ANC LAUNCHES OFFENSIVE

THE AFRICAN National Congress has declared this the decade of liberation for the black people of South Africa. On 9 January ANC president Oliver Tambo celebrated the seventy-fourth anniversary of the Congress stating: 'We declare 1986 the year of Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation), the people's army.' He called for 'a rapid extensive escalation of our military struggle'.

This is a stepping up of the South African people's struggle to make the apartheid regime ungovernable, and for its replacement by a single nation where black people have democratic rights.

As the white supremacists used more brutal forms of resisting the just struggle of black South Africans against their rule, the ANC had no choice but to meet the violence of the slavemaster with an armed response.

After the Sharpeville massacre of 1960, Umkhonto we Sizwe was born. In 1986, its traditional guerilla activity against military and government targets will be extended to a people's war, with mass bases in the townships and bantustans.

This ANC offensive — coming on the heels of mass funeral demonstrations and the formation of the unified trade union federation COSATU — deepens the problems of the Botha regime, which is in economic and political crisis at home and is becoming more isolated abroad.

This is a signal to step up international pressure to break all links with the apartheid regime. The anti apartheid movement in the United States has taken a lead with an international campaign to boycott products made by the Anglo-Dutch Shell group.

Shell has been selected because, by supplying crude oil to South Africa it is the only big oil company

to breach the embargo. Shell has significant investments in South African pipelines, refineries, filling stations, chemical plants and coal mines. Shell protests that it is 'unequivocally opposed to apartheid', but newspaper adverts have been discovered where Shell announce 'We're backing South Africa'. The US campaign against Shell is backed by the auto and mineworkers unions and the AFL-CIO union federation.

By Celia Pugh

The Anti Apartheid Movement in Britain is appealing for more activity against South Africa's aggression in the region. It wants sanctions against Namibia and a campaign to end the South African occupation of the country. Last week, the apartheid regime continued its undeclared war against Angola with a raid on the hamlet of Mupa, 95 miles inside the country, and the kidnapping of two Angolan militiamen.

The tiny country of Lesotho, surrounded on all sides by South Africa, faces famine level shortages because, since 1 January, the apartheid regime has imposed border checks and restrictions. The regime claim to be searching for ANC guerillas. Repression continues

against opponents of the regime in South Africa and Namibia. In Namibia teachers have been detained, accused of planting bombs.

In South Africa, the banning order has been reimposed on ANC leader Winnie Mandela. Winnie Mandela is due in court on 22 January charged with ignoring an order banning her from her Soweto home.

On 7 January 20,000

platinum miners in the Western Transvaal were dismissed by the Impala company after a five day strike. Thousands of these miners were transported back to the homelands.

The Anti Apartheid Movement's 1986 agenda for action — with demonstrations, lobbies and a national trade union conference of 1 March — offers a solid base to respond to the ANC's appeal for solidarity.

### AAM agenda for action

Picket in solidarity with Winnie Mandela, Wednesday 22 January, 1-2pm, South Africa House, Trafalgar Square.

Picket to demand release of teachers detained in Namibia, Tuesday 4 February, 6pm, South Africa House, called by Namibia Support Committee.

Trade union conference called by AAM, Saturday 1 March, 10-5pm, London School of Economics, Houghton Street, London WC2. Registration, £5 for national delegates £3 local. AAM recommends early registration, to guarantee entrance because of limited space.

National lobby of parliament called by AAM, Wednesday 19 March.

Day for local demonstrations, Saturday 22 March.

Trade union week of action, April 14-20.

National demonstration and rock concert, Saturday 28 June.

● Islington Against Apartheid rally, Thursday 20 February, 7.30pm, Red Rose, 129 Seven Sisters Road, London N7. Speakers from ANC, SWAPO, Tony Benn MP and others.

● Huddersfield AAM demonstration, Saturday 8 February, 11pm from Beck Road. Rally 12 noon, town centre, Nelson Mandela Square. Contact Eric Biddulph, 0484 658175.

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