

Socialist Challenge

Laurence Scott

LAST Sunday hundreds of trade unionists in Manchester rallied in support of the Laurence Scott workers, who are continuing their fight against redundancy, despite their forcible eviction from the factory by bailiffs last week.

Support has continued to pour in for the Laurence Scott workers from rank and file AUEW workers and other trade unionists all over the country. But none of this is due to the AUEW executive who have been doing everything possible to sabotage the Laurence Scott jobs fight.

For the full story see page four.



US-Hands Off Libya Hands Off Grenada

OVER the past week the true face of American imperialism has been displayed with all its mighty arrogance.

Almost within sight of the Libyan coast the huge American sixth fleet provoked an air battle with the Libyans, as part of the US's openly declared plan to 'destabilise' and overthrow the Libyan regime.

The meaning of the Reagan administration's huge arms build up is made abundantly clear by these events.

From now on the US is going to re-establish its pre-Vietnam role as world

cop, using its military muscle to cow and intimidate anyone who dares oppose the United States and its reactionary allies.

While the sixth fleet was engaged in its deadly work off the coast of Libya, the US navy and marines were engaged in Caribbean manoeuvres, including practice landings off Puerto Rico.

There is a mass of circumstantial evidence to suggest that this exercise was a practice for a possible invasion of revolutionary Grenada, the tiny island in the Caribbean whose two-year old revolution is under constant

economic, political and military threat from the United States.

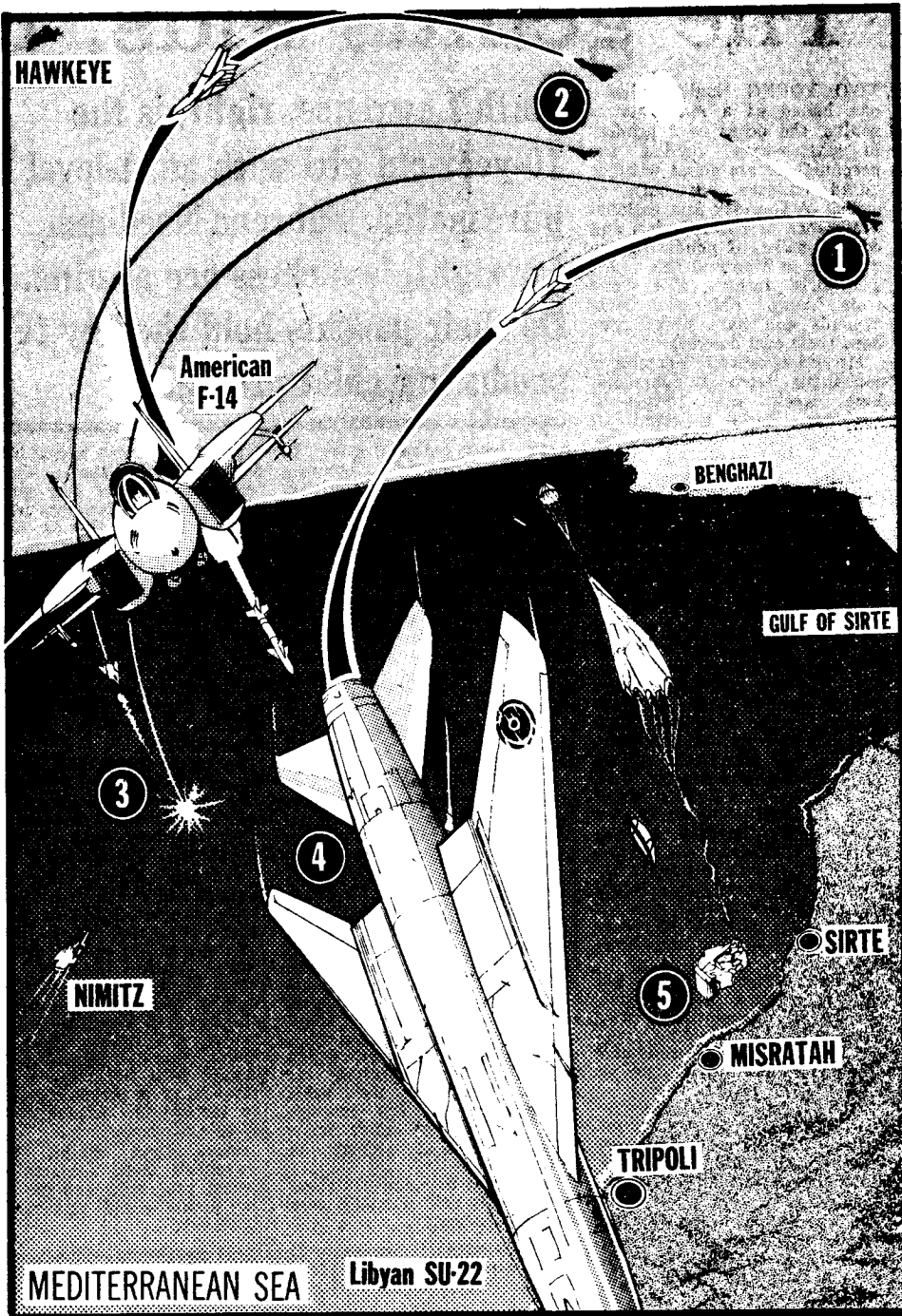
The admiral in charge of the operation described Grenada, Cuba and Nicaragua as 'practically one country' and 'a politico-military problem'.

The urgent task of the hour is to mobilise international public opinion to defend the right of self-determination of the Libyan and Grenadian peoples.

The international bully boys of the Reagan regime must be stopped in their tracks!

Imperial America on the rampage see pages two and three.

HAWKEYE



Peter Sullivan

Libya - a Bonapartist military

THE American administration is gunning for Gaddafi because the kind of Arab nationalist politics he puts forward brings him into sharp conflict with the aims of imperialism.

There is nothing new in this: US imperialism opposes all those who challenge its interests, irrespective of their precise political character.

Because Libya is in conflict with imperialism, it does not follow that there is anything socialist or revolutionary about the Libyan government. In defending Libya's right to self-determination, and opposing any US attempt to de-stabilise

the existing government, socialists should not in any way attempt to prettify what that government represents.

In fact, Gaddafi is the latest of a long line of radical nationalist military figures in the Middle East. He explicitly takes much of his inspiration from historically the most important of them — Egypt's Colonel Nasser.

Despite the radicalism and anti-imperialist flavour of Gaddafi's ideology and foreign policy, Libya remains a capitalist nation, which has not broken free from the bonds of imperialism.

The military government came to power through a coup in 1969. Since that time it has taken a number of very radical measures internally, the most important being the nationalisation of the majority of foreign oil holdings. This measure was followed by a policy of systematic nationalisation not only of the major means of production, but of everything right down to retail shops.

In carrying through these measures Gaddafi registered many important gains for the Libyan masses. The standard of living of the Libyans has

IMPERIAL AMER

FOR the last 18 months *Socialist Challenge* has argued that the new arms race was the product of a 'war drive' by the United States — aimed at the growth of the colonial revolution, and in defence of the US's imperial interests. This explanation is widely contested by those who consider that the US and the USSR are equally responsible for the new 'cold war'. But the events off the coast of Libya speak louder than millions of words of analysis: imperial America is on the rampage again.

During the 1960s and 1970s the United States suffered a series of harsh blows, economically and politically. Above all, the defeat in Vietnam damaged its international prestige and influence. But although the US no longer has the economic dominance it once enjoyed, it is still the world's strongest military power. Now it is engaged in a process of welding and deploying that power in order to reinforce its position, and that of its allies in reaction.

Over the past year and a half direct US involvement in world conflict has increased dramatically. In Central America, Reagan has moved quickly to prevent the victory of the left-wing insurgents in El Salvador. After the revolutionary offensive in January of this year, 300 American military 'advisors' and hundreds of tons of arms and other military equipment poured into that country. This aid has been decisive in keeping the right wing Duarte junta in power.

Afraid

The Reagan regime has also reversed the uncertain and half-hearted approach of Carter to the Nicaraguan revolution. All aid and loans have been brutal-

which aims to overthrow the MPLA government, and the State Department has coddled up to the South African regime.

Elsewhere, while the Sixth Fleet is currently menacing Libya, other detachments of the US navy are carrying out manoeuvres in the region of Grenada, raising fears of an invasion.

The backdrop to this general increase of direct American intervention is the massive rearmament programme proposed by Defence Secretary Caspar Weinberger. Over the next ten years the US

Reagan and his Secretary of State, Alexander Haig, have charted a much more stridently right-wing course over Southern Africa. Aid has been resumed to the pro-imperialist UNITA movement in Angola,

'Destabilisation'

The shooting down of two Libyan Sukhoi-22 jets by carrier-based American F-14s is the most open and dramatic indicator so far of the new aggression in American foreign policy. PHIL HEARSE reports.

Only the most naive could believe that the 'incident' in the Gulf of Sirte was an unprovoked attack by the Libyans on innocent American warships merrily chugging along on the high seas. The US exercise off the Libyan coast is a carefully calculated step in the American plan to overthrow the Gaddafi Libyan regime. As long ago as last May the *New York Daily News* revealed a secret White House memo outlining a plan to 'de-stabilise' the Libyan government. On 2 June, the State Department announced that henceforth it would step up military aid to those countries in northern Africa which wanted to resist Libyan 'terrorism' — in other words, it would beef up the armies of the reactionary states bordering Libya — Egypt, Tunisia, and Sudan. The State Department has made Gaddafi 'enemy number one'.

According to the US, Gaddafi is the 'patron saint' of 'terrorism', responsible for sending agents all over the world to assassinate his political opponents. The truth is that Gaddafi antagonises the US by backing struggles and movements against many of the US's reactionary allies.

Washington is particularly concerned about the support given by Gaddafi to the Chad government of President Goukouni Oueddei, which is composed of the Frolinat (National Liberation Front), who fought against French domination of Chad since the mid 1960s.

Last year Gaddafi sent troops to defend the government against French and Egyptian backed rebels. Thanks to the intervention of the Libyans the rebels were roundly defeated. Last April, Libya decided to give Nicaragua a \$100m loan, after the Reagan

regime had cut off all aid to Nicaragua in an attempt to starve the revolution there.

Volunteers

Nor does the US like Gaddafi's role in the Middle East. Libya strongly supports the Palestine Liberation Organisation. It has asked the Arab world to send volunteers to the Lebanon to assist the struggle of the Palestinians and the Lebanese leftists. The Libyans have also been leading critics of the Camp David agreement between Israel and Egypt which proposes a 'settlement' of the Arab-Israeli conflict at the expense of the Palestinians.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the US has chosen Libya as the first nation to openly harass and challenge. The manoeuvring of the American sixth fleet within view of the coast is all too reminiscent of the prelude to the US invasion of the Lebanon

in 1958. Only two days before the shooting down of the Libyan jets, the government in Tripoli warned that there was a danger of an invasion from the United States.

The American sixth fleet is not just a few destroyers aimed at challenging the Soviet Union, but a huge counter-revolutionary task force composed of dozens of ships, including carriers with thousands of marines and hundreds of aircraft. America's aggression against Libya is a graphic demonstration of what the US war drive is all about — using imperial might to keep the world free for reaction.



dictatorship

risen dramatically. Virtually everyone has a decent house to live in. Irrigation projects have eased the lot of the peasantry, as have state loans to peasant farmers for development projects.

This progress for the Libyan masses has been based on two factors — Libya's oil wealth, and the fact that the Libyan population is very small, only 3 million. Oil revenue has been distributed to improve the well being of the ordinary people. (It should be added that the lot of Libya's immigrant workers is not nearly so good.) What

prevents us characterising this regime as socialist?

In the first place, political power is firmly held by the military-officer caste. Officially all state structures have been dissolved, and power lies in the hands of 'people's committees'. But that is a fiction. The real power lies in a complex bureaucratic structure at the centre of which is Gaddafi and the military. The workers have no real political power. All political parties are 'dissolved'.

Second, the fact that the economy is nationalised is not in itself definitive proof that a socialist system exists. For ex-

ample, in Nasser's Egypt, in the first phase of his rule, the majority of the economy was nationalised but the revenues from state business went into the pockets of the bureaucracy, a 'rentier' capitalist class. Nasser's Egypt was in the real meaning of the term 'state capitalism'.

Gaddafi's Libya, paradoxically, remains tied to imperialism economically. Forty per cent of Libya's oil exports go to the United States, the rest to other imperialist powers.

Libya still retains the status of a producer of raw materials. The limited industrialisation re-

mains *dependent* industrialisation, with foreign made parts being assembled in Libya, on the basis of foreign-supplied technology.

Libya therefore depends on the vagaries of the world market, and the present world glut of oil will hit the economy hard.

It is a characteristic of such regimes that their policies can wildly fluctuate. Gaddafi appears radical today. If he is not overthrown, it is not at all excluded that he could modify his international policies and seek a new relationship with imperialism tomorrow.

AMERICA ON THE RAMPAGE

intends to spend at least an extra \$200bn on modernising its nuclear strike force. This will be in addition to the possibly \$100bn which will be spent on the huge MX missile project.

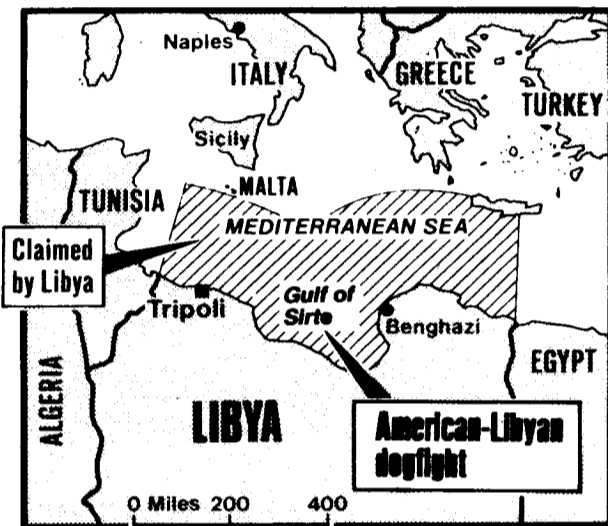
Increasing pressure is being put on the US's allies to go along with the policy of re-armament and aggression. The most recent example is the attempt being made by Caspar Weinberger to get the British government to deploy the neutron bomb with the British army of the Rhine.

This, in itself, is full of lessons. NATO is an alliance

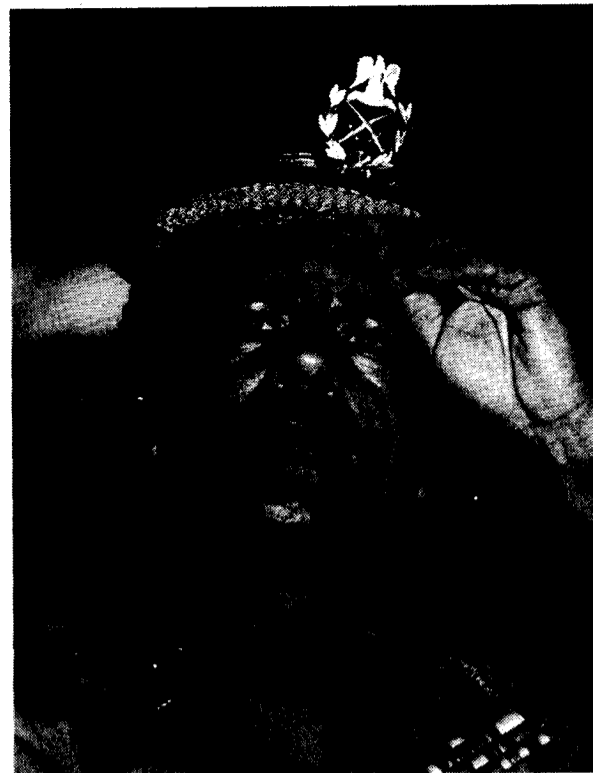
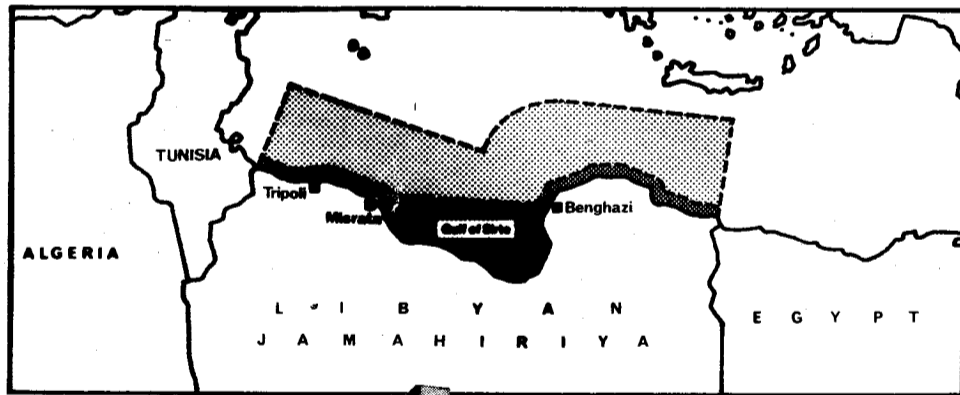
whose fundamental aims and trajectory are decided by the United States. The decisions on Cruise missiles, Trident and the neutron bomb have been made primarily by the US, even if the allies have gone along with afterwards. They have been made because NATO is an alliance whose whole strategy is based on the use of nuclear weapons.

The American re-armament programme should be a salutary lesson for the debate on nuclear weapons in the Labour Party. Last year's Labour Party conference decided *against* nuclear weapons but *for* NATO. Yet NATO just gives expression to the American militarisation.

The events off the coast of Libya show just who dangerous the new turn of American foreign policy is. It should give added stimulus to the CND demonstrations outside the Labour Party conference on 28 September and in London on 4 October.



Below map provided by the Libyan government shows in dark shading the real extent of Libya's claim — a 12 mile limit plus the 'historical waters' of the Gulf of Sirte — together with Western assertions in light shading of what the Libyan claim is. Above, the 'Economist' goes one stage further, claiming that the Libyans even demand sovereignty over the coast of Cyprus!



Libyan leader Gaddafi

GRENADA UNDER THREAT

THE Peoples Revolutionary Government in Grenada is becoming increasingly disturbed by the mounting evidence that the United States is preparing an invasion of that country.

The US navy is currently carrying out an exercise off the coast of Puerto Rico which looks like a trial run for an invasion of Grenada.

This exercise involves a simulated coastal invasion, and the country subject to invasion is code named 'Amber', together with subsidiary islands called the 'Amberdines'.

The islands near Grenada are called the Grenadines. There is also an area in Grenada called Amber, which is next to the international airport, on the southern tip of the coast — just the sort of area where an invasion would start from.

In charge of the operation is Rear Admiral Robert P. McKenzie who has referred to Nicaragua, Cuba and Grenada as 'practically one country' and a 'politico-military problem'.

The simulated invasion is taking place on to mountainous country, very similar to that on the southern coast of Grenada.

This exercise is only the latest example of American hostility to Grenada. Other examples have included persistent overflights of Grenadian air space by American planes, a contingency plan to invade Grenada drawn up within a week of the revolution, and repeated attempts by the US to get international aid for the rebuilding of the airport, and money for development, cut off. In the light of the events in the Gulf of Sirte, Grenadian fears of an invasion look only too realistic.



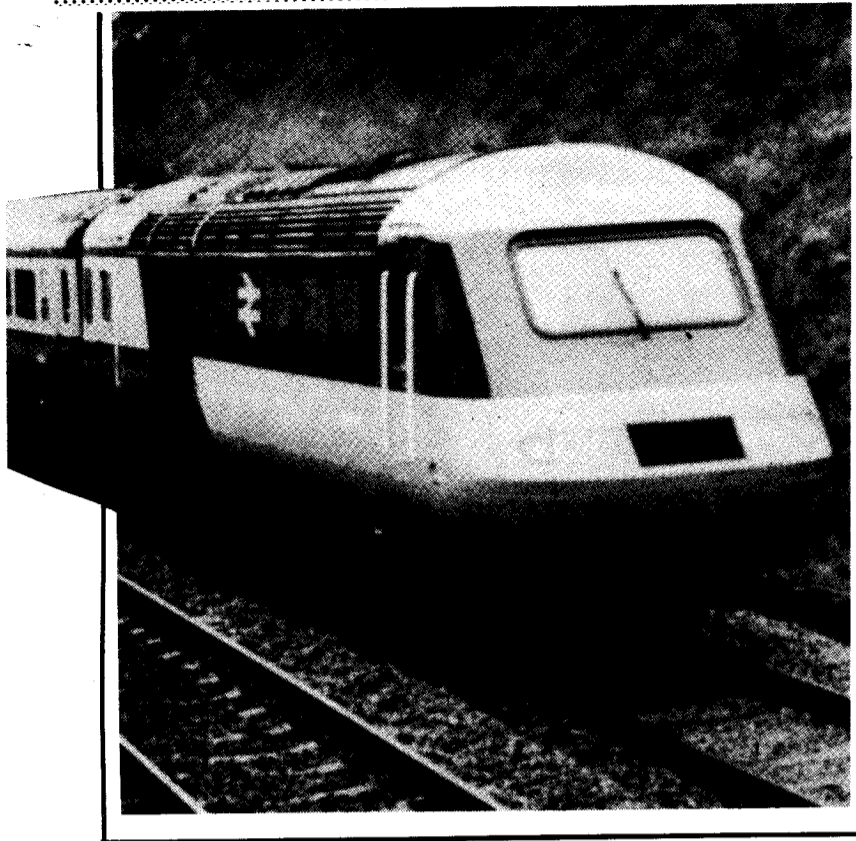
Solidarity with the people of CHILE and LATIN AMERICA

No Tory Arms for Chile
No U.S. Intervention in Central America

National Demonstration
Sunday 20 September '81

Assemble 1:00pm
Clerkenwell Green EC1
March to Trafalgar Square

NO AID, NO TRADE, NO GUNS FOR FASCISM
STOP TORTURE IN CHILE
FOR THE RESTORATION OF TRADE UNION RIGHTS IN CHILE
FREE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS IN LATIN AMERICA



Productivity strings threat to rail workers

By Hazel Macpherson (NUR)

WHEN the NUR's Sidney Weighell and ASLEF's Ray Buckton announced the details of the rail settlement last Friday, they presented it in such a way as to make it appear a victory. British Rail had agreed to pay the three per cent increase from next January, backdated to August, in return for 'discussions' about productivity.

But by Sunday the reality of the deal became clear: the increase from an eight to an eleven per cent pay award is conditional on union agreement on productivity.

Many of the changes in working practices which BR wants involve either job loss or a deterioration in working conditions — and some of the most important changes have already been agreed in principle by the NUR.

Far from being a victory, the union leaderships have shown they are prepared to sell jobs and

working conditions for a tiny wage increase.

The most important changes in working practices are the introduction of 'open stations' and an end to five-day working. Open stations will involve continental-style on-board ticket sale and collection on many routes.

Jobs

This will have the effect of eliminating jobs both among platform staff and booking office staff, members of the TSSA.

Moreover, the train guards will have their burden increased, towards ticket collection and away from ensuring the safety of the train, their nominal first concern. The NUR have in any case already agreed to a seven-month experiment on open stations.

The abandonment of five-day working will significantly affect the working conditions of railway workers. They will now be expected to work four ten-hour shifts.

Sunday will now be considered part of the working week with no extra payment. Increased 'flexibility' in hours means that drivers and some other workers will have to work split shifts on the same day.

In other words, the

abandonment of five-day working will mean a considerable increase in the unsocial nature of the job.

The overall outcome of the deal is that hard-won gains made by workers in the industry have been sold for a measly three per cent wage increase.

Rash

However, as these are implemented it is inevitable that there will be a rash of local struggles against them. It is this that the Rail Broad Left will have to address itself to — to co-ordinate and build support for the struggle against productivity. If the changes are allowed to go through unchallenged, it will amount to a defeat for all rail workers.

These actions of the union leadership show also the importance of building the triple alliance between steel, coal and rail workers at a rank and file level, so that when any sections go into struggle against the sell-out policies of the bureaucracy the maximum support can be developed.

Laurence Scott — support the picket line

By Patrick Sikorski

'WE call on every trade unionist here today and every other in the Manchester area, especially those facing redundancy, to support the picket line at Laurence Scott. We are fighting a battle for every worker in Manchester and indeed nationally. Our fight is your fight. It's us today — it could be you tomorrow.'

That was the message from Laurence Scott convenor Dennis Barry at the rally attended by over 500 trade unionists last Sunday in support of the Laurence Scott picket line and in protest at the brutal eviction carried out five days earlier by 45 drink-sodden

bailliffs.

Dennis Barry has challenged the AUEW executive to come clean on its attitude to the eviction. In an open letter to the whole of Fleet Street and the labour movement press he has condemned the silence of the executive on this attack on their union members.

Their lack of condemnation of the eviction, he says, can only be interpreted as being consent or at least indifference.

In a very real sense, the action of the AUEW executive in withdrawing official support and opened the way for the bailliffs to do their dirty work.

But far from being the end of the story the eviction has hardened the resolve of the Scott's workers. Breaking in to repossess the factory was one thing, but it will not be nearly so easy for the management to remove £3m worth of motors and masses of machinery and plant.

Strip

In normal circumstances it would take Snipe 18 months to strip the factory. The workers at Scotts are determined to prevent a single nut or bolt being removed.

Bolstering their resolve is the knowledge that, as far as the North West region TGWU is concerned, the strike is still official. The Manchester

WHAT WE ARE FIGHTING FOR

- The factory should reopen
- No enforced redundancies
- Compensation for the workforce in the form of an *ex-gratia* payment for loss of wages during a dispute unnecessarily prolonged through management's refusal to negotiate

WHAT SNIPE IS OFFERING

- The factory should reopen for a 3 month trial period on a 2 day week
- No guarantee on enforced redundancies
- Any return to work is conditional on total repayment of redundancy money paid by management during dispute

TGWU offices have issued instructions that no TGWU drivers must cross the picket line.

In the meantime the TGWU is still paying its members in Scotts official strike pay. If this situation is confirmed at a national level during the next week then carrying the fight to Snipe by picketing his Doncaster factory becomes a real possibility once again.

It was official backing from the TGWU for the



LSE Convenor Dennis Barry

last picket at Doncaster, which was decisive in starting Snipe's parent company of essential gases from the British Oxygen Company, that forced him to negotiate.

The life blood of the dispute is still national solidarity both politically and financially.

There is now a straight fight between the AUEW executive and the Scotts stewards for support from the rank and file of the engineering unions. At the moment, the stewards are way ahead on points.

The number of MPs supporting the dispute has risen to over 60. Since the beginning of August over 70 AUEW branches have responded to the circular calling for protest resolutions to be forwarded to

the executive and for financial support.

During the last week, over £2000 has come into the strike fund, including a cheque for £600 from Clancy Tooling, Sheffield. In response Duffy and Boyd have lashed out with a four-page letter to every one of the 2,400 AUEW branches in the country. The stewards have sent out a reply.

Duffy's letter opens with a crude and scandalous attack on the first national branch appeal put out by the stewards. This is labelled 'misleading material purporting to inform our members of the situation'. The executive letter then claims that the mandate given to keep the factory open was fulfilled.

But it is clear that the nationally negotiated agreement only guarantees three months working on a two-day week during which, to quote the stewards circular, 'the final closure of the factory could be more easily effected'.

As to the claim in the executive's letter that the national agreement guarantees no enforced redundancies, this is even more outlandish.

As the stewards say: 'At no stage has it been stated that the company will remain open longer than three months, and at no stage has the expected level of employment been stated.'

The protest resolutions must keep rolling in to the executive.

'For A Few Dollars More'

Last week, the owners of the Lee Jeans factory in Greenock, the USA based Vanity Fair Corporation, announced their profits for the last six months. They were over 20 per cent up since last year from nine and a half million dollars to nearly eleven and a half million dollars!

In a pamphlet produced last month by 'War on Want' about the Lee Jeans occupation, a sorry tale is told of the crass exploitation of women workers in the 'rag trade' and the dirty tricks of companies like V.F. Corporation.

Despite 'record' profits, the Greenock workers were told that the jeans market had collapsed and that closure was the only option for the company.

Behaviour like this has transformed the V.F. Cor-

poration into one of the world's leading jeans manufacturers.

Service

War on Want do a valuable service to the Lee

Jeans workers and to the labour movement by documenting the rise of the V.F. Corporation and exposing the way it operates.

According to the pamphlet, Lee Jeans was created over the last ten years by V.F. Corporation as its other, more traditional, clothes manufacturers hit bad times.

It is part of an empire which includes forty-four factories spread throughout the USA and Europe.

It has become an enormous profit maker in the last seven or eight years for the V.F. Corporation, specialising in 'get rich quick' schemes — investing in areas where government grants are plen-

tiful and wage rates are low.

When it came to Greenock in 1970, it received employment grants of up to £2 for each worker: investment grants, which were as high as 75 per cent for plant and machinery and rent and rate rebates from the local authorities. All of which were paid for by a government subsidised loan.

Alabama

It's the same in the USA where Lee Jeans concentrates its attention on the Southern States, especially Alabama. Its most recent European ex-

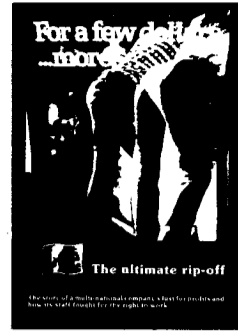
pansion has focussed on Northern Ireland.

As well as milking the public purse for its profits, V.F. Corporation likes to ensure that it has a low wage operation by preventing unions from organising in the plants.

Convenor

The Greenock workers know well the battle they've had to achieve their closed-shop, including strike action to re-instate Helen Monaghan, the Shop Stewards Convenor.

In most of Lee Jeans' plants, throughout the USA and Europe, they don't meet the same resistance. It's even been suggested that the sites of their Northern Irish plants were chosen to make sure that



For a few dollars more — the ultimate rip-off. Published by War on Want, 467 Caledonian Rd, London N7. Price £1.

they were differentiated along religious lines.

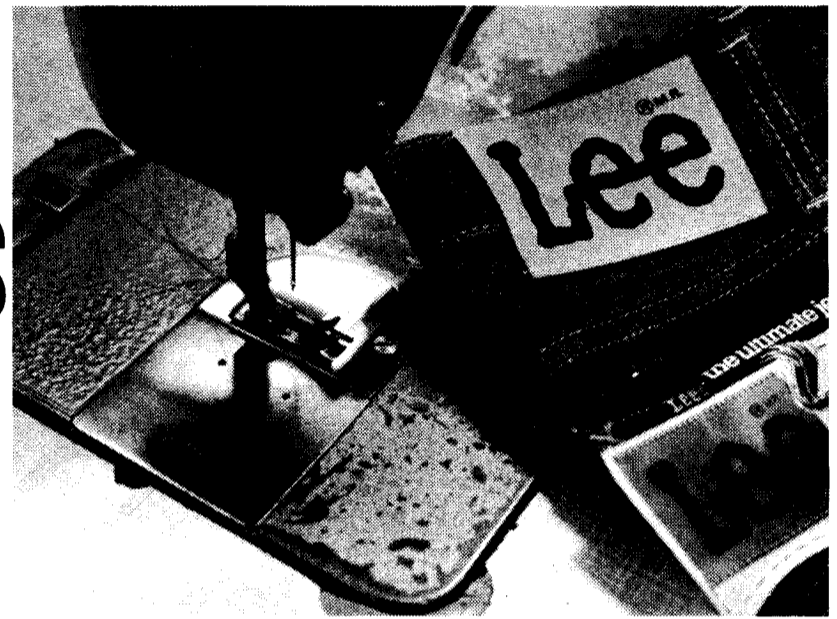
Their final tactic to guarantee a peaceful workforce is to make sure their factories are relatively small. Any industrial action which does not organise throughout the company therefore has little chance of success.

Disregard

And it might have worked for the V.F. Corporation at Greenock. But, like all capitalist employers, disregard for their employees led them to underestimate the determination working people could display.

LEE JEANS

After 7 months, it's VICTORY!



AFTER SEVEN MONTHS of occupation of their factory against redundancy the women of Lee Jeans in Greenock have won their fight.

The factory has been sold to a split off from the US-based VF Corporation.

When the redundancies were announced the workers were determined to back their demands by uncompromising action, hoping to force the firm to retreat.

At first, there seemed to be a bit of hesitation in the labour movement, waiting to see how serious this fight was going to be before committing full support. But soon support was flooding in.

Their example and their presence dominated the Scottish Trades Union Congress in April. Their speakers galvanised May Day rallies throughout Britain. They took pride of place at the highly successful *Festival for Women's Rights against Tory Attacks* and on the *People's March for Jobs*.

The small factory in Greenock became a Mecca for those wanting to see a serious fightback against the Tories. Labour leaders Foot and Benn visited the factory. Scottish TUC officials and leading trade unionists throughout Britain 'popped in'.

Sustain

But it was ordinary trade unionists and other working class people who sustained the occupation. Workplace collections, workplace levies and fundraising efforts brought in the massive sums of money required to sustain the occupation.

For most working class people who helped, it was a sacrifice worth while. At last, workers somewhere were showing that they would no longer accept the continued destruction of jobs by this Tory Government. They

by Des Tierney

were showing the way to fight.

A month ago it looked as if all the efforts of the Greenock workers were about to pay off. Although they had been unable to persuade the VF Corporation to change its decision to close, a London based Jeans retailer, Mr Nigel Wright, owner of Dickie Dirts, offered to buy the plant and employ its workforce in jeans production.

The deal seemed simple enough. Dickie Dirts offered to pay around half a million pounds for the plant and equipment at Greenock and indicated that they were prepared immediately to produce 10,000 pairs of jeans per week. The total workforce would be re-employed.

However, the deal didn't go through.

While the Lee Jeans workers waited patiently, however, they reacted bitterly to the withdrawal of official support by their union, the National Union of Tailor and Garment Workers (NTGWU).

The Executive Board of the union, including the members of the Com-



Lee Jeans women victorious

unist Party, explained their disgraceful decision by accusing the Lee Jeans workers of changing the original demands of the strike. Even if this had been true — and it wasn't — it seemed a particularly flimsy excuse for their action!

The leadership of the

NTGWU, traditionally a very right wing leadership has allowed the loss of over 100,000 jobs in the textile industry over the past ten years.

Worried

It is extremely worried by the success of the oc-

cupation at Greenock. It is worried that this success will inspire workers in the textile industry all over Britain to take similar kinds of action. This would break up the 'cosy' relationship which they have developed with the textile companies, and expose their strategy of

fighting redundancies through joint company-union appeals to the government to control imports.

Now victory has been achieved. The workers will maintain a token presence at the factory until production is resumed. The new owners have secured

the deal with Dickie Dirts, the cut price jeans chain based in London, to supply 10,000 pairs a week.

The Lee Jeans struggle has been a famous victory. The courage and determination of the women workers is a shining example for the whole labour movement.

'I'm not prepared to go down the Lothian road'

Socialist Challenge talks to GLC leader KEN LIVINGSTONE

KEN Livingstone, Labour Greater London Council leader is never out of the news — royal weddings, hunger strikers, gayrights — you name it and the press has gone to town.

There's no doubt that both the left and the right have been looking to the GLC since its election in May of this year.

Has it carried out its pledges in the manifesto? Is it giving a lead to the struggle against the Tory government?

Can a local or county council have any real power? These are the questions that are being asked.

The experience of the Labour GLC is particularly relevant at the moment as Heseltine's latest proposals against local authorities are being put into shape in time for the local elections next May. *Tessa van Gelderen* spoke to *Ken Livingstone* to find out how he sees the present situation.

What is your assessment of the first hundred days at County Hall? Do you think you have kept to the pledges you made in the manifesto?

In retrospect, it's amazing the amount of work that's been done, particularly the restructuring of the housing and transport programmes and the establishment of programmes on industry and employment.

Now we will start to develop concrete policies.

With the exception of the defeats we suffered around the reduction in the cost of school meals and the transfer of estates, the rest of the programme has gone through, although with a lot of resistance.

And it's not surprising that we lost on those issues.

With only a majority of eight in the council, there is no prospect in the GLC for a direct surcharge risk. It's restraint that we're locked into.

Unless there is massive pressure and popular support, some councillors will just not put themselves in such a position.

So how do you see such support developing?

The GLC newspaper has gone off to press. We are planning a series of autumn meetings in London, and nationally, around the attacks on local government.

We need to organise that support around a broad programme of activity.

The GLC is convening a conference in autumn of trade unions to discuss the coming confrontation with the government and how we can defend our programme.

How do you see the outcome of such a confrontation?

Either we're going to be totally crushed into the ground, totally defeated, or the government is going to have to back down.

We will defeat the government, either by defeating them in Parliament on Heseltine's proposed legislation, or by standing firm if the proposals do get through.

The main point about these proposals is that they will prevent councils being able to increase commercial rates.

So if everything goes according to the Tories' plans, this will effect next year's budget which will have devastating results for Labour in the local elections in May.

There has to be major pressure on the Parliamentary Labour Party — MPs must be forced to stand up and fight.

Then if the legislation does go through, Labour councils should not make any cuts whatsoever.

They have then to be prepared to take the consequences of such action.

Finally we have to demand that all unions support such action — not just the public sector unions but also the industrial ones.

Such support has to involve industrial action. If the government gets through all its proposals and faces London with the sort of cuts facing Lothian council, we'll be going into major struggle with hundreds of thousands of jobs at stake.

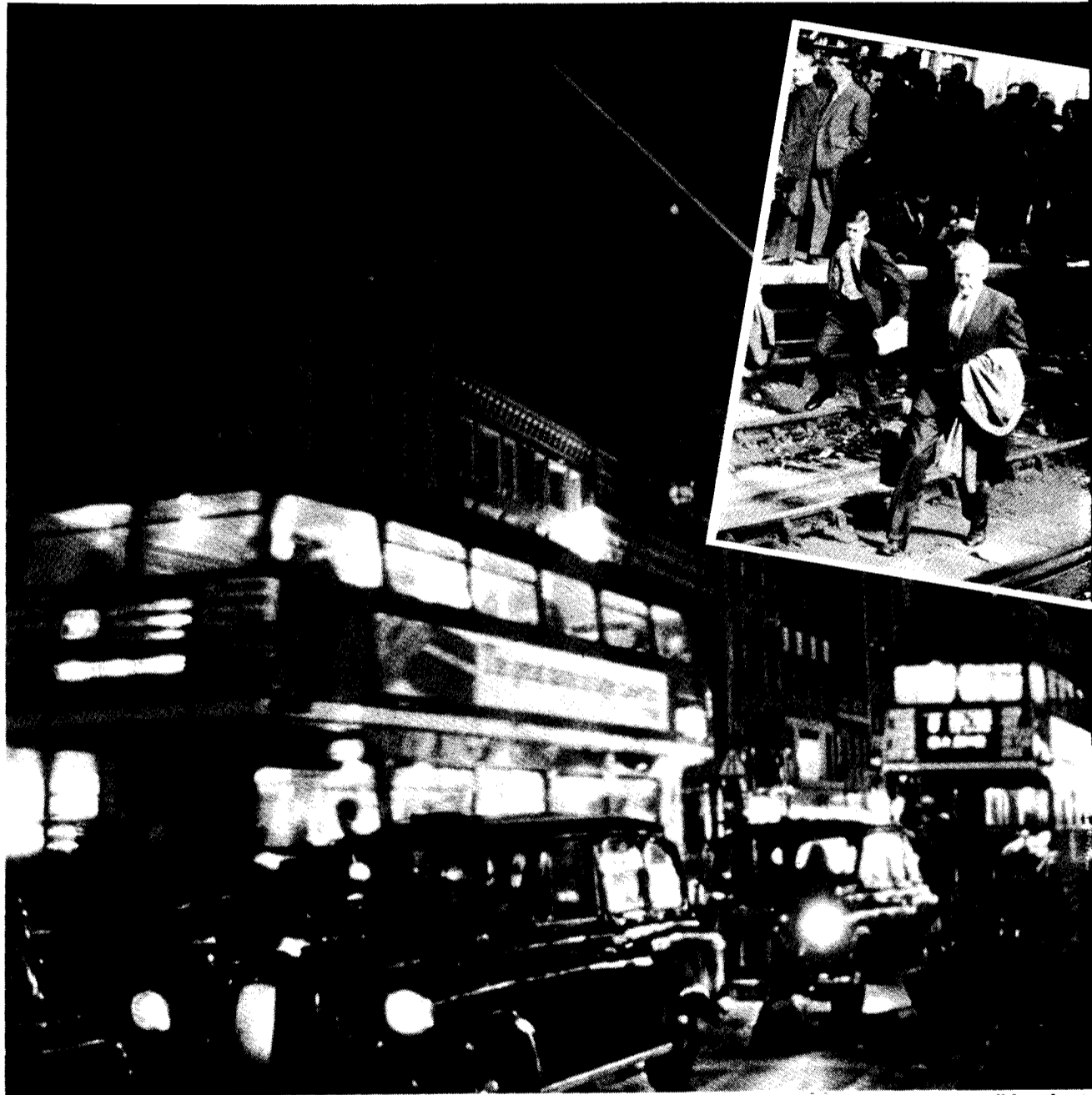
It's easy to criticise Lothian council. It's been singled out with no real support outside the immediate area, except verbal support.

It has a majority of one in council and a majority of one of the left in the Labour group.

Any refusal to make cuts will result in defections, but I'm not prepared to go down the Lothian road.

I'd go into opposition before I'd make any cuts. But we need to discuss a lot of these questions out, especially over the issue of rates increases.

We should open up a discussion inside the London Labour Party to sort out our



London — Bright lights can't hide the big problems. Insert: Will central government cutbacks have Londoners walking the rail?

position over rates in the light of Heseltine's proposed strategy for local authorities.

When you first came into office in May this year, did you think it would be such an either/or situation? Either you'll defeat the government or they'll defeat you?

We've been really surprised at the way the media has continued to attack me.

The *Mail*, *Express*, *London New Standard*, they are all just propaganda sheets. We have to stop their obsession with me and push our politics forward.

I didn't expect that from the press. I thought I'd be a nine-day wonder.

I've always worked on the assumption that you could get

at least part of the message across. So we have to find ways of preventing the continuation of the thoughts of Ken Livingstone and really start pushing what we're doing.

How significant do you see the campaign for Benn for deputy?

The right wing see it as much more crucial in the GLC than the left. The right time to get rid of Ken Livingstone is linked to what happens to Benn.

As for the policies of the Benn campaign: the alternative economic strategy is a stage the party has to move through, a bit like Benn.

Don't get me wrong, I'm not critical of Benn. He's an expression of the present move-

ment within the party.

I'm opposed to import controls as such although I think a left Labour government will have to use them to a limited degree. But it's a minor aspect — not an economic strategy in itself.

We should be more concerned with the control of capital, preventing the export of capital.

But if we did have a Labour government with Benn as Prime minister, it would still find itself locked in the same restraints as we are in the GLC at the present time.

If the rail strike goes ahead, it's possible that London Transport will come out in support, which may well

break Prior's law. What would your reaction to that be and what would London Transport do?

If the rail strike goes ahead, neither the GLC or London Transport will break that strike. We support their demands.

The reason why British Rail can't pay is because the government has cut the subsidy.

We've offered more money to British Rail to cut fares but we haven't been allowed to because of government policy.

You've hit the headlines once again, this time over positive discrimination. Can you say something about

LABOUR CONFERENCE 81

John Silkin—stalking horse for the right

By Toni Gorton

Although no one seriously expects John Silkin to be elected deputy leader of the Labour Party, some 70 MPs led by Stan Orme, Judith Hart, Don Concannon and Frank Field have pledged their support. Also committed are the Transport & General Workers Union's one and a quarter million votes as well as those of the seamen and agricultural workers unions.

Described by the press as the 'stop Benn' candidate it is how Silkin's votes are distributed in the second round that will be the decisive factor between Healey and Benn. A battle is now on to stop the reported move by Alex Kitson, acting general secretary of the TGWU, to persuade that union's delegates at Labour Party Conference to abstain in the second ballot.

According to John Silkin and his supporters, he is a man of the left, 'the only candidate who can help to lead us into the next election as a party committed to the policies passed by conference, but committed also to tolerance, understanding and comradeship within the party'.

So where does this paragon of virtue stand on the key questions being debated within the labour movement?

Issues

In a statement in the August issue of the Post Office Engineering Union's journal, Silkin defined four policy issues as 'holding the key to our country's future'. These were on industry, the EEC, incomes policy and nuclear arms.

On the industrial front he calls for 'reversing Tory spending cuts'; for 'steering British business to re-equip our home base' and for 'controlling manufactured imports'.

He argues for withdrawal from the Common Market in order to get more control over EEC imports 'which cost British workers jobs'. He does not say whether he is in favour of a United Socialist Europe.

Nowhere does he call for a planned programme of public works to create services, facilities and jobs that working people need. He does not call for controls on the export of capital. On the vexed question of incomes policy he complains that it has repeatedly dominated the relationship between the government and the trade unions, instead of constituting a minor part of what he hopes should be 'a broad, constructive dialogue' between them.

Waffle

So it seems that he is annoyed at the importance placed on the issue, which is his excuse for dodging it.

In a truly inspired bit of waffle he admits that the nuclear missile programme will keep both East and West on the very edge of a nuclear conflagration that would utterly destroy Europe for generations(!) Again he fails to say where he stands in regard to the Cruise and Trident missile systems or unilateral disarmament.

There is little point of contact between policies adopted at Labour conferences and Silkin's programme. He makes no mention of democracy, accountability, of ethnic min-

orities, of women's rights or of shifting the balance of wealth and power in favour of working people. He is 'proud' to stand on the record of the last Labour government and his policies are those of Callaghan and Healey.

Will he be able to mend the divisions in the party as his supporters claim? His 'tolerance and comradeship' are scarcely evident when he says that the supporters of Benn are 'political adolescents incapable of discussing the role of the parliamentary leadership in terms other than that of a pantomime in which their own idol always plays the role of Cinderella.'

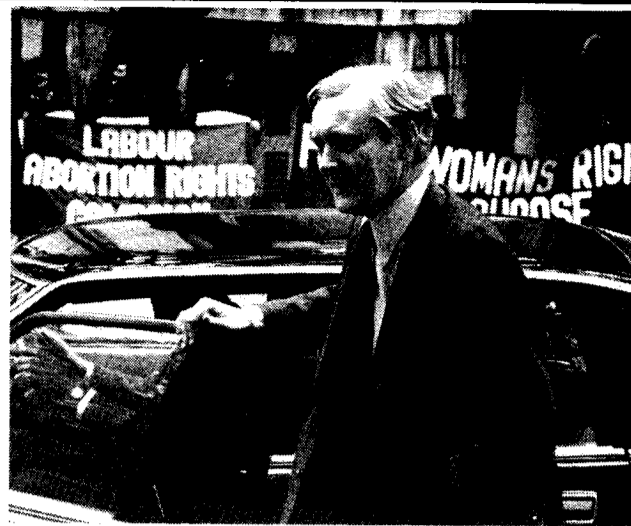
John Silkin is recommended by people like Don Concannon, the sadistic ghoul who

went to Bobby Sands death bed to tell him that the Labour Party wouldn't support the hunger strikers' just demands.

Silkin is a stalking horse for the right wing. He draws left support from those who can't stomach bully-boy Healey with his record and policies but who haven't got the bottle to go down the road Benn has opened. He gives left cover for those too embarrassed to endorse Healey.

Silkin's candidacy gives the union leaderships the possibility of swinging their members' votes behind Healey on the second ballot, a possibility which the membership cannot easily control.

The task of Benn supporters in the next few weeks is to get out the truth about Silkin's record and programme and to stop the trade unions supporting Silkin from transferring their votes to Healey or abstaining. A victory for Benn would be an immeasurable important step towards a future Labour government committed to socialist policies.



Campaigning at the LP NEC in '78

Abortion and the next Labour government

By Joan Twelves, Lambeth Vauxhall CLP delegate to Labour Party conference

'WE, the undersigned, believe that every woman should have the right to decide when and if she should bear children. We therefore call upon the National Executive Committee and the Shadow Cabinet to ensure that the Labour Party acts upon its commitment to a woman's right to choose about abortion and that an undertaking to liberalise the abortion law and improve NHS abortion services is written into the next manifesto to become part of the programme of the next Labour Government.'

This petition will be presented to the Labour Party conference at a lobby in Brighton on 29 September. The National Abortion Campaign and the Labour Abortion Rights Campaign drew up the petition and are seeking sponsors in the women's and labour movements.

Since its 1977 conference, the Labour Party has had a clear and comprehensive policy in favour of a woman's right to choose whether or not to bear children.

But, in spite of winning the required two-thirds majority of national conference on two separate card votes, and in spite of the increased support for abortion rights inside the Parliamentary Labour Party, there is still no guarantee that the next election manifesto will include a commitment to legislation for a woman's right to choose.

The policy in favour of a woman's right to choose contained in the current 'rolling manifesto' could easily be dropped at the 'Clause 5' meeting between the NEC and the Shadow Cabinet which determines the final form of the manifesto.

Even if a future Labour government were to introduce legislation, the free vote for

Labour MPs — condoned by past conferences with the support of the trade union block vote — would permit MPs to vote against it. Thirty four Labour MPs joined the Tories to defeat Jo Richardson's abortion facilities bill in July.

Some Labour Party members argue that the problem of the Labour Party's contradictory policies — in favour of abortion rights but against forcing MPs to toe the line on this question — will be resolved through the reselection of MPs.

However, there is no indication that anti-abortion MPs are being rejected. Kevin McNamara, for example, was recently reselected at Hull Central.

Of the five resolutions on abortion on the conference agenda, some take up the principles involved, others the question of the free vote.

Conference will be asked, yet again, to affirm its commitment to abortion rights, so that pressure is kept up for its inclusion in the manifesto.

A large and vociferous lobby on 29 September will be important in showing the strength of feeling in support of the motions and to ensure that time is allocated for their discussion.

NAC/LARC LOBBY
OF LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE
FOR ABORTION RIGHTS

29 SEPTEMBER
12 TO 2

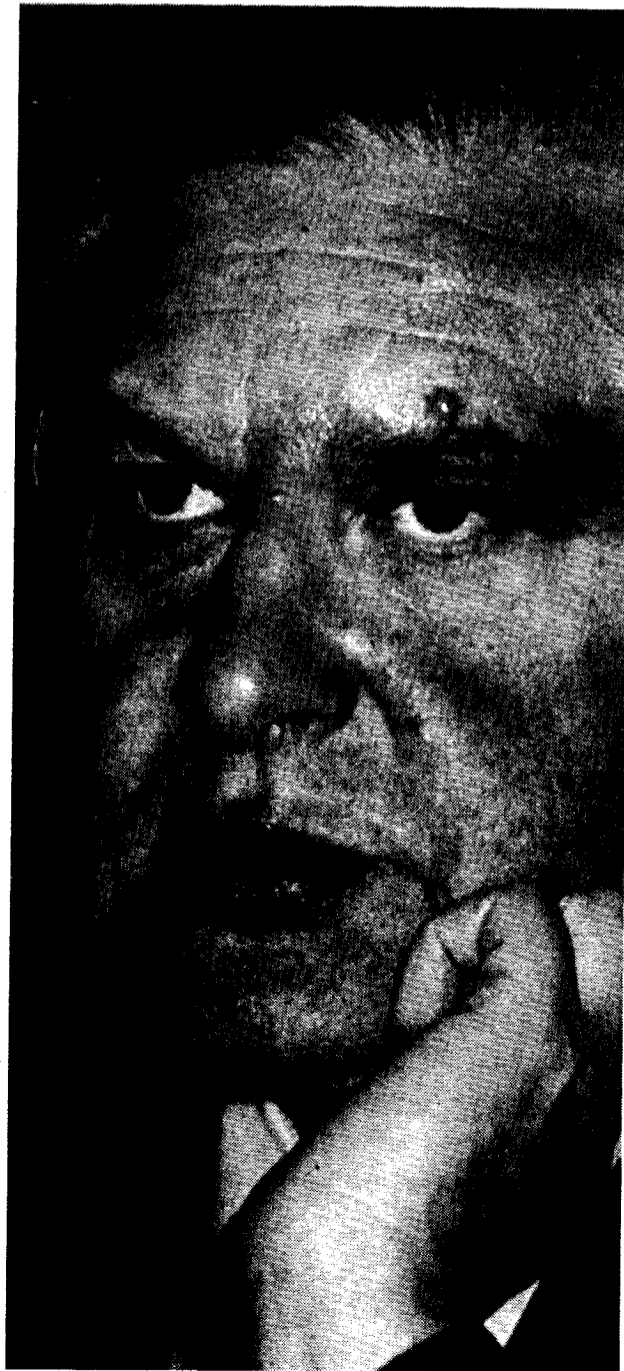
LARC FRINGE MEETING
29 SEPTEMBER
5.15

ROYAL ALBION HOTEL

Speakers will include Jo Richardson MP

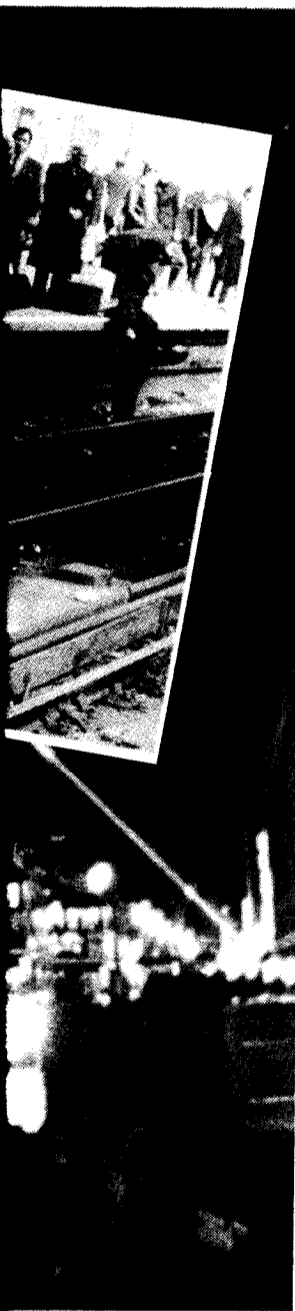
Both NAC and LARC are desperately short of money.
Are you and your CLP/union branch affiliated?

LARC, PO Box 110, London SE21 8ND £2 for individuals £5 for CLP/TU, NAC, 374 Grays Inn Road, London WC1 £7 (waged) £5 unwaged for individuals £15 for organisations



Silkin — no 'man of the left'

IE



GLC policy on this question?

We don't use the term 'positive discrimination' — it's completely misunderstood.

We call for positive action to end discrimination.

The first area we've tackled has been the London Fire Brigade where, out of a workforce of 7,000, only ten are black.

We've stopped advertising in the Home Counties papers and instead we only advertise in the ethnic press.

We're overseeing interviews and if the discrimination doesn't end we've informed the Fire Brigade that we'll take over hiring ourselves.

The Fire Brigade Union has been very supportive.

Police-control or collaboration?



Grunwicks — a struggle of black women workers

Black Workers Conference

**Saturday
12 September
Digbeth Civic Hall
Birmingham**

OUT of 1.9 million blacks, the majority are in manual jobs. 62 per cent of them are organised in the unions as compared to 48 per cent white workers.

Blacks have led prominent strikes at Grunwicks, Imperial Typewriters and Garners Steakhouse. Why then

- are there very few black full time officers in unions?
- is the number of blacks on leading elected bodies minimal?
- were there very few trade union banners at the last demonstration against immigration laws and the Nationality Bill despite official backing by the TUC and the Labour Party?
- is so little material carried in trade union journals about black history?
- do union courses scarcely cover racism?

These are some of the problems which the Black Workers Conference will discuss.

On Saturday 7 February 1981 a meeting was held in the offices of the Commission for Racial Equality. It was attended by 80 black trade unionists. After discussion they decided, unanimously, to set up a steering committee with a view to organising a conference of black workers, as well as establishing black caucuses in the unions.

As British capitalism is restructured, more and more blacks are thrown out of work. The problems these workers confront are different to those of other workers.

More and more black women are forced to take up 'home work' which is very poorly paid. It is difficult to organise them without a black dimension.

As the economic crisis grows so does the oppression of black workers. Harassment increases, as well as violent attacks on blacks.

It is in the light of these developments that a conference of black workers has been called on 12 September, at Digbeth Civic Hall. If you are interested, fill in the slip and post it to us as quickly as possible. An agenda and list of speakers will be sent later.

I shall be attending the conference of black workers, on September 12th at Digbeth Civic Hall, Birmingham.

Name.....

Address.....

Union (if any).....

Occupation (if any).....
Send to: Steering Committee for Black Workers Conference, 177, Antrobus Rd, Handsworth, Birmingham 21.

THE youth rebellions earlier this year have prompted a number of labour movement bodies to step up their discussions on the role of the police and how to control them.

As this issue may be debated at Labour's annual conference and as local Labour parties start to draft their manifestos for next May's local elections, TONI GORTON discusses some of the ideas put forward.

That there is a serious problem was recognised by the London Labour Party during the GLC elections in May. It pledged to campaign for the democratic accountability of the Metropolitan Police under a committee consisting solely of elected members of the GLC and the London boroughs.

The Labour group on the GLC seeks to give this committee the power of appointment over all officers above the rank of Chief Superintendent, work for the extension of trade union rights to police officers and the disbandment of the Special Patrol Group, the Special Branch and the Illegal Immigration Intelligence Unit.

Object

The objective is to create an authority which will have the power to scrutinise the day to day affairs of the police and to allocate resources to various police functions to that Londoners will be given a say in how the £270m a year which is raised in rates by the Metropolitan Police is to be spent.

Meanwhile the GLC Police Committee will investigate complaints against the police.

This committee will act as an advocate on major law and order issues which give rise to questions about police attitudes and tactics.

The Labour Campaign for Criminal Justice, chaired by Alex Lyon MP; advocates that local Labour councils should set up police subcommittees of elected members of the council.

Monitor

These committees would monitor police policy and practice in the borough; ask the views about the kind of policing people want; pass local views onto the GLC Police Committee; encourage the

police to be sensitive to local needs and wishes by liaising with the local commander; discuss what form of statutory control and accountability should be established for London's police; and encourage victim's support schemes.

Do these various proposals lead to control of the police or collaboration with them?

The police force is a state institution whose role is to defend property and more importantly property rights. The police are not here to 'serve us' as the LCCJ claims.

Any idea that the police can be 'sweetened', won to the side of the working class, ethnic minorities and youth is a dangerous delusion.

The Brixton Defence Campaign in its latest bulletin takes up the much touted solution of 'community policing'.

They describe how it works in Handsworth in Birmingham. It started in the mid-70s with the target of winning the old-style black community leaders and the smashing up of the youth and nationalist organisations.

The community police carried a campaign against the Rastafarian youth and gained control of the ganja trade to buy information, informers and to set people up.

Liberties

Community policing, in the opinion of the defence committee is about 'the subtlest techniques of spying on and manipulation of civilian populations.'

It is necessary to change the balance of forces against the police. To do this is to be alert to the erosion of civil liberties which is taking place under the Tory government.

The evidence is before



Police Commissioner McNeen in Brixton earlier this year

us. The bans on demonstrations have been used several times in the past year especially in London and new legislation is being drafted to give the police greater powers of arrest and use of arms.

The police cannot be permitted to conduct their own investigations as they are doing in the Liverpool case of David More who was run down and killed by a police vehicle.

Emphasis

Investigations of possible police malpractice should be conducted by independent bodies constructed from representatives of local councils, trade unions and community organisations with the statutory requirement or the police to co-operate.

The emphasis in discussions on the police must be on inhibiting the use of their power to harass, mistreat and violate the rights of individuals and communities.

The proposals being discussed in the London Labour Party are a useful start.

Contributions are invited from readers about their view of the issues.

For further information contact:
Brixton Defence Campaign, tel 01-274 7696
Labour Campaign for Criminal Justice, 19 Windermere Avenue, London NW6, tel 01-278 4575
London Labour Briefing, 158 Thorold Rd, Ilford Essex

ANTI RACIST NEWS

Southall demo

AS SUPPORT builds up for the national demonstration in Southall on 20 September, there have been more conflicts between the local community and fascists.

Last Saturday a few dozen racist skinheads picked a fight with black youth in nearby Greenford.

One elderly white woman who lived in the road said: 'There were about 60 skinheads. They were chanting 'come out'. One said "the blacks live here, let's go and break some windows". The coloured youths were throwing bottles at the skinheads and the skinheads were throwing them back. It happens regularly here, we get used to it.'

A 16-year-old Asian woman said: 'The black kids were throwing bottles

back. There were only about 5 black kids. They ran off when they had nothing else to throw.'

Meanwhile the Southall Anti-Fascist Committee, the local alliance which has called the demonstration has been mainly targeting the local factories to build up support.

Asian shop stewards and residents have distributed thousands of leaflets in all the big local workplaces. Thousands of people from the area are expected to attend.

Southall Demo: Drop the charges — self defence is no offence! Unity against racism and unemployment.

Sunday 20 September. Assemble 1pm Dominion Cinema, Car park Southall.

Notting Hill Carnival

THE NATIONAL FRONT are expected to get their biggest turnout for years at a march or rally planned for the Notting Hill area over the weekend bank holiday. Their aim is to get this famous annual carnival stopped by getting it outlawed under a state ban on all processions. The ANL aims to make sure that the fascists don't get anywhere near the car-

nival. Along with the Hammersmith and Fulham trades council the ANL has called a rally in Fulham. Anti-racists should make an effort to come along. Let's see the back of the Nazis before spending the afternoon at the carnival.

Assemble: 11am Sunday 30 August Fulham Broadway Station.

Oliver New

Gearing up for the fight

THERE have been three recent reminders of Socialist Challenges' importance. Reagan has ordered neutron bombs and shot down two Libyan planes — and Michael Foot has decided that unilateral disarmament shouldn't be in Labour's manifesto.

Socialist Challenge won't be giving up the fight against Reagan's madness. We're already gearing up for the big demo in October.

But this fight needs cash: Last week's quarterly drive brought us in £1861.80 — a very good response to our appeal.

Two Lambeth supporters, returning to

Canada, sent us £200 and their best wishes. They'll be carrying on the fight slightly nearer Reagan's home territory, through the Canadian section of the Fourth International.

Oxford supporters send us £106 and we have had several other lump sums.

The biggest boost, however, has come from our regular monthly pledges, a lot of which now come in through standing order.

This is the best way to give us a guaranteed income. Small amounts can quickly mount up.

Exeter comrades have increased their regular

pledge to £29 from among three of them, and Southampton are now sending a guaranteed minimum of £46 every month.

Target

Repeated nationwide, this level of support would take us over our target by £3000.

But with only five

weeks left in this quarter, we've totalled only £6,691 towards our target of £15,000 — which means that if we continue at the present rate we shall be short by £3,500.

A pound extra from every reader in September would see us generously in the black. So please think if you can send us something extra next month, and make sure that fundraising activity is organised in every area.

Just a normal week in Ireland

A hunger striker died, a by-election was held, bombs exploded and politicians made statements. There were riots and there was gunfire. GEOFF BELL takes note of just a normal week in Ireland.

Sunday 16 August

Margaret Thatcher is verbally attacked, and not for the first time, by a number of Irish politicians. Most prominent is Garret FitzGerald, the Southern premier. FitzGerald calls for British politicians to declare publicly they are in favour of a united Ireland. On the hunger strikers he states 'There is, among a segment of our opinion, a very critical attitude to the British government and its inflexibility'.

Another critic is Cardinal Tomas O'Fiaich. Recalling a meeting he had with Thatcher the previous month, O'Fiaich says, 'I wasn't so terribly, terribly impressed by her knowledge of Irish history, by her interpretation of events which occurred in the past, nor by her understanding of the present hunger-strike.'

In Belfast, the Social Democratic and Labour Party says it will have no part in the British government's latest political 'initiative' — a proposal to set up an advisory council in the North. SDLP leader John Hume says, 'It was ridiculous to ask the SDLP to participate when publicly he (Humphrey Atkins) has been ignoring our advice on the hunger strike issue'.

In London, the *Sunday Times*, in a major editorial, insists, 'There is only one solution... It is that Britain should declare its intention of renouncing its sovereignty over Northern Ireland'. The newspaper goes on to advocate an independent six county state. In the H Blocks another political prisoner, Jackie McMullan, joins the hunger strike.

Monday, 17 August

The British Catholic magazine the *Tablet* joins the attack on Britain's H Block policy. The journal says, 'The hunger strike will continue, it is plain, until some agreement is made as to the conditions in which the IRA prisoners are held... There is no hope of agreement without a measure of compromise. However much one may dislike the Provisional IRA and condemn their methods, however much one may regard the hunger strikers as allowing their delusions to lead them to the grave sin of suicide, it cannot truthfully be said there has been no measure of compromise on their part. It therefore must be for the government to make a gesture of conciliation which the world will recognise as such.'

The *Guardian* calls for the sacking of Northern Ireland secretary of state, Humphrey Atkins. It disagrees with the *Sunday Times* but acknowledges, 'It is a sure sign of desperation that Northern Ireland independence should suddenly become so attractive. Anything to be shot of the place.'

Tuesday, 18 August

Michael Devine enters his 59th day without food in the H Blocks of Long Kesh. He is given the last rites and, according to a statement from the



National H Block/Armagh Committee, he is within 'twenty four hours of death'.

In London, the British government, in a rather pathetic effort in the 'propaganda war', issues what it calls 'fact files' on the H Block prisoners. One on Michael Devine complains, 'he has refused to wear prison clothing since going to prison.'

The 'fact file' neglects to mention that if Devine had behaved like a 'normal' prisoner he would have been due for release on parole next year. His political beliefs excluded him from taking such a relatively easy option.

Wednesday, 19 August

It is the eve of the crucial by-election in Fermanagh and South Tyrone, the seat held by Bobby Sands. Gerry Adams of Provisional Sinn Fein pinpoints what the election is about. 'What we want,' he says, 'is for the prisoners to get their five demands'.

The official unionist in the election declares he is 'optimistic'. The Workers Party Republican Club candidate, Tom Moore says 'voters like my idea for job creation'.

In Dublin, an Italian Member of the European Parliament, Mario Capanna, says the hunger strikers are 'Irish patriots and not terrorists.'

In County Tyrone, parish priest Austin Eustace publishes an 'open letter' to Margaret Thatcher. Eustace has a record of repeated condemnations of the IRA, but now he turns his fire on Thatcher. 'Your name' he writes 'will cause a stench in English/Irish relations long after you have been forgotten.'

Eustace condemns Thatcher's 'sole, pathetic, abortive attempt at a solution viz. "a crime, is a crime, is a crime"'. He ends, 'Do you ever ask yourself who has committed the greatest crime? You should.'

Thursday, 20 August

Michael Devine becomes the tenth hunger striker to die. His death leads to rioting in Belfast and in Derry. Dozens of vehicles are hijacked and set on fire. The RUC fire round after round of plastic bullets.

In Belfast a British soldier is shot in the leg. In the centre of the city a bomb explodes near an army barracks.

The Alliance Party, the 'moderate Unionists' so loved by the British media, join the SDLP in attacking the government's plans to establish an advisory council. Alliance dismiss it as 'a mere cosmetic exercise... not only worthless but positively counter-productive.'

The voters in Fermanagh

and South Tyrone go to the polls.

Friday, 21 August

Owen Carron, the anti-H Block candidate wins the Fermanagh and South Tyrone by-election. He receives 31,278 votes and defeats his main Unionist opponent by over 2,000. The margin of victory is greater than that achieved by Bobby Sands.

Commenting on the result, Gerry Adams of Provisional Sinn Fein declares, 'The election of Owen Carron is more than a victory for the political prisoners and a repudiation of the British government's death policy in the H Blocks of

Anti-H-Block/Armagh candidate



Vote Carron X

Long Kesh. It is a reassertion, once again, by nationalist people, of our right to a future free from British interference.'

Adams says that the high vote, 'is the progressive voice of those who wish to see an end to discrimination and British terrorism and an end to poverty and inequality.'

John Hume of the SDLP again attacks Thatcher over the hunger strikes. 'Political pragmatism, if not compassion, demanded that the British government should act to end the prison protest', he says.

Saturday, 22 August

Two huge car bombs explode in the centre of Belfast and the seaside town of Bangor. Three policemen are injured.

The *Guardian* runs an editorial on the victory of Owen Carron. It begins: 'This time, the result bears only one interpretation. The nationalist people of Fermanagh and South Tyrone had ways, if they chose to take them, of dodging the question at the heart of the H Block crisis. They chose not to dodge it, and the massive vote for Mr Owen Carron... is the climax of a series of political victories by the Provisional IRA. No matter what the facts are, the belief among nationalists in the constituency is that the men inside the gaol are justified...'

The *Guardian* calls for concessions to be granted to the hunger strikers and observes, 'The vote obliges the major parties in Britain to make a searching examination of their policies.'

Michael Devine is buried.

THE SUNDAY TIMES

Ireland: the change that has to come

BRITISH POLICY in Northern Ireland — to try to keep it in the United Kingdom by general consent — has not worked, is not working and will not work. Even among those who wish it would work, and know the attempt to have been honourable, that sad fact is more recognised every day. The signs that during the past 12 years they have made small return for the guarantee in the shape of concessions to Catholics. But those arguments are not needed. The true meaning of the guarantee was that Protestants would not be submitted to rule by the Catholic Republic of South. Under this plan, they...

The latest edition of **Socialist Republic**, newspaper of the Irish revolutionary organisation Peoples Democracy is just out. Included are articles on the hunger strikers, the campaign in support of the prisoners, the Irish women's movement, and much more. Ask your local Socialist Challenge seller for a copy. Or order direct from Plough Bookshop, 16 Capel St, Dublin 2. Price 40p (includes p&p).

Where you can buy Socialist Challenge

Scotland

ABERDEEN: SC available at Boomtown books, King St. For more info ring Bill 896 284.
DUNDEE: SC available from Dundee City Square outside Boots, Thur 4-5.30pm, Fri 4-5.30pm, Sat 11-4pm.
EDINBURGH: SC sold Thur 4.15-5.15pm Bus Station, St. Andrews Square and bottom of Waverly steps 4.30-5.30; Sat 11.30-2pm East End, Princes St. Also available from 1st May Books, or Better Books, Forrest Rd. More info on local activity from SC c/o Box 6, 1st May Bookshop, Candlemaker Row.
GLASGOW: SC sales every Thur/Fri 4.30-5.30pm at Central Station. Also available at Barretts, Byres Rd; Clyde Books, High St; Glasgow Bookshop Collective, Cresswell Lane; Hope Street Book Centre.
HAMILTON: SC sale every Sat 1-5pm outside Safeway, shopping centre. For more info contact John Ford, 53 Elliot Crescent, Hamilton or Paul Youngson, 18 Forrest Crescent, Hamilton.

Wales

BANGOR: Sat 10-12 town centre.
CARDIFF: every Sat in Bute Town 10.30-12. Also available 1-0.8 Books, Salisbury Road.
NEWTOWN: every Sat in town centre 11-12.30.
PONTYPRIDD: SC sales every Sat outside Open Market 11-1pm.
SWANSEA: SC sales outside Co-op, Oxford St, 11am-1pm, Saturdays.

England

BATH: SC on sale at 1985 Books, London Road, and Saturdays 2pm-3pm outside the Roman Baths. Phone 20298 for more details.
BIRKENHEAD: SC on sale at Labour Club, Cleveland St, Thur nights, in precinct outside Littlewoods, Sat 11-12.
BIRMINGHAM: SC on sale at The Ramp, Fri 4.30-5.40, Sat 10-4. For more info phone 643-0669.
BOLSOVER: Cross Keys, every Fri 8-10pm.
BRADFORD: SC at Fourth Idea Bookshop, 14 Southgate.
BRISTOL: SC on sale 11-1, 'Hole in Ground', Haymarket. More info Box 2, c/o Fullmarks, 110 Cheltenham Rd, Montpellier, Bristol 6.
BURNLEY: SC on sale every Sat morning 11.30-1pm St James St.
CHESTERFIELD: SC sold outside Boots, Market Place, Sat 11.30am-12.30pm.
COVENTRY: SC available from Wedge Bookshop. For more info about local activities phone 461138.
HEMEL HEMPSTEAD: SC sales in Time Square, Sat 10.30-1.30pm.
Huddersfield: SC sold Sat 11am-1pm, The Piazza. SC also available at Peaceworks.
LEEDS: Sat 11-1 at Lands Lane Pedestrian Precinct and 10.30-12.00 at Headingly Arndale Centre. Corner Bookshop, Woodhouse Lane.
LIVERPOOL: SC on sale from News from Nowhere, Whitechapel and Progressive Books, Berry St.
MANCHESTER: SC sold 11-1pm Sat at OLDHAM outside the Yorkshire Bank, High St; at BURY in the shopping precinct and at Metro Books; at BOLTON in the town centre; and in MANCHESTER outside the central reference library in St Peter's Square and at Grassroots and Percivals Bookshop. Tel: 061-236 4905 for further info.
NEWCASTLE: SC on sale every Sat 11-1pm outside Fenwicks. Also available at Days of Hope Bookshop, Westgate Rd.
OLDHAM: SC sold every Saturday outside Yorkshire Bank, High Street. For more information about local activities. Tel. 061-682 5151.

What's Left

RATES for What's Left. 5p per word or £4 per col inch. Deadline: noon Sat prior to publication. Payment in advance. Phone 01-369 8180.
SPARE BOOKS? Any books you don't want taking up valuable space on your bookshelves? Send them to the Other Bookshop, 328 Upper St, London N1 2XP.

BADGES: Make money for your organisation or branch. Huge reductions on anti-racist, Irish solidarity, women's badges and many more. Write for lists of incredibly low bulk rates — from as little as 5p. Free offers for large orders. Send to: SCD Badges, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

OXFORD: SC sold Fri 12-2pm outside Kings Arms and every Sat 10.30-12.30pm in Cornmarket.
SHEFFIELD: SC on sale Thursday, Pond St, 4.30-6pm; Saturday, Fargate 10.30-12.30pm.
STAFFORD: SC on Sale Market Sq Sat lunch-time.
STOCKPORT: SC sold every Saturday, 1pm, Mersey Way. Can be delivered weekly: phone 483 8909 (evening), 236 4905 (day).
SWINDON: SC on sale 11-1 every Sat, Regent St (Brunel Centre).
TEESSIDE: SC on sale Sat lunchtime in the Cleveland Centre, and in Newsfare, Linthorpe Road, Middlesbrough, and outside Woolworths on Stockton High Street.
WOLVERHAMPTON: SC sales on Thur/Fri at Poly Students Union from noon-2pm and British Rail 4.30-6pm; and Saturday near Beatties, town centre from 11am-2pm.
YORK: on sale every Thursday, dole office Clifford Street, 9.30-11; University Vanburgh College 12-2; Saturday at Coney Street 11-1.

London

BRENT: SC sold Willesden Junction Thur 4.30pm.
EALING: SC sold Thur, Ealing Broadway tube, 4.30-5.30pm.
ENFIELD: SC at Nelsons Newsagents, London Rd, Enfield Town.
HACKNEY: SC on sale on estates throughout Hackney, at public meetings, and local factories. Contact us c/o PO Box 36, 136 Kingsland High St, London E8 2NF or phone Megan or John at 359 8288.
HILLINGDON: SC sold Fri, 4.30-5.30 at Uxbridge tube station; Sat 10.30-12.00 outside Woolworths, Uxbridge shopping centre.
KILBURN: SC sales every Sat, 10am in Kilburn Square, and Thursday 8.30am at Queens Park tube.
LAMBETH: SC available from Village Books, Streatham; Tethic Books, Clapham; Paperback Centre, Brixton; Oval tube kiosk. Also sold Thur and Fri evenings and Thur mornings outside Brixton tube.
NEWHAM: SC sold Sat 11am to noon, Queen's Rd Mkt, Upton Park.
PADDINGTON: SC sold at Portobello Rd market Sat at noon.
WEMBLEY: SC sales Fri 6.45am at North Wembley BR Station.

Bookshops

BANGOR: Rainbows, Hollyhead Road, Upper Bangor, Gwynedd.
BRADFORD: Fourth Idea Bookshop, 14 Sandgate.
BRIGHTON: The Public House, Little Preston St.
BIRMINGHAM: Other Bookshop, 137 Digbeth, Birmingham.
DURHAM: Durham City Co-op Bookshop, 85a New Elvet.
ILFORD: South Essex Bookshop, 335 Ley Street.
MILTON KEYNES: Oakleaf Books, 109 Church Street, Wolverton.
OXFORD: EOA Books, 34 Cowley Rd.
LEICESTER: Blackthorn Books, 70 High St, Leicester, and V Karia, 53A London Rd, Leicester.
LIVERPOOL: News from Nowhere, 100 Whitechapel, Liverpool L1.
LONDON: Central Books, 37 Grays Inn Rd; Collets, Charing Cross Rd, WC2; Paperback Books, Brixton and Charlotte St; Kilburn Bookshop, Kilburn High Road, NW6; The Bookplace, Peckham High St, SE15; Books Plus, Lewisham; Balham Food Co-op; Housmans, 5 Caledonian Rd, N1; Compendium, Camden Town NW1; Owl, Kentish Town; New Beacon, Seven Sisters Rd, N4; Bookmarks, Seven Sisters Rd, N4; Centerpiece, 126 Kingsland High St, E8; Dillons, QMC, Page One, E15; The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper St, N1; Reading Matters, Wood Green next to Sainsbury's.
YORK: Community Books, Walmgate.

BADGES available from Revolution Youth, 20p each plus postage. Big discount on bulk orders. Write to: Revolution Youth, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

BADGES: Make money for your organisation or branch. Huge reductions on anti-racist, Irish solidarity, women's badges and many more. Write for lists of incredibly low bulk rates — from as little as 5p. Free offers for large orders. Send to: SCD Badges, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.



'REVOLT and survive' — new badge for Haringey supporters. 20p each plus 11½p p&p. Bulk rates: 15p each post free. Cheques/orders to: Haringey History Group, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

IMG notices

ABORTION fraction Sat 5 Sept at national centre 10.30am. At least one member of each branch to attend to discuss national perspective for next year.
RAIL FRACTION at the national centre, Sun 30 Aug at 2pm.



SC Events

SC ORGANISERS fraction Sat 5 Sept 11am-4.30pm. Venue to be announced.

BRENT Socialist Challenge presents 'Downing Daiquiris with Fidel', an evening of fun and celebration of the Cuban Revolution. Film showing of 'The Battle of the Ten Million', starring Fidel and a cast of millions; full-course meal, Cuban cuisine; music; daiquiris, rum punch and other goodies for £2.50. Sat 5 Sept, 7.30pm, 5 St Mary's Rd, London NW10. For tickets ring Pam at 359-8288.

Nat'l meeting of representatives of IMG/RY branches in local defence committees. Birmingham centre on 13 September.

International

South Africa deports 'aliens'

By Tom Marlowe



MORE than 1,000 black people, many of them women and children were forcibly removed from Nyanga camp, near Cape Town, last week by the South African authorities.

They were deemed to be 'aliens', despite the fact that they were born in South Africa, and were transported, under guard to what the racist government claims is their proper 'homeland' — the poverty stricken area of Transkei.

On Wednesday, in a dawn raid on the black squatters the South African police used dogs and tear gas. The media was prohibited from witnessing the attack on the squatters' camp, but afterwards the entire area with

its flimsy shelters in which 2,000 people had lived had been completely flattened.

Sick

Within 24 hours of the raid 414 men, 470 women and 175 children were being forcibly transported to Transkei. All had been living in Nyanga camp. In a sick comment on the mass arrests and deportations, the government minister responsible, Piet Koornhof declared, 'I am too

humane, that's the problem'.

In the last two decades, at least two million blacks have been forced to move to 'homelands' such as Transkei, which are unable to provide either jobs or adequate land for the people living there.

This forced emigration is an essential part of the apartheid system which regulates there be 'separate development' for blacks and whites — in effect this means as many blacks as possible should be kept out of the richer areas of Southern Africa. It means that blacks have to hold special passes to live and work in the 86 per

cent of South Africa designated as the 'white' area.

The contrast between these 'white' areas and the 'homelands', such as Transkei and Ciskei, has recently been documented in a report drawn up by Jan Lange. Lange is a former vice-president of a South African chamber of commerce, so he is not exactly friendly to the black majority.

Better

Nevertheless, Lange has recorded that blacks can be between three and eight times better off living 'illegally' in 'white' areas

than if they stay in 'homelands'.

Even if a black is jailed for nine months in a year for contravening South Africa's pass laws, he or she can still be 230 per cent better off with only three months' work, than a person in the 'homeland'.

Risk

This explains why blacks are prepared to risk imprisonment and forced deportation in order to live in 'white' areas, where at least there may be some chance of work. Often, the only 'homelands' option available is starvation.

Last week's mass arrests marked a stepping up by the South Africa regime in their campaign of discrimination and repression against the native blacks. It was the first time that immigration and alien laws have been used against people born in South Africa.

Return

But there is little chance of the latest victims of apartheid meekly accepting their deportation. Last August, on a particularly cold day, Koornhof's Ministry of 'Co-operation and Development' launched a previous attack on the squatters, burning down their shelters and seizing their food.

But the squatters stayed put, and the signs are that many who were deported last week will quickly return.

'These people seek confrontation' said Piet Koornhof. The truth of the matter is that they have little choice but confrontation, and that this confrontation will get bigger and bigger as times goes on.

Sri Lanka another state of emergency

SRI LANKA president Junius Jayewardene has declared a state of emergency — the second in three months.

It is part of the regime's campaign of repression against the Tamil minority — who number four million out of Sri Lanka's population of 15 million.

The previous state of emergency was declared on 3 June after a police officer had been killed in the northeastern town of Jaffna. The police used the opportunity to go on the rampage against the town's Tamil population.

Establish

A statement issued by trade union leaders Bala Tampoe and Keerthi Seneviratne described what happened: 'There is enough testimony available to establish beyond doubt the groups of police personnel, in uniform and in civilian clothes, committed acts of assault, arson and pillage on a terri-

fying scale. Several innocent people were shot and killed by armed service personnel.'

Following these attacks on the Tamil community, considerable international attention was turned on 'the Jayewardene regime in Sri Lanka. For instance, although it was unreported in the British media, in London, Tamil youth demonstrated on the Royal wedding day.

Intimidate

The latest state of emergency and the violence against the Tamils which has accompanied it, appears to be an attempt by the government to, by intimidation, halt such

protests. Tamil leader Appapillai Amirthalingam said last week that four more Tamils had recently been killed.

Amirthalingam is secretary general of the Tamil United Liberation Front, which is the largest opposition party in parliament, and which seeks independence for the country's Tamils. Amirthalingam was among those arrested and detained during the June emergency.

Root

The statement issued by Tampoe and Seneviratne summed up the background to the Tamil question this way: 'The root of the problem and the ever-present danger of fresh outbreaks of racist violence lies in racist discrimination against and oppression of Tamils and Tamil-speaking people in



the Northern and Eastern provinces, and in the plantation areas, especially. This cannot be eliminated

without the establishment of a genuine democracy in this country, with equal rights for all its people.'

An impossible choice

By Yvonne Taylor

EVERY day, babies are born with severe malformations requiring a life or death decision. The British Medical Association in their handbook of medical ethics, advises doctors that in such cases, parents must ultimately decide.

Now, the law has taken a hand. In a recent case, the court overruled a parental decision not to allow doctors to operate to save their baby's life.

The baby was a victim of Down's syndrome and also had an intestinal blockage which would lead to death unless treated by surgery.

David Plank, the Director of Hammersmith Social Services took the case to court, where the baby was made a ward.

The court's decision comes at a time when Dr Leonard Arthur, a Derbyshire paediatrician, is about to stand trial for allegedly murdering a Down's syndrome child.

He was arrested last year when a hospital worker told *Life*, the anti-abortion group that the baby had died after being given a pain killing injection by Arthur.

Clear

Life also claimed that the Director of Public Prosecutions is considering four cases in which babies have been allowed to die.

For *Life*, the issue is clear. All life is sacred and failure to do everything possible to preserve life is equivalent to murder. Supporters who work in hospitals have been asked to give details to *Life* where they suspect babies are being allowed to die.

For most of us, the questions involved are not so simply resolved.

Tony Smithe, Director of MIND (the National Association for Mental Health), told *Socialist Challenge*, 'These wretched *Life* people have clouded the issue.'

While Tony Smithe personally agrees with the

decision of Hammersmith's Social Services Director to take the recent case to court, he is opposed to *Life's* view that it's possible to apply any absolute principle in all similar cases.

He told us, 'Many situations exist where life would be truly unsupportable and undesirable. For instance, where constant operations and medical attention are needed to keep life going beyond reason.'

In the recent court case, however, he thinks little of the argument that the child's life would be unsupportable. 'The operation that was needed was not exceptional and the baby should have been treated like any other.'

Interest

He is in favour of an independent mechanism for scrutinising individual cases of this kind. 'Parents should have considerable choice but, at the end of the day, the interests of parents, children and professionals don't always coincide.'

He agrees that parents face a hard choice though. 'If I were a new parent in that situation, given my knowledge, and if I were well heeled — I would be



Many severely handicapped children and their parents could lead easier, pleasanter lives

able to cope with the help I could buy.'

For those who are not well off, Tony Smithe described the sort of local provisions they could expect from the authorities as 'a genuine toss-up. Where there are good services — life is hard but still supportable. Where there are no services, life is bloody difficult.'

Carol, a London social worker talked to *Socialist*

Challenge about the provision made in her area for severely handicapped children and those caring for them.

Cope

'During the first few years', she told us, 'severely handicapped children are not such a tremendous burden. It's at the age of three to four, when they

are not developing, that life becomes harder.'

Local medical social workers can help out by referring children to special play groups and day schools. Many special day schools are owned and run and by charities. Area Social Services Departments can organise holidays and home helps. A small amount of financial help will also be provided for special needs.

It's when severely handicapped children reach adolescence that parents begin to find it extremely difficult to cope with them at home. But facilities in terms of homes for the handicapped can be very poor.

Abuse

The social worker we spoke to told us, 'Com-

munity integration projects have been organised for handicapped people in my area. None has worked so far. The client to staff ratio is very high and so the handicapped people are practically hospitalised. Abuse in these circumstances is no big surprise.'

Afraid

Even for the severely handicapped who grow to their twenties and thirties at home, life becomes more uncertain. Tony Smithe told us that MIND frequently receives letters from parents in their old age who are afraid for their handicapped child's future.

Today, the bulk of the responsibility for handicapped children is placed on the shoulders of parents, particularly the mother, and the state alternatives to home vary widely. Small wonder then that some parents feel they should allow their children to die when a choice is presented, rather than subject child and family alike to a living martyrdom.

Choice

But while it's impossible to condemn parents for making such a decision, given today's options, surely it would be totally wrong to advocate 'a parents' right to choose' life or death for their handicapped children in the instances where that choice arises. Children are separate human beings with rights, not their parents' property.

Many severely handicapped children and their families could lead easier, pleasanter lives, if only the necessary support were freely available. And if only popular attitudes to the handicapped did not assign them to a sub human species.

Today, there are no simple answers. The only certain thing is that handicapped people lose out all round.

Judge Horton and the Scottsboro boys

ON Sunday 16 August, BBC2 showed *Judge Horton and the Scottsboro boys*, a film specially made for television, directed by Fielder Cook. The film was a reconstruction of the notorious case of nine black youths convicted in the 1930s of the rape of two white women, in Alabama.

Charlie van Gelderen was an active socialist at the time and reviewed the film for *Socialist Challenge*.

The film showed vividly the background against which the trial was held — the deeply racist south.

The women in the case, in the eyes of the 'WASPs' (White Anglo-Saxon Protestants), would normally have been regarded as 'white trash' by these upholders of true American manhood.

WASPs

But for a white woman, any white woman, to be physically assaulted by a black man — not to say

anything of nine black men — that was more than their lily-white flesh could stand.

Frame

Of course, as is evident from the trial — and this was only one of many — the whole case against the youths was a gigantic frame-up.

The film clearly depicts the brutal racism of the prosecution, the crowded court room and the jury — twelve good men and true, all white and all male.

The prosecuting at-

torney shows his racism not only against the black accused but against the 'smart Jew-lawyers from New York' who were defending them.

Sentence

Despite the efforts of Judge Horton, who knew that the whole prosecution case was a colossal fraud, the jury found eight of the accused guilty and sentenced them to the electric chair.

The youngest, only 13 years old, was sentenced to life imprisonment.

But, defying the mob, the Judge ordered a retrial and all the death sentences were eventually commuted to various terms of imprisonment. The last Scottsboro victim was only released in the 1970s.

What the film did not show was the role played

Holiday Reading

Colin Smith reviews *Strumpet City* By James Plunkett, published by Arrow Books, price £1.95.

WHEN the Persian poet wrote something like 'a flask of wine, a book and thou' I feel sure he was looking forward to his holidays. For the teetotal and vacationally celibate here's a good long read.

James Plunkett's eponymous city is Dublin during seven years up to the First World War. At this time the conditions of the working class of that city were among the worst in Europe.

The death-rate from the diseases of poverty in Dublin were higher than in Czarist Moscow,

by the labour movement, in the States and internationally, which undoubtedly was instrumental in saving the men from the electric chair.

Labour

I recall picketing the American consulate in Cape Town in 1933 to 'Save the Scottsboro Boys' (we subconsciously adopted the language of our

masters in those days).

In his 'The First Ten Years of American Communism', James P Cannon talks of the crucial role of the Communist Party — then not yet completely warped by its Stalinist future: 'It was the Communist Party, and no other, that made the Herndon and Scottsboro cases national and world-wide issues, and put the Dixiecrat legal-lynch mobs on the defen-

sive — for the first time since the collapse of Reconstruction.

By such and similar actions and agitation in the thirties, the party shook up all the more or less liberal and progressive circles of the white majority and began to bring about a radical change of attitude on the Negro question. At the same time the party became a real factor among the Negroes, and the Negroes

higher even than in Calcutta. However this is not a catalogue of oppression and distress. The novel chronicles the rise of working class struggle. In 1908 Jim Larkin founded the Irish Transport and General Workers Union and the following years were ones of strikes and growing trade unions, culminating in one of the first generalised strikes in Western Europe.

The employers' response was to lock-out all workers who refused to resign from the trade unions.

Strikes and lock-outs paralysed Dublin for six months between August and Christmas 1913. Plunkett retells the story of

these events through the eyes of groups of characters: working class families, Catholic priests, and employers — the far from eternal triangle of Irish society.

We eavesdrop on the cynical machinations of boardrooms, feel the elation, strength and sometimes the panic of mass demonstrations and discover that the only priest with a glimmer of humanity is a drunk.

A short review cannot do justice to this panorama of a novel. It is a fine piece of storytelling (an antidote to those friends who feel the need to begin every other sentence with 'basically') and it is a relief to get away from the tortured egos of most fictional heroes.

Plunkett's hero is the working people of Dublin 1913. Take it with you on holiday and get the sand between its pages.

themselves advanced in status and self-confidence — partly as a result of the Communist Party's aggressive agitation on the issue'.

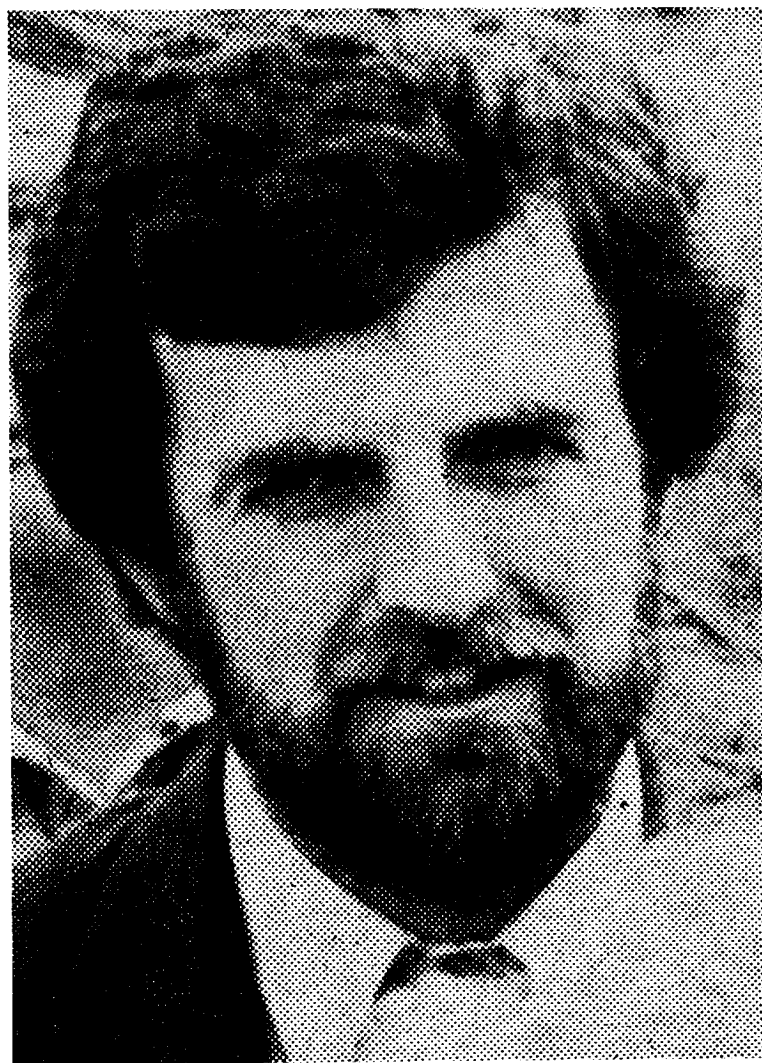
There is a lesson here for us today when the black minorities in this country are confronted with the same Ku-Klux-Klan mentality which tried to railroad the Scottsboro men and youth to the electric chair. The legal-lynch mobs are still among us.

**Socialist
Challenge**

**H Block election
victory**

31,278

**REASONS
TO GRANT
THE FIVE
DEMANDS**



- 1 No prison work
- 2 No prison uniform
- 3 Free association
- 4 Educational and recreation facilities
- 5 Full remission of sentence