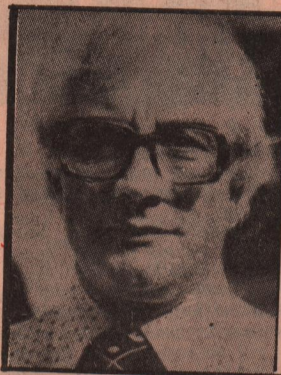


Workers' ACTION

8 pages
10p

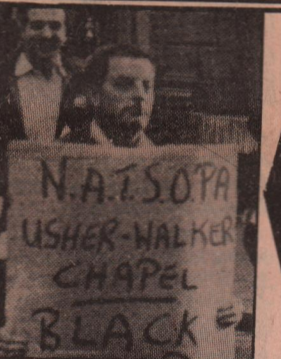
No. 176
May 17, 1980

FOR FIGHTING BACK



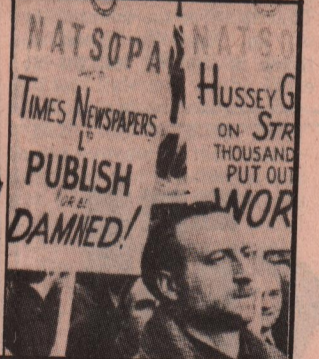
Leaders sent to jail?

Unions face huge fines?



Workers get the sack?

Strikers sued for costs?



ON MAY 14TH

Answer bosses' threats with a

General strike!

THERE MUST BE an all-out general strike if leaders of the print union NATSOPA are jailed, or if trade unionists face punitive fines or heavy damages because of the TUC day of action on May 14.

The Tories and their allies are attacking the right of working people to effective political protest. And if they win in their attempt to brand May 14 'unlawful', they will go further. The Employment Bill makes almost any sort of trade union solidarity unlawful too.

The ruling class, the top 5% who own over half all private wealth, are arrogantly insisting that only they can take effective political action. Police chiefs, army chiefs, top civil servants, judges, top managers, all closely tied to or part of the top property-owning class, control our lives — and the working people who produce the wealth can only put a cross on a ballot paper once every five years.

Express Newspapers are now threatening to sack workers who strike on the 14th. And if the turn-out is at all weak, a wave of legal actions for damages could hit trade unionists after the 14th.

The working class must defy this arrogance. Without active defiance not

by
MARTIN THOMAS

a single one of our democratic rights would ever have been won.

Printworkers and electricians at the Daily Express and Daily Star responded to the court ruling against the unions by deciding to strike on the 14th. As one of them put it, "That's our answer to the judge and to Victor Matthews" — chairman of the company which owns the Express and the Star, and which started the court case.

Other workers should respond in the same way — and extend it to an indefin-

ite general strike if the courts and the bosses do not back down.

Working hand in hand with the courts, the Tory press has been campaigning venomously against the Day of Action. Apart from NATSOPA's stand against the High Court, the union leaders have done nothing but retreat and make excuses.

The rank and file must halt this retreat, and force the leaders to stop manoeuvring for a deal with the Tories and instead to fight them. If the leaders won't lead a general strike, then the rank and file must.

A general strike can cripple the Tories' immediate attacks. It can free any trade unionists jailed, as the threat of general strike action freed the 'Pentonville Five' in July 1972. It can force the dropping of fines, as an AUEW strike call in 1974 quickly produced an announcement that the fines imposed on that union had been paid anonymously. It

can beat back the Tories on the Employment Bill, on the cuts, and on the closures.

Industrial action can force the bosses to drop vindictive attempts to get damages through the courts.

The labour movement also needs to fight for a positive answer to the crisis. The Tories must be kicked out, and we need a government which takes socialist measures to restructure industry under workers' control, with a decent livelihood for all.

For that, the labour movement must gain control over its organisations and its leadership, and organise itself to take on the bastions of conservative power. We must fight for a workers' government: not a government like past Labour governments, basing itself on the capitalist state against the labour movement, but one basing itself on the labour movement against the capitalist state.

Sweden: half a victory

THE SWEDISH bosses and government have suffered a defeat.

The bosses locked out ¼ million workers, in an attempt to break the determination of Swedish workers and make them bear the brunt of the economic crisis. But now the bosses' confederation has been forced to go back on its original refusal to grant the compromise solution of 7.3% wage increases for public sector workers and 6.8% for private sector employees.

Under pressure from the Prime Minister Thorbjörn Fälldin, the private sector employers finally accepted

the wage increases after first rejecting them.

Although a partial victory, the wage increases are much less than could and should have been won. Inflation is now running at over 8%.

Model

Sweden, the country traditionally looked to by social-democrats as the model of economic prosperity and social harmony, has in the last two weeks seen its biggest class battles for decades. 750,000 workers were locked out, while 100,000 workers struck

All the ports, airports and major factories were shut down.

The airline strike spread to Norway where engineers employed by the Scandinavian Air System came out in sympathy, thus preventing strike breaking by Swedish holiday companies who wanted to use Norwegian charter flights.

Oil tanker drivers stopped last Friday when negotiations broke down between the bosses' federation and the unions.

With this partial victory under their belts, and with their self-confidence increased, Swedish workers will

not be willing to accept the new attacks that the bosses and the government are bound to launch to try and get their system out of the present crisis.

Boast

And they will look for more radical political answers than the 'nealy-mouthed' recipes of the traditional social democratic leaders of the Swedish workers, who could only boast that "they had better links with the unions than the present government."

JOHN MACDONALD

BY THE last issue we had received £219.05 towards our £300 target. Since then we have received:

Coventry £2.50
Liverpool £25
S.London £2

This makes a closing total of £248.55 on May 13th, £51.45 short of target. However, we have also received one extra donation from a supporter in Leicester of £5,000.

With this magnificent donation we will be able to carry out the plans we had for our £2,000 development fund which had just opened — buying a new printing press to allow us to produce much needed leaflets and pamphlets more easily cheaply and much faster and get other new equipment too.

In short, we're going to use the money to expand not to tide us over. Because we'll be taking on greater committ-

ments, our fund drive will become more important, not less. So really we've failed badly this month by not reaching our target. We urge supporters round the country to chase up regular buyers for a donation, to organise socials, jumble sales and whip rounds at work, in YSs and the Labour Party.

To help with that fund raising work, a special leaflet, outlining our expansion plans and why we need money, will be out at the end of the week. It will have forms on it both for one-off donations and for supporters to take out a regular bankers' order.

When next month's target date of June 10th comes up, we hope to see more than £300.

Send all donations to WA Fund c/o PO Box 135, London N1

The asSAsSins

by Alexis Carras

ACCORDING TO Colin Shepherd, MP for the SAS's home turf of Hereford, the SAS Operations force of about 900 men has been involved in 32 theatres of war since World War 2.

The British Army's *Land Operations Manual* states:

"SAS squadrons are particularly suited, trained and equipped for counter-revolutionary operations. Small parties may be infiltrated or dropped by parachute, including free fall, to avoid a long approach through enemy dominated areas, in order to carry out any of the following tasks:

- the collection of information on the location and movement of insurgent forces,

- the ambush and harassment of insurgents,

- infiltration of sabotage, assassination and demolition parties into insurgent-held areas,

- border surveillance,

- limited community relations,

- liaison with and organisation, training and control of friendly guerilla forces operating against the common enemy."

Among the countries where the SAS has been active are Borneo, Aden, Cyprus, Kenya, Oman and more recently Ireland. In Oman they helped the Sultan to fight his ten-year struggle with left-wing rebels from the province of Dhofar. They trained and led the Firquat, a militia formed from mountain tribesmen.

Apparently SAS casualties were very high before the war ground to a halt in December 1975. However, SAS casualties are never

recognised as war victims, there are no military honours at their funerals, details of the deaths are never released, and the routine excuse is that they died 'during a training exercise'.

The whole Oman operation officially did not exist. It was Britain's "Secret War". But Roy Mason, Army Minister from 1974 to '76 in the last Labour Government, frequently visited there.

Mason also appointed Major-General Creasy, the former commander of the Sultan of Oman's military forces, as General Officer Commanding in Northern Ireland. And again it was Mason who in January 1976 announced for the first time that the SAS were being sent into the North of Ireland.

In fact the SAS had been active long before this official announcement, but because the SAS soldiers are seconded from other regiments, it is easy for the Defence Ministry to deny their presence by citing the name of their original unit.

In October 1972 the IRA discovered that a 'Four Square Laundry' van which had operated in a Catholic area of Belfast for some months was a fake. The driver was a soldier, and two other soldiers were hidden in a secret compartment. After killing the soldiers, the Provisionals announced that they were SAS men.

In July 1978 14-year old John Boyle was killed by five high-velocity bullets, fired from less than four yards' distance and from behind. The top of the boy's head was blown away.

A year earlier the SAS had crossed the Border on April 15 and murdered Peter Cleary. He was shot 'while



trying to escape'. On May 2, 44-year old Seamus Ludlow was found dead on the southern side of the Border.

Several months earlier on March 12, Sean McKenna from Newry was kidnapped from a house in Edentubber in the South. He was taken over the Border and after being held for 4 days, handed over to the RUC. The British Army claimed he had 'stumbled' across the border.

All this came out when the

Southern government re-treated slightly from its tacit agreement to allow cross-Border operations by the British Army. On May 5, 1977, the Gardai arrested eight SAS men who had crossed the border.

They were put on trial, the official prosecutor using the opportunity to reaffirm the Southern government's nationalist stand.

Merlyn Rees was furious, stating that: "When incursions do occur, they are norm-

Shot in the back

The *Sunday Times* (May 11) has now published some details of the SAS raid.

Apart from revealing that the operation was not as brilliant as made out — one SAS man spent the entire operation tangled up in a climbing rope — the *Sunday Times* poses the question: "Even if such terrifying force was necessary, need so many people have died in that attack?..."

"The blunt answer... is No... the SAS shot at least two of the gunmen after they

had seemed to surrender. The men were no longer holding guns.

"And according to two of the hostages who saw what happened, they were shot as they lay or kneeled on the floor with their backs to the door through which the SAS men entered". Not just shot, but shot dead.

It is about time the full facts of the raid were made public. Then, perhaps, the SAS will be seen not as heroes but as brutal killers.

ally handled on the spot quickly and without fuss. Both the Republic and ourselves have after all a common interest in defeating terrorism".

The Army came up with the lame excuse that the men had misread their maps.

Eventually a deal was concocted. The SAS were fined £100 each and London agreed to cut back on cross border operations and take more action against the Protestant paramilitaries.

Many atrocities in Ireland may well have been the work of the SAS, trying to discredit the IRA and demoralise the nationalist population.

A former SAS engineer, interviewed in the socialist paper *Workers' Fight* in 1972, reckoned that the SAS "would be used to infiltrate the IRA's ranks. The particular individuals would be of Irish origin to be credible. As well as obtaining information about the activities of the IRA, the SAS would be causing explosions and organising killings which would then be attributed to the IRA to attempt to discredit them and justify the Government's repression".

The SAS also operates in Britain. During the 1973 IRA bombing campaign in London, they formed a Special Detail of hand-picked men to carry out armed plain-clothes duties. They liaised closely with the Army, the police, the Security Services, the Special Branch and the Defence Intelligence Committee. There are also close contacts between the SAS and the notorious Brigadier Frank Kitson.

And the SAS plays an important role in NATO's military plans.

In an East-West war, the SAS would be used to 'cut off the enemy's tail'. They would be parachuted behind the Warsaw Pact lines to carry out sabotage and try to stir up revolt among the oppressed nationalities of the USSR, especially those such as the Estonians, Lithuanians, Latvians and Ukrainians who are relatively close to the possible areas of immediate NATO attack. That is, if in the eventuality of an East-West conflict there is any tail left to cut off...

Letter: Missing the point

Dear comrades,

I think your article on the Iranian embassy missed the point.

Surely the point is that such actions as those taken by the Khuzestanians are futile.

Their cause as I understand it is just. They played their part in helping the Iranians rid themselves of the Shah, yet they reap none of the benefits, and are finding Khomeini to be as repressive. The slogan they painted inside the Embassy said, 'Khomeini, the new Shah'.



Instead of opposing the praise for the SAS and the anti-Iranian chauvinism, Labour spokesman Merlyn Rees just joined in.

But nevertheless hostage taking is the act of the desperate who see no way forward. We understand why they are driven to such action, but we point out that it is not the way forward.

To have such faith in the British bourgeoisie (and it is faith to believe that the bourgeoisie anywhere in the world are concerned about the lives of individuals, and can be forced to make concessions because of that) is very misguided indeed!

The other point which is missed out in the article is the eruption of national chauvinism and racialism after the attack on the embassy by the gang of thugs known as the SAS. The SAS are now seen as heroes, not as the killers they are.

The fact that they didn't kill everyone inside the embassy is due to luck and not to the actions of the SAS, who cared little who they killed.

The SAS is known as a professional body of killers. We have only to look at the way they operate in Northern Ireland.

The article should also have condemned the police for their actions in relation to the Iranians who were demonstrating outside the embassy. The Iranians were not allowed to leave the demonstration to go to the toilet or get food — or if they left they would not be allowed to return. They were given a bucket to urinate in, men and women alike.

Yet the racist anti-Iranian demonstrators were allowed to come and go as they pleased with their racist placards. The following day, Merlyn Rees joined the racist bandwagon by saying, 'We need to look at the number of Iranian students in this country'. He could have kept his mouth shut and left it to the Tories.

I don't disagree with your article. But it missed the main points as far as I am concerned: the anti-Iranian feeling and the chauvinism that is being whipped up the media and by MPs such as Merlyn Rees.

PATRICIA KELLY

Training to kill



THE S.A.S. was founded by Lieutenant-Colonel David Stirling, when serving as a subaltern officer in the Scots Guards during World War 2. [In the '70s he reappeared as organiser of a private strike-breaking army during the big battles against the last Tory government]. In July 1941, in the Western Desert, Stirling created a special force to carry out sabotage and intelligence operations behind the enemy lines.

According to the official account, the first military action carried out by the SAS was on 11 November 1941. The attempt to destroy a Libyan desert airfield was a disaster. The SAS failed to find the airfield, let alone destroy it, and only 22 of the 60 involved in the operation returned alive.

The actual first SAS operation was even worse. Earlier in 1941, the 11th SAS battalion raided targets in northern Italy. This operation was a farce. All 36 men involved surrendered, some of them to unarmed peasants!

But that isn't in the official history. The secrecy and the

official hush-hush creates a mystique which 'endows the troopers with such a reputation as supermen that the enemies are psychologically beaten before the battle starts'.

Until the end of the war the SAS collaborated with the French and the Belgian special services, at one time existing as a single unit. They also trained the Greek 'Heros Lohos', who spearheaded the anti-communist warfare in that country. The SAS, the Belgian Army, and the Greek unit to this day wear a badge showing a winged dagger inscribed with the motto, 'Who dares wins'.

There are three existing SAS units, one regular [the 22nd], and two Territorial Army Volunteer Reserve units — the 21st and 23rd.

The 22nd SAS regiment specialises in counter-insurgency and is directly linked to the regular army. This is the regiment which has recently shot into the limelight with the Embassy raid.

The 22nd is based at Brad-

bury Lines, in Hereford. It is recruited from volunteers from other army units.

One in three of the SAS intake every year comes from the Parachute Regiment. All applicants must be under 34 years of age, the average being 27.

Although officers keep their rank on joining, all other soldiers including those with sergeant's stripes revert to the rank of trooper. Only one in five of the applicants is accepted after the initial four week selection course. Great emphasis is placed on physical fitness. The training is rough and brutal, including practice in resisting torture. Only the very toughest or insane actually pass the tests.

By the time men join the SAS, they are well indoctrinated in the mentality expressed by an SAS man charged with the murder of 14-year old John Boyle in Ireland: "Asked whether he had ever heard of any sort of patrol whose main objective was to capture rather than kill a man, Corporal Michael Alan Bohan replied: 'I have read of such patrols in World War Two literature'."

Our lives in whose hands?

by
Andrew Hornung

"IF I RULED the world" was a slush hit song by ex-goop Harry Secombe. The idea of an idiot really ruling the world is pretty scary though.

So get scared! The next President of the US — who won't rule the world but will be about the most powerful person it — might be Ronald Reagan. According to *Newsweek*, the American current affairs magazine, Reagan is so ignorant of world politics that he confuses Indonesia with Indochina and Afghanistan with Pakistan.

Thatcher might get the idea of telling him, if he gets elected, that Iran and Ireland are really the same place.

It was recently revealed too that he didn't know who the President of France, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, was. Can't you just imagine him asking, "Valery who? Isn't she President Schmidt's wife?"

But he isn't completely empty-headed. On the contrary, his mind is stuffed full of facts from *Reader's Digest* and similar reactionary political pulp. According to *Newsweek*, "He fills the dead time aboard airliners and in hotel suites reading a jumble of papers and magazines and scissoring whatever supports his conservative views, without checking whether it's true."

His worried campaign committee has now got him to mail back his reading material so that they can vet it for accuracy and stop some of his Reagan's rivals

One of Reagan's rivals

for the Republican nomination is George Bush. Bush recently told reporters how he imagined a coming world war between the US and the USSR. The US could win, he insisted. About 5% of Americans would survive to declare themselves the winners.

If you think that such lunacy ill-equips a member for public office, remember that Bush was US Ambassador to the UN (1971-73), head of the US liaison office in Peking (1974-75) and for the last year of the Ford administration, head of the CIA.

At some of his campaign meetings, enthusiastic audiences chant "CIA, CIA".

The Democratic nomination will almost certainly go to President Carter, who, it was reported at the time of his election, was an

ignorant peanut farmer that made even President Ford look smart.

President Ford, you will remember, was said by President Johnson to be 'so stupid he couldn't chew gum and fart at the same time'.

The White House seemed almost committed to lunacy as a political principle in Nixon's day. Nixon and Kissinger adhered to what the President called 'The Madman Theory'. As he once explained to his aide Bob Haldeman, "I call it the Madman Theory, Bob. I want the North Vietnamese to think I've reached the point that I might do any thing to stop the war. We'll just slip the word to them that 'for God's sake, you know Nixon is obsessed about Communism. We can't restrain him when he's angry — and he has his

hand on the nuclear button" — and Ho Chi Minh himself will be in Paris in two days, begging for peace".

No wonder Kissinger, not many months before joining Nixon's White House team, had said, "Nixon isn't fit to be President".

Compared with Vice-President Agnew, however, President Nixon was thought to be an intellectual giant — not a moral one of course: they both left office convicted of crimes. In fact, so frightening was the prospect of Agnew taking over that until he had been convicted of fraud, no-one wanted Nixon to go.

Henry Kissinger, in fact, used this as his (dishonest) excuse for not resigning over the Cambodian war. "Suppose I went in and told the President I was resigning", Kissinger argued

against those who tried to convince him to quit over the Cambodian bombing. "Nixon could have a heart attack and you'd have Spiro Agnew as President. Do you want that? No? So don't keep telling me to resign."

Would it be better if the President were actually sane and smart? Well, according to most, John F. Kennedy was both. And what did he do? He nearly brought the world to war over the Cuban missile crisis. He started the war in Vietnam and he tried to invade Cuba...

Obviously it doesn't matter which Republican or which Democrat wins the race to the Mad House. What does matter is whether the US workers get themselves organised in time to seize power from both capitalist gangs.

DESPITE the High Court injunction declaring strike action on May 14th outside the protection of the law which grants trade unionists immunity from civil action for damages, and despite the vicious press campaign millions of workers will come out.

They will protest against the anti-union Employment Bill now passing through Parliament and against the whole anti working class thrust of the Government's policies. It is an action with an explicit political focus, and it is a milestone in trade unionism.

The recognition that only direct industrial action can beat back the Tory offensive is true to the reality the working class faces, and is a step forward despite the timid, feeble and unserious way the TUC leaders have organised the action.

They have not instructed trade union members to strike, issuing invitations instead. They have scarcely bothered to organise it. Len Murray, who has been pilloried — ludicrously — by the press as Lenin Murray, symbolises the way the TUC have gone about organising May 14: he will not return from holidaying at an expensive hotel in Madeira until Tuesday May 13!

COSY

David Basnett, general secretary of the GMWU, expressed the spirit in which the TUC has organised the protest: "If you can't be heard in Whitehall, you have to take your argument to Trafalgar Square".

Millions of workers will be striking to stop the Tories and defeat them. As the demo on March 9 showed, already there are many workers who want to use industrial action to drive them out of office, as we drove out Heath. But Murray, Basnett and Co. want action like May 14 as a means of forcing the government to TALK to them again!

The leaders of the British working class movement have not broken off cosy collaboration with those who are attempting to beat down the working class. The Tory Government has simply refused to bother with the trade union leaders.

Gone, like the Labour Government, are the days when the Government and the unions were engaged in regular consultations.

Not only incompetence, but also their limited poli-

MAY 14 AND THE TRADE UNIONS Talk to the Tories - or beat them back?

tical objectives, have determined how the TUC has organised May 14 — which they should have organised as at least a one day general strike.

As the *Observer's* labour correspondent reports: "There seems to be general agreement for the moment that union leaders count for little and that their pretensions must be curbed". He comments: "For, after all, unless it [the TUC] can bargain with Government, it is nothing".

Margaret Thatcher herself told listeners on the Jimmy Young show recently that "trade unions must learn to concentrate on their members' pay and conditions, and not bother the Government with their alternative social and economic programmes".

The reversal in the fortunes of the trade union bureaucracy could not be more dramatic and stark. In the middle of the life of the Labour Government an opinion poll showed that most people thought that TGWU leader Jack Jones was more powerful than the prime minister. Together with the Labour leaders, the union bureaucrats shaped the policies of the Government from 1974 to '78. Now, discarded and rejected, they are not allowed to darken the door of no. 10 Downing Street.

But they do not seem to have learned much about their experience in the last 10 years since Edward Heath last slammed the door of no. 10 Downing Street in their faces. We must remember and learn.

LIMITED

In 1970, deprived of the consultation on social policy that had been custom and practice with every previous government for 30 years, and then assaulted by the anti-union industrial relations legislation, the union leaders were driven into opposition. The rank and file revolt against the Tories limited their possibilities of manoeuvre.

In 1972 the Industrial Relations Act became law and the unions adopted a policy of boycotting the National Industrial Relations Court set up under it — instead of an offensive and a full-scale industrial mobilisation against it. It was direct action by the rank and file which crippled the Industrial Relations Act.

When five dockers were jailed by the National Industrial Relations Court in July 1972, the immediate eruption of strikes forced the TUC to schedule a one-day general strike: if it had actually happened it would almost certainly have become an all-out general strike.

So Heath capitulated and found a legal excuse to release the dockers.



Basnett and Murray

The tremendous industrial struggles from 1970 to 1974 drove out the Tory government and made the return of a Labour government possible. It was like a long drawn out version of the 1926 industrial offensive — except that we won.

The unions were the most powerful force in the state, the government's dependence on them openly acknowledged. What would they do?

Would they, led by 'leftists' like Jack Jones and Hugh Scanlon, use their strength to overthrow capitalism, and take power in society into the hands of the labour movement? Or would they behave according to the pattern shown in an anecdote told by Aneurin Bevan in *In*

Place of Fear:

When Lloyd George faced the 'Triple Alliance' of trade unions in 1919, he challenged the union leaders

"For if a force arises in the state which is stronger than the state itself, then it must be ready to take on the functions of the state, or withdraw and accept the authority of the state."

"Gentlemen", asked the Prime Minister quietly, "have you considered, and if you have, are you ready?"

"From that moment on said Robert Smillie, 'we were beaten and we knew we were'."

In fact the union leaders in 1974 were true heirs of those who sold out the working class after World War 1 — with the difference that



the Labour Party took office with their support, and sustained the system.

The unions supported a government which began with some concessions to the labour movement, including the repeal of some Tory legislation. They continued to support it after 1975, by policing an incomes policy against their own members which cut living standards.

They quietly accepted the doubling of unemployment to well past the million mark which occurred under Labour. Intimidated by the world capitalist crisis, they went along with Labour when the Government obeyed the IMF and initiated the cuts programme on which the Tories have built their current anti working class

offensive.

The unions continued to support the Government until the end of 1978, when the rank and file revolted. Jack Jones was defeated at his union conference in summer 1978 over support for a new round of incomes policy.

The strikes of 1978-9 only 'discredited' the Labour Government because it was already hollowed out and a spent force. They also seriously discredited the trade union bureaucracy, shown to have lost the ability to deliver 'social peace' on the bosses' terms.

Thatcher won the election, spurned the trade union leaders, and began preparations for new anti-union legislation. David Basnett was driven back to Trafalgar Square, and Margaret Thatcher tells the unions to mind their own business and not to bother the Government with their 'alternative economic policies'.

This was the pay-off for the years in which the unions had sustained a stable capitalist-Labour government for the bosses!

The union leaders can afford to be tepid in their opposition to the Tories. They always hope for a new welcome at Downing Street. Faced with a vicious Tory government, with a new world capitalist slump, with the prospects (admitted by the bourgeois press) of unemployment which will rise steadily for years ahead to the two million mark and probably far beyond, and with the destruction of whole working class communities and the de-industrialisation of areas of Britain — the working class cannot do other than go all out with industrial action to beat back the offensive and drive the Tories out.

BUILDING

This time round, when we have done that, we must make sure that the labour movement is armed with different policies and organised to enforce them.

We must fight for a workers' government.

For the unions that means building a rank and file movement to fight the bureaucrats' stranglehold. We must fight to drive out the Tories: but to do that effectively — as the way 'Lenin Murray' & Co have organised May 14 demonstrates — we will also have to fight the existing leaders of the labour movement and replace them with rank and file control.

John O'Mahony

Labour council threatens court action over May 14

THE YELLOW press of Fleet Street are not the only ones doing their bit to break the strike on May 14th. Haringey Labour council have tried to overturn the school ancillary workers' decision to strike.

The workers voted overwhelmingly to go on strike at a mass meeting three weeks ago but the campaign in the press and the court action against the print unions led a small minority of the caretakers (about 20 out of 100) to back down. In addition, education officers had seen the caretakers individually to demand the keys so that head teachers could open the schools and break the strike. They claimed that the caretakers would be in breach of contract and the disciplinary action would be taken against them if they didn't hand the keys over. 31 still refused.

At a joint meeting of the GMWU and NUPE caretakers last Saturday, the local union leadership gave a strong lead, explaining that the action was official and that they should not give in to the threats. The 31 who hadn't handed in their keys were told not to and told that they had the full support of the union.

On the Sunday, the local union representatives met three leaders of the council to talk about the legal implications.

The unions were threatened with a court injunction to make them hand over the keys. On the advice of both unions' lawyers, the stewards backed down and instructed their members to hand over the keys.

The council took this action because of the court case brought by parents during the low pay strike in early 1979, when Haringey schools were closed for six weeks. However much the scandalous action of the council may ingratiate them with the courts (and even that is doubtful) they have not only lost strong sympathy only lost the strong sympathy that did exist for them among caretakers, but also become scabs in the Tories' campaign against May 14th.

In the longer term, they have also set a precedent for head teachers to break strike action by caretakers.

MICHAEL O'SULLIVAN

THE WARMO

HOW A 'HOLDING ACTION' CRUSHED CAMBODIA

The American military are building up their forces to be ready for a "limited war" in the Gulf or the Middle East. In the second part of a review of *Sideshow* by William Shawcross (Fontana, £1.95), ANDREW HORNUNG shows how an imperialist "limited war" in Cambodia escalated to ravage and destroy the whole society.

VIETNAM was centre-stage. Cambodia was only a sideshow. As an expert in Kissinger's Indochina team put it, "I never knew very much about Cambodia. I don't think anyone did. I am a Vietnam expert, and I always thought of Cambodia as just an adjunct to the whole damn thing."

Taking over Cambodia, however, initially to support the war in Vietnam, soon assumed a dynamic of its own. It ended with butchery on a huge scale in Cambodia and defeat for imperialism not solely in Vietnam but throughout the whole of Indochina.

Kissinger had started off with the view that "We are so powerful that Hanoi is simply unable to defeat us militarily", and that "Victory by a third-rate Communist peasant state over the US" is inconceivable. As time went on, the rosy view had turned bloody: the perspective now was merely "to avoid humiliation".

In the vain, desperate hope of preventing that humiliation, the United States lashed out towards Cambodia: it subverted the country's neutrality, corrupted its officials, overthrew its government, pounded its land and people from the ground and air, shattered its economy, fomented racism, fuelled civil war, dragooned its population into fighting on behalf of imperialism and murdered millions through bombing and starvation. And still they lost...



For hundreds of years the Khmer people and the surrounding mountain tribes had been dominated by the empires of Siam to the west and Vietnam to the east. In the middle of the last century, the French allied with the ruler of Cambodia to oust the Siamese who had themselves helped the Khmer beat off the Vietnamese. One of the chief ways in which the French maintained their rule was by playing off different sections of the royal family. When Prince Norodom Sihanouk was crowned by the French, it was a slap in the face for Prince Sirik Matak who had expected to succeed to the throne.

In 1955 Cambodia began to accept US economic and military aid, but, following the 1963 assassination of Diem, the American puppet President of South Vietnam, Sihanouk cut off American aid, shifted closer to Hanoi, and began a programme of reform... and at the same time cracked down on the Left. The following period was characterised by intense repression, particularly the crushing of the Battambang peasant rebellion in 1966.

In 1965 Sihanouk agreed that troops of North Vietnam and the South Vietnamese

National Liberation Front could operate from Cambodian territory close to the Vietnam border. At the same time, supply routes were opened up through the port of Sihanoukville which were very profitable for the Cambodian ruling class. As Shawcross tells us, "Members of the royal family and many senior Cambodian army officers — including those who, like Lon Nol, were correctly considered pro-American — were involved in the traffic."

In the late sixties, the US had contact with General Lon Nol and with Prince Sirik Matak, the leading capitalist in Cambodia. It encouraged them to overthrow Sihanouk and turn Cambodia into a base for "anti-communist" operations. At the same time, the US was supporting Son Ngoc Thanh, the right wing Cambodian

Sihanouk's first reaction was to retire to the south of France. But finally he agreed to accept the nominal leadership of the Cambodian "Communists". As he himself put it later, "I had chosen not to be with either the Americans or the Communists, because I considered there were two dangers, American imperialism and Asian Communism. It was Lon Nol who obliged me to choose between them." Within days of the coup, Pham Van Dong, the Prime Minister of North Vietnam, flew to Peking (where Sihanouk was) and agreed Sihanouk's nominal leadership with Chou En-lai. In May 1970 Sihanouk announced the formation of his government, the Royal Government of National Union of Kampuchea, (GRUNK). Peking recognised it. At the same time the US was enthusiastically building up Lon Nol.



A secret White House decision to supply arms was implemented before there was any official Congress-backed military aid pro-

usually the bombing would be stepped up to give the Cambodians time to Cambodianise...

Most of the bombing and some of the ground fighting was carried out by South Vietnamese troops, but the war in Cambodia was planned in Washington without even consulting the government of Cambodia. By early September 1970, only six months after the coup, there were, according to Shawcross, "twenty-one South Vietnamese battalions scouring the country and fully one quarter of all airstrikes and troop lifts flown by the Vietnamese air force were committed to them. Even so the Cambodians had lost the northeast corner of the country."

The same month the Senior Review Group chaired by Kissinger decided that the US would build up a Cambodian army that, with South Vietnamese and Thai ground and air support and American air power, must try to hold about half of Cambodia against the Khmer Rouge now headed by Sihanouk.

By December 1970 the US Military Equipment Delivery Team had arrived in the Cambodian capital Phnom Penh, then receiving the first really big influx of

French had to be replaced by standard American English-only forms.

Eager to please, the Cambodian administration proposed a compromise: how about forms in Khmer and English? Not good enough. Cambodians, claimed Mataxis, "had no ability to interface carbon paper between the copies". Imaginative as ever, Mataxis had the Khmer quatermasters dismissed and replaced by Filipinos who were used to American administrative methods.



Military suppliers made a fortune supplying sophisticated equipment that could neither be operated nor serviced by Cambodian technicians. The country became studded with mountains of military junk. (A few years later, just before the fall of Phnom Penh, Mataxis showed up in Phnom Penh as an agent for a Singapore arms dealer trying to buy this hardware he had helped deliver.)

Now Kissinger pressed for stepping up the action in Cambodia. The Chiefs of



Refugees in Phnom Penh

nationalist leader of the Khmer Serai guerillas based in South Vietnam. (This means, of course, that while it is true that Sihanouk was giving "sanctuary" to North Vietnamese-NLF troops fighting the puppet government in South Vietnam, the US was harbouring right-wing guerillas fighting the government of Sihanouk.)

Prior to the March 1970 coup against Sihanouk, Khmer Serai fighters moved across the border to join the Cambodian army to strengthen the anti-Sihanouk faction. Then, when Sihanouk was out of the country, Lon Nol and Sirik Matak seized power. The CIA, having encouraged the coup and helped with the Khmer Serai infiltration, now (to quote a US official based in Saigon) "exacerbated the crisis by spreading misinformation". But the main factor in weakening Sihanouk was the bombing of Cambodia's eastern border by the US and the consequent move west by the North Vietnamese NLF forces and by refugees from the border areas.

gramme to Lon Nol's Cambodia. The US also flew Son Ngoc Thanh round Vietnam on a drive to recruit Khmers to the Khmer Serai battalions supporting the new Cambodian government.

As the arms started arriving, so did advisers. The first advisers were Indonesians who convinced Lon Nol that he had to base himself on the Khmer population and expel the hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese citizens. A racist campaign was whipped up in which the entire population of several villages was wiped out and hundreds of thousands driven out of Cambodia.

Gradually a paradox emerged: the US argued that supporting Lon Nol was vital to their Vietnamisation programme because it would give the South Vietnamese more time to take over from the withdrawing American forces, but at the same time it meant a huge commitment by the US and by the South Vietnamese armed forces — the very opposite of Vietnamisation. Event-

ually the bombing would be stepped up to give the Cambodians time to Cambodianise...

refugees. The MEDT under General Theodore Mataxis was supposed to monitor how US aid was being used. Mataxis' approach provides a glittering example of imperialist arrogance. What the White House wanted in Cambodia, he confirmed later, was "a holding action. You know, one of those things like a rearguard you drop off. The troika's going down the road and the wolves are closing in, and so you throw them something off and let them chew it."



But the Cambodians had to be Americanised if the "holding action" was to be effective, he decided. First off the entire Cambodian logistics system had to be computerised: it didn't "interface" well with American methods. Mataxis decided that requisition forms printed in Khmer and

Staff submitted a plan for the Cambodian army to be increased to 220,000 men, for a paramilitary force of 143,000, for a larger United States training programme based in South Vietnam, a pacification and counter-insurgency effort, and another increase in Mataxis' team, this time to 1,003 (it had started at 40!).

Shawcross comments, "It would cost \$350,000,000 for the next year, and they claimed it would enable Lon Nol to move into North East Cambodia against the enemy. The plan ignored the fact that only 15,000 Communist troops had easily tied down 150,000 government soldiers. It also ignored the spirit if not the letter of the Cooper-Church amendment and the economic impact on Cambodia of such an increase in the army."

"The State Department and the Agency for International Development (AID) calculated that Cambodian inflation would soar to at least 34% if the Chiefs had their way. Higher if, as the Chiefs also wished, economic

aid was diverted to military hardware."

The reality was much worse. From a base of 100 representing 1949 prices, the index had risen to 348 in March 1970 when Sihanouk was overthrown. By the end of 1970 when Mataxis arrived it was 523; by the end of 1971 it had shot up to 825; by the end of the next year it had gone up to 1,095; by the end of the following year it had leapt to 3,907; six months before the fall of Phnom Penh it was 11,052.

All this was wrecking Cambodia. However, by stalling the onrush of imperialism's enemies, it was saving American lives — and in Nixon's opinion those were worth far more than Cambodian lives. That was, as one general put it, "the Nixon Doctrine in its purest form".

In December 1970 the President told a press conference: "The aid programme for Cambodia is, in my opinion, probably the best investment in foreign assistance that the US has made in my lifetime. The Cambodians, a people, seven million only, neutralists previously, untrained, are tying down 40,000 Vietnamese regulars."

"If those North Vietnamese weren't in Cambodia, they'd be over killing Americans... The dollars we send to Cambodia save American lives and help us bring Americans home." To use General Mataxis' phrase, as the American troika sped home the flesh of the Cambodians was to be thrown to "the wolves"...



Just how many dollars Cambodian lives were worth can be seen from the following two incidents, one in 1971 and the other in 1973.

It did not take long before the 600,000 population of Phnom Penh rose to over a million. These refugees were not running away from the Khmer Rouge (as later seems to have been the case) but from the South Vietnamese. The racial hostility that had existed for centuries between Vietnamese and Cambodians meant that the South Vietnamese regarded Cambodia as a free fire zone, pillaging, burning and raping. Shawcross recounts that "At the town of Kep in Kampot province the South Vietnamese ate the animals in the zoo. A Joint Cambodian-South Vietnamese Committee appointed to examine the outrages had, by September 1971, examined three hundred cases and paid compensation for only two — \$90 for a rape and \$180 for a murder."

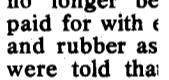
In August 1973 a US plane bombed the strategic ferry town of Neak Luong by mistake — by forgetting to flip a switch on his radar set, the navigator homed in not on the appointed target but on the radar beam itself. The authorities tried to stop journalists getting to the town but one got through to report back on how Ambassador Swank had lectured the survivors of the town, whose main street and hospital had just been bombed, that "in-war one learns

to suffer, but it is disheartening death and your friends' government rebuild the hospital approximately 137 dead a day. The fine \$700.

White House Cambodia was expressed early Secret Laird's response of the bomb "We're taking in Cambodia as well bomb possible". In 1971 Seventh Air Force was directed by the next of missions Cambodia (the loads had nearly two thirds cleared after of the Paris agreement in 1971. *Seventh Air Force firepower on Cambodia*)

The bomb ground war: Cambodian population towards 3,000,000. Cambodia was like the country to be started. Cambodia reported \$7.8 million drugs; by 1970 rocketed, but fallen to \$4.1 million the next year towered to an height but the same. The officials called include drugs programme (a no longer be paid for with and rubber as were told that did not know drugs carefully much of it would enemy".

At the same time the government was waging war by slashing the budget. Of the million given aid between July 1973, only was for refugees



Soon main common, gas epidemic, hospital piled with patients each, were crowded and able to find assistance was of" informally teen organisation US officials called it would do no attention to sides of the war

At the same time ion flourished grew ever fatter draining the grain imports. In where carb housed million ation and everywhere, them the military who showed with their around sipping cod who could a part of the establish live well "Lon Nol



At the same time ion flourished grew ever fatter draining the grain imports. In where carb housed million ation and everywhere, them the military who showed with their around sipping cod who could a part of the establish live well "Lon Nol

JEAN-PAUL SARTRE

GORDON BREWER reviews the life and work of the French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre, who died on April 16th.

WHILE HE was alive, Sartre received the full vent of the venom of the French bourgeoisie as an intellectual who had betrayed his class, a venom which earned him the title of 'the most-hated man in France'. Now he is dead, the bourgeoisie will try to claim him, to bring him safely into the clutches of their official culture.

Within the next year there will be a flood of academic books and articles paying tribute to Sartre the dramatist, Sartre the philosopher, Sartre the novelist. All will try to turn him into an intellectual icon.

But he was also a man who stood out against the crimes of French imperialism in Algeria and US imperialism in Vietnam, who provoked 500 ex-servicemen during the Algerian war to march through the streets of Paris to the slogan 'Shoot Sartre!' Sartre came from a middle

class background. Alienated by the stuffiness of bourgeois culture in France, he turned to philosophy to provide some answers on freedom, religion, and the role of the individual in society.

problems about the nature of consciousness, politics seems barely to have impinged on his preoccupations, though Hitler was already in power in Germany, and the great class battles of the Popular Front period were taking place in France.

Despite his lack of interest in politics, Sartre even at that time identified with the Communist Party as opposed to other parties. But he was also repelled by the Moscow Trials and the sharp and irrational changes of line which had to be accepted without question. Definitely not the place for an intellectual who wanted to think for himself.

It was the Second World War which forced Sartre up against the reality of class society. In September 1939 he was called up and sent to the Maginot line. A few months later the German armies rolled towards France.

The French officer corps reacted with all the single-minded heroism of their class — they piled into staff cars and ran for safety. An entire army was left drifting around with no objectives, no organisation. Thousands were taken prisoner by the Wehrmacht, among them Sartre.

He was flung into a prison camp while most of the bourgeoisie set about collaborating with the Nazis.

were hunted alone and arrested alone. And when they were arrested, they were naked and alone to face torture...

"And yet, in the depths of that solitude, others were present, all the others, all the comrades of the Resistance Movement they were defending... Thus, in shadow and blood, a republic was formed, the strongest of republics. Each citizen knew he was dependent on everyone else as he also knew that he could count only on himself; each one knew, in his complete isolation, his role and his historic responsibility" (from a BBC broadcast shortly after Liberation).

Sartre formed a small resistance group in Paris, which resolutely fought the Nazis in spirit, although it seems to have been totally ineffective in practice.

But there was a profound ambiguity in Sartre's relationship to political activity. At the same time as he was becoming active in the Resistance, Sartre produced his first major philosophical work, *Being and Nothingness*.

It is impossible even to summarise the main themes of this vast and complex work in a few words, but its central concern stands out clearly. Sartre wants to assert the reality of human freedom. But the freedom he asserts is not a very comfortable state to be in. In fact, according to Sartre, we spend most of our time trying to avoid the knowledge of our own freedom.

Being and Nothingness is a frontal assault on several established philosophical traditions. Against Hegelian idealism, Sartre asserts that matter cannot be reduced to consciousness, and that it is impossible to deduce the structure of reality from some first principle (like God). In a famous passage, he argues that the idea of a Being whose possibility entails its necessity is logically incoherent — "If God exists, then he is contingent".

Similarly, Sartre rejects cosy religious explanations of the place of man in the world. Human existence may bring necessity into the world, but it itself is contingent, a brute fact.

Against mechanical materialism, Sartre asserts that consciousness cannot just be reduced to or derived from matter. I am free in everything I do, since I am conscious of the possibility of my not doing it. Nothing I do is inevitably determined beforehand. Each act or thought requires an individual free act of consciousness.

Of course I can, and generally do, behave as if I were not free, to evade the awareness of freedom which makes every aspect of my existence problematic. In what Sartre would call 'patterns of bad faith', I look on myself as a being who is conditioned, like a thing.

Sartre also argues that consciousness has no essence. It is only as it makes itself. And it can either lapse into a fake pretence of being like an object, or it can live out a consciousness of its own freedom.

It is at this point that Sartre's increasing political

involvement seems to clash most heavily with his philosophy. For how do I live out my freedom in 'good faith'?

His answer is that there are no goals inscribed in Being for my consciousness to adopt, and I just have to choose a 'project' to live out.

also from the Stalinist apparatus.

The Cold War forced Sartre again decisively to take sides. By this time everybody loathed him. "Esoteric philosopher, writer of *Nausea*, scandal-prone dramatist, third-rate dema-

criticisms of the Party, Sartre became a fellow-traveller. He tended towards the idea that the CP must be 'objectively' correct because of the class it represented, despite the inhumanity and class-collaboration of its politics. Thus for a short period Sartre



In 1946 Sartre [above] was the hero of all the middle-class intellectuals who hated capitalism but shied away from the workers' movement. But when the Cold War reached its height, he swung over to the side of the CP.

There can be no basis in reason to determine which project I choose.

I could be a fascist or a communist, a suffragette or a nun; it doesn't make any difference. The book ends on a nihilistic note.

"Thus it amounts to the same thing whether one gets drunk alone or is a leader of nations. If one of these activities takes precedence over the other, this will not be because of its real goal but because of the degree of consciousness which it possesses of its ideal goal; and in this case it will be the quietism of the solitary drunkard which will take precedence over the vain agitation of the leader of nations".

Conditions immediately after the war could bolster the individualistic tendencies of Sartre's thought. The PCF became ever more openly reactionary, entering the bourgeois government in order to restore French capitalism to stability, then being booted out for their pains. Although politicised by the resistance, struggle, Sartre felt little attraction to the Party.

And he was suddenly rocketed to international fame. Disillusioned petty-bourgeois intellectuals took Sartre's early novel *Nausea* as their Bible. And in Sartre's three novels *The Roads to Freedom*, many leftist intellectuals could recognise their own alienation from French society and

could square his conscience and intellect with a reluctant support for Stalinism. It was not to last for long. Sartre vociferously attacked the Russian invasion of Hungary in 1956. But in breaking from the CP, he began to work out the connections between his own brand of Existentialism and Marxism, rather than leaving them to rot alongside each other, as he had done before.

Next week: Sartre after 1956.



Sartre with his companion Simone de Beauvoir

Having graduated from the Sorbonne in Paris, Sartre went to Berlin in the '30s and studied the German phenomenologists Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger. Concerned with

Released in the spring of 1941, Sartre had become politicised, no longer seeing the world purely in terms of the individual psyche. He himself explained the effect of the war — "Those who fought in the underground movement learned, by the very conditions of their battle, a new experience: they did not fight in the open as soldiers; they were in all circumstances alone; they

FIGHTBACK FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS CONFERENCE 2

- ★ Future aims and policy
- ★ Reports and plans for action
- ★ Publishing a newspaper
- ★ How the campaign will be run

**JUNE 21st 11 to 5
DIGBETH HALL
BIRMINGHAM**

DETAILS FROM 41 Ellington Street, London N7

WORKERS' ACTION

For more information, or to subscribe to Workers' Action, complete this form and send to the address below:

NAME
ADDRESS

Subscription rates Rest of world, air mail
25 issues, £9
50 issues, £16.50

Britain & Ireland Surface mail
25 issues, £6.25 25 issues, £6.75
50 issues, £11.50 50 issues, £12.75

Cheques etc. payable to 'Workers' Action'
SEND TO: WA, PO Box 135, London N1 0DD

BL workers rally for a fightback

OVER THE LAST year BL workers have suffered several serious defeats. Now the notorious 92 page document has been imposed, stripping away the last vestiges of the shop stewards' right to be consulted and destroying every protective agreement won over decades of struggle.

But BL workers were not just defeated by the company. They were stabbed in the back by their 'own' union leaders.

Terry Duffy and the right wing AUEW leadership have been working more or less hand in glove with Michael Edwardes. They betrayed Derek Robinson and then refused to back any strike action against the 92 pages.

While Duffy's open treachery sickened and enraged trade unionists, the T&G leadership seemed to maintain apparently steadfast opposition to Edwardes. But Evans' 11th hour capitulation to the bosses came as a stunning blow and effectively sabotaged the growing rank and file strike wave of mid-April.

Most of the plant leaderships within BL had no answer to the treachery of Duffy and Evans. The Leyland Cars Joint Negotiating Committee put off any strike call for five months after the November 1st expiry date for the 1979 pay review.

The convenors and full time officials never seriously pushed the official claim for £24 increase plus inflation-proofing and a move towards

the 35 hour week. Despairing of victory, they were clearly ready to jump at the most minimal concessions from Edwardes — except that no If ever there was an example of the failure of reformist trade unionism and of the need for a new revolutionary leadership, that example is BL.

The Leyland Action Committee, a loose alliance around the IMG, the WSL, and Workers' Action (and several other militants from most of the major Midlands plants), has set itself the task of building a new leadership at every level in BL. It has called a conference for June 7th open to all BL workers.

Workers' Action supporters will be arguing that the conference should concentrate on the following demands:

- Continued opposition to every aspect of the 92 page document, focused round a 'code of practice'.
- Full support for all workers resisting the document.
- Build a fighting democratic organisation in BL. Abolish the LCJNC and replace it with a committee of stewards elected from each plant and accountable to the rank and file.
- Defence of jobs and living standards. Fight for the nationalisation without compensation of the whole car and components industry, and its restructuring under workers' control, to safeguard livelihoods — not for capitalist 'viability'.



Motions on nuclear weapons form one of the largest sections on the agenda of the Welsh Labour Party conference, in Swansea on May 16th. MARTIN BARCLAY reports on the founding of the Wales Anti-Nuclear Alliance.

"IF nuclear power stations are so clean, why build them away from large urban centres — why not build them in Battersea, Whitehall, or the gardens of Buckingham Palace?" asked Alan Rogers, Euro-MP for

Anti-nuclear campaign launched in Wales

South East Wales.

Over 200 activists attended a rally in Cardiff on the 21st April to launch the Wales Anti-Nuclear Alliance. We heard speeches from MPs and from local and national anti-nuclear campaigners which shattered most of the myths peddled by the Government, the CEBG and the supporters of the nuclear power programme.

Nukes would not provide jobs in the unemployment blackspots in North Wales. This high technology industry actually replaces workers; even in the labour-intensive building stage, site-workers are usually brought in from outside the locality. Enrys Roberts (Vice President Plaid Cymru) quoted from government documents which saw the nuclear programme as a weapon against the industrial muscle of the miners and the electricity workers.

The argument that nuclear energy is needed to 'bridge the energy gap' was attacked by Alan Rogers. A campaign to eliminate some of the more wasteful exercises of capitalism could alone fill the gap.

In capitalist terms, there is no profit in energy saving while Third World resources can be exploited so cheaply. Rogers advocated the kind of mass campaign by demonstrations and civil disobedience that we have seen in Europe in opposition to nuclear power.

The speakers were very effective at destroying most of the commonplace illusions

about nukes, but they were preaching to the converted for the most part. And, underlying all the contributions was a sentiment best summed up by Jonathan Porritt, the chairperson of the Ecology Party. Praising the "passionate appeals for civilisation" from previous speakers, he wanted to "put an end to nuclear power once and for all" because there is "no such thing as the peaceful use of the atom."

He ridiculed attempts to distinguish between different types of nuclear technology, and claimed that whatever form it took, the use of nuclear power was a "symptom of collective insanity"

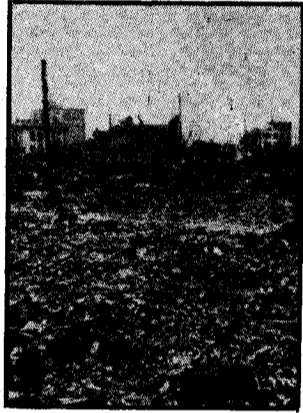
power; the restoration of full union and civil rights, including the right to strike, to workers in the industry; workers' inquiries into the safety of nuclear developments; and complete opposition to nuclear weapons.

Unfortunately, it rapidly became clear that there was to be no debate around the policies and the structure of WANA. Instead, the conference became a rally with no questions or contributions allowed from the floor. The only motion on the agenda — no-one explained who had written it or where it had come from — expressed rather mild opposition to the building of nuclear power stations in Wales and the dumping of nuclear waste in Mid-Wales. There were no amendments allowed to this.

The structure of the campaign will apparently be decided at a meeting of delegates from interested bodies to be held at the end of May in Llanwrtyd Wells. The venue could not have been less accessible for activists in urban South Wales.

As socialists, we need to put the anti-nuclear campaign on a class basis and to take the struggle against present-day nuclear technology into the labour movement.

It seems that WANA will not have the policy or structure to do either, and that part of our fight will be for an open and accountable anti-nuclear campaign in Wales.



What nuclear weapons can do: Hiroshima

These ideas were criticised in a leaflet distributed by Socialist Organiser supporters. Instead of saying 'no nukes', it argued for a moratorium on the use and development of nuclear

MARTIN BARCLAY

Notts teachers take on hard-faced Tories

LAST WEEK 25 schools, and this week 31 schools were on strike in Nottinghamshire, in the battle to get Eileen Crosbie's job back. Ms. Crosbie was sacked for refusing to teach an oversize class.

The National Union of Teachers took action by calling on other teachers to refuse oversize classes too, but those who took up the call were promptly suspended, and the national NUT action committee has now gone back to the policy of rolling strikes.

Local NUT members want more decisive action. Both South and Central Notts NUT Association meetings have voted for indefinite strike action in those schools which have already got a 2/3 majority in favour of a strike. Nottingham city association voted for "an escalation of action".

It is obvious that Nottinghamshire — a hardline Tory council — are prepared to ride out any half-hearted action, especially as it enables them to save money with little adverse publicity.

But the National Action Committee still link milk-and-water action with "breathing space" to "allow the authority time to reconsider", simply because the authority says it "will not negotiate under duress".

At the last South Notts meeting, attended by 250 members, it was decided to have another meeting to monitor the situation and to call on the NAS/UWT (the second biggest teachers' union who have refused to back any of the NUT actions) to change their policy and give active support.

Even with the present weak tactics, it should be possible to escalate the struggle consid-

erably.

Instead of having the striking schools spread round the county, it would be much more effective to concentrate on schools within the Nottingham area.

And the membership should be kept active with lobbies of County Hall, petitions and leafletting.

But we really need indefinite strike action to take on this Tory council which won't be budged by anything less.

IVAN WELS

May 14 march backs Kleins strike

AS THE STRIKE at Klein Bros Salford enters its 10th week the workers are more determined than ever to win the strike.

Last Thursday a mass picket jeered and pushed scabs who went in. Mass pickets have been mounted every Friday for the last month supported by night-shift workers from Gardiners in Patricroft. Management have retaliated by shipping the scabs in at 7.00am rather than the normal 8.30.

Mass pickets are now being called on a guerilla basis to break the morale of Klein's and their devoted scabs while official blacking of Klein's retail outlets by USDAW is starting to bite.

Salford Trades Council has called its May 14th march to start outside Klein's — this will be a golden opportunity to bring this strike to the attention of the movement. It is essential that we break the back of these arrogant little tyrants and win union recognition.

We must:

- Ensure Kleins and their 'Bendyk' label are blacked;
- Send financial support c/o National Union of Tailors and

Garment Workers, 409 Wilmslow Road, Manchester 20; (c) Build the mass pickets — ring NUTGW on 061-226 6212 for details.

Newsline's new slander campaign

NEWSLINE, the daily paper of the Workers' Revolutionary Party, has been running a series of articles to 'prove' that the Workers' Socialist League — whose leading members were expelled from the WRP in 1974 — is not an organisation of serious revolutionaries but a nest of spies and provocateurs.

Its 'proof' is a letter from a police academy asking Thornett to take part in a seminar on 'conflict in society'. Thornett did not take part in the seminar. The WSL maintains a hostile attitude to the police and knows the police as an enemy of the working class. Invitations for such events to prominent 'reds' are commonplace.

So much for 'proof'.

But where did the WRP get the letter, reproduced in facsimile in the Newsline. It was part of a massive haul of documents burgled from Thornett's house in Oxford in December 1977! Well known for gangsterism, thuggery and shady financial dealings as the WRP leaders are, the fact that they have the letter indicates that they were the people who rifled Thornett's filing cabinet.

But ah! says the Newsline — the WSL say we stole the documents to set us up for a police raid, which is further proof that they are provocateurs!

In fact the real provocateurs and would-be disrupters are the leaders of the ex-Trotskyist and ex working-class WRP, who pursue their paranoid and lying vendettas against people who — unlike the WRP — continue to fight the class struggle against the Tories' offensive and against Gauleit-

er Edwardes of BL.

Thornett and his comrades got out of the WRP just in time to remain revolutionaries and militants, while the WRP accelerated its long-time political degeneration to the point where it is now widely believed on the left to subsist on donations of oil money from reactionary Arab regimes. In return for that money, it crawls on its belly to the politics of petty-bourgeois Arab nationalism and to Islam, and supports viciously anti working class regimes such as Iraq's.

In their hearts, Gerry Healy and Michael Banda of the WRP must have some inkling of what they have become. Which is why they snarl and slander and lie and try to poison the atmosphere against revolutionaries like Thornett and his comrades

Did Thatcher declare war?

A NUMBER OF Labour Party ward branches in Basingstoke are calling on the Constituency Party to hold a special public meeting to discuss the war threat posed by Carter's Iranian fiasco and Britain's sabre-rattling support for it.

The urgency has been underlined by a letter received on Saturday 10th by the Constituency Party Secretary who has circulated it to all General Management Committee delegates.

Tom Grant, secretary of Sandown and Shanklin Labour Party, writes: "On Wednesday 23rd January Mrs. Thatcher was alleged to have called a nuclear alert, thus putting this country on a war-footing with the Soviet Union. The report appeared in the Scotsman of 28th January, and the editor has subsequently confirmed it as having come from an authoritative source.

My MP Stephen Ross, Liberal spokesman on Defence, knew nothing of this, and enquiries have produced a

denial from Francis Pym. I am disturbed that we can be put in jeopardy this way and I am hoping to get a debate in the Labour Party branches to discuss this vital issue."

The letter goes on to say how foreign policy is determined by a small group in the Cabinet and their civil servants, surrounded by tight secrecy.

Coshes? We always use them, say SPG

ACCORDING to Inspector Douglas Hopkins, head of unit no.3 of the SPG, it is normal practice for policemen to keep and use unauthorised weapons, like the 25 found in the lockers of the two SPG units active in Southall on April 23 last year.

Hopkins said that he kept his grandfather's home-made truncheon in his locker as a 'memento', but he still used this 'memento' when 'fighting crime' in the East End.

The official truncheon, he said, is too flimsy. In future, he said, heavier weapons will 'probably' be given out officially.

But, said Hopkins, there was no question of these heavy weapons being used in Southall. Too many TV cameras and press around, he said with bold cynicism.

There is no reason why Hopkins should be believed on this, any more than the police evidence in the trials of the 342 people arrested in Southall was to be believed.

A pathologist also came up with the fact that Blair Peach's skull was 1/16th inch thinner than the pathologist would have expected for a man of his age. Even so, the pathologist added that if Peach's skull had been thicker, that would not have prevented the fracture, just made the injury not so extensive. Anyone who re-

ceived the same kind of blow could still have been killed.

The inquest still has a few more weeks to go, but from the self-satisfied smirks of the police emerging from the court, they obviously think that the due process of law will proceed in the same manner as it did during the trials of the 342 arrested. We in the labour movement have to make sure it does not. Blair Peach was killed by a policeman, and that policeman is a murderer and should be dealt with as such. The men who organised and trained that murderer, and sent him on the streets, should also be dealt with.

No racist slogans in our school!

DAVID, a 15 year old school-boy at St. Pauls Way Comprehensive, East London, last week told Workers' Action, how they deal with racists in his school.

There have been racist slogans daubed on the walls in the toilets and the anti-racists have not been able to cop the racists. But last week they did.

"About five of us walked into the toilets and caught a 16-year old racist writing 'Wogs out' on the wall. He turned round when he heard our footsteps and he went very pale at the sight of us.

"We made him wipe his racist slogan off the wall and then we poked him up and threw him head first into the pig swill bin.

"He got out covered in all this smelly waste and went to the headmaster and asked for a transfer. When we told the headmaster what he had done, he gave him his transfer and said it served him right.

"We hope that the next school he goes to does the same.

"We plan to do the same to anyone else we catch writing racist slogans in our school."

WORKERS' ACTION

Labour and trade unions: linking the left

THE NEED to link the struggles against the right wing in the trade unions and in the Labour Party will be the theme of the *Socialist Organiser* trade union conference on May 24th.

The conference organisers told *Workers' Action* that they are beginning to get a good response.

Peter C. Smith (Wanstead and Woodford CLP and UPW) writes in a letter to *Socialist Organiser*:

"May I plead with all Socialist Organiser supporters and readers to ensure that 'Democracy in the Labour Party' occupies a high place in the agenda of high place, not only on the agenda of the Conference, but also on the agenda of as many Trade Union conferences, branch meetings,

executive meetings... shop stewards combine committees and as many Labour Party meetings as possible between now and October's Labour Party Annual Conference?"

"Many comrades will remember the attacks on 'Tribune' in the 1950's, which, if the tide turns, could easily be repeated, and on a more extensive basis too."

Jonathan Hammond, a member of the National Executive Committee of the NUJ, has spoken to *Socialist Organiser*, stressing the need for trade unionists and the left of the Labour Party to get together and formulate a joint struggle to strengthen Labour Party/Trade union links and to extend democracy in the movement."

All socialist trade unionists, especially Labour Party members, are welcome.

The agenda includes:

- The Labour Party and the trade unions. The block vote.

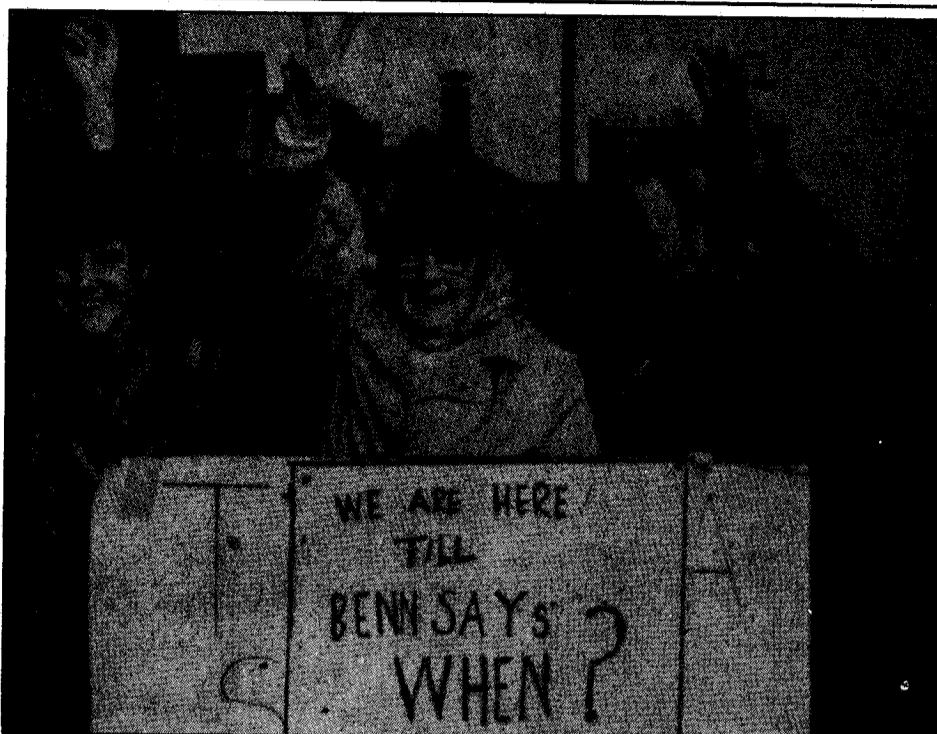
- Labour Party workplace branches.

- A campaign for the affiliation of trade unions to the Labour Party.

- Fighting the Tories — organising in the workplace against the Tories' Employment Bill, the cuts and other attacks.

Venue: Caxton House, St. John's Way, London N19.

Date: Saturday 24th May, 11am-5pm. Registration fee: £1. Further details and background material from J. Bloxham, 5 Stamford Hill, London N16.



Imperial Typewriters, Hull. But instead of waiting for Labour leaders to act for us, workers should fight for control over those leaders

Union right-wingers move against Labour democracy

THE LABOUR PARTY "is elitist... with a massive structure of committees, sub-committees, study groups producing endless amounts of paper and statements", says the AUEW in its submission to the Party's Commission of Inquiry.

So what do Messrs Boyd and Duffy propose to end this elitism and bureaucratic panoply? Do they support mandatory reselection? No. Do they think the Party leader should be chosen by Conference, the highest body in any democratic organisation? No.

Do they think that that breed apart, the real Party elite, the MPs, should have their wings clipped by being made accountable to their constituency parties or the National Executive Committee? Not at all — indeed, quite the contrary.

Their proposals fall into two groups: what they propose for the Party and what they propose for their own union.

For their own union they propose abolishing branch voting for the delegation to the Labour Party's Annual Conference. Instead

they want to have a postal ballot: that way there will be no discussion, no branch life and the least active will be the voting fodder of the right wing.

They also propose eliminating the power of the delegation to interpret union policy — the union's executive will take on that power. And so they reckon to guarantee that the AUEW's votes will be cast solidly against democratic reforms

at 1980 Labour conference. Most dramatic of all, they propose that the AUEW, long the most democratic union with elections for all posts, will be run by 200 full-time branch officers (instead of branch secretaries) who will be appointed by the executive!

And what do the autocrats of the AUEW propose to end "elitism" and bureaucracy in the Labour Party?



Do Boyd and Duffy hope that their 'services rendered' will earn them lordships like Scanlon? (from *Engineers Charter*)

They want to cut down the women's section of the National Executive Committee (presently 5 seats) to 2, thus giving less voice to the most underrepresented section of the party and a doubly oppressed section of the working class.

They want to give the Parliamentary Labour Party — an institution that ought to be abolished as a 'party within the party', and not encouraged — 15 representatives. And within the constituency section (which they propose to enlarge and restructure) they want to give two seats to representatives elected by the Local Government Conference (the councillors).

Within this context the expansion of the constituency section and its restriction to lay representatives is nothing but a sop. It would indeed be good to enlarge the section, certainly to guarantee that lay representatives are elected, but with the rest of the NEC so stacked towards the Right, such representatives would be prisoners of the rest of the NEC.

In any case, the AUEW

proposals seek to introduce an extremely dangerous proposal into the election of these representatives. The lay representatives — 11 in number, they propose — will be chosen from the regions, not by Conference. But this contradicts the whole point of the NEC.

The Party after all is federal, but the NEC isn't. The federal Party comes together at conference to elect one leading committee which will, in the period up to the following conference, see to it that the party operates in line with policy as laid down by the delegates.

If the NEC members in the constituency section come from the regions, then they will be there as representatives of the regions and not be accountable to the Party as a whole. Thus the sole apparently democratic proposal in fact conceals an attempt to evade the NEC's collective responsibility to Annual Conference.

At the constituency level itself, the AUEW has more changes to propose. Union branches that are

affiliated — and they are in favour of local and not national affiliation — will receive delegates to a constituency council in the same proportion as the wards. This council would meet "at least twice a year" and elect a GMC to conduct party business. The council would select candidates.

Such a proposal would exclude many wards from being on the GMC — a sure path to making them defunct — and effectively release the GMC from accountability.

There is, not surprisingly, no progressive idea in the entire document. It is part of Callaghan's attempt to wipe out the gains by the Left at last year's conference where the AUEW's vote was decisive in determining the outcome.

The only thing that is interesting in it is the way its tone and language reflect the fact that the AUEW leaders know how popular the drive towards greater Labour Party democracy is. With democrats like these, though, who needs dictators.

ALEXIS CARRAS

Defend the gains of Brighton

With the AUEW swinging decisively against the democratic reforms in the Labour Party, and other unions like the GMWU and APEX also campaigning hard for proposals to neutralise last year's reforms, the left has to organise urgently for a fight-back. Otherwise we could find ourselves after this year's conference not only having lost last year's gains, but on the run from a victorious witch-hunting right wing.

Among the various right-wing proposals, for example, are plans to restructure the National Executive so that it would have a solid right-wing

majority.

So the Socialist Campaign for Labour Victory and Socialist Organiser have taken the initiative for a 'Defend the Gains of Brighton' campaign. The SCLV secretariat decided this on May 4, and the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy and the Labour Coordinating Committee are now considering proposals for a joint campaign.

The SCLV also aims to rally activity in the unions on this issue of the right of the labour movement to control the leadership, the MPs, and the policy of the Labour Party.

NGA: one victory won, more battles to come

DESPITE THE hard talk and lock-out tactics of the newspaper bosses, they have been forced to make concessions to the NGA printworkers' claim for £80 for a 37½ hour week. The £80 minimum earnings is to be paid from Monday May 12th, and the reduction to 37½ hours is to

be achieved by next year.

Joe Wade, the NGA's general secretary, said after the settlement, "This is a victory for common sense".

But 'common sense' has little to do with it. It was a victory for the printworkers against the newspaper bosses, an assertion of the work-

ers' power against the bosses.

This is important in view of the battle yet to come over the introduction of new technology in the print industry. If the print workers are to benefit from the new equipment, then jobs must not be lost, so the question of a

further reduction in hours with no loss of pay will come up again.

That is the printworkers' next fight. The £80 wage victory must be regarded as a statement of intent for the fight yet to come on new technology.

JO THWAITES

Activists' Diary

OPPOSING THE WAR DRIVE see page 5

WOMEN'S FIGHTBACK CONFERENCE see page 6

SOCIALIST ORGANISER TRADE UNIONISTS' CONFERENCE

see above

BLACK FREEDOM MARCH

The Black Freedom March due to take place in June/July has been cancelled.

LUTTE OUVRIERE FETE

Each year the fete organised by the French revolution organisation Lutte Ouvrière, at Mériel; near Paris, attracts thousands of people. Dozens of socialist groups from many countries will have stalls there.

Several WA supporters will be going over for this year's fete, on May 24-25-26, and running a stall. If you want to go, contact Simon Temple, c/o WA, PO Box 135, London N1 0DD.

EVENTS

WEDNESDAY 21 MAY. Women's picket at Chix, Farnham Road, Slough Trading Estate. From 6.30am.

WEDNESDAY 21 MAY. Edinburgh Socialist Organiser meeting: The way forward after May 14. Speakers: Ron Brown MP and Jimmy Burnet (Lothian Regional Councillor). 7.30pm at the Trade Union Centre, Picardy Place.

WEDNESDAY 28 MAY. London Workers' Action meeting: Fight for a workers' government. Speakers: John O'

Mahony, Jo Thwaites. 7.30pm at the Hemingford Arms, Hemingford Rd/Offord Rd, London N1.

SATURDAY 31 MAY. South-ern Africa after Zimbabwe: national action conference called by the AAM. 10.15-4.45 at the Logan Hall, Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way, London WC1.

Published by Workers' Action, PO Box 135, London N1 0DD, and printed by Anvil Press (TU).