

# A Socialist ACTION

## March against apartheid 2 November

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# BELFAST COMES



# TO TOTTENHAM

LAST SUNDAY night's events in Tottenham, portrayed as a 'riot' by the press, were in fact the most brutal and most sustained single attack ever launched against black people by the police in Britain.

Events began with a barbaric police raid on a black home. It left a black woman, Mrs Jarrett, dead after police had entered her house with a stolen key. Subsequently police prevented Tottenham's black community from protesting against her death, by laying siege to the Broadwater Farm Estate where black people had gathered in the youth club prior to marching to the police station.

The culmination of all this was a Belfast-style operation: riot police, armed with plastic bullets, paraded through the streets of Tottenham. It was the same type of violent assault, but worse, as that carried out on the mining communities during the strike last year. The truth of that assault was brought into the light of day by, for example, the exposure of police

methods and lies at the Orgreave trials.

Police in Britain now — openly and publicly — go well beyond their habitual and long standing racism: beating up and harassing black people is routine, so is turning a blind eye to racist attacks on black people, their homes and their families. Now, not content with ignoring the fact that racists regularly kill and maim black people, the police themselves — within the short space of one week alone — are responsible for the fact that one black woman is paralysed and another dead.

As Bernie Grant, leader of Haringey council, bluntly put it: 'The police were to blame for what happened on Sunday.' Black people are left with only two choices: accept the racism and brutality of the police, acting as an agent of the state, or fight back. When they do fight back against gross brutality and racism it is declared a 'riot', a 'criminal act' by the media, the police, and the ruling class.

The Labour party leadership's support for the police and condemna-

tion of youth who participated in that fightback on Sunday is disgraceful. It is the same type of 'condemnation' Kinnock made of the miners 'violence' during their historic strike.

The miners were fighting for their jobs and their communities. Black people are fighting because they have no jobs and to protect their communities. Both have been subject to vicious attacks from the police for so doing. The responsibility lies wholly and completely with Thatcher and the police, no one else. That truth should be proclaimed by the labour movement.

The job of the Labour Party, and of the labour movement as a whole, is to defend the miners and defend the black people of Tottenham, Brixton and Handsworth. All socialists should completely support the actions of Haringey council leader Bernie Grant, in seeking to stop the council paying the police precept until there is a full enquiry into Mrs Jarrett's death, until the police officers involved are suspended, and until a commitment is made that no CS gas or plastic

bullets will be used against the inhabitants of Haringey.

As Bernie Grant said:

'We must not let them divide us when the press come up with their rubbish. There is no way I will condemn the action of the youth on Sunday night.'

'We have to start a campaign today. We have to get people to support us — the trade unionists, the political people and the community. They have to show solidarity with the black and white youth of Tottenham.'

'These youth are in the vanguard of the struggle. They are the people who are daily harassed by the police.'

'The police are not interested in peaceful coexistence. They are only interested in war. That's why they want plastic bullets. Police chief Newman was trained in Northern Ireland. People warned that he wanted to bring Northern Ireland to Britain.'

'The council will give full support to the youth. We are acting as agents of the police by collecting the (police) precept. We have been asked to stop paying the precept.'



# Socialist ACTION

## The Tory conference and Kinnock

THE 1985 Tory party conference is undoubtedly the worst for Thatcher since she came to office. It is not simply the immediately hostile press reaction — with the *Economist* declaring that Thatcher had become a liability for the Conservative Party. It is that in a very profound sense the events leading to the conference showed the great dangers to the ruling class now represented by Thatcher's particular political tactics.

There should be no underestimating what the rebellions in Handsworth, Brixton, Toxteth and Tottenham mean. Taken with what happened in some of the mining villages during the strike these are the most serious 'civil disturbances', to use the official term, since World War II. In their potential, they are far more serious than anything seen in the 1930s.

For in the inter-war period not merely, was the social dislocation less severe in the 1930s but the Tory party stood at the peak of its historical popularity. It is often forgotten that during the depression years of the 1930s the Tories gained the highest level of support ever received by any party under a universal franchise.

Today Thatcher stands at the opposite extreme. She was re-elected prime minister in 1983 with the lowest percentage of the vote ever received by a government with a safe majority in parliament. The Tory Party's direct social base today is far too weak to sustain the type of assault being thrown against it by events like the miners' strike, the struggle with the local councils, or the inner city riots. Today, more than ever, the ruling class is almost completely reliant on the SDP-Liberal Alliance and the Labour leadership to back up Thatcher — although the capitalist class is naturally quite certain that they will.

What is happening in British politics is easy to see. The 'edges' of Thatcher's Britain, the areas of worst deprivation and deepest oppression, are exploding.

Within the British state there has now been a 16 year armed struggle for national independence in the North of Ireland. The miners' strike was the greatest trade union struggle in British history based on the historic vanguard of the British working class. The revolt of black youth in the inner cities is something never seen before this decade in Britain. Thatcher's entire aim is to isolate that revolt, and crush it with repression, before it spreads any further into society. That explains the ferocity of her police action — and her merciless attack on any wavering by Kinnock or any section of the Alliance.

But another crucial aspect is that this revolt is not bypassing the labour movement but having but having a colossal impact within it. Despite Kinnock swinging the party as a whole to the right, what also stood out at this year's Labour Party conference was that the key forces of the left — the miners, the black section, the Campaign Group of MPs and their supporters — did not back off. On the contrary they stood their ground and fought. A tremendous polarisation developed within an overall swing to the right.

That is why Kinnock had to launch such a ferocious attack on the left at the conference. Because the ruling class demands that this left, a left that actually fights, be utterly crushed. Because it is precisely a transmission within the labour movement of the social revolt — one that threatens the stability of a labour movement on whose leadership Thatcher is totally dependent for the ability to carry through her policies.

The disarray at the Tory Party conference, the polarisation of right and left at Bournemouth, the miners and the riots, are not isolated developments from each other. They are the emerging pattern of British politics.

# Labour must defend b

## The siege of Broadwater Farm

ON THE NIGHT of Sunday 6 October 500 riot police placed Tottenham's Broadwater Farm estate under siege. Having caused the death of Cynthia Jarrett after breaking into her home in nearby Thorpe Road, they were determined to stop Tottenham's youth, who had been meeting on the estate with community leaders to discuss their response, taking their protest to the streets of Tottenham. The result was the most serious civil conflict this century. Police and media reaction has been unequivocal: they want to crush black people, and youth with gas and bullets. The whole labour movement must defend the black communities against this racist outrage. Socialist Action looks at the escalating spiral of racism, deprivation and repression which led to the siege of Broadwater Farm, the latest but not the last of the inner-city revolts produced by Thatcher's Britain.

**BROADWATER Farm** Estate was heralded when it was built in the late seventies as an architectural dream. Today it is a nightmare. Three quarters of its 2,200 residents are dependent on state benefits of one form or another. Unemployment, which averages 25 per cent in the Tottenham area, rose by 19 per cent in the immediate area of the estate last year alone. 60 per cent of the youth, in an estate where half the families are single parent, is unemployed.

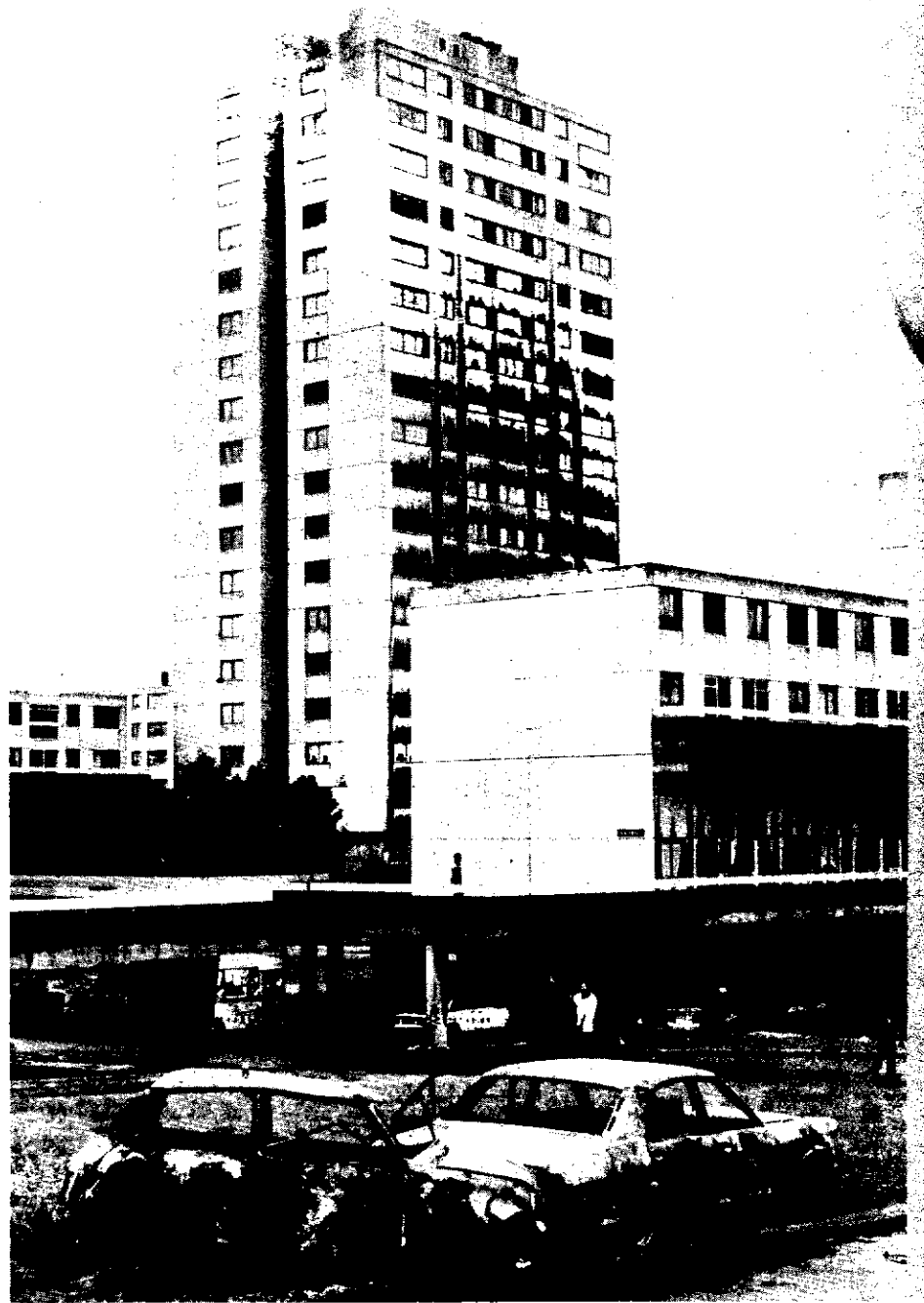
Today, as councillor Steve Banerji explained, it is under martial law. Eight coaches, holding four hundred police, are parked in the estate's main approach road. Squads of ten and twenty march in and out of the estate, or stand guard at the stairways to its complex network of walkways like an army of occupation.

On Monday night the police turned it into a battlefield. They sealed off the estate when youth, meeting to organise protest at the killing of Cynthia Jarrett, ended their debate to march on Tottenham police station. 500 police in riot gear, with CS gas and plastic bullets standing by, placed it under siege.

But for Broadwater Farm, half of whose

residents are black, a battle for survival has been in progress for far longer than the last few days. Before the uprising the council estimates that £1.75m was needed for maintenance and the correction of defects. It has just over a third of this to spend on housing in the whole of Tottenham. Even with these limited resources, it managed, working jointly with the estate's Youth Association, to set up three community co-ops with two more in the pipeline, and the many community affairs projects on the estate include a children's play centre and playground, a nursery and an after-school club. In addition the Youth Association, which opened its new club earlier this year, has become the focus for youth whose hopes of a future have been destroyed by six years of Thatcherism.

The estate's black people and above all its youth have been singled out in the last few weeks for unashamed and unceasing police harassment. The racist nature of their behaviour is blatant. As Bernie Grant explained, 'On Broadwater Farm estate in the last few weeks we have had police stopping black occupants of cars and allowing whites to go through. Last night, during the situation, police



stopped black people leaving the estate and allowing white people to leave. That is racism.'

Sunday night's revolt was only the most recent

episode in a fifteen-year battle, against deprivation, against racism, against the combined effects of Thatcher's rule.

But the youth of Tot-

ttenham are not alone. In Handsworth, in Brixton, in Toxteth, the same conditions exist and the same response is the inevitable result.

## Tottenham's black people speak out

On Tuesday afternoon after the uprising, Tottenham black youth and their leaders held an open rally outside Tottenham town hall to explain their side of the story of Sunday's siege.

Around 200 young people from the estate with supporters from the area heard speakers call for an independent enquiry and a campaign of solidarity with their fight against police harassment and for justice.

We print selections from these speeches.

**Martha Osamor, a leader of the Broadwater Farm Youth Association**

What has happened to one black person, to one black family, is an attack on us all. We have to look at what is happening to all black people here, in South Africa and all over the world.

When they knock one of

us down, they knock all black people. That's why we don't get sidetracked by discussion on Mrs Jarrett's health condition. It's about time we come out on the streets and not hide our voices in church halls and town halls. We will have our meetings in the streets to show that we have nothing to hide.

They say black people can't think for themselves, that the problem is outside agitators. But we can think and we are going to organise for ourselves. You touch one and you touch all and we are going to unite to defend ourselves.

**Bernie Grant, Leader, Haringey council**

We must not let them divide us when the press come up with their rubbish. There is no way I will condemn the action of the youth on Sunday night.

We have to start a campaign today. We have to get people to support us — the trade unionists and the political people and the community. They have to



Bernie Grant

show solidarity with the black and white youth of Tottenham.

These youth are in the vanguard of the struggle.

They are the people who are daily harassed by the police.

The police are not interested in peaceful coexistence. They are only in-

terested in war. That's why the want plastic bullets. Police chief Newman was trained in Northern Ireland. People warned that he wanted to bring Northern Ireland to Britain.

The council will give full support to the youth. We are acting as agents of the police by collecting the (police) precept. We have been asked to stop paying the precept.

**Woolly Vance, secretary, Haringey independent police committee**

Cynthia Jarrett was killed by the police force, by the same police force that has been active against our people in England since we've been here.

When the police argue this was a natural death, we all know this is rubbish. It followed the police breaking into her house with a key that was not theirs.

The blame rests with the police and that's why we're here today. We want a full enquiry. We must have justice and retribution.

Cynthia Jarrett is not the only person to die from

# ack youth

**What really happened to Cynthia Jarrett? The following statement was issued after the uprising by the Broadwater Farm Youth Association, the Haringey Black Women's Association, and the Haringey Independent Police Committee.**

**ON SATURDAY 5 October 1985 Floyd Jarrett was stopped in Tottenham High Road because of an alleged motoring offence. It was claimed by the police that his tax disc had expired.**

He gave a false name, which resulted in the police using their national computer to check the given information, which they found to be incorrect. At about 1.25pm he was taken to Tottenham police station.

Later that day the police went to his mother's address, on suspicion of stolen goods being in the house, despite the fact that he gave his correct home address in Enfield.

The police gained entry by using Floyd's key which had been confiscated at the police station.

At the commencement of the search the police claimed that they had a search warrant. However, this was not produced at the time of entry nor during the search to the family.

The family of Mrs Jarrett have stated that four uniformed officers and one plain clothed detective searched the house. Whilst searching the house, the family witnessed detective constable Randall's forceful pushing of their mother. She fell to the ground gasping for breath. However, the detective

constable jumped over the mother and still continued with his search, ignoring the family's plea for help.

Consequently the youngest son ran across the road to a public phone box to ring for an ambulance. It took 45 minutes for the ambulance to come. The police officers could have used their radio to radio for an ambulance. She was taken to North Middlesex Hospital and found to be dead on arrival.

An emergency meeting was subsequently held by members of the black community, Haringey Council representatives, and various sympathetic organisations and individuals. There was a unanimous condemnation of the police action against Mrs Jarrett and her family and the constant harassment of the black community of Haringey. A resolution was passed which stipulated the demands of the meeting. The resolution said:

1. Council responsibility: to respond to the need of the black community as ratepayers. We expect to be protected and not attacked and killed by the police.
2. We demand from Haringey Borough Council:
  - a) Call emergency meeting to demonstrate the gravity of the situation.
  - b) Project the view of the family, as this view reflects the experiences of the black community as a whole.
  - c) That the council withdraw all funding from 'Y' division until the demand of the council and the black community are met.
  - d) A full and independent investigation in to D.C. Randall and his actions within the black community.
  - e) We demand an end to the police harassment and brutality of young people and the black community as a whole.

This incident is merely part of the continuing story of police harassment, stop and search, targeting and unjustifiable arrest suffered by the youths of Broadwater Farm. In 1982, an innocent youth on Broadwater Farm was accused of breaking into the tenants social club, resulting in a number of youths being beaten and arrested. Since then Haringey Independent Police Committee has monitored complaints against the police, which is on the increase. The criminalisation of the youth must stop. The police must respect us and give us equal rights. They can not now start killing our mothers!!!!

Now in October 1985, the police who have become militaristic, have again occupied Broadwater Farm, due to the uprising which took place because of Mrs Jarrett's death, and ongoing harassments. The police have made the estate a no go area. We the black community demand the withdrawal of the police from the estate.

For information, messages of solidarity, etc. contact: Broadwater Farm Youth Association: (01-) 808 1667; Haringey Independent Police Committee: (01-) 808 2837.

## Brixton defence campaign established

**AT A meeting of the black community in Brixton at Lambeth Town Hall on 3 October 1985 the Groce family support and community defence campaign was established. The campaign has been set up to seek justice for Mrs Cherry Groce, support her family in their time of stress and also to ensure the defence of the community and those arrested in the aftermath of the events of the weekend.**

The meeting decided upon the following:

- That Inspector Lovelock should be arrested and charged with attempted murder
- That there be a totally independent public enquiry to look into the details of the shooting and police tactics generally and that the community itself should determine the nature and

form of such an enquiry. There was much concern about media coverage of the shooting itself and the events of the weekend. Reports on Saturday evening that Mrs Groce had died and the totally false reports of the deaths of the three young white women inevitably inflamed an already volatile situation. We believe that the media should be forced to act more responsibly; efforts are being made to raise the issues with the appropriate authorities.

### Policy

The campaign will be organising a petition demanding the arrest and charge of the officer and also the establishment of an independent public enquiry. It was resolved that the community be mobilised by way of a demonstration and march in November, the date of which will be announced. In the meantime the Groce family which includes six young children need material support.



Fund raising efforts are being organised but we take this opportunity to make a public appeal for donations to assist them at this most difficult time. Much help is

also required to organise effective defence for those arrested and charged on Saturday 28 and Sunday 29 September. Donations and contacts can

be made to The Groce family support and community defence campaign, c/o 506 Brixton Road, London SW9. Tel: 01-326 1397

## Handsworth

**THREE hundred people attended the first public meeting of the Handsworth Defence Campaign on Friday 4 October.**

Afro-Caribbean, Asian and white, they heard speakers explain the incidents leading up to the 'riots', the subsequent arrests and the task facing the defence campaign. A message of support was received from Birmingham Trade Council.

Among the proposals put to the meeting was a series of pickets of police stations. It was also announced that the campaign would not be cooperating with the police or the independent enquiry organised by Birmingham city council. The boycott of the city council enquiry is due to the announcement that witnesses giving evidence will not be immune from criminal prosecution.

Labour MPs Roy Hattersley and Jeff Rooker came under frequent attack for their public statements blaming the events on 'criminal elements'.

The annual conference of the Labour Party failed to discuss the events in Handsworth, Brixton or Toxteth. An emergency resolution, supported by four Birmingham constituencies, was not taken because of lack of time — despite a challenge from the floor of conference to this recommendation.

It argued that the uprisings were a result of unemployment, poverty, social deprivation, racism, and police brutality. It called for support for the Handsworth Defence Campaign.

The Handsworth Defence Campaign can be contacted at: 104 Heathfield Road, Handsworth, Birmingham, or by phoning 021-554 0026/2747.



## Labour Party black section on racist attacks

**THE LABOUR Party black section has issued the following statement on racist violence.**

**THE war being waged against the black community in the form of race attacks is an indication of how racist Britain is today.**

Many council estates, particularly in urban areas, are the battle grounds.

The victims are largely Asian, many old, single parents and children.

Racist graffiti has become 'acceptable' on walls, houses, buses and most public property.

The streets of our cities are no longer safe to walk on; in many cases, in the middle of the afternoon, people are subject to abuse and attack.

Home Office figures

show that Asians are 50 per cent more likely to suffer some form of insult and attack than any other group in Britain.

300 attacks were notified to the authorities this year. This is a gross under-estimation of the real figures, since most victims have little or no confidence in the authorities to act against the perpetrators.

This type of squalid behaviour has been allowed to grow precisely because with the exception of the GLC, no regional or national government has bothered to investigate or take seriously the horrors that many people face daily.

If black youth defend themselves and their communities, like the Newham 8 and Newham 7, they are the ones subjected to state brutality.

We pay tribute to the Asian and Afro-Caribbean people who have come together in solidarity to fight against fascist thugs. We repeat their slogan 'Self-defence is no offence'. Black sections call for a bold political solution to the evil of race attacks and racial harassment. We make three immediate demands:

1. Local authorities in the inner cities, spearheaded by Labour administrations, to set up special units to take complaints from the black community and collect data on race attacks. These authorities to fund black community groups working to defeat race attacks and racial harassment on the street and on housing estates.
2. When known per-

petrators live in council accommodation, they are the ones to be evicted. Local authorities must end the practice of moving the victims, often to even worse accommodation.

3. Police must respond immediately, once notified of incidents, and on apprehension of the perpetrators, must press criminal charges against them. No effort must be spared in bringing the perpetrators to justice.

4. Special police units like the drugs squad and serious crime squad, whose sole purpose is to combat race attacks must be set up in the inner cities.

5. The Labour Party must mount a national campaign and give a high priority commitment in the manifesto to implement all these demands.

Justice for the Pryces

Week of Action  
22-28 October

**TUESDAY 22 October:** picket Forest Gate police station 6.30pm-8pm

**WEDNESDAY 23 October:** picket East Ham police station 6.30pm-8pm

**THURSDAY 24 October:** Remember Eustace — picket of Plaistow police station 6.30pm-8pm; wreath laying ceremonies after the picket at Green Gate

**MONDAY 28 October:** public meeting at 24 Street North, Plaistow. Invited speakers include Handsworth Defence Campaign.

For details of these and other events in London and around the country contact (01-) 555 8151. To join the 'Justice for the Pryces' support committee write to PO Box 273, Forest Gate, London E7.

## Labour women's setback

By Carol Turner

THE DEFEAT of the Women's Action Committee resolutions at Labour Party annual conference demonstrated just what a year of contradictions it has been for women. On the one hand, they played a leading political role in the biggest class struggle for over half of century, a role acknowledged throughout the whole labour movement. On the other, what Diane Abbott correctly described as Labour women's 'extremely moderate' demands for recognition within the party were refused.

The issue raised by this is how WAC should organise to bring to bear the reality of women's major role in every major social struggle today on the fight for democratic change inside the Labour Party.

The Women Against Pit Closures movement showed in practice the most advanced alliance between the interests of women and the interests of the working class as a whole since the time of the suffragettes. Through this, a section of the labour movement began to understand the importance of supporting women's struggles. That's why the NUM supported the WAC resolutions at last year's conference and again this year. That lesson is summarised by Arthur Scargill's statement that no one is better fitted to represent the labour movement than women.

Whilst this new understanding is a tremendous achievement, party conference showed the obstacles that still exist in the fight for women's rights. The leading role they have played — and not just in the miners' strike, but in the anti-missiles movement, in anti-racism and deportation struggles, in the fight for self-determination in Northern Ireland, and in workplace disputes — has not been translated into any steps forward for women's representation in the Labour Party.

There is a lesson here for all Labour Party women, and especially for WAC, the Labour women's organisation which has done so much in the past around this fight. By failing to base its intervention on the kind of alliances built during the miners' strike, WAC became marginalised at this year's party conference. Its debate and its actions seemed abstracted from the main terrain of the struggle for left policies within the party. That — together with the massive resistance of the Labour establishment — was a contributing factor to the heavy defeat of the resolutions.

Fewer WAC resolutions were submitted this year than in the past, and WAC was unable to present a full slate for the women's section of the national executive elections. But most of all this is shown, as Bristol West delegate Maggie Peterson pointed out, in the fact that only 17 women have so far been chosen as parliamentary candidates in the 200-plus selections that have taken place in safe Labour seats.

The defeat of these resolutions, however, does not reflect a big decline in support for positive action for women. The huge support for a resolution removing MPs' 'conscience clause' on the abortion question was carried — against the recommendation of the national executive.

The contradictions in the women's debate at conference spell out the choice facing the Women's Action Committee today. On the one hand WAC can base its fight for women's representation on supporting and organising alongside those women such as WAPC, and their allies in the labour movement like Benn and Scargill.

On this basis WAC can go forward. A fight for representation for women in the Labour Party which has activists from WAPC proposing its resolutions, which campaigns alongside WAPC, which identifies with and builds the campaign for black sections could not be so easily silenced by the Kinnock leadership.

On the other hand WAC can continue to separate its fight from that of women in struggle and the left in the Labour Party. If it turns its back on these allies its only possible course is an alliance with Kinnock in the hope of concessions from above. And Kinnock's price will be straightforward: that women are incorporated at the expense of black people, the miners, and everyone else struggling for a Labour Party that defends them.

THE  
LABOUR  
PARTY

# The road to Labour victory

AT A LABOUR CND fringe meeting following Kinnock's conference statement against the Liverpool city council, TONY BENN repudiated the attack and outlined his views of where such methods of leadership would take the party. We reprint Benn's speech below.

I WANT to say a word about today's events. For those who've been worried by recent events, it's nice to know that it's all happened before.

In 1883 Keir Hardy went to the TUC congress in Dundee. Henry Broadhurst, the then general secretary of the TUC and a Liberal, passed a resolution condemning 'irresponsible people who are spreading division within our ranks'. That was Keir Hardy.

## Future

You have to have a bit of a vision of the future. After all, life isn't just about what MORI says tomorrow about our standing in the polls. We're all going to live beyond that, and we're going to live beyond the election. We have to look ahead.

There's one function that in a way controls all others. That's the analytical function: the ability to understand what is really happening. I'm not a believer in personalities of any sort of kind, so I will try to use the coolest analytical skill that I have to analyse what actually happened today.

Everyone agreed the speech made many references which won the support of delegates. But I can tell you from long experience that speeches of that kind are really planned for the climax. It was prepared for that purpose.

It was I think — and I must say this as coolly as I can — to release the anger of the public against a part of the party. It was to con-

firm what Owen has said about the Labour Party, what Thatcher says about the Labour Party, and why the riot police are now playing such a prominent political part in our society. To that extent it was inevitably a process of the discrediting of the conference.

Tomorrow we have a vote on the miners who are very comparable to the Liverpool and Lambeth councillors, although actually their sacrifices took different forms. Whereas the surcharge ahead is painful for people like John Hamilton or Ted Knight, the miners lived without money for a year. Their sacrifice was made on a weekly basis.

## Inspired

But tomorrow it's likely that there will be a victory for the miners. The movement wants to support them, and quite rightly too because they have inspired hope. But if you can discredit the conference today, then tomorrow's vote for the miners is, by definition, discredited. And if you destroy the credit of the Labour conference and its role, it's not only reflected on the leadership given by Peter, Michael and Arthur, but it's also shattering the link between the trade union movement and its political voice.

Remember that all the ballots which have taken place this year in the trade unions have been very, very important. Many people thought, and I sup-

pose I was one of them, that it was pretty chancy to ask trade unions to come out for a political voice given the hammering the party had had. But they did come back, they rediscovered their historic conclusion that Keir Hardy tried to establish in Dundee.

## Conference

If you're a trade unionist you need a political voice, you need a political party. That party is the Labour Party; its instrument of decision-making is the conference. Destroy the conference and you have actually destroyed the citadel of Labour power.

Now I say all this because I think also we heard a lot about winning. I've never met anyone who'd contemplate the thought of another Thatcher government, who wants to see or who believes that if we lost again we'd swing to the left for ever and ever. But at the same time the strategy of victory needs to be analysed carefully because if the strategy of victory is based on the discrediting of the party then the vote you're playing for is the Owen vote, the dissatisfied Conservatives, in the belief that the working class — that rump of it that *Marxism Today* still recognises exists — will have nowhere else to go but to vote for a strategy of victory which plays primarily for the Owen and Steel constituency.

## Agenda

I say this as coolly as I can because it was a very difficult and disturbing day. But I think you must understand that when you are told about victory it is a presidential victory that is contemplated. A victory without the party, without the conference, without the movement — a victory that would lead to something more like Mitterrand's France than we have historically accepted would be the broad collective victory that we try to win by putting issues on the agenda.

## Power

I hope I haven't been thought to be making a coded attack on anybody — which I'm not. I'm trying for us to understand that when we're now told that we must get power we now know much more about how that power is won and what price we have to pay for that power.

But we also know something else. If the public opinion polls had shown a huge majority for the miners and for the Liverpool councillors, then if Bob Worcester — who is the new ruler of the party — had gone to the campaign strategy committee of which I am a member (whether I will be after this conference I do not know), but had he gone and said that if you want to win you'd better back Arthur and Peter, better back John Hamilton, then of course the response today would have been different.

Now why do I raise that question of the polls? Because I don't share the optimism that other policies are safe. If you follow that course, and if it were to turn out that near polling day a majority was against the ending of our nuclear deterrent, we would be told that the price we had to pay for victory in those circumstances was to drop that too. Coupled with it would come the second argument: that if the decision is made presidentially it becomes a vote of confidence in the presidential candidate, that we should no longer press for it to be included.

## Combination

Please don't think I'm pessimistic about this. I remember the Scarborough conference — and 25 years later nuclear disarmament is the policy of the party. Denzil Davies at the Labour CND rally described the policy that Gaitskell said he would fight, fight, fight again to stop.

But you have to remember that the combination of discrediting the conference and making it a vote of confidence

is a strategy that has no limit to how far we would have to go. And therefore we have to ask ourselves what is our job now?

It's trying to protect our own people, that's what it's about. We're there simply to protect people, to advance their interests, to argue their case, to explain as best we can to them — and I hope as calmly as I can do it tonight — what are the obstacles to their own advance.

There are of course so many simple things that people want: they want a job of work, they want a home, they want health care free at the point of use, they want decent pensions, they want a lifelong education, they want dignity in their old age, and they want peace. And we have to look therefore at the situation and say how can we support this...

## Message

If we hadn't had the Liverpool argument — if we hadn't been diverted into that sewer of attacks on our own people — the message would have got across. But it hasn't, and that's a crime. It's wrong that we should turn in on ourselves in that way.



## Neil Kinnock:

'I'm telling you, you can't play politics with people's jobs, with their homes, with their essential services. They have no time for such posturing or for the generals of gesture or for the tendency tacticians. Comrades, it seems to me sometimes that some of our number have become latter-day public-school boys taking their inspiration from Kiplin: 'it matters not whether you won or lost, but how you played the game.' Those game players get isolated, hammered, blocked off. They try to blame others, workers, trades unions, some other leadership, the people for their lack of revolutionary vigour — always somebody else. And then they talk of victory.'

## The Campaign Group of Labour MPs:

The Campaign Group of Labour MPs reiterates its support for all those in struggle, whether they be democratically elected representatives of communities, individuals deprived of their rights, miners, teachers, or any other trade unionist. We find it a gratuitous insult to councillors in Liverpool, Lambeth or any other authority, to talk of them playing at politics without being interested in power. Especially as these people have done so much to improve the lives of so many people in their communities, whilst endeavouring to carry out Labour Party policy as decided by conference. We believe that the next general election will be won by uniting rather than condemning those in struggle against the current Tory government. We are confident that this week's conference will endorse these principles during the course of the week. We therefore call on the newly elected NEC of the party to campaign for these aims.



# THE LABOUR PARTY

## Labour's fighting left

**THIS YEAR'S** Labour Party conference was dominated by two processes which will remain the key to Labour Party politics between now and the general election. The first, quite obviously, is Neil Kinnock's campaign to make Labour 'fit to govern' by turning its back on the miners, on cities like Liverpool and on the black communities. Kinnock quite consciously used this conference to project himself as acceptable capitalist candidate for prime minister, as a more effective 'hammer of the left' than David Owen or David Steele.

The second process was the continuing emergence out of the miners' strike of a Labour left of a quite different type to anything seen since at least World War II. This 'fighting left' — around the NUM, the black sections and the Campaign Group of MPs — was a clear minority in the conference, but a minority which, because it is based on class struggle, was able to impose some important defeats on Kinnock.

### Disaster

Kinnock and the fighting left are the forces whose struggle will dominate the life of the Labour Party between now and the general election. They represent the basic choices facing the labour movement.

Kinnock won the plaudits of the Tory press in Bournemouth by signalling that his programme is not to reverse Thatcherism. Instead he aims to take Thatcher's chief planks as the starting point for any Labour government.

Hence the essential content of the economy debate was abandoning the objective of restoring full employment and the promise to renationalise the industries privatised by the Tories. On trade union law the aim is to retain the key elements of Thatcher's anti-union legislation. In addition Kinnock wants to be able to guarantee a deal

### Lessons

with the union to restrict pay increases.

In its fundamentals this programme is the same as that of the Liberal-SDP Alliance. Where they differ is that the Alliance, unlike Kinnock, wishes also to break the links between the unions and the Labour Party, and, ultimately, to drive through a political split in the TUC itself.

But Kinnock's project is not viable unless two conditions are fulfilled. The first is to achieve a deal with the key sections of the trade union bureaucracy on pay policy and trade union law. Kinnock has made some progress on this front but Ron Todd's impromptu defence of the NUM, in which he specifically ruled out pay restraint, showed just how far Kinnock has to go.

But Kinnock's progress is based on the fact that Ron Todd, Jimmy Knapp and Rodney Bickerstaffe don't have any alternative. They accept that Labour can only have a chance of winning the general election if it is united under the leader-

ship of Neil Kinnock.

The problem for those who accept this argument is that unity under Kinnock's leadership inexorably necessitates unity around his programme

### By Redmond O'Neill

and policies. This is why 'the new realist left' — the Labour Co-ordinating Committee, *Tribune*, Blunkett, Livingstone and so on — will not be able to maintain the position they argued at conference: support Kinnock and the miners, support Kinnock and Liverpool.

The destination of those who make support for Kinnock the touchstone was demonstrated in a cynical *Tribune* editorial dealing with Meacher's last-minute decision to vote against the NUM. *Tribune* explains that 'Michael Meacher, in particular, came under extremely unpleasant fire. Nowhere among his attackers was there any comradely recognition that, even if they thought he was wrong, he had acted courageously and from honourable motives.'

'For many others shared Michael Meacher's reservations about the NUM resolution but found the emotional pull of the strike too strong to do anything other than back whatever demands the NUM cared to make. It is in that emotional light that the wording of the miners' resolution will have to be viewed in the changed circumstances of a Labour government.'

Kinnock will find it difficult to isolate and defeat this new Labour left minority precisely because they are based on, and express, social forces engaged in class struggles that embody a fundamentally different line of advance for the labour movement than Kinnock against the Thatcher government. As the Campaign Group's response to Kinnock explained: 'We believe that the next general election will be won by uniting rather than condemning those in struggle against the current Tory government.'

*Tribune* advocates voting with the NUM in today's 'emotional light' and betraying that vote when Labour forms a government. Thus has Kinnock succeeded in winning over a section of the left.

The trajectory of this 're-aligned' or 'Kinnock left' is to the right. It is not a product of Kinnock's arguments. It reflects the impact of the miners' strike on the Labour Party, and the failure of a section of the left to organise support for that strike,

followed by the collapse of the majority of the opposition to the Tories rate-capping laws.

### Election

This Kinnock left, in particular around *Tribune* and the LCC, is now the spearhead of his efforts to build up a base of support in the constituency parties and to undermine and coopt the campaigns around local government, CND, and women's representation within the party. This means a fight not only against *Militant* but also against the Campaign Group of MPs, the Scargill leadership of the NUM and their supporters. So, for example, the *Tribune* rally at this year's Labour Party conference was used by Ken Livingstone and *Tribune's* editor, Nigel Williamson to launch a series of attacks on the Campaign Group.

This relates to the second fundamental condition for the viability of Kinnock's project: to turn the Labour Party to turn its back on the type of social explosions which Thatcher's policies have provoked in British society. On this there can be no compromise.

### Wishes

No section of the British ruling class is prepared to countenance a government which defends what Scargill did in the miners' strike, or which stands for city councils defying the law in their confrontations with central government, or which defends black youth involved in the greatest urban revolts in the twentieth century in Britain. That is why Kinnock and his spokespeople have been so vicious in their denunciations of the miners' picket lines, of Liverpool and of the youth of Handsworth,

Brixton and Tottenham.

But to win the Labour Party as a whole to turn its back on such struggles Kinnock has to isolate and defeat the fighting class-struggle left — which has acted as the voice of these struggles within the organised labour movement. That is why Kinnock concentrated his fire on Scargill, Liverpool city council, the black sections and the only section of the Parliamentary Labour Party which has supported them, the Campaign Group of MPs.

### Betray

These forces represent something quite remarkable in the British labour movement. At the 1984 Labour Party conference, the NUM came forward in defence not only of its own members but in support of black sections, in defence of gay and lesbian rights, and in support of women's demands for greater representation. At this year's conference the black section speakers took the floor in defence of the NUM, in support of the Women's Action Committee as well as in support of black sections. The Campaign Group laid the ground for the conference through an enormous number of meetings in support of the NUM (over 1,000), the publication of Private Members Bills on questions such as miners' amnesty, Ireland and racial attacks, and through giving 100 per cent support to local councils like Liverpool and Lambeth actually fighting the Tories.

### Defence

Following the Labour Party conference this course can be strengthened by pursuing the broadest possible united action with the entire labour movement on particular campaigns and at the same time hammering out the key policies and alliances necessary to build a long-term political alternative within the labour movement around the axis of building an alliance for socialism. After Kinnock's attack on the *Militant* and other socialists against witchhunts, both from local right wing forces and nationally directed attacks.

Within this framework, the tactics adopted have to correspond to the real balance of forces, not fantasy. So, for example, the proposal championed at conference by *Labour Briefing* and *Socialist Organiser* that a key task is to run for leader or deputy leader of the party in 1986 is a non-starter. Rather than strengthening the fighting left that emerged at this year's conference, such a course would allow Kinnock to destroy that new left. What is needed is not organisational gimmicks or kamikaze tactics but a political alternative to the course pursued by Kinnock.

for socialism that the miners' strike demonstrated are possible and necessary.

Kinnock is leading the Labour Party to disaster by reviving incomes policy which destroyed the last Labour government, and by attacking the areas where Labour's support is strongest — in the big cities, in the mining communities, among black people. The new fighting left which is emerging stands for expanding Labour's base by supporting those fighting the Tories, coming forward as the champion of women (including removing the obstacles to women representing the labour movement), defending lesbian and gay rights, opening up a dialogue with those fighting British rule in the Six Counties of Ireland and so on.

### Section

This is also one of the chief lessons of Liverpool. Liverpool must be defended. But the *Militant's* objection towards Liverpool's black organisations, and their reduction of all struggles to the economic, have weakened Liverpool's fight and facilitated Kinnock's attacks.

What is needed in the run-up to the next election is a break not simply with electoralism but with the past racism, sexism and British chauvinism of the Labour left — and serious tactics to achieve broad united action and clear policies. Despite Kinnock's victories steps were taken along that road by the new fighting left centred around the Campaign Group, the NUM and the black section.

## Black sections target the TGWU

AMONG the most significant developments at Labour Party conference was the role played by black sections. Not only were new forces — notably the NUR and NUPE — won to support the demand for black self-organisation, but the black section played a leading role in support of other key struggles at the conference: the miners, local government, the Womens' Action Committee and lesbian and gay rights. As a result there is now a growing force of black socialists in the Labour Party who are becoming a key component of the left leadership.

Following the conference the black sections will be taking up the defence of the youth of Handsworth, Brixton and Tottenham and taking the campaign for black sections into those unions, like the TGWU which refuse to give them support. We print here an article by BERNIE BUNSEE on the TGWU, which first appeared, in a slightly different form, in *Rank and File Briefing* at party conference.

BRITAIN'S biggest work. The TGWU has learnt nothing from local authorities and public sector unions who are at least trying to do something. Nor from unions like the NUM, NUR, NUPE and ACTT who have backed our



Black TGWU members deserve a democratic say

the black candidate, I struggle for black just happen to be black' Morris was ostentatiously paraded as their deputy secretary. And Bill, dutifully, launched an attack on black sections at his press conference. Despite its failure to consult its members, the TGWU cast its 1.25 million votes against black sections ensuring defeat for the cause.

A TGWU delegate to Nottingham East CLP, Mohammed Riasat, was recently directed to oppose black sections by a TGWU official. On questioning which TGWU conference had voted on black sections, Mohammed was unconstitutionally threatened with removal as a delegate.

He wrote to 'Brother' Bill Morris about this witchhunting. Mohammed a loyal black member of Bill's own bus section has not had a reply.

The TGWU pretends to ignore black sections while secretly working against us. It has learnt nothing from the struggle of the black membership against its own institutionalised racism over the years.

The TGWU must not only give its black members a democratic say in union affairs, but also back the struggle of black members of the Labour Party by supporting their demand for black sections.



Campaign Group appeals for solidarity with struggles.



# Defend Liverpool

**DURING THE** same week that Neil Kinnock launched his unprincipled attack on Liverpool councillors fighting to defend the city's public sector jobs and services, the *New Statesman* published an article which explained in the starkest of terms just how deprived Merseyside really is. 'The EEC has bestowed on Merseyside its classification as the most deprived region in Northern Europe,' it said.

'Only Calabria, Sardinia and Sicily come lower in the table. Tees Street in Birkenhead merits a blue plaque of its own. With not one householder working it is officially the most deprived street in Europe.'

This is the description of a city at which Labour leader Neil Kinnock decided to aim all his fire — at the very time when the eyes of everyone in this country were directed towards the party in its week of annual conference.

His speech was no mistake, no tactical error. It was deliberately designed to wall off, to illegitimise, that section of the party which is prepared to act to defend the working class against the concerted onslaught of a determined Tory government.

## Labour

In so doing, he deliberately conflated three questions. First, and infinitely the most important, the need to defend a city at the far limits of its overstretched resources against an attack designed to crush it. Second, the issue of what tactics will best build the mass support among Liverpool's population and the labour movement as a whole needed to withstand those attacks. Third — and for Kinnock the *raison d'être* of the speech — the issue of branding a section of the party and of the whole movement as outside and beyond the legitimate aspirations of Labour, as 'mindless agitators' who use the plight of Britain's poor to pursue their own political ends.

Whilst aimed at one section of the Labour Party — the *Militant* newspaper — the attack itself stretched far beyond the boundaries of that current. It encompassed the miners, black people, women, the Campaign Group of MPs: all those, in short who have proved over the last 18 months that they are ready and willing to take the action necessary to defend those in struggle against Thatcher's project.

Any discussion of the situation that exists in Liverpool today can proceed only from that understanding. It is within that context, and that context alone, that a debate about redundancy notices or alternative action can be had out, and hand out correctly. The overriding point to be grasped about the situation on Merseyside is that there is no alternative but to confront the Tory axe. Liverpool, its civic resources depleted by decades of Tory and Liberal misrule, has no fat to live on. That is why, for the last 18 months, the *Militant*-led city council has commanded genuine mass support from among its own workforce, from among Liverpool voters, and from among the labour movement as a whole.

## Struggle

Having said that, it is necessary now to understand that the tactic of issuing 31,000 redundancy notices to the council workforce is a deep error — one which opened the way for the attack made by Kinnock and his supporters, one which let them off the hook at party conference. Whatever the Council's intentions, to activists in the labour movement, the redundancy notices are seen as a means of councillors avoiding surcharge and debarment from office.

No one imagines that Liverpool council set out to do anything other than protect jobs and services. Yet their methods of attempting to so do have led to a great deal of confusion.

Opposed to the redundancy notices, the majority of council unions

have now walked out of the joint shop stewards committee. NALGO, NUT, NATFHE and NUPE have all taken a position against the issue of redundancy notices. Together with UCATT (who have taken no position on the notices), they have walked out of the JSSC. That puts over half of the council's workforce outside its joint consultative structures: 17,000 out of 29,000 workers are unrepresented now on this body. In addition both the NUT and NATFHE are proposing court action against the redundancy notices.

## Lesson

Where has Liverpool council gone so wrong? Last week's edition of *Militant* explained the council case in some detail. It said: 'But the crisis was brought to a head in September, when it became obvious that the council would run out of cash by the end of the year. The Public Works Loan Board, the body used normally by councils to acquire loans for current expenditure would not give loans to the council, unless it issues letters to its workforce announcing the fact that the money would run out, in other words, technically giving notice of redundancy.'

'There is no facility in local authority contracts to "lay off" all its employees. The legal position of the council, therefore, was such that it has to issue 90-day "redundancy letters" to all its employees. The Labour Party were prepared to do this, not in any way in an attempt to sack even one of its 30,000-odd workers, but only as a means of paying wages for a further three months. It was seen as a tactic.' (original emphasis)

## Strike

The three-page article goes on to explain the unions' indefinite strike call and its failure to win support. Then, failing to recognise the divisive nature of such a 'tactic', *Militant* tries to exonerate councillors by laying the blame

# KINNOCK AND THE FIGHTING LEFT

NEIL KINNOCK's Tuesday speech to Labour Party conference was hailed by the press and by sections of the labour movement as a victory for the party as a whole and for him as its leader. Rejoicing was due to the fact that Kinnock took the opportunity to launch a direct attack on that section of the Labour Party which is prepared to fight the Tories now.

Referring to Liverpool council, Kinnock ridiculed the attempt to defend the city's jobs and services. He used the errors of *Militant* to

proclaim that 'impossible promises' would not win elections.

'You start with implausible resolutions,' he said, 'which are then pickled into a rigid dogma, and you end with the grotesque chaos of a Labour council — a Labour council — hiring taxis to scuttle around a city handing our redundancy notices to its own workers. I'm telling you, you can play politics with people's jobs, with their homes, with their essential services.'

By rubbish of that type

Kinnock justified his move to the right. His attack was launched on the eve of the debates on the miners and on local government — the two single most important struggles taking place now against the attacks of the Thatcher government.

As Tony Benn correctly pointed out at a Labour CND fringe meeting that evening, 'the primary purpose of Kinnock's speech was to discredit the support which conference — in its overwhelming majority — was about to pledge to

at the unions' door.

This is the most dramatic, but not the first time that the city council has found itself at odds with a section of the population in whose interests it claims to act. The Sam Bond affair is another, notorious, such case.

When Bond, a *Militant* supporter with no track record or worth in Liverpool's black community, was appointed the city's race relations chief the Liverpool Black Caucus objected. Their protest was labelled 'divisive' and 'anti-working class' by *Militant*, and black caucus supporters were accused of thugery or worse.

The trouble is that *Militant* want to claim a monopoly on the ability to prosecute the class struggle — and anyone who disagrees is divisive and not acting in the interest of the working class. They fail to understand that the working class as a whole is composed of its separate component parts whose immediate interests don't necessarily coincide at any given moment of time. The only strategy which can unite the whole class in a battle against the Tory attacks — which do threaten everyone's interests — is one which takes that fact into account: one aimed at uniting in struggle trade unionists, black people, women, and so on.

By failing to recognise this, *Militant* have dug a grave for themselves and their ideas in Liverpool and beyond. The debate on local government at Labour Party conference showed exactly that. It allowed Neil Kinnock and David Blunkett to pose at the true defenders of local jobs and services and, at the same time, to duck the real issue: that of supporting those councils prepared to fight to the end against Thatcher's attacks.

Party conference voted in support of a resolution to defend local authority jobs and services — including to 'fully compensate those representatives of the labour movement who have suffered personal loss, bankruptcy, disqualification or whatever as a result of non-compliance with these laws'. By so doing, delegates showed their willingness to unite in the fight to protect local authorities from the Tory axe. It is now up to front-line councils to ensure that the methods they advocate are fully discussed and supported locally, thus able to find support within the labour movement as a whole. In that fight they will find, as have the people of Liverpool, that Kinnock is not an ally he is an obstacle. His attack on Liverpool Council was an attack on the fight against the Tories, not wrong tactics in pursuing that fight.

## Eric Heffer speaks

AT A MEETING of Labour CND on the Tuesday of conference, immediately after Neil Kinnock had launched his attack on Liverpool council, Eric Heffer, himself a Liverpool MP, responded. He said:

I WANT to say one or two words in relation to this afternoon. I think that it is important that we should understand why we feel so strongly about the situation, and why I found it necessary after listening to the leader of the party to walk off the platform.

I would like to tell you that I had absolutely no intention of doing that. I didn't know there was going to be that reference to Liverpool. I listened, as I'm sure those of you who are delegates or saw it on television also listened, with very great interest and I'm certain you would admit that the majority of the speech was one we could all agree with. In particular, when Neil spelled out once again the pledge of the party to get rid of nuclear weapons and nuclear bases, it seemed to me that at least that aspect of our party policy was safe and we were going forward with determination.

But I was absolutely horrified and stunned at the attack that he made on the Liverpool councillors. I tell you quite frankly there are some supporters of *Militant* on the Liverpool council, there are some supporters of *Militant* in the party in Liverpool and in the various constituencies. But they don't happen to be the majority of the party and they, like all the other members of the party in Liverpool, are carrying out the decisions of the party which were decided at the municipal policy conference many years ago.

Do you know what the councillors have done? They have built, as I said in the housing debate, 3,800 houses in two years. More are going ahead. Three sports centres have been built by the Liverpool city council and they have done many, many other things.

They have done that in the face of some real opposition by the government, under the penalty that the government are operating, and knowing that if they continued sooner or later they could well come into a confrontation with the government's policies.

That council was faced with the choice of either cutting the services to the people and jobs permanently being made redundant — not the whole of the city workforce as a method perhaps of putting pressure on the government within 90 days, while in the meantime definitely trying to get some money from somewhere to solve the problem and spotlighting the question. But there would have 7-8,000 workers permanently joining the ranks of the unemployed in the city.





the NUM and to those Labour councils who continued to fight. If Labour is to stand a fighting chance of winning the next general election it is precisely by sticking to the sort of policies conference upheld on local government and the miners.

It is precisely by showing that a Labour government is prepared to commit itself to a thorough-going defence of the interests of the working class and the oppressed of this society. That is why, after the 1985 annual conference, the fight is still on to commit the party to defending all those in struggle against the Tories.

That fight starts with the defence of the mineworkers union and all miners victimised as a result of their strike, and with the defence of the Liverpool council's attempt to protect the jobs and services of the city's people. CAROL TURNER reports from Bournemouth.

\* See page 4 for a report of that speech.

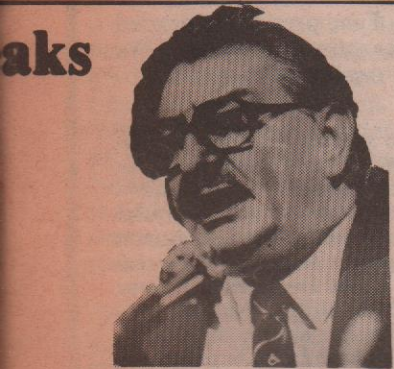
# Defend the miners

AFTER ARTHUR Scargill moved the miners resolution, conference heard Eric Hammond of the electricians, Gavin Laird of the engineers, and others come to the rostrum to denounce the mineworkers union for attempting to wreck the chances of electing a Labour government. While the big trade union guns were wheeled out to oppose the resolution, only constituency delegates were called to support it.

When the chair announced the close of the debate, he was drowned out by a relentless slow hand-

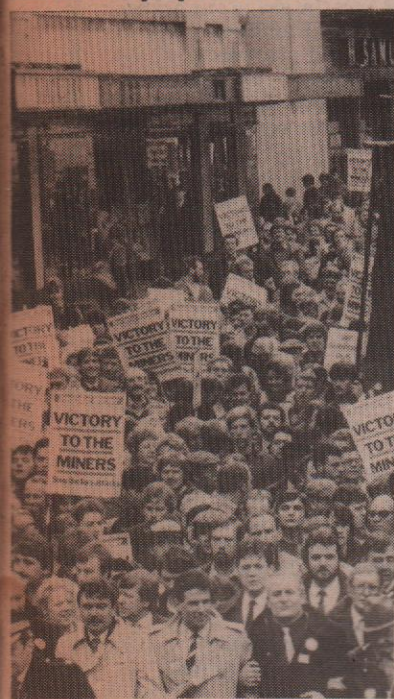
clap. Delegates demanded Ron Todd speak. When Todd came to the rostrum, the applause was deafening. 'I didn't intend to join in the debate today, but ...' he said.

Despite Neil Kinnock's speech of the precious day, the miners debate saw conference slip from the political control of the leadership. The miners resolution was carried by 3,542,000 votes to 2,912,000 — confirming the determination that still exist within the party to trenchantly defend those in struggle against the vicious Tory government.



In my constituency we have 45, 50, 60 per cent unemployment. We have areas, streets, where there are no workers working, and youngsters who for the last five or six years have never had a job.

I want to make it quite clear that walking off the platform was a spontaneous action on my part. And I want to make it clear that I do not apologise for what I did — I would do it again, I have a right to do it. We have got to tell the leader of this party that he can't treat his own supporters and his own people like that.



This is a Labour CND meeting — and this comes to the whole question of NATO and nuclear weapons — and I will recall to you what happened many years ago at the Scarborough conference. I was there when the then party leader opposed the decisions of the party and said he would fight, fight again. He split the party from top to bottom, when we were all trying desperately to show a united front. Today, years afterwards, the policy that Gaitskell said he would fight, fight again is actually the policy of the party, and it's accepted as the policy of the party.

The councillors in Liverpool — in taking the stand they are taking — are raising in their own way the whole question of the defence budget. The money that has been spent for defence cannot be spent on the houses and the services for the people of Liverpool and elsewhere.



ARTHUR Scargill, National Union Mineworkers, moving composite motion 69 — moving the motion against a background of malicious hysteria whipped up by Fleet Street and, sadly, aided and abetted by sections even within our party.

In 1985 we find ourselves embroiled in a major debate on the issue of retrospective legislation which has already won the support of this party on a previous occasion. I want to warn this conference that if in today's debate it fails to support this particular motion it will make an absolute mockery of last year's standing ovations in support of miners, the women's support groups, and the struggles of miners and their families.

## Debate

The national executive committee accept the first two parts of our resolution. They can see that there is an overwhelming case for review of all those cases of miners jailed as a result of activities during the dispute. They secondly can see that there is an overwhelming case, supported by the select committee in the House of Commons, for reinstatement of miners sacked by a vindictive National Coal Board supported by a Thatcher government determined to destroy the British coal industry.

When we met the party leadership, we were told that the real issue, indeed the only issue, was the question of retrospective legislation and the reimbursement of the funds confiscated by fines, sequestration and receivership. I find that incredible, if for no other reason than in 1982 this party conference by a majority of over 6,000,000 to 66,000 passed a resolution accepting the principle of retrospective legislation to reimburse trade unionists who were fined in this particular way. Surely

if it was right in 1982 it's more than right in 1985 after the miners have been shackled by a Tory government.

We were fined £200,000 without even having the opportunity to put our case in the High Court. We were fined £200,000 on the basis of an action which had to come before the courts for a full hearing. An interlocutory injunction was granted. That case has now been abandoned and yet our union for having the audacity, according to the media and the Tory Party, of standing by the rules and constitution of our own union found itself in contempt of court, was placed under an order of sequestration.

But more sinister for the whole movement and certainly for every trade union was an application in November 1984. Fourteen miners took the union to court and argued that there should be an appointment of a receiver and dismissal of the three trustees democratically elected by the union. We reached an agreement between the plaintiffs and the defendants, went back into court with that agreement between the two sides, when suddenly at the back of the court a barrister stood on his feet and said: 'I've no right to be here, can I have an audience?' The judge said 'I've no right to hear you, but I will, carry on' — and at the end of a two-hour submission removed three elected trustees of the NUM and appointed a receiver that has now resulted in costs of over £1 million to our union.

## Actions

Surely there is a class issue at stake here. Our union has been hijacked — and this movement ignores that fact at its peril. There's nothing peculiar or strange about introducing retrospective legislation. There's nothing peculiar or

strange about giving a commitment to the trade union movement who find themselves at the wrong end of Tory legislation, or at the wrong end of laws that are designed clearly to attack the basic democracy of unions.

Why is it that in 1985 there is even a debate about this issue? We determined the principle in 1982. Why then in 1985 can't we reaffirm that position without question?

## Strength

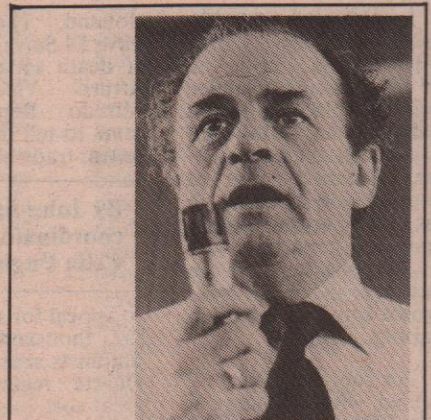
In a speech yesterday it was said that principle without power is sterile. Comrades, as a socialist all my life, I also urge that power without principle for a socialist is unthinkable. If the Tory government can introduce retrospective legislation under the 1982 Employment Act to give compensation to workers who refuse to join a union under a closed shop agreement, our union movement and our party can also give the same commitment to TUC policy and say with one loud voice that our movement is not going to stand idly by in the face of more and more attacks upon our civil rights and upon our trade union movement in this country. I have to ask conference from the bottom of my heart.

There are many reasons I can put forward in support of this resolution. I believe the fact that it is existing party policy and that this sympathy finds the issue at stake for the NUM and other unions who've been thwarted with this type of legislation should be enough.

But if you need any more convincing, I'll give you a convincing case: 11,000 miners were arrested in our dispute, 7000 of our members were injured, 11 people who died, including 4 on picket lines as they struggled to save jobs and pits and communities. Those

people suffered in that way not because they were mindless militants but because they were carrying out the policy of the TUC, carrying out the policy of the Labour Party.

I ask this party to give its commitment to them as they did to you. I move.



**Ron Todd:**  
I'VE been criticised because my union put its vote (with the NUM). People tell me 'you can't rock the boat because you'll destroy the future'. I do not believe it will impair the future of a Labour government.

I ask you, what will we do when they come and tell me they don't like my unions' policy on incomes? Will I change it? What will I do if they tell me they don't like unilateral nuclear disarmament? Will I change it? If we do we're traitors.

I take no joy in standing here and saying different to people on the platform. I want a Labour government. I want a socialist government. But I will not betray the National Union of Mineworkers.



# South Africa solidarity

## Solidarity round the world

● Swiss anti-apartheid activists are planning a large demonstration on 5 October in Zurich. This culminates a month of growing protest actions in Switzerland, where many of the multinationals most involved in the profits of apartheid have their headquarters.

On 7 September demonstrators gathered in one of the main streets in Zug, which has been dubbed 'Apartheid row' because of the close ties between South Africa multinationals based there.

The demonstration was called by the Socialist Workers' Party and backed by the anti-apartheid and South Africa boycott committees. In Zurich a fortnight later a foodstore was invaded by demonstrators who stuck labels on goods with the slogan 'Hands Off — produce of South Africa!'. A large banner was unfurled outside the store.

And on 18 September two evangelical churches picketed the South African embassy in Bonn, demanding the release of priest Alan Boesak, a UDF leader and president of the World Federation of Reformed Churches.



The campaign builds for a trade boycott

● On 21 September 10,000 people demonstrated in Bonn and 5,000 in West Berlin, calling for a boycott of South Africa.

The West Berlin demonstration was backed

by the West Berlin 'Alternative List', the Social Democratic Party and the Young Socialist 'Jusos'.

In Bonn speakers included prominent trade

union leader Christian Goetz, Ingrid Matthaues-Muller from the Social Democrats' parliamentary fraction, and Dr Wela Boesak, Alan Boesak's brother.

## Co-op bans apartheid goods

THE CAMPAIGN for boycott of South African goods received a boost last week with the announcement by the Cooperative Retail Services that South African produce will be banned from its 800 stores.

The CRS was joined by the Cooperative Wholesale Society which owns 300 stores. The CWS has progressively cut out South African imports since 1978 and will now package no South African goods under the Co-op label, use no South African ingredients in its manufactured products and stop fruit imports. Brands made or packaged in South Africa will be axed. TUC general secretary Norman Willis welcomed the move, which he said would give hope to campaigners against apartheid.

Photo: PAUL MATTSOON

## Salvadorean Unionists Tour Britain

LABOUR PARTY delegates and miners rose to their feet in an emotional ovation for two Salvadorean trade unionists at a Conference fringe meeting on amnesty for jailed miners. Arturo Valencia and Alfredo Represa are members of the Salvadorean Power Workers Union STECEL and the story of their last five years is an inspiration to British trade unionists fighting for the release of imprisoned miners.

In 1980 the STECEL power workers at the hydro-electric station on the river Lempa occupied their workplace to protest against attacks on their union rights and conditions. Their action sparked a nationwide strike which was met by brutal military repression, and the deaths of 200 strikers. Eleven leaders of STECEL were thrown into the inhuman Mariona prison.

For four years they remained, without charge or trial, tortured and abused by the Salvadorean regime. Their families feared for their lives. The seventeen year old daughter of one STECEL prisoner was murdered by death squads and the wife and daughter of the STECEL General Secretary were kidnapped, raped and then murdered while he was detained.

But the STECEL prisoners never gave up hope and in October 1984 they were rewarded with release when the Duarte regime could no longer withstand the campaign of protest in the United States and Europe.

Ten of the STECEL prisoners are now in

Holland. They had to leave El Salvador for fear of death squad reprisals. Arturo Valencia and Alfredo Represa have come to tell their story to British trade unionists and

By John Smith (tour coordinator) and Celia Pugh.

to appeal for solidarity for the thousands of trade unionists still resisting the Duarte regime at such great cost.

Despite military repression a wave of strikes and demonstrations has swept El Salvador in the last year. Inflation has reached 90 per cent, almost half of Salvadorean workers are unemployed, wages have been frozen by military decree since 1980, many workers have had wages withheld, strikes are illegal and many factories are occupied by the military.

Working people refuse to accept these conditions any longer and are taking to the streets to demand their rights and to force the government into a dialogue for peace with the organisations leading the



Salvadorean trade unionists take to the streets.

popular resistance, the FDR-FMLN.

Demonstrations take place almost daily. On May Day 40,000 workers took to the streets of San Salvador. On 6 July, 22,000 peasants marched to demand rights for their cooperatives.

An estimated 80 strikes have taken place since the beginning of the year. Many have been met with brutality. A four week sit in by hospital workers was broken up by the military and a patient was killed. The public and international reaction to this atrocity forced the employers to concede the workers demands for

higher wages and the dismissal of corrupt administrators.

The unity of Salvadorean workers and peasants grows with each struggle. The STECEL workers are part of FENASTRAS, one of the largest trade union federations. With other federations they are unifying their efforts through the Committee for Trade Union Unity, CUS and a broad movement, the Coordination of Workers Solidarity, CST.

While they are in Britain, Valencia and Represa will be appealing for funds for this movement. The organisers of the tour, the

Photo: JOHN BIRDSALL

El Salvador Solidarity Campaign and Central American Committee in Sheffield and Nottingham hope that their efforts will help raise money for a fact finding delegation of British trade unionists to El Salvador in January 1986.

The tour began on 4 October with meetings with Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire miners wives and rail workers. From there the STECEL members will spend two weeks in Yorkshire.

Their packed agenda has meetings with local NUM branches, the Yorkshire NUM executive, womens action committees, trades councils, Labour Parties, shop stewards committees and public meetings in Sheffield, Rotherham and Doncaster.

● PUBLIC MEETINGS WITH STECEL SPEAKERS SHEFFIELD Friday 11 October, 7pm AEU House, Furnival Gate. ROTHERHAM Wednesday 16 October, 7.15pm Rotherham Library/Arts Centre. DONCASTER Thursday 17 October 7.15 Doncaster Trades and Labour Club.

● If your union or Labour Party would like more information about the Salvadorean unions or the trade union delegation to El Salvador, write to ELSSOC Trade Union Commission, 13-16 Borough Road, London SE1

## IRELAND UNFREE

### Gerry Adams attacks summit

WITH LABOUR Party conference providing a rerun of past years on Ireland, as union bosses veto the most reasonable proposals, the government is pursuing its Dublin summitry unopposed. On 25 September Gerry Adams, Sinn Fein president, briefed party workers on the current situation. We reproduce an edited version of that talk.

WHILE it is foolish to speculate on the speculation about the outcome of the current London-Dublin talks, Irish establishment opinion shows how little it is prepared to accept how successful the British have been in setting the agenda and side-tracking public opinion away from the real issues. Dublin and the Social Democratic Labour Party (SDLP) have left the British firmly in control. The British government's need to supplement their Unionist allies, who have failed to defeat the Republicans, with a Dublin ally has produced a situation where the London government is once again projecting itself as honest broker, caught between 'intransigent unionism and militant republicanism'.

It should be remembered that Unionist use of discrimination and gerrymandering was encouraged by Britain for as long as they fulfilled the British need to repress opposition to their rule in Ireland. Sustained resistance of recent years has made unionist methods redundant. Britain now seeks new ways to repress or neutralise opposition.

Before the rise of Sinn Fein, the British-Unionist alliance meant that the use of the orange card was always successful. Unionists were, in British propaganda terms, the guarantors of the union. Failure to accommodate or defeat nationalist opposition has meant that Britain no longer needs the orange excuse as much as it did before.

Since the hunger strikes, London and Dublin interests which were always complimentary, have become clearer. Whatever the outcome of the current talks (and agreement now appears very likely) London's role will be to confront the unionists while Dublin's will be to try to lower nationalist aspirations. Both governments are pursuing their joint objective of defeating republicanism.

An example of how far these talks have progressed can be found in recent British leaks about the role of the UDR. In the past, Fine Gael and the Catholic hierarchy have all called for the disbanding of the UDR. Recent leaks have dismissed such a move and suggest that discussions now centre on URD identification numbers or their accompaniment by the RUC.

Instead of dismissing such suggestions as an absurdity, Dublin and their Six County allies the SDLP, prefer to tell nationalists not to expect too much anyway. They bank on predictable unionist outcry to create the illusion of substantial moves.

So much for the heady days of the Dublin Forum. Whatever gains are produced at the end of the present process will have been won by the suffering of Northern nationalists and republicans, and their support for Sinn Fein. They are not and will not be sufficient to resolve the national question. Dublin and London have agreed that.

Irish nationalists face a difficult time ahead. Those engaged in current talks see that only by neutralising nationalist aspirations can they stabilise the situation in their own interests. Every manifestation of Irishness will be under threat. Anglification of this island will continue, with the 26 Counties politically and economically integrated in all but name with Britain.

Lack of unionist sophistication, their failure to grasp the true nature of Dublin's intentions, and a lot of hype from Dublin and the SDLP may obscure this in the short term. Because of the colonial nature of the problem, it cannot do so in the long term.



## Oliver Tambo speaks

# “Labour must impose sanctions”

**OLIVER TAMBO**, whose speech to the Labour Party conference is reprinted in part below, is president of the African National Congress, the major national liberation movement in South Africa today. Tambo was a collaborator of Nelson Mandela's since they formed the ANC Youth League in the 1940s. He has been in exile since early 1960 when the apartheid state banned the ANC.

COMRADES, I bring the fraternal greetings of the national executive and entire membership of the ANC. I salute you in the name of all the oppressed masses and all democrats in South Africa. On this occasion, I want to greet in particular an old and long-standing member of the anti-apartheid movement, one whose interest in our struggle goes back to his student days, and has remained constant throughout his whole political life. We now find great hope in the fact that he will be the next prime minister of this country. Neil Kinnock, when you are at Number 10, we have confidence that your support will remain with our people.

### Drama

Brothers, sisters and comrades, a great and exciting drama is unfolding in South Africa. The old is giving way to the new. The future presses on with an insistence which not even the gentlemen of the City of London, the

Wall Street financiers or the gnomes of Zurich can ignore. It will be a future without the apartheid white minority regime and without the domination of one race by another. When that moment comes, it will mark the close of the epoch of colonialism. A new society will emerge which will, because of its past, make a

### ‘The masses of the British people can and must impose sanctions themselves’

significant contribution to the worldwide struggle to banish the crippling cancer of racism and to build relations of equality and fraternity between black and white people. If for no other reason, it will redress the inequities inflicted on our people by centuries of oppression and exploitation, with a true society of equals.

It will also have to attend to other important questions, such as an equitable distribution of the wealth of our country, the genuine emancipation of women, and the defence of the rights of the young. The cry ‘Amandla Ngawethu’ (Power to the people) that rings out from every corner of our land, refers to the transfer of votes and to political and economic power to the people.

In the Freedom Charter, we encompassed the aspirations of the masses of our people, workers, peasants, the middle strata, black and

white, foundry workers, teachers, miners, shopkeepers and students. United around these objectives, our people have been able to overcome the divisiveness inherent in the apartheid system and brought our country close to its transformation into a united, democratic and non-racial society.

But much remains to be done to remove the apartheid regime. Our people have graduated from protest to challenge. The days when every campaign we launched was an appeal to the powers that be to redress the wrongs heaped on us have gone. We are on a path that must end in the destruction of these butchers, who have for a generation turned our native land into a seething piece of hell.

It is, of course, recognising this historic reality, that the Pretoria regime is confronting the democratic movement of our country with savage fury, which has claimed the lives of more than a thousand people in the last 12 months. Indeed, so widespread has torture become that the courts, which have remained silent on this issue for 55 years, have been forced to issue injunctions prohibiting the abuse of detainees. The racist regime is now using death squads.

### Ungovernable

The enemy's incessant campaign of repression has further fuelled the anger of our people. They have determined to make apartheid unworkable

and the country ungovernable.

The regime, it is clear, will respond with even greater brutality. But whatever may be done, we shall not retreat. Rather, it is inevitable that we shall win more allies to our cause. The much-vaunted unity of the whites in general, or the Afrikaners in particular, is a thing of the past.

### Democratic

We are determined to do everything in our power to draw as many whites to the side of the democratic movement as possible. Being certain that the security and happiness of all our people, including our white compatriots, lies in the kind of democratic South Africa spelt out in the Freedom Charter.

We stand here today to ask this great party what contribution it is willing to make to the birth of the new society. We have the right to know whether the millions of ordinary Britons that this great party

### ‘We are convinced of the certainty of victory... There can be no turning back’

represents have remained unmoved by scenes of terrible savagery and obscene brutality that they see on their screens from South Africa every day.

The relation between our countries goes back two centuries. The confluence of both nations has already been decided by colonial governments, expeditionary armies, robber barons, stockbrokers and their political representatives and allies. They give birth to the criminal apartheid system. It is a past to which important political and economic forces of this country remain bound. They refuse to accept anything different from the rule of a racist and colonial regime in South Africa. There is no difference in this question from the former Smith regime in Rhodesia. Together they pronounced themselves the alternative to terrorism and justify the violence of racist tyrants as the maintenance of law and order.

### Liberation

We believe the time has come when no longer can relations between our people be decided by stockbrokers, bankers and colonial politicians. The contours of the new relations that must emerge have already been drawn by the Southampton dockers who have taken action to ensure that supplies to the armed forces would not reach South Africa, by the Dunnes strikers, by the international conference of dockers' unions which is due to meet in London at the end of this month to discuss the imposition of the oil embargo.

These workers, the local authorities, and the educational and other establishments that have taken direct action against apartheid are engaged in a process which we have long awaited, namely, the expression of the will of the people by the people themselves, since it is all too clear that 10 Downing Street has a rather peculiar understanding of what it means to give one damn about the apartheid state.

What we are saying is that the

masses of the British people can and must impose sanctions themselves. You have the power to stop all trade with apartheid South Africa. We plead with you that you do not worry. The stomachs of those shot down in South Africa today are empty already. The bellies of those who pull the trigger are bulging to the point of



Oliver Tambo



Anti Apartheid demonstrators

obscurity. Stop feeding them. Stop giving them the strength to take even more lives from our people.

The greetings we have brought this conference are from an embattled people. But also a people that is confident of victory. It is because we are convinced of the certainty and proximity of that victory that our people are making sacrifices. There can be no turning back. In their millions, our people are determined on a combination of political and armed struggle to bring down the citadels of white power and replace them with a system of democratic rule based on the principle of one person, one vote in a unitary state. Nothing Botha does can save him and his regime from this thing. Not the so-called reforms designed to refurbish this racist system, nor the greater use of force. Neither can the invasion of Angola and the support of puppet forces against the independent states of our region, the murder of South African refugees that occurred in June, nor continuous external support will save the apartheid system.

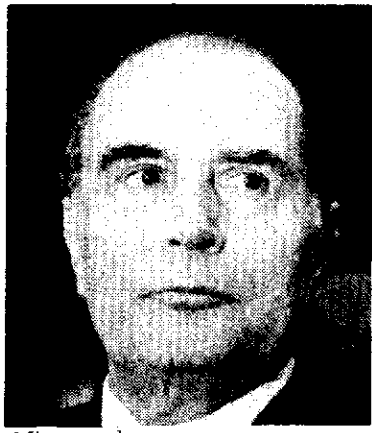
### Apartheid

Yet we have no desire to inherit a country with more graves than it has already. We have no wish to celebrate liberation day surrounded by a desolate landscape of destroyed buildings and by productive machines that have been reduced to scrap metal. Were it in our power we would pursue the just solution of the South African question on the basis of non-violence. But that choice is denied us, and we are determined to meet force with force, the quicker to defeat this racist regime. Comrades, it is in the hands of the British people to help bring down apartheid.



Advances in South Africa boost black people fighting for their rights in Britain.





Mitterrand

# The Soviet connection

**MIKHAIL GORBACHEV'S** visit to Mitterrand's France received enormous publicity. It was an obvious propaganda triumph for the Soviet leader. But much more serious issues were involved than presentation. JOHN ROSS reports.

THE style of Soviet diplomacy is certainly drastically changing. During his visit to France Gorbachev submitted himself to a full confrontation with the international press — and came out considerably in front. Gorbachev's approach follows a similar one to press conferences adopted by the Soviet foreign minister Shevardnaze and military leaders in the USSR.

The change in style actually does reflect something about Gorbachev's policies. He intends to develop the USSR as a powerful modern state. Its economy has to be modernised. Its leaders have no need to hide behind walls of secrecy in the West but should openly project Soviet achievements in every sphere.

Above all in France however, Gorbachev intended to exploit the cracks appearing in the relations between Western Europe and the United States.

The western capitalist economies are already relatively close to an open trade war. There are over 300 billion supporting trade protectionism before the US congress. The recent meeting in the United States of the economics ministers of the US, Japan, West Germany, Britain and Canada was precisely aimed to lessen the mounting pressure for a trade war by talking down the price of the dollar and thereby making

US goods more competitive on the world market.

The Soviet leadership is well aware that the present relations between the United States and Western Europe could not survive such a trade war. United States troops wouldn't so easily stay in West Germany confronting the 'Russian threat' if the EEC and the US became engaged in full scale protectionist trade war against each other.

The USSR therefore has not only been utilising the anti-missiles protests in Western Europe to increase the distance between that continent and the United States. It has also been adjusting the Soviet Union's trade patterns to increase its ties with Western Europe and decrease its dependence on the USA.

Two-thirds of Soviet trade with capitalist countries is now concentrated on Western Europe. The USSR is particularly rapidly increasing its imports of grain from France — to help replace its old dependence on wheat imports from the United States. The Soviet Union is also making sure the West European countries do not run major trade deficits on their trade with the USSR.

Gorbachev's proposal to Mitterrand, made in Paris, to have direct arms control talks with France and Britain — excluding the United States — is part of the same policy. The USSR is also exploiting the deep unease in Western Europe over Reagan's Star

Wars plans — a so-called defensive anti-missiles screen around the United States which would not cover Western Europe. To prevent the US developing Star Wars is now the number one aim of Soviet diplomacy.

Gorbachev is quite right to exploit every crack in the western alliance as he is attempting to do. The problem is that the Soviet leadership always sees mass movements against imperialism as subordinate to their manoeuvrings between the imperialist powers. For exactly this

reason Gorbachev's visit has been seized on by those such as Joan Ruddock who are seeking to demobilise the anti-missiles movement.

The rising struggle in South Africa, the development of the Nicaraguan revolution, or the anti-missiles movements in Western Europe are reliable allies of the Soviet Union. An imperialist government such as Mitterrand's is not.

But, for all that, Gorbachev's visit to France was an important initiative by the Soviet leadership.



Gorbachev



The campaign for gay rights continues

**A WAVE of euphoria swept Labour Party conference last Friday morning when delegates ignored the national executive recommendation to remit and carried the lesbian and gay rights composite by 3,395,000 votes to 2,805,000.**

The resolution called for the party to commit itself to end all legal discrimination against lesbians and gay men; outlaw discrimination in employment, housing, child custody and so on; and end police harassment. It also calls for a campaign to educate the labour movement and win lesbians and gay men to the party. A new NEC working party will draft the policy in detail.

The massive support for the resolution came from the significant number of lesbian and gay delegates, as well as supporters of the black sections, Women's Action Committee, and the vast majority of rank and file delegates and visitors.

The outcome of both the TUC and Labour Party debates is a tribute to the hard works of the Labour Campaign for Lesbian and Gay Rights (LCLGR) and to the unflinching support given by many heterosexual activists from other sections of the movement, especially from the black section.

After a week of lobby-

ing trade union delegations, we were confident of victory in our call for a card vote. We knew the

By Peter Purton

NUM would cast a positive vote in response to the unstinting support they had received from lesbians and gays during the miners' strike.

Unions like NUPE and COHSE have been forced to take up the issues in the wake of the hysteria generated around AIDS. And the vote also indicated the effects of many years of hard work for lesbian and gay rights in other unions, most notably the TGWU.

The anticipated support from constituency delegates showed a new understanding developed in recent years, that it is impossible to talk of equality, justice and socialism without taking up the oppression of lesbians and gay men.

In the debate delegates seethed with fury at the one delegate who voiced opinions which might even have commanded a majority just five years ago.

They rose to their feet and cheered wildly when the vote was announced, and joined enthusiastically with lesbians and gay delegates afterwards in our celebrations.

Now we must fight hard for the implementation of the agreed policies. We need to get unions voting against us to change their views, and supporting unions to go out and convince their members.

We must continue to build up a massive campaign for the movement to recognise that AIDS is a trade union issue. It is a crime against humanity that those who suffer — and by implication all lesbians and gay men — are to be treated as worse than criminals.

But we can now carry forward this campaign knowing that in one short week we have achieved as much as was achieved over so many years. We go forward with the confidence that millions of lesbians and gay men will respond enthusiastically to the lead given them on Friday morning.

Above all, we know we now stand with the authority of the TUC and Labour Party conferences when we demand that the working class recognise that lesbian and gay liberation is a central part of the struggle for socialism.

## Other Books

The following selection of books on South Africa is available by post from Other Books:

**South Africa: white rule, black revolt.** Ernest Harsch, Monad, 352pp, £6.25 plus 69p postage

**Class and Colour in South Africa 1850-1950.** Mack and Ray Simons, International, Defence and Aid Fund, 702pp, £5.00 plus £1.33 postage.

**Power: black workers, their unions and the struggle for freedom in South Africa.** Macshane, Plaut and Ward, Spokesman, 195pp, £4.95 plus 46p postage.

**To honour women's day: profiles of leading women in the South African and Namibian liberation struggles.** ADAF, 56pp, £1.00 plus 22p postage.

**Nelson Mandela: I am prepared to die.** ADAF, 48pp, 50p plus 18p postage.

**Nelson Mandela: The struggle is my life.** ADAF, 208pp, £1.85 plus 46p postage.

Make cheques or postal orders payable to IMRS. Orders with payment should be sent to: Other Books, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

## Labour's NATO Debate

THE disarmament debate took a step forward at this year's Labour Party conference.

Despite a recommendation from the national executive to oppose, a vote to discuss next year the issue of NATO membership was lost by only a narrow margin of 2,469,000 to 3,863,000. A position of withdrawal now, however, was overwhelmingly defeated.

The NATO debate reflects general concern with the ambiguities of the Labour defence statement passed overwhelmingly in 1984. A Labour CND fringe meeting on withdrawal from NATO at the beginning of the week attracted 250 people, including NUM general secretary Peter

Heathfield. An emergency resolution from Orpington constituency, opposing the Emergency Powers Bills

By Carol Turner, Secretary Labour CND (personal capacity)

was passed on a show of hands. These powers give US military forces the right to create 'key strategic centres' in Britain and to search and detain anyone 'classified as 'subversive'.

CND speakers were much in evidence throughout that day. And the overwhelming support for a resolution demanding the party campaign on its defence and disarmament policy showed the concern that exists among party members that Labour's unilateral policies should be explain-

ed and publicised before the next election.

Despite the NEC proposal to support this resolution, the contribution to the debate from Labour defence spokesperson Denzil Davies left room to doubt that they intend to carry out such a campaign. This made Labour CND's 'campaign kit' a popular collectors item among constituency delegates, providing as it does the basis for a constituency-based campaign on unilateral nuclear disarmament.

• Copies of Labour CND's campaign kit and of the latest issue of LCND newsletter are available by writing to: Carol Turner, LCND Secretary, 29 Stodmarsh House, Cowley Estate, London SW9.



Labour Party members on the march for jobs not bombs



## Leicester miners stay with NUM

LEICESTERSHIRE miners are remaining with the national union although the overwhelming majority worked during the strike. Jack Jones, area secretary, announced at September's area council meeting that as there had been such low turnouts at the special branch meetings called to consider the breakaway, everyone must be content with the current situation. So, he concluded, the area executive has no plans to join any breakaway.

At Bagworth, where most of the Dirty Thirty work, the union never even discussed the breakaway! Union officers kept the issue off the agenda because they feared a majority would back our views.

On 13 September, the High Court ruled that striking miners in our area must have access to all branch meetings, with full speaking and voting rights. Since 24 February, we'd been banned although we attended every meeting. But when the crunch came on any issue, we were ruled out of order.

As the issue of the breakaway gathered impetus in the area, it was vital we had full voting

and speaking rights at the special meeting. We felt we had no alternative but to revert to the courts.

On 15 September, 13 ex-strikers attended the 50-strong Bagworth branch meeting. At the

By Mick Richmond, Dirty Thirty

chair the speaker said the leadership had been served with an injunction and 'we have no alternative but to comply'.

On the advice of the area delegate, a motion was put to abandon the meeting until further legal advice was taken. But when it was put to the vote, 17 were in favour and 25 against. This was another victory for us because it meant 12 working miners had backed us.

So the meeting proceeded, but there was no mention of the breakaway. We put a proposal to oppose any talks or plans to join a breakaway. Despite strenuous efforts on our part, it was ruled out of order as it was 'not relevant'.

Just last month Jack Jones was in the local press encouraging Daw Mill branch to join the breakaway. Today he's on the front page pledging loyalty to Peter Heathfield and the national union. That gives our campaign a tremendous boost, but how long it lasts depends very much on the support we can get on the ground in the area.



Striking Notts miners, now fighting for unity.

## Notts breakaway

LAST WEEK the Coal Board played its trump card in the fight over the unity of the NUM in Notts.

As soon as the government's Trade Union Certification Officer gave the go ahead for Roy Lynk, the acting general secretary of the Notts NUM, to call his ballot for the breakaway, the NCB made an announcement it was granting full negotiating rights to the new organisation.

The obvious implication in the management's statement is that a significantly higher pay deal will be offered to the breakaway than to the national union.

These developments mark a new stage in the fight against the split in the NUM. The NCB had to

show its hand because of the abject failure of Lynk's local campaign. It

By Helen Arthur

is a back handed recognition of the massive ground gained by those loyal to the NUM.

Just last week Lynk

was making a contemptuous comparison between the 'modern media tactics' of his 60,000 campaign and what he referred to as 'the outdated tactics of the 1920s and 1930s' being used by the NUM in printing leaflets and calling local public meetings. But now the superscabs have changed tack.

Lynk's supporters have tried to organise meetings in pit canteens. Colin Clarke, member of the area council, attempted to address one such meeting at Sherwood pit, but abandoned it under a barrage of embarrassing

questions from strikers and other miners loyal to the NUM.

The action of the Coal Board shows indisputably that when the right wing within the labour movement is able to drive through a split, the Tory government is prepared to fully back it up through management.

Whatever the decision of the ballot on 18 October, there will be a split in the Notts NUM. The Notts Miner, Lynk's journal, openly states in the latest issue that the split has already happened and that a breakaway now exists. The only two questions on the ballot will be on the amalgamation with the South Derbyshire and Durham splinters, and on acceptance of a new rule book.

Unlike the full and open debate which the NUM leadership encouraged around their rule changes this year, with less than two weeks to go to the Notts ballot, no copy of this new Notts rule book has been distributed to the membership. Lynk is allowing no opportunity to present any amendment

or resolution on the new rules.

Arthur Scargill explained to Welbeck miners last week that the national union leaders will immediately reorganise branches of the NUM at every pit in Notts. The need now is for a stepped up campaign to win miners to the national union.

This week the Notts NUM Forum has committed itself to flood the pits and communities with leaflets explaining what these NCB bribes really represent. There will be a big rally at Mansfield Leisure Centre on 12 October, where Peter Heathfield, NUM general secretary, and Ken Gill of TASS will present the case for one national union.

Whatever happens after the ballot one thing is clear. The NCB is dangling its carrot right under the noses of the Notts miners. Unless they can look beyond the promises of fat pay deals today, and see the big stick which will be wielded tomorrow, they will be locking themselves in a golden prison, and throwing away the key.

## Bosses retreat on teachers' pay

ON FRIDAY 4 October the teachers' employers decided, by the casting vote of the chairperson Nicky Harrison, to make teachers a 'no-strings' cash offer on their 1985 claim. This does not mean the fight is over though.

Union members are continuing their selective strike action and refusal to cover for absent teachers. They want a wage increase to restore the 34 per cent fall in the real value of their wages over the last 10 years.

This year's claim, formulated by the National Union of Teachers at a special conference in September 1984, represents an important step forward for the left in the union. It is the result of years of work by the Socialist Teachers Alliance, the Socialist Workers Party, and others.

The left successfully argued for a flat rate claim. They pushed for a pay structure which would unify teachers and deal with the problems faced by the majority trapped on the lower scales, especially women teachers.

Before the offer of 4 October, the Labour group who took over the leadership of the bosses' side after the May council elections, had been trying to get teachers to accept a package originally put forward by Tory education secretary Sir Keith Joseph.

Joseph's proposal is to offer teachers a little extra cash in return for an agreement to accept a contract that would seriously weaken their conditions of service. Central to this package were proposals to make covering absent teachers compulsory, so masking inadequate staffing. He also wants to have teachers assessed regularly by senior administrators to make them pliant towards Tory education policies.

Teachers have learnt over the last eight months of struggle that this fight is about more than pay. As in local government and

the health service, there is a battle to defend the service they work in.

There is a real mood of determination among teachers. Many on the bottom end of the scale are so

By Bernard Reagan, NUT Executive (personal capacity)

badly paid that they get supplementary benefit.

During the action they have refused duties out of school hours. The no-cover policy has seen working conditions improved. For many there will be no going back. The NUT executive is under great pressure to fight, as is the leadership of the second largest union, the TUC-affiliated NAS-UWT.

Until now this union has toyed with accepting the employers' package to get extra cash this year. But at local level their members are working with NUT activists to maintain the campaign.

In Lancashire their whole local leadership has resigned to protest the lack of national backing, while in Birmingham and London positive steps towards cooperation between the two unions have been taken.

No one thinks teachers have reached the same militancy as the NUM. But Arthur Scargill was absolutely right to say, at the Labour Herald rally at the TUC, that the teachers would not have been fighting today if it hadn't been for the miners.

In some places, like Liverpool, influenced by the Communist Party, the NUT still has many lessons to learn about trade union unity. But it is clear in other areas that the teachers have made advances from which they will not be willing to retreat.

## Duffy's ghost lives

TERRY DUFFY, president of the engineering union, died on Wednesday 2 October. Despite strong evidence, there is no truth in the rumour that he has been reincarnated in the body of Neil Kinnock.

But there is a firm connection between Duffy's years as AUEW president and the current disastrous course of the labour movement leadership. Duffy was a leading advocate of what is known as 'new realism', the very sentiment with which Kinnock attacks the miners and the Liverpool councillors, and pushes incomes policy.

New realism is the open advocacy of class collaboration. This idea, that workers and bosses have common interests, was Terry Duffy's hallmark.

Duffy was tied up in the 1979 deal with the Engineering Employers Federation, which reduced the length of the working week to 39 hours. It has been argued that this deal shows the value of the 'new realistic' trade union leadership. But the truth is that Duffy snatched defeat from the jaws of victory.

The employers were deeply divided, with a number on the verge of conceding the full claim for a 35 hour week. Duffy had favoured acceptance of their original offer which made no concession on hours whatsoever. He opposed the strike action that forced the employers hand. And he pursued the same policy till his death.

If Duffy should be

remembered for any single event, it was his compliance with Michael Edwardes' sacking of British Leyland convenor Derek Robinson. 'Think of England and go back to work,' Duffy told his

Jonathan Silberman, AUEW Convenor, Colman Fasteners

members as he urged them to cross the transport union picket lines.

Less than one week after the final sacking of Robinson, Duffy and his partner in crime, general secretary Sir John Boyd, were dining and dining at the Dorchester in London's Park Lane. Along with British Leyland boss Michael Edwardes, they were guests of the engineering employers. The meal was estimated at £114 per head.

This cosy dinner party relationship with the engineering and British Leyland bosses has produced further Robinson-type sell-outs at Longbridge. In the middle of the miners' strike the AUEW leadership declared a Longbridge strike unofficial and sent strikers back to work.

While Duffy gained personal reward for servility, engineering workers have been battered from pillar to post by the



Duffy at his dirty tricks

employers. In the period between 1979 and 1983, 750,000 jobs were axed and profits increased three-fold. Today the nationally agreed skilled rate for engineers is a paltry £96.20.

Duffy's class collaboration weakened the entire labour movement. He encouraged AUEW members to cross official picket lines during the Isle of Grain lagers dispute. The AUEW leadership did nothing to organise solidarity for the miners during their historic strike. Duffy even went on TV to say that it would be better if the miners didn't win.

He and his friends followed up the defeat of the miners by an offensive to win the entire labour movement for active collaboration with the Tory

government's anti-trade union laws.

Yet again they broke TUC policy by urging acceptance of state funding for ballots. They have issued a circular to shop stewards which does nothing other than police the 1984 Trade Union Act.

Duffy was also secretary of the Labour and Trades Union Committee for Transatlantic Understanding. Set up in 1975, the committee was the brain-child of a former attaché at the American embassy in London. Its aim was to forge 'closer links between the labour and trade union movement and the Atlantic alliance' — and it was largely funded by NATO.

Prominent members of the committee are David Owen and William

Rodgers of the SDP. This formal relationship with the SDP is Duffy's decisive contribution to the bosses, joined by prominent leaders of the electricians union.

Duffy and others in the AUEW leadership have been prepared to see an organised split in the labour movement, including a split from the TUC itself.

There is only one effective reply to this challenge: a vigorous counter-offensive to mobilise the entire movement against the Tory government. But Kinnock and TUC general secretary Norman Willis prefer to capitulate instead.

Duffy's ghost was alive and well at last week's Labour Party conference in Bournemouth.





# An Alliance for Socialism

After the Labour Party conference people urgently want to discuss the situation facing the labour movement.

- How to draw out the lessons of the miners' strike and fight for amnesty
- How to fight racism and build the black section
- How to build Women Against Pit Closures, the Women's Action Committee, and women's organisation in the labour movement
- How to fight the legal attacks on the unions
- How to fight the assault on local councils
- How to fight the drift to the right in the party and build on the successes the left has won
- How to build solidarity with the struggle in South Africa
- How to defend Nicaragua and the Central American revolutions
- How to get Britain out of Ireland
- How to defend lesbian and gay rights

There is no better place to discuss these, and other issues, than in the sessions and workshops of Socialist Action's 'Alliance for Socialism' weekend in London on 16-17 November.

The speakers at the event, Socialist Action is co-sponsoring include:

Diane Abbott, Tony Benn, Jack Collins, Jeremy Corbyn, Vladimir Derer, Betty Heathfield, Peter Heathfield, Stuart Holland, Ann Pettifor, Russell Profitt, John Ross, Marc Wadsworth, Jude Woodward, Doreen Wepler. plus speakers from Black Sections National Committee, the FDR of El Salvador, and many many more.

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