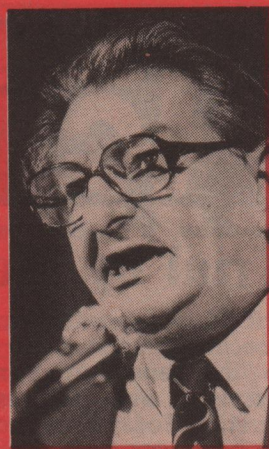


A Socialist ACTION

BUILDING AN ALLIANCE FOR SOCIALISM

STOP THIS PURGE!

By Eric Heffer



WOMEN MARCH

AGAINST MURDOCH

PICTURED HERE are women from the Kent mining communities marching on London during the 1984-85 miners strike. The legend on their placard is prophetic. Next in line, it turns out, are the employees of Rupert Murdoch's *News International* — and the rest of Fleet Street's print workers will be hot on their heels if Murdoch gets his way.

Like MacGregor before him, Murdoch has plans to decimate the jobs of tens of thousands of workers, and to deal a savage blow to the organisation and strength of the print unions in the process. From their own experiences during the last two years, mining community women know only too well what print workers and their families are facing. That is why contingents of Women Against Pit Closures will be travelling across the country next Saturday to join the women's march and rally on Fortress Wapping, to mark the an-

niversary of International Women's Day.

This demonstration is sponsored by SOGAT and the NGA, by Women Against Pit Closures, and by the women's committees of the South East Region TUC and the Greater London Labour Party. They say: 'International Women's Day offers all of us the opportunity to salute our sisters everywhere, whether they are struggling against oppression, fighting for their jobs, for national liberation, for socialism, for democracy or for peace.'

By bitter experience the mining communities discovered the alliances, the determination, and the leadership needed to stand up to MacGregor. Printworkers will need the same alliances, the same determination, and the same qualities of leadership to defeat Murdoch. Who better to teach them than the women of the working class?



● See page 10 for details of the women's march and rally, and page 11 for Wapping picket line news.

AT THE 1982 Labour Party annual conference Jim Mortimer, the then general secretary, introduced a report which called for disciplinary action against leading supporters of the *Militant* newspaper. The following year, at 1983 conference, the expulsions of the *Militant* editorial board were confirmed, and their appeals rejected.

At that time the party leadership promised there would be no witch-hunt. But here we are again. There is no reason to believe them now when they say it will stop with Liverpool.

You don't have to be a *Militant* supporter to get yourself attacked — just a critic. Up and down the country expulsions and threats of expulsion are being made against all sorts of comrades: *Labour Briefing* supporters, Irish activists, black section supporters, and more.

After last Wednesday's NEC decision on Liverpool, the media were clear about the consequences. 'Well done,' they're saying. 'You've made a good start with *Militant*. But what about the two MPs, and what about other left groups?' In time they'll end up expelling Eric Heffer and Tony Benn.

The majority of the Labour leadership appear to believe that a purge will clear a path to electoral success. Roy Hattersley claimed that the expulsion of the *Militant* editorial board would gain Labour a million votes. But the 1983 election was actually the worst result since 1918.

The report of the commission of enquiry into the Liverpool District Labour Party brings to light nothing new. But then no one criticised the party until the confrontation between the city council and the Tory government began.

The enquiry purports to consider the practices of the district party, using unproved assertion to imply they are undemocratic. In fact what the NEC wants to impose on Liverpool is a form of centralism without democracy. Disbanding the party and imposing a temporary executive — which is all-powerful because delegates to the district party will only vote in a 'consultative' capacity until the party is reconstituted — is the real attack on democracy.

But, in deciding that up to 16 members of the party will have charges brought against them at the 12 March NEC, the real purpose of the Liverpool enquiry is brought to light. Reading the majority report you will see that the basis of those charges is support for the *Militant* newspaper. Whilst I am not a supporter of *Militant* or any other newspaper within the party, I firmly defend their right to be in the Labour Party.

Alongside the witch-hunting attacks being launched within the party, stage by stage, conference policy is progressively being disregarded. On public ownership, for example, and the renationalisation of privatised firms. As if we can tackle unemployment without those policies.

It is the witch-hunt in fact which is the real attack on democracy — aimed at the left of the party as a whole. This would be an electoral disaster. The NEC must be flooded with protests — in support of Liverpool and against the purge.

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A Socialist ACTION

Trial by ideology

THE TERM inquisition, according to Collins *Concise English Dictionary*, owes its origins to 'the general tribunal established to discover and suppress heresy and heretics'. Today it has two common usages: 'an inquiring investigation' or 'any harsh or arbitrary suppression of dissent or non-conformity'.

The decision to send an NEC team up to Liverpool was claimed by the Labour leadership to be for the purposes of the former. The publication of that team's report, however, indisputably reveals its real aim was the latter.

In the guise of clearing up breaches of the constitution — supposed to have led to the suppression of democracy — the national executive has decided to close down the district party and impose arbitrarily-appointed full-timers. The two to be installed will preside over the May elections without a by-your-leave to the membership.

Whatever the malfunctioning of the Liverpool district party may or may not have been, and the report itself only shows minor irregularities, rule by NEC dictat cannot be claimed to overcome it. But then it isn't meant to.

The intention is quite the opposite. Kinnock and Hattersley haven't won the political arguments on party policies. So they are throwing their weight around instead — and creating an internal war that takes everyone's mind off the fact that they are dropping those policies anyway in their helter-skelter dash to an electoral victory which bases its strategy on appealing to the hacks of Fleet Street.

The starting point for their heresy hunt owes its origins to a very precise conference policy: that of confronting the Tory government attacks on the jobs and services of local people. Liverpool Labour councillors, whose stand was backed by the overwhelming majority of the local party, attempted to carry it out; Kinnock and Hattersley have ditched it.

It won't stop at Liverpool. And it won't stop at a few expulsions of *Militant* supporters. It is an escalation of the political struggle going on across the labour movement. Any expulsions on 12 March will signal open season to witch-hunters up and down the Constituency Labour Parties.

The attack on Liverpool is part of the long-term strategy of the Kinnock-Hattersley leadership — a strategy of exorcising opposition to their line from the ranks of the labour movement. It is aimed at all those movements and their leaders who offer an alternative to the sterile appeal to 'the middle ground'.

At the Scargill leadership and all those who supported the fight of the NUM; at the Campaign group of Labour MPs who have championed the causes of all those in struggle against the Tories and shown in practice that the Labour Party and its leadership can do things differently; at Bernie Grant who spoke up for the black youth of Britain's inner-cities; at the black section movement and the constituency parties who back them in action.

Liverpool is an easy target, because other Labour councils had fallen by the wayside. *Militant* supporters are an easy target, because the politics expounded by that newspaper include the expression of some of the worst features of British imperialism's mark on the working class and on the left.

The battle waged against Liverpool and *Militant* today is a part of a war with big stakes. The struggle going on is a fight between Kinnock and those seeking to forge a unity of the working class and oppressed which will carry it forward in its long-term goal — that of breaking the domination of the few who own the means of production over the many who sell their labour.

That unity demands alliances of a sort which have not been forged in the history of working class struggle in this country — alliances which began to emerge in tiniest part during the course of the miners strike. That is an alliance between the organised labour movement and all those oppressed sections of society with a material interest in changing this rotten system.

Every blow against the witch-hunt is a blow which makes more possible the realisation of that goal. That is why the black section has been so correct in its out-front opposition to all witch-hunts. Every blow against the witch-hunt is a nail in the coffin of Labour's misleaders who would take the working class away from its historic goal.

A purge plan laid bare

THE PUBLICATION last week of the majority report of the commission of enquiry into the Liverpool District Labour Party confirmed what many already knew: a purge of the Liverpool Labour Party is now well underway. And it won't stop on the shores of the Mersey, or at the portals of the *Militant* newspaper offices.

Since the decision to send Labour's own version of the *Insight* team to Liverpool was made last

By Carol Turner

November, spokespeople for the national party have repeatedly claimed it was the practices of the district party which were under investigation. Indeed, as the dissenting report from Audrey Wise and Margaret Beckett points out, that was the brief — or at least the window-dressing.

The majority report reveals otherwise. Section 14, succinctly headed 'Involvement in Militant Tendency', says (14.5 and 6): 'In the view of the majority of the investigation team it is also beyond reasonable doubt that this concentration of power and decision-making is largely dominated by the organisation of the Militant Tendency.'

It has to be said that the investigation team do not take seriously all allegations made of Militant activities in Liverpool. However there are undoubtedly a large number of supporters of the broad line taken by Militant in Liverpool, and others who are prepared to go along with most of the policies, particularly whilst Militant has appeared to be the only credible focus of left wing activity within the party in Merseyside.

Majority

The majority conclude: 'there are serious questions about the eligibility for party membership of a few key individuals in Liverpool. It is therefore suggested that these individuals be presented formally by the NEC with such charges with a view to disciplinary action.'

These quotes, in a nutshell, lay bare the raison

d'être of the whole fake exercise. There is no proposal to expel party members because of the practices of the district party. The explicit basis on which disciplinary proceedings are advocated is on the grounds of support for the *Militant* newspaper.

The report makes clear that *Militant* is considered a threat to the party leadership because, the enquiry team believes, the views of that newspaper are regarded by ordinary Liverpool members as offering a political alternative to the Kinnock-Hattersley line. Ergo, *Militant* supporters must go.

District

Supposed malpractices within the district party and 'indications' of a 'shadow organisation' existing are the technicalities on which a purge of those who don't support the leadership is pegged. But, although the report throughout is couched in semi-legal language, and as the minority report effectively points out, the 'evidence' in this trial by ideology is no more than assertions and allegations made by some of *Militant*'s opponents.

Kinnock

Expelling up to 16 suspected *Militant* supporters, however, will hardly be enough to ensure that the Liverpool parties fall firmly into the grip of the Labour leadership. And the NEC majority knows it.

The reason that party members on Merseyside, as elsewhere, support conference policies and not those of the national leadership is precisely because, when it came to the Tory attacks on the jobs and services of working class people, Kinnock and Hattersley ran away while the Liverpool city



Kinnock with witch hunter general Larry Whitty

councillors stood and fought.

Expelling 16 scapegoats cannot escape this political reality. And that is why the NEC last Wednesday took the opportunity to shut down the party and install its own henchpeople on Merseyside — a fact which the report summary on page 3 of this paper makes clear.

Many readers already will have read the 'evidence' to the enquiry team submitted by the Liverpool LCC. Such ill-argued and unproven statements were grist to the NEC mill. To make doubly sure, no right of reply procedure was built into the team's investigation procedure.

The report says (page 43, 15.15): 'When any individual member of the investigation team considered it necessary to clarify or pursue such charges those individuals

concerned were invited for interview or reinterview about these charges.'

The conclusion of the phoney enquiry was that many practices and procedures of the district party contravened the rules and were undemocratic. Their answer? To enforce over the heads of the Liverpool parties appointees of the national leadership.

Executive

There is no doubt that such individuals will be so appointed on their record of proven sycophancy to the national leadership. In addition, the temporary district executive over which they will preside has no party-based delegate structure to which it must make itself accountable.

The main recommendations clearly spell out that until the district party is reconstituted, such meetings are 'consultative'

only. They further make specific provision that the local elections are within the complete control of this temporary body, thus creating the possibility of further public conflict if candidates are imposed on wards and constituency parties against their will.

Although the report indicates early June for reactivating the district party structure, there is already speculation that its reconstitution could be delayed much beyond that date. In short, the Liverpool saga could run and run.

It is in the interest of every single Labour Party member and affiliated trade unionist, every branch, section, constituency, and district party in the country, to demand that the national executive of the Labour Party immediately call a halt to a witch-hunt that will spread poison across the whole labour movement.

Audrey Wise on: The minority report

THE NEC resolution of 27 November, which set in motion the enquiry into Liverpool District Labour Party, makes clear that events in Liverpool must be taken in the context of the 'tremendous government attacks' on the city, argues the minority report. Aware of the 'terrible dangers' involved in the proposals to bring charges against supporters of the *Militant* newspaper, of the 'doubts and queries raised about the circumstances' of expulsions being proposed elsewhere, and of the party's past record on this, Margaret Beckett and Audrey Wise conclude their report: 'We must dissociate ourselves from any suggestion that expulsion of members of the Liverpool District Labour Party should be recommended.' AUDREY WISE explained why to Socialist Action.

WHEN I spoke at the Labour Party national executive on 26 February I stressed the need for a sense of proportion on the question of Liverpool. Last Wednesday, that is what the NEC completely lost. The decision made is deplorable.

Margaret Beckett and I

feel that the commission of enquiry exceeded its remit. Although the word evidence is used in the majority report, it is used loosely. The commission largely relied on allegations and assertions.

That is why we produced a minority report: because we disagreed with

the emphasis of the majority, and with the report's conclusions. There is a huge difference between the two reports.

Margaret and I have pointed out that if our approach had been adopted by the NEC, it might not have been liked by the Liverpool party, but it could have been accepted and any changes of practice could have been made with a minimum of disruption and dislocation to the party. The NEC decision has ensured the maximum of disruption.

I believe that supporters of the *Militant* newspaper are valid members of our party. Many of those in Liverpool facing charges are long-standing members of the party.

I don't agree with many of the things the newspaper says and I don't like their style. But

the way to beat them is by force of argument and by winning votes — not by expelling them. The decision of the NEC has given credibility to the Tory lie that there is something sinister about the Labour Party.

The commission of enquiry was given no brief to call for disciplinary proceedings. Margaret and I were not giving our own view of party rules — in fact I'm not sure we share the same views. We were sticking to the remit and pointing out in an objective way where rules have been misinterpreted.

We reported that we found some practices that were peculiar to Liverpool. For example, the hybrid nature and therefore confused status of aggregate meetings.

But open meetings with all party members invited are not uncommon.

And the wide scope of district party discussions is something that happens in lots of other big city parties.

We accept that some people did feel intimidated by an unpleasant atmosphere in the aggregate meetings. But that's a matter of saying 'don't hold meetings that way' not 'out you go from the party'.

Liverpool practices are not dreadful crimes. I don't think that discipline is appropriate, let alone expulsion. It is quite ridiculous to jump from these kinds of breaches to saying that people should be expelled.

Most of all, any consideration of these points must be situated within the context of all the other problems which exist in Liverpool, especially the council's struggle to protect jobs and services.

STOP THIS PURGE

REACTION TO the NEC decision to shut down the Liverpool district party and move to expel up to 16 alleged supporters of Militant came thick and fast last Thursday. Robin Cook, on the London LBC radio, went straight to the heart of the matter as far as the Labour leadership is concerned. 'Let Militant stand for election on their own policies,' he said 'and Labour will be happy to contest seats against them on that basis.' In other words: anyone who doesn't agree with the leadership should be out of the party. Derek Hatton was nearer the real mark. 'There is not one ounce of evidence in that report,' he said, 'It's page after page of tittle-tattle. They knew what they wanted the verdict to be, they looked for evidence — but they couldn't find it.' CAROL TURNER reports.



Militant supporters lobby the NEC

Photo: JOHN CHAPMAN

Photo: JOHN CHAPMAN

Majority report



recommendations:

- That general secretary Larry Whitty be 'instructed to consider the evidence in relation to possible membership of Militant Tendency against the persons named below and where applicable to formulate charges against them to be heard by the NEC.' They are: Tony Mulhearn, Terry Harrison, Felicity Dowling, Josie Aitman, Tony Aitman, Paul Astbury*, Roger Bannister*, Carol Darby*, Pauline Dunlop*, Derek Hatton, Richard Knights, Ian Lowes, Sylvia Sharpey-Shafer*, Harry Smith*, Cheryl Varley, Richard Venton. The names asterisked were agreed by four of the six team members signing the report; the remainder by all six.

- That the NEC appoint two full-time officers to Liverpool for a period of two to three years responsible for: organising and administering the district and constituency parties; campaigning, publications and propaganda; 'a major new programme of political education and training'; building relations with the party and affiliated organisations; 'effective membership drives'.

- That the district executive committee and officers be replaced by a 'temporary coordinating committee' of two representatives each from CLPs, the labour group and the larger unions, the Coop Party and socialist societies; North West regional officers and the Liverpool full-timers.

- That this body elect its own officers and be responsible for the May elections, including the manifesto, and the local government panel and selections.

- That the target date for reconstituting the DLP be early June, postponing its annual meeting till then, and that DLP delegate and wider meetings be convened, in a 'consultative' capacity only, by the temporary executive.

- That this gives time to introduce 'major changes' in the constitutional procedures and practices of the DLP, including: clarifying that all DLP items must have a local government context; 'all member' meetings must be properly notified and no voting takes place; such meetings cannot take place before the rules are changed; clarifying the demarcation between the DLP, the Labour group, and the constituencies; spelling out voting procedures and credential checks at DLP meetings.

- That affiliations be investigated and altered.
- That the Labour group redraft its standing orders which will be ratified by the NEC.
- That the group 'rectify any abuses and conduct' set out in the majority report, especially personnel recruitment, relations with Liverpool's 'ethnic minority', and the Static Security Force and the Campaign Support Unit.

Liverpool rejects expulsions

JUST 24 HOURS after Labour's NEC launched its purge against Liverpool last week, the Labour group of the city council moved into action. A meeting it called for Thursday evening saw over 400 party members check in, including council leader John Hamilton.

Aware of national executive attempts to brand the Liverpool practices as undemocratic or worse, a full attendance record was kept, including which party branch each member came from. Councillor Tony Hood, organiser of the fighting fund for surcharged councillors, took the chair.

The main item of business was consideration of a resolution moved by

Jim Parry, Labour council whip and brother of Liverpool MP Bob Parry, and seconded by Frank Mills, vice chair of the council finance committee.

The resolution made clear that Liverpool Labour Party completely rejected expulsions. Members are determined to fight them all the way. The resolution was car-

ried by an overwhelming majority of 400:4, with not more than a dozen abstentions. In the light of the NEC's attempt to imply that the district party practice of 'aggregate' meetings (ie of delegates and non-delegate party members) is an undemocratic gerrymandering of the vote, it is worth noting that the majority of votes on issues crucial to the fate of the city in the last few months have had huge majorities.

It looks just as likely that constituency parties in Liverpool won't wear expulsions. Over the next few weeks, this may raise

the question of further party disbandments.

After Thursday's meeting, Eric Heffer told Socialist Action: 'The national executive are going to have terrible problems carrying out this purge in Liverpool. That was shown at Thursday's meeting. The mood of the party membership was totally against expulsions.'

'In Sheffield they only carried the decision to remove the whip from expelled councillor Paul Green by a handful of votes. How are they going

to get such a thing through the Labour group in Liverpool?

'The NEC decision raises many questions. For instance, how will they handle the local elections in May? Will there be two candidates in some areas: one put forward by the party membership and one by the new rump organisation the NEC is setting up?

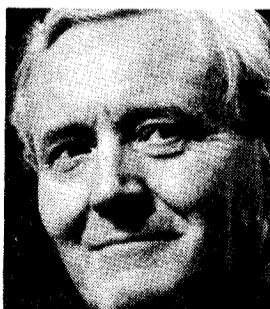
'Hundreds of good, working class people who believe passionately in working for Labour are going to be bitterly hit by this witch-hunt!'

What they had to say

Campaign Group of MPs:

THE Campaign group of Labour MPs unanimously condemned the inquisition of Labour Party members in Liverpool. What we should be doing is fighting the real enemies of the working class: the Conservative government, the rich and the privileged in British society.

We call on the whole labour and trade union movement to respond positively to this call. Let's get on with defeating Thatcher and winning the next election.



Tony Benn

Tony Benn: WHAT WE are witnessing is an attack upon a wide range of people within the left, including the miners leadership during the strike, some of the black leaders, some of the Labour Briefing people, and others. The intention seems to be to have a purge

to win electoral support. But the effect has been to create a diversion and cause dismay among good, hard-working activists up and down the country.

The constitutional argument is merely a cover for a political attack. We have seen it all before, and it has been fended off before with the people expelled allowed to return to the party. The speed with which we can get this purge stopped depends on the strength of the response — which should not lead us to counter-attacks or division but a rallying round the principles of solidarity and socialism.

Joan Maynard:

TO PUT it mildly, the



Joan Maynard

decision to ask the Labour Party general secretary to examine the cases of 16 members of the Liverpool Labour Party and recommend charges is deplorable and a disgrace. At least four million are unemployed, old people are dying of hypothermia, our industrial base is being destroyed, trade unions are under massive attack — and the Labour NEC spent 7 to 7½ hours last Wednesday ostensibly

looking into the operation of the Liverpool District Labour Party.

The report from the commission of enquiry was outrageous. They had closed minds from the very beginning. I have never accepted that this was an enquiry, but a potential witch-hunt — and that is exactly what it turned out to be. Labour Parties and affiliated organisations should flood the national executive with resolutions opposing the decision and in support of Liverpool's tremendous fight against Tory policies.

First Westlands and now the Johnson-Matthey scandal show how fragile a situation the Thatcher government is in. It is a tragedy that we should be locked in internal argument at a time when we should be concentrating our attacks on the Tories.

Photo: GM COOKSON

35,000 students against Fowler

ON 20 FEBRUARY the National Union of Students organised one of its biggest ever demonstrations. 35,000 students came to Kennington in South London to march against the cuts in students' benefits proposed in the Fowler review.

These would mean the loss of all housing and supplementary benefits in term-time and holidays, for which students are at present eligible.

The demonstration heard greetings from Red Wedge, NATFHE, NUPE and SOGAT 82.

But there was dissatisfaction with the NUS leadership's response to the proposals and NUS president Phil Woolas was booed throughout his speech. Students stormed the platform to emphasise how serious the threat from these proposals was and to try and encourage students to occupy their colleges in protest.

They also wanted to fight for a breakaway march on parliament instead of the suburban route adopted by the organisers. More mass action like this demonstration is needed and the NUS will have to draw on the labour movement for support. At a recent national rally they put themselves in the ridiculous position of having David Owen on the platform backing 'mergers' between colleges.

NOLS

The National Organisation of Labour Students (NOLS), which controls the National Union of Students, held its annual conference last weekend. It failed to adopt any position on the Labour Party NEC's expulsions 'because of lack of time'.

It was a selective gathering. Missing from the 200 delegates were representatives of Labour Clubs up and down the country who happened to disagree with the 'Democratic Left' (a grouping similar to the Labour Coordinating Committee, which dominates the NOLS leadership).

Twenty-four delegates were disqualified without reason on the day before the conference alone. Many more had already been disqualified for unstated reasons.

There was a tiny turn out from the Militant-controlled Welsh Organisation of Labour Students, which had been unconstitutionally suspended.

By a strange coincidence the new national committee contains 12 Democratic Left supporters, one Militant and one Socialist Organiser supporter. The committee includes three known witchhunters including NOLS' new chair Ben Lucas.

This method of dealing with opponents — far worse than the worst excesses of Militant — is important to note because NOLS is being developed by Kinnock as the alternative pole for youth to the LPYS and, eventually, an alternative. The posts of youth officer and student officer are to be merged to take away the LPYS's full time post and leave the 'Democratic Left' NOLS full timer in charge of youth at Walworth Road.

NOLS' support for the ANC and COSATU, and its backing for troop withdrawal from Ireland, will stay on paper in an organisation where all independent thought is summarily excluded. As Phil Woolas, Democratic Left President, explained, its relationship to the Labour Party will be one of 'subservience'. And that, presumably, is what will matter most for Kinnock's New Model Youth.

Midlands LPYS

The West Midlands LPYS conference on 1-2 March made a step forward when it affiliated to the Anti-Apartheid Movement and adopted detailed proposals to build its events — though a majority of conference, who were Militant supporters, confined their remarks to the ANC, even calling it a 'terrorist organisation'.

A resolution from Perry Bar LPYS, which includes the area of the Handsworth uprising, provoked the most heated debate. It condemned 'looting and hooliganism' in terms virtually indistinguishable from the racist remarks passed by Labour MP Geoff Rooker just after the uprising.

The Militant leadership of the region clearly felt under pressure, and passed a resolution supporting black self-organisation in principle, but vehemently opposed supporting black sections.

This contradictory stance was the story of the conference. Despite hostility to the ANC, victimised black youth, and the Irish independence struggle there were limited openings at the conference, such as an emergency resolution agreeing to send a coach to join the International Women's Day picket at Wapping.

Those in the LPYS who want to build it through solidarity with these struggles — one third of the delegates — now have a big opportunity. At a fringe meeting backed by four LPYS branches over 30 people heard speakers from SWAPO, black sections and the Asian Youth Movement. Through such an alliance of forces the LPYS can draw in black youth and build itself in a mass way.



Regional Conferences

London swings right; black section fights back

DIANE ABBOTT, prospective parliamentary candidate for Hackney North has backed up Bernie Grant's controversial attack on racism in the right wing of the Labour leadership. Last week his criticism of Roy Hattersley earned him a public rebuke from Neil Kinnock. 'I entirely support Bernie and if Neil Kinnock wants to rebuke me he had better get his letter in the post,' said Diane.

She was speaking in the



Diane Abbott: 'Hattersley's remarks were colonialist, patronising and racist'

black section debate at the London regional Labour Party conference in Brixton this weekend. But conference rejected a composite supporting black sections by 500,000 to

160,000. Two years ago the region backed black sections. Several union delegates followed the line put by NUPE, who said they supported black sections but could not endorse a motion calling for existing black sections to be recognised.

Conference also narrowly defeated a motion deploring expulsions and calling for positive campaigning and an end to the 'leadership's divisive campaign against local council which fight Tory cuts.' An emergency motion against the result of the NEC enquiry into Liverpool suf-

fered a four to one defeat. However Conference overwhelmingly backed a motion defending Lambeth and Liverpool councils against the Tory attacks.

Conference rejected a motion calling for Labour MPs to be allowed to vote 'according to their consciences' on unspecified questions. This right wing inspired motion was clearly intended to enable Labour backbench support for anti-abortion legislation. The National Abortion Campaign is worried that this may herald a new tactic by anti-abortion campaigners at other regional conferences

so undermining the decision of last year's Labour Party conference against the free vote on abortion.

Two fringe meetings on Saturday 1 March, which unfortunately clashed, showed that there is support for campaigning policies inside the Party. Fifty people heard Kingsley Abrams, Diane Abbott, Sharon Atkins and Linda Bellos defend black sections. Over seventy delegates attended a meeting with Tony Benn, Diane Abbott, and speakers from CLPD, the Irish in Britain Representation Group, and Lambeth council.

Photo: GM COOKSON

Nationalist spectre haunts Scottish Labour

THE SCOTTISH regional Labour party conference meets next weekend, 8-9 March against a background of a worrying resurgence in support for the Scottish Nationalist Party.

The SNP has won five seats from Labour in local bye-elections since December, and parties are casting worried glances towards the May regional council elections.

There are over 20 resolutions on defending local government, and fighting the Tories. Ten of

them follow the non-compliance line argued by Edinburgh council, and want the NEC to back up councils in conflict with the government. But there is widespread speculation that these will be watered down to avoid too much embarrassment to Neil Kinnock, who is coming up to address this important conference, traditionally dominated by the Labour Co-ordinating Committee. A heated debate is also likely over a Scottish Executive resolution which would end outright opposition to council house sales.

Several resolutions



Ken Livingstone will address the LCC fringe meeting

congratulate Kinnock for his 1985 Labour Party conference speech and call on the party to unite behind him. However, defending party unity against expul-

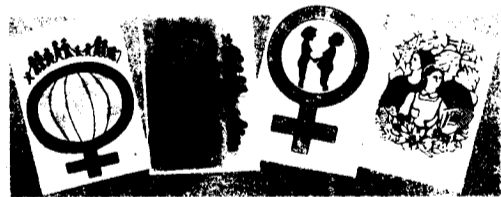
sions does not figure: there is no specific resolution on expulsions, although emergency resolutions are widely expected and Michael Hartins, Labour MP for Springburn, has called for the expulsion of Bob Wylie, Militant's most prominent spokesperson in the West of Scotland. The conference in the past has been a field day for witch-hunting speeches, as has been the LCC's fringe meeting, which this year, however, features Ken Livingstone.

On policies and on campaigning there are some good resolutions. Dumbarton calls for a

clear campaign to win voters to the party's unilateralist positions. There are many resolutions on South Africa calling on the party to back the Anti Apartheid Movement, the ANC and COSATU, and a request for the party to take the initiative to secure a Scottish anti-apartheid demonstration

If, however, the message to the press from the conference is that Scottish Labour's main concern is the Militant menace, the Nationalist revival can be expected to keep on going.

New! CARDS FROM NAC



Design No. 1: Green & lilac on white, with black.
Design No. 2: Lilac and black on green.
Design No. 3: Lilac and black on green.
Design No. 4: Black and white. The greetings cards comes in two versions.
Prices: Coloured greetings cards: 35 each; coloured postcards: 20p each; black and white greetings cards: 25p each; postcards: 12p each.

All cards come complete with envelop.
Packs of 5: coloured greetings cards: £1.60
coloured postcards: £0.80
black and white greeting cards: £1.15
black and white postcards: £0.50
Postage: Add 13p for up to 5 cards, 18p up to 10. Post-free for greater quantities.

Bulk orders: For orders of over 10, there will be 10% discount (normal discounts for trade).

From: National Abortion Campaign (cards), Wesley House, 70 Great Queen Street, London WC2B 5AX.

The National Abortion Campaign's new bulletin is just out; orders 60p plus postage from National Abortion Campaign, Wesley House, 70 Great Queen Street, London WC2B 5AX.

Yorkshire drops Busby

THE YORKSHIRE conference continued an attack on the socialist policies fought for over the last three years. Labour's commitment to renationalise industries privatised by the Tories was brought into question when an NCU resolution, calling for renationalisation without compensation, was defeated.

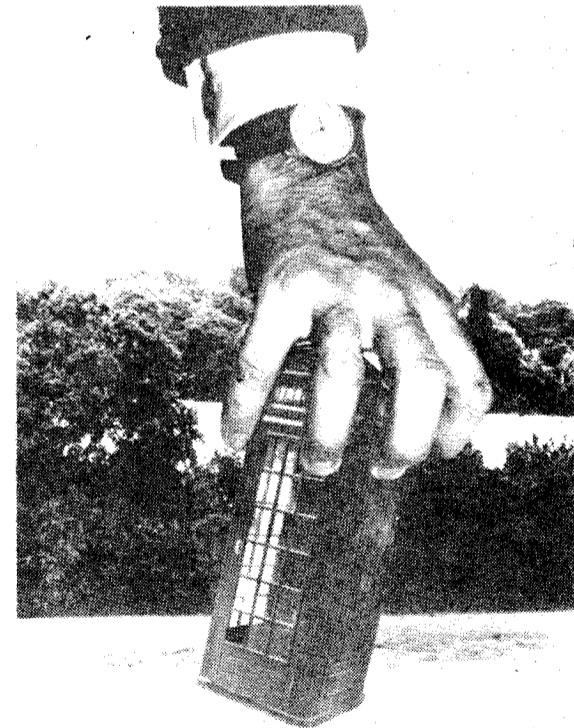
By Andy Hollis, NCU delegate (personal capacity)

A similar resolution on British gas suffered the same fate. The conference debate was a warning sign that Kinnock and the leadership do not intend to campaign around national conference policy.

Militant was witch-hunted in many speeches but an attempt by the left to put this on the agenda was frustrated.

The fringe meetings by contrast showed that a minority is prepared to campaign for socialist policies and defend working class struggles. At a meeting called jointly by the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy and the Campaign Group, Bob Cryer MP attacked the witch-hunt.

He warned that this was part and parcel of Kinnock's strategy to remove socialists and socialist policies and accommodate to the SDP after the next election.



HANDS OFF TELEPHONES!

Leave them in the shareholders' hands, says Yorkshire Labour Party conference, two days before World in Action revealed the City robbed us of £3bn when it sold off Busby.

The Justice for Mineworkers meeting was the best attended with 60 delegates proving the growing support for a concerted campaign to support the sacked and

imprisoned miners. These fringe meetings and a third organised by Labour CND, show how the left is coming together to campaign regionally and nationally.

News

JUSTICE



Photo: MARTI VOLK

Women Against Pit Closures take the stage — the real stars of the 'Heroes' concert

THE Justice for Mineworkers Campaign was launched with a splash last weekend. A march and rally in London were followed by an Albert Hall concert on Sunday evening.

The date chosen marked the second anniversary of the strike and the miners' return to work one year ago. The weekend events were preceded by the introduction in parliament of the Campaign group of MPs' bill of the same name.

Several thousand miners and supporters marched from Jubilee Gardens to Hyde Park, via Coal Board headquarters Hobart House. Many went on to join a packed house for the *Heroes* concert, organised by Women

Against Pit Closures.

'What better way,' said Peter Heathfield, 'for the NUM to express its gratitude to all the people who consistently supported us for those two years. That struggle goes on.'

Name after famous music name added their support to the justice demand. They were joined by Dennis Skinner, accompanied on piano by Dave Nellist, who offered his own musical tribute to the struggle of the mining

communities.

'On the clear understanding that we'll never be defeated, here we go, here we go, here we go... he sang, to the tune of 'Will you dance?'. Other old favourites were also adapted for the purpose. The audience raised the roof.

'If this is the morale of the labour movement after a bit of a setback,' said Tony Benn, 'what will it be like when we win?' The lessons of the strike, he said, were not just about saving jobs, but about justice — justice for all, and that meant building socialism.

'Who will build the new society? Not the

general council of the TUC, not the national executive of the Labour Party, but we ourselves.'

A collection by Eric Clarke raised almost £10,000, including contributions from miners support groups, WAPC groups, Labour Parties, LPYSS, student labour clubs, and trade unions. Barnsley Women's Action Group topped the poll with a £2000, followed by £1000 from the Campaign group of MPs.

The real tribute for the evening, though, must go to Women Against Pit Closures. Women from the mining communities not only organised the concert and contributed generously

to the fund-raising, they were the stars of the show too.

The evening finished with Mal Finch, joined by women from across the coalfields, singing the women's songs of the strike. 'We are women, we are strong' was the best note on which to finish such an evening. The audience agreed, with a five-minute ovation.

● Information about and applications for affiliation to the Justice for Mineworkers Campaign should be sent to the campaign at: Durham Mechanics Office, 27 The Avenue, Durham DH1 4EH.

Black section replies to Bill Morris

MORE THAN half a tabloid page of last December's *Record*, the TGWU journal, was devoted to an attack on the Labour Party black section by deputy general secretary designate, Bill Morris. But though the transport workers union is a major backer of the Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom, so far it has refused to give the right of reply requested by the black section national committee.

By Carol Turner

Morris argues that he has 'no difficulty in advising the (TGWU) executive to oppose black sections,' because they are 'narrow', 'sterile' and 'divisive'. They demand 'organisation on sectarian lines', he says, which would separate 'blacks from whites and blacks from blacks'.

Morris's conclusion? 'I am convinced that black people will give their active support to Labour when they see the party committed to policies to deal with their immediate problems — not on the basis of them being partitioned into their own separate sections, but as part of a united movement of all workers. Racism is not an issue for blacks alone. It is a problem for the entire labour movement.'

Remove the attack on black sections, and such a statement would be fully supported by the Labour



Bill Morris

Party black section. The real question — which black sections were formed to take up — is *how* will Labour get there. The black section reply which the *Record* refuses to carry is in the March issue of black section newsletter. Among other points, it says: '(The Labour Party)

does after all find space for societies like the Labour Lawyers, the Cop Party, Labour drinking clubs and a Jewish Labour Party called Paole Zion. To be consistent, Bill would have to call these groups and the trades unions "divisive" and "sectarian".

'Black party members

Black sections take part in Newham reselection

NEWHAM North-West constituency Labour Party added itself to the growing list of parties who have reselected their MPs with black section participation, contrary to the NEC's instruction.

It chose Tony Banks, the sitting MP. The NEC

has still not endorsed Lewisham East's selection of black prospective candidate Russell Profitt because the constituency's black section took part.

But as more and more selections take place involving black sections, the NEC will find it increasingly hard to victimise Russell.

have given their own verdict on black sections — 37 formed in CLPs from Birmingham to Manchester, Nottingham, Liverpool, Luton, Leicester and London. Hardly just a London phenomenon. Objective proof of this is provided by the geographical range of resolutions in the

booklet for party conference.

'It is our experience that when the issue of black self-determination and black self-organisation as a means (though not the sole one) of defeating racism is given a full and fair hearing, black sections win the argument.'

STOP THE STRIP SEARCHES

PUBLIC MEETING CALLED BY THE LONDON LABOUR PARTY THURSDAY MARCH 13

CAMDEN TOWN HALL, JUDD ST, NW1 7.30pm
Wheelchair access

WITH

Jo Richardson, MP
Peter Archer, MP
Sarah Roelofs (LWI)
Richard Balfe, MEP

Also invited

Aingéal ní Mhiáchain (IBRG)
Brixton Women Prisoners Support Group
Women in Prison Campaign
Chair: Glenys Thornton,
London Labour Party

Stop the strip searches in Brixton prison

THERE IS growing support for the campaign against strip searching of Irish women prisoners in Brixton prison.

Since July 1st two prisoners on remand in prison, Martina Anderson and Ella O'Dwyer, have been strip-searched on average 50 times per month each. On 18 November they were informed that from that date the folds of their bodies could be probed. They have had 115 body searches each, i.e. with clothes on, per month. This has involved prison officers putting their hands inside the women's trousers. In the last week of October Martina Anderson was even strip-searched after having an internal gynaecological examination.

The women have been given a new and segregated exercise yard — 36 paces one way and 12 paces the other. Three warders with dogs are always present. A roof is now being put over the yard and the women have refused to use it. They are now getting no exercise.

Being category A prisoners, they are checked on every 15 minutes in the night. A flap is lifted outside the cell door, causing the light to come on and wake them up. So they are being denied proper sleep.

Martina Anderson has regular migraine attacks which are receiving inadequate medical attention. Because of the severity of the migraine, tinted glasses were ordered for her. But it was two months before she received them.

Since 1 January 1986, Martina Anderson and Ella O'Dwyer have been locked up most days for 21½ hours, separately in their cells. They try to register complaints with the Governor, but she says she can choose not to record their complaints (and she doesn't!). She has also said they are lucky to be in Brixton!



The strip-searching and constant cell-searches and cell-changes continue at the same rate as before. Their trial is set for May 1986, so the two women are facing another several months of this degrading and debilitating treatment.

Women have been systematically strip-searched in Armagh Prison, Ireland since November 1982, mainly remand prisoners. In the 24 months from November to October 1984, an average of 24 women were strip-searched 1,899 times. The authorities' excuse is that it is a security precaution, but the only things ever to be found in Armagh during a strip-search have been two keys, some money and a phial of perfume. Metal detectors are available both in Armagh and in Brixton, but strip-searches are used in preference to them.

Strip-searching is not, as is claimed, a security measure. It is an act of intimidation intended to humiliate and degrade. This level of strip searching amounts to torture. It is sexual harassment. Ella and Martina are being strip-searched because the Government has a policy of harassment of all Irish political prisoners in British jails.

Brixton prison is to be picketed every Saturday from now on to highlight the practice.

The Irish Prisoners' Appeal, which is calling the picket, is asking particular groups to turn up on specific dates, though everyone is welcome any time. Bring banners and placards which protest strip-searching.

All pickets assemble at Jebb Avenue and Brixton Hill (Brixton underground), outside the prison entrance, at 11.30am, and end at 1.30pm. On 7/8 March there is a 24-hour women-only picket, but the others are mixed. Details are as follows.

7-8 March, starts 8pm Friday: Women-only picket and vigil.

15 March: Lambeth, Southwark trades councils, trade unions.

22 March: Labour Party branches, black groups, prisoners' support groups.

● For further information contact the appeal at 245a Coldharbour Lane, SW9 (274 7700 extn 36, or 609 1743).

BEHIND MARCOS



MARCOS HAS gone, to the joy of the Filipino people and the relief of Ronald Reagan. His replacement, however, has made her allegiances clear. The bases will stay. The guerilla leaders stay in jail — above all Juan Sison, founder of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP).

General Ramos, who 'has been a favourite of the US government for some time, with excellent reason', according to the *International Herald Tribune*, is to pursue the war against the guerillas ruthlessly. The communists will not be legalised.

The list of former Marcos cronies in Aquino's team grows by the hour. This team is a US product,

constructed to do a job on the communists — a job which Marcos could not do.

Its purpose has been to try to split the revolutionaries and divide them from their potential allies by creating an 'alternative' opposition to Marcos which could guarantee US and capitalist interests in the territory.

Who are the forces of the revolutionary opposition — a movement which is probably the best organised and deepest entrenched outside Central America? And how was the Aquino alternative put together? Our two articles, reproduced from *Intercontinental Press* and *International Viewpoint*, explain the background to the new stage of struggle in the Philippines.

Aquino's backers

THE YEAR 1985 was marked by rumours and counter-rumours about the possibility of presidential elections. According to the electoral calendar, they should have taken place in 1987 and Marcos had, more than once, asserted that they would not be brought forward. However, in November last year, he suddenly announced that the elections would be held in January 1986, then only two months away! They were finally put off to 7 February 1986 in order to calm protests in the Philippines and the United States at such violent haste.

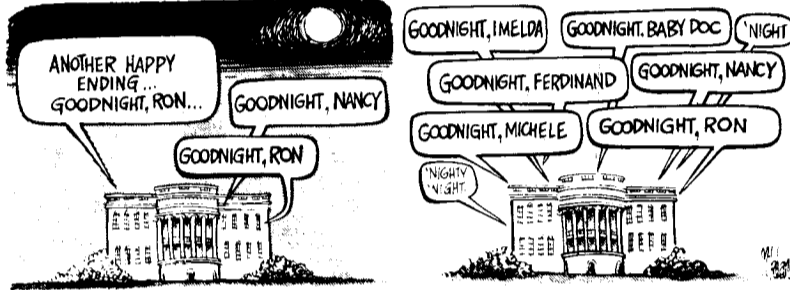
In announcing the surprise elections, Marcos obviously hoped to take advantage of the disorganisation of the opposition forces. Throughout 1985, direct or indirect negotiations had been taking place between the different opposition groups to prepare an eventual electoral challenge. But by the autumn these negotiations had ended in failure with political differences and presidential ambitions playing a contributory role. Three main poles arose out of these discussions.

The most conservative and traditional sections of the opposition bourgeoisie were grouped around the United Nationalist Democratic Organisation (UNIDO). Their leader, Salvador 'Doy' Laurel, is the head of one of the 'main families' in the country. He was a supporter of Marcos and the regime of martial law, who over the last few years has gone into opposition. He was nominated as presidential candidate for UNIDO in June 1985 and has never tried to hide his overwhelming personal ambition.

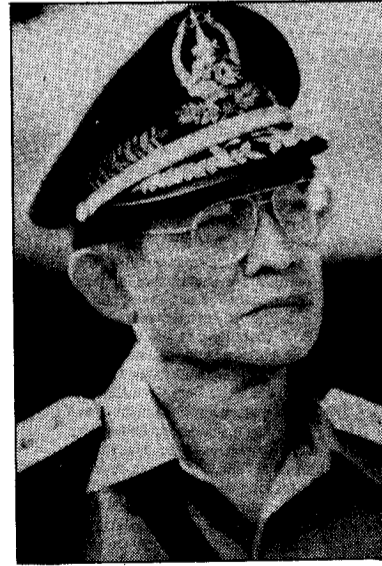
Next, a whole number of groups rallied around Corazon 'Cory' Aquino, who belongs to the important Cofuangco family, very close to the president and his wife Imelda, but also the widow of Benigno 'Ninoy' Aquino, sent into exile in the United States and then assassinated on his return to the country.

Very early on, Cory's campaign was supported by an informal coalition of various political groups. Several businessmen from Makati, the 'city' of Manila, who represent huge financial interests or are part of a 'modernist' bourgeoisie and have been penalised by the regime, which only favoured the president's cronies, gave financial support to the election campaign.

The second opposition party in the national assembly, the PDP-Laban (Philippine Democratic Party



Enrile



Ver

— Lakas ng Bayan) supported Cory's candidature from the beginning. This party has an important regional influence especially in the north of Mindanao island with Aquilino Pimentel. It is influenced by an underground movement, the 'soc dems' (Social Democrats) which came out of Jesuit circles and whose leadership is profoundly anti-communist. Since

'Ninoy's' assassination it had been attempting to make links with the brother of the deceased, Agapito 'Butz' Aquino.

Very early on also, personalities of the independent nationalist left began to organise themselves in defence of Cory's candidature.

The third pole of the opposition was a coalition of three of the mass popular opposition groups, called Bayan (Bagong Alyansang Makabayan — the New Patriotic Federation). It was launched in March 1985 and held its first congress in May. The most important mass organisations are inside this coalition and include the trade union confederation, KMU (Kilusang Mayo Uno — May 1 Movement), the Nationalist Alliance, the peasant movement — KMP, the League of Filipino Students (LFS), and so on.

Bayan claims a million supporters who are members of affiliated organisations. Under the influence of the National Democratic Front (NDF), Bayan is the main popular opposition pole. However, in May of last year and in the weeks that followed, a series of smaller groups supporting Bayan withdrew from it on a national level (It may have been different on a regional level.) Sections of the 'modernist' bourgeoisie from Makati left first and then 'Butz' and the 'soc dems' current, who founded a competing organisation, Bandila (Flag).

It must be noted that the 'soc dem' current includes a left wing element that is involved in mass work. This current, though not in Bayan, did not join Bandila.

In the weeks following the May 1985 congress, independent nationalist leaders, such as ex-Senator Jose Diokno and a movement like Kaakbay (led nationally by Diokno but also including non-party Marxists) also left Bayan without joining Bandila.

On the level of the popular masses, Bayan, the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), the New People's Army (NPA) and the National Democratic Front (NDF) represented a growing pole of attraction without any serious rival. But by

the end of 1985, these forces seemed to be more divided than ever on the electoral level. Marcos must have been counting on this disintegration so that he could have an easy victory without too much obvious fraud.

On the eve of the closing date for the declaration of candidates, Salvador Laurel and Corazon Aquino managed to arrive at a last minute agreement: Laurel agreed to give up the candidature for president and to run for the vice-presidency and Aquino agreed to stand under the banner of UNIDO and not under that of the PDP-Laban. Bayan did not present a candidate, instead calling for a boycott. Marcos was faced with a unitary candidate who had popular support and with a not inconsiderable convergence of opposition forces, however transient that convergence might be.

The main revolutionary forces in the country (the CPP, the NPA and the NDF) called for a boycott, as did the principal mass organisations like the KMU, the Nationalist Alliance and Bayan. For them the electoral dice were loaded as long as Marcos was in power, and the Cory-Laurel ticket was bourgeois. Corazon Aquino's programme was opposed to theirs in particular with regard to the former's refusal to reject the expected agreement on the presence of military bases in the country up until 1991.

The left was thus divided. Most of

the nationalist and independent Marxist left decided to situate themselves within Cory's campaign in order to attempt to channel, from the inside, the people's aspiration for change which consolidated around 'Ninoy's' widow.

This was the position of two trade union affiliates of the KMU — the National Federation of Labour (NFE) and NUHWRAIN (hotels) and also of Kaakbay. It was also the position of four 'ex-senators', nationalists and progressives: Jose Diokno, Jovito Salonga (who came back from exile in the United States in January 1985), Lorenzo Tanada and Ambrosio Padilla.

Tensions emerged within Bayan. Lorenzo Tanada, chairperson of Bayan, and Ambrosio Padilla, the vice-president, took leave of absence and resigned from the organisation. And Bayan-Mindanao got involved in the election in support of Cory.

Cory embodied a very deep aspiration for democratic rights including the end of personal rule and the release of political prisoners. Those supporting a boycott insisted that free elections were impossible while Marcos was still in power. The supporters of participation believed that the opportunity had to be seized to aggravate the regime's crisis and that the electoral terrain could not be left to the bourgeois opposition.

The revolution

US ASSISTANT secretary of defence Richard Armitage told the US senate foreign relations committee on 30 October 1985, that there are nearly 16,500 New People's Army (NPA) guerrillas in the field. Their influence has spread throughout the Philippines.

US intelligence agencies estimate that the New People's Army already has a presence in 8000 of the 40,000 villages in the Philippines. The same agencies place the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) membership at 20,000 — double the level of five years earlier. The CPP plays a leading role in the National Democratic Front, a coalition of mass organisations that was set up in April 1973.

The National Democratic Front (NDF), which is an illegal organisation, is said to have more than 50,000 organisers at work in two-thirds of the country's provinces. Among the groups making up the NDF coalition are the May First Movement (KMU) union federation, Christians for National Liberation, the League of Filipino Students, Nationalist Youth, Youth for Nationalism and Democracy, the Nationalist Health Association, and the Association of Nationalist Teachers. Membership in the mass organisations that make up the NDF is estimated at one million.

The CPP also has considerable in-



Jose Marie Sison

fluence in two legal coalitions — the National Alliance for Justice, Freedom, and Democracy, and the New Patriotic Alliance known by the acronym Bayan (which means 'nation' in the Talalog language).

The National Alliance, which claims to have 500,000 followers, was formed by organisations sponsoring a 21 September 1983 protest rally marking the eleventh anniversary of the proclamation of martial law. That rally drew half a million participants. Bayan, formed in April 1985, claims one million members and includes in its ranks the National Alliance for Justice, Freedom, and Democracy.

The CPP's existence dates back to an April 1967 meeting of the Central

OVERTHROW



onaries



Committee of the already existing Communist Party of the Philippines (PKP). At that meeting, the PKP expelled a group of young activists who charged that the PKP leadership had in effect liquidated the organisation a decade earlier. The group of young expellees was led by Jose Maria Sison, who had begun criticising the PKP leadership in 1964.

Sison and his supporters responded by setting up their own political bureau. They issued their first public statement on May Day 1967, hailing the Chinese Cultural Revolution, blasting the Soviet Communist Party, and condemning the old PKP leadership as 'the bearers of modern revisionism in the Philippines'.

On 26 December 1968, 11 of the expellees gathered to form a new party, also called the Communist Party of the Philippines but differentiated from the old party by use of the initials CPP. The CPP's aim, stated in a document ratified at the Congress of Reestablishment, was 'the overthrow of US imperialism, feudalism, and bureaucratic capitalism, the seizure of political power and its consolidation'. Its method was to launch a 'protracted people's war in which the revolutionary forces would gradually strangle the enemy-controlled cities from stable bases in the countryside'. Three months later, on 29 March 1969 — the twenty-seventh anniversary of the formation of the World War II Huk guerrillas — the CPP set up the New People's Army to wage armed struggle under the party's leadership.

In an interview with *Intercontinental Press* (12 November 1984) Sison, who has been in prison since 1977, stated that the three key tasks in the Philippines today are achieving national independence, eliminating the Marcos dictatorship, and solving the land question. 'By national independence I mean the cutting off of the dependence on a superpower like the United States. To develop democracy we have to eliminate feudalism, to liberate the peasant from feudal and semi-feudal bondage ...

'We have to break up the

feudalism so that the local forces of capitalism can be liberated, that is, the national entrepreneurs and smaller businessmen. The property owned by the multinationals and traitor elements will be taken over by the state. Our economy would be a combined one — of state and Filipino private ownership'.

In order to achieve this goal, Sison argued 'the solution is a national democratic revolution of a new type. That is, with the class leadership of the proletariat.' The liberal bourgeoisie, he stated, cannot lead the process because they 'do not have the political, ideological, or organisational leadership necessary to cope with US imperialism'.

Although the CPP was strongly Maoist at the time of its formation and was deeply affected by the ultraleftism of the Chinese Cultural Revolution, the CPP broke with the Chinese Communist Party in 1975, when the People's Republic of China and the Marcos dictatorship established diplomatic ties.

The CPP, many of whose positions are in flux, remains deeply influenced by its Stalinist origins. The CPP's newspaper *Ang Bayan*, for example, continues to prominently feature 'Mao Tse-Tung Thought' on its masthead.

And even after the break with the Chinese Communist Party, the CPP continued to endorse many of the same foreign policy views. When Vietnamese troops entered Kampuchea to help overthrow the murderous Pol Pot regime in late 1978, *Ang Bayan* saw in this the hand of 'Soviet social imperialism' and chastised the Vietnamese leadership for 'allowing itself to be used' by Moscow. *Ang Bayan* also justified the subsequent Chinese invasion of Vietnam.

More recently, however, some prominent leaders of the CPP have made statements less critical of Moscow. However, when Ferdinand Marcos imposed martial law in 1972, the reactions of the PKP and the CPP were fundamentally different.

Two months after martial law was imposed, Jesus Lava of the PKP, at that time still in prison, issued a 'political transmission' indicating that on balance martial law was not so bad because its main targets were Maoists and CIA-linked politicians like Benigno Aquino.

The PKP took a further step toward making peace with Marcos in October 1974, when members of its Political Bureau met with him at the presidential palace. Felicisimo Macapagal, the PKP general secretary, told the Philippine dictator: 'Your excellency, you have called for national unity and we are here today in response to your call. We do so with an offer of patriotic and socially conscious participation in nation-building which has long been denied us.'

The PKP Political Bureau members symbolically turned over 19 weapons to Marcos to mark their commitment not to take up armed struggle. Since that time, PKP leaders have continued to be invited to affairs at the presidential palace.

The CPP's reaction to martial law was very different. CPP activists from the Manila student network took to the mountains to join the small group of NPA members already waging armed struggle. The addition of these cadres enabled the CPP and NPA to build bases in a number of regions. In fact, as the *Far Eastern Economic Review* noted on November 21 1985: 'they have succeeded in forging a nationwide cell structure, something no previous revolt had been able to accomplish.'

Although a number of central leaders of the CPP, including Sison, were captured in 1976 and 1977, this loss has not stemmed the growth of the CPP-led insurgency.



Malcolm X

A tribute to Malcolm X

MALCOLM X, the North American black leader was gunned down 21 years ago on 21 February 1965. He stressed many times how important the world struggles of the oppressed and for national liberation were for black people in the USA. In 1964 he toured Africa and the Middle East to win support for the black struggle in the USA and to learn about the battles going on there. In 1964 the US and Belgian governments sent troops and planes to crush a popular uprising in the Congo (Now Zaire). On 13 December of that year Malcolm X delivered a speech against this crime. We reprint an extract of that speech from the book *Malcolm X Speaks*.

I, FOR ONE, would like to impress, especially upon those who call themselves leaders, the importance of realising the direct connection between the struggle of the Afro-American in this country and the struggle of our people all over the world. As long as we think — as one of my good brothers mentioned out of the side of his mouth here a couple of Sundays ago — that we should get Mississippi straightened out before we worry about the Congo, you'll never get Mississippi straightened out ...

We have to realise what part our struggle has in the overall world struggle. Secondly, we need allies ... But when we realise how large this earth is and how many different people there are on it, and how closely they resemble us, then when we turn to them for some sort of help or aid or to form alliances, then we'll make a little faster progress ...

I think it's important to show the importance of keeping an open mind ... We never like to think in terms of being dumb enough to let someone put something over on us ... But you and I are living in a very deceitful and tricky country which has a very deceitful and tricky government ...

They take the newspapers and make the newspapers blow you and me up as if all of us are criminals, all of us are racists, all of us are drug addicts, or all of us are rioting. This is how they do it. When you explode legitimately against the injustices that have been heaped upon you, they use the press to make it look like you're a vandal. If you were a vandal, you have the right to be a vandal.

The press is so powerful in its image-making role, it can make a criminal look like he's the victim and make the victim look like he's the criminal ... If you aren't careful, the newspapers will have you hating the people who are being oppressed and loving people who are doing the oppressing ...

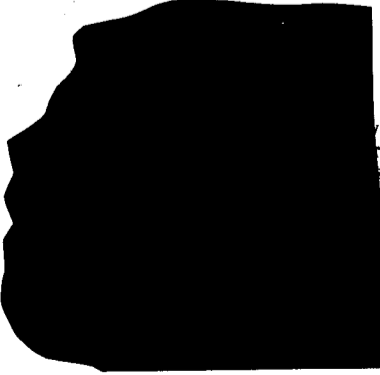
Right now, in the Congo, defenceless villages are being bombed, black women and children and babies are being blown to bits by airplanes. Where do these airplanes

come from? The United States ... (The media) won't write that American planes are blowing the flesh from the bodies of black women and black babies and black men. No.

Why? Because they're American planes. As long as they're American planes, that's humanitarian. As long as they're being piloted by anti-Castro Cubans, that makes it all right. Because Castro's a villain, and anybody who's against him, whatever they do, that's humanitarian ...

They take the press with their ability to control you with image-making, land they make mass murder, cold-blooded murder, look like a humanitarian project. All these thousands of black people dying, butchered, and you have no compassion in your hearts whatsoever for them, because the victim has been made to look like he's the criminal ...

So I say, brothers and sisters, it's not a case of worrying about what's going on in Africa before we get things straight over here. It's a case of realising that the Afro-American problem is not a Negro problem, or an American problem, but a human problem, a problem for humanity. When you realise that, when you look at your and my problem in the context of the entire world and see that it is a world problem, and that there are other people on this earth who look just like you do — who also have the same problem — then you and I become allies and we can put forth our efforts in a way to get the best results.



Europe without NATO



Tony Benn

LAST MONTH, on 12 February, TONY BENN spoke at a mass meeting in Madrid, Spain, as part of the campaign for a 'no' vote in the Spanish referendum on NATO membership. The referendum takes place on 12 March. Below we reprint Benn's speech.

Importance of the Spanish Referendum

I have come here to express support for your campaign against Spanish membership of NATO. For if the people of Spain decide to vote against NATO membership, in next month's referendum, it will be welcomed by all those who are working for peace everywhere in the world. Indeed it could herald the beginning of a really powerful movement against the military blocs in Europe, against the ever-escalating nuclear arms race and against the American domination of Europe, and for detente and for international co-operation.

The British people, like the Spanish people, should also demand a referendum to decide whether we wish to remain within NATO. For in Britain, as in Spain, there are thousands of American troops in over a hundred US bases equipped with a huge armoury of nuclear weapons, all under the personal command of President Reagan whom we did not elect, do not control, and cannot remove — and no written agreement has ever been published governing the use of these bases or these weapons.

The very existence of these bases makes our two countries into prime targets in the event of the United States stumbling into war, or actually provoking it. The same is true in many other countries, and there are tens of millions of people throughout Europe, who believe that NATO, and the system of military blocs itself, now poses the greatest danger to peace in the world. It is significant that the US has refused to agree to a NATO 'no first use' policy for nuclear weapons.

There is no such thing as being a member of the civil wing of NATO, for that organization is committed to joint military planning, and while American military bases remain in Spain, in Britain or anywhere else, those countries will continue to be under the effective control of the USA.

The myth of a Soviet military threat

NATO is not — as is claimed for it — a defensive alliance to safeguard the West against Soviet aggression, which was the reason given for establishing it, after the last world war. For there has never been a shred of evidence to suggest that the USSR intends, or has ever intended, to launch a military offensive to occupy Western Europe.

After having been invaded by Germany twice this century, after having had a British military expedition sent in against it to crush the revolution, and after having lost over twenty million dead defeating the Nazis between 1941 and 1945, the USSR has



Spanish demonstrators campaign against NATO

legitimate anxieties about her own security.

The USSR is a super-power, which like the USA wishes to protect itself, and to exercise influence around its borders, as it has done in Eastern Europe, but that is not the same as planning a military assault upon the West. The best way to liberalize the regimes in Eastern Europe would be to work for detente.

And now we have, on the table, a serious and comprehensive series of proposals for disarmament from the USSR covering nuclear and chemical weapons and linked to a parallel proposal to divert money to assist the developing world.

Responding to these Soviet initiatives does not in any way involve endorsing the system of government in the USSR, which is a matter for them to determine.

NATO and American power

NATO has, in reality, become the hard core of an American global power system, designed to protect her economic and political interests, and world capitalism — now itself in crisis — against the many popular movements that are working for peace, democracy and human rights.

When military dictatorships came to power in Greece and Turkey, the USA and NATO worked closely with them, despite their denial of basic freedoms, and in Latin America the United States has encouraged, and supported, the creation of some of the worst military dictatorships — as in Chile.

American policy world-wide has followed the same pattern, setting up a chain of alliances, like SEATO and ANZUS, which have provided a string of other US bases across the globe. As we saw in New Zealand, when a government is elected which is committed to the maintenance of a non-nuclear policy, the USA immediately threatened her with retaliatory measures. In Greece too the Americans have obstructed the policy of the PASOK government by

a combination of military and economic demands made on them.

The attack on the Bay of Pigs in Cuba and the much more recent invasion of Grenada are examples of how the White House uses its power to enforce its will. In that context the possible use of US bases to sustain the new Rapid Deployment Force could involve any country with US bases in a war which its government did not wish.

It is also clear that the policy of 'Vietnamization', under which the people of Vietnam were made to carry the main burden of losses in the war, is to be extended to other areas. The Pentagon would like to see a similar policy of 'Europeanization' under which Europeans provide most of the manpower, while the USA controls the nuclear weaponry and the policy of NATO.

We should not forget that the nuclear weapons that the USA owns are fuelled with plutonium, some of which comes from the civil nuclear power stations in Britain, and the uranium that goes into them comes from Namibia under the control of the South African government, so that apartheid has to be sustained in order to keep the USA equipped with the war heads that it needs for its forces.

NATO threatens our freedom too

NATO also undermines democracy in the parliamentary democracies themselves. For it is NATO which decides the level of spending on defence, replacing the role of the national governments to determine their own defence and foreign policies, which have, effectively, thus also been removed from the control of the electors in these countries.

The political power of the military has grown steadily, with each new inflated defence budget always justified by the stimulation of artificial fears of a foreign attack or internal subversion. Indeed the main motive for the civil defence preparations, which we

also have to pay for, is to deal with those people who might oppose the policies of the government in a period leading up to, or during, a war — and the only military operations that have ever been conducted in which the bases were involved was a year ago when hundreds of British troops were used to clear a peace camp from the area.

In that connection we ought to remember that the US intelligence services effectively supervise and control the intelligence services in all the NATO countries — intelligence services that are more concerned to watch dissidents than to catch spies and in the eyes of the NATO intelligence services all trade unionists, socialists and peace activists may be seen as subversives.

The cost and consequences of inflated defence budgets

The United States has used its position in NATO to commit itself, and its allies, to spend thousands of billions of dollars building huge arsenals of weapons, under the effective control of secretive and repressive military establishments. This eases the US defence budget and, by insisting upon higher defence spending in Europe, it also creates a larger market for US weapons here.

But those who believe that the purchase of US weapons gives them independence should remember that the US may impose restrictions on their use, and in the case of the Trident and Polaris missiles they cannot be used without the help of the guidance systems provided by the United States itself. In addition there is a growing tension between the US and Europe over which should control the arms production, as the Westland helicopter affair has recently shown in Britain.

At the same time the cost of all this military hardware is denying us the money we need to meet the basic requirements of our own people for work, homes, health care and decent



pensions, and is depriving the third world of the essential resources that it needs to develop itself and end famine and poverty.

On top of this President Reagan has now come up with his Star Wars project which is a criminal waste of those scarce resources and is an extra obstacle to any disarmament agreement. The other motivations for Star Wars seem to be both a crude attempt to bankrupt the USSR, while pumping money into the high technology industries in the USA to defeat Japanese competition. Yet it is partly because the Japanese spend such a tiny fraction of their huge national income on defence that they are able to concentrate upon civil production, keep their best brains on the civil side and make and sell so many of their goods all over the world.



A vision of a new Europe

If we hope to win majority support for the building of a new Europe we must make it crystal clear what it is we want, and our demands must include:

1. The withdrawal of all foreign troops from Europe, East and West, the dismantling of all bases, and the dismantling of all the military blocs.
2. The creation of a European security system that will safeguard the integrity of all states.
3. Major cuts in defence spending and the diversion of the money and manpower saved into the civil field to meet the needs of our own people and the development requirements of the third world.
4. A positive response to the Soviet initiative on disarmament and the participation of every nation in Europe, on an equal basis to agree a reduction of troops and arms.
5. The development of a new and more co-operative system in Europe to replace the EEC and Comecon, that will allow every country in our continent to work together for the betterment of all, as equal and fully self-governing nations.
6. Much closer links between the peoples, trade unions and peace movements in all European countries to help us to free ourselves from the divisions caused by the cold war.



Conclusion

If the Spanish people vote against NATO next month all these possibilities could be opened up.

We cannot live for ever in a divided Europe and we must resolve to build a new one within the next fifteen years to take us through in peace and security into the next century.

International



British trade unionists participate in a solidarity demonstration in El Salvador

Sacked miner reports from El Salvador

How we built the boycott in Portsmouth

WE'VE BEEN in dispute for six weeks over our right to refuse to handle South African goods. We first ap-

Speech by Andy Lavender, Portsmouth steward

proached our management last September. We were outraged at their instruction to continue handling these goods. We were told by them they do not discriminate about the country of origin from where they purchase their goods. They also told us any employees who take action would be disciplined.

We said we could not tolerate this and from 13 January have boycotted South African fruit in the health service. Immediately we faced discipline, and workers were sent home half a day early and lost bonuses.

We've responded to the call of our South African brothers and sisters. To stop this, management have brought in outside contractors as our drivers and central stores staff are refusing to handle the goods. We're asking that Britain's unions respond to the call of the ANC, SACTU and COSATU for sanctions. We want financial support, but more than that we want you to take action in your own workplace. If you can't yet take action, question the morality of your employer. At present we're isolated in Portsmouth and also face the threat of anti-union laws. We need the support of the trade union movement to force this government to take action. NUPE in Portsmouth have taken this action, we hope you'll follow us.

• Messages of support/donations to: Portsmouth NUPE Health Workers Branch Secretary, Richard Jewison, 93 Leigh Rd, Eastleigh, Hants, Tel 0703-61151.

DAVE BOYLE, a sacked miner from Silverwood pit near Rotherham and member of the Labour Party Young Socialists, was one of a four-person trade union delegation which visited the strife-torn Central American nation of El Salvador in January 1986. They saw plenty of action. During their stay, FMLN guerrillas blacked out power across the country for several days, and a wave of strikes and street protests met the announcement by the dictatorship of austerity measures. JOHN SMITH interviewed him for Socialist Action.

What were your first impressions of El Salvador?

There were soldiers and armed police everywhere, patrolling the streets especially in San Salvador. There were even guards with machine guns outside MacDonalds.

The trade unionists I met were very concerned about the large numbers of union members and leaders who've been jailed, killed or simply gone missing. They wanted us to send messages of protest to Duarte, and solidarity messages to the unions. They stressed that this international pressure saves lives and strengthens their morale.

How can they organise and have disputes when the government has killed 60,000 people since 1980?

They have very few full time officials. Most union officers are shop-floor workers. When grievances arise they are on the spot.

The unions are growing rapidly as workers lose their fear of being active. The government has eased up a little on anti-union repression. The unions can organise strikes and demonstrations without being attacked by the so-called security forces. A few years back there were almost daily massacres. Now the repression is much more selective.

This means there are still many jailings and death squad assassinations. For example, we met the general secretary of FUSS (Salvadorean Trade Union Unity Federation). He said that in the last 19 years 25 general secretaries had been murdered. We asked him if he was worried. He said yes, but someone had to do it, and if something happened to him many would be willing to step in to his shoes.

Why has the government relaxed repression even to

the centre of trade union disputes?

First, legal recognition. Many unions are fighting for legal status — without it, they have no way of being legally represented when members and leaders are arrested and carted off for taking industrial action. Wages and conditions are also at the centre of most disputes.

What about directly political demands?

FENASTRAS (National Trade Union Federation of Salvadorean Workers) calls for the government to enter a dialogue with the guerrillas.

Those we met concentrated on union solidarity against torture and killings of their members, and for basic human and union

rights. With few exceptions they did not directly address the war.

But I think they have to be very conscious of security, and they were concentrating on what they wanted from us, which was solidarity against repression.

On the demonstration, which was protesting austerity measures, all the speakers denounced the war.

• Report back meeting with delegation members Larry Smith, assistant general secretary of the TGWU, Joan Burbidge, TGWU executive member, Dave Boyle, sacked miner, Jeremy Corbyn MP and a representative of FENASTRAS. Monday 17 March 7.30, Lambeth Town Hall, (Brixton tube) London.



a small degree if at the same time it is stepping up the war?

International solidarity! When I was there I saw literally thousands of letters from abroad denouncing the attacks on the unions or on specific union members. The minister of labour himself showed us a huge pile.

More and more workers are joining the unions because they see how much international backing they have. When we marched on the anti-austerity demonstration, we carried a banner announcing our presence. It helped provide security for the demonstration, making it too politically costly for the government to attack it. But the actual organisers had to keep their identities completely secret, and many marchers covered their faces.

How old, and what sex, were the union leaders you met?

Most were young men, but women were strongly represented at all levels of the union structures. Women form the leadership of some of the most militant unions. For instance, the hospital workers' union, which organises all who work in the hospitals — nurses, cooks, doctors — which last summer staged a sit-in which was attacked by the army and police. I would say that the average age of the union leaders we met was about 30.

What sort of issues are at

Anti Apartheid trade union conference big success

OVER 500 delegates came to the Anti Apartheid Movement's national trade union conference on 1 March in London. They came from 36 different unions including official representatives from 26 national executives. Though NALGO had most delegates and white collar unions dominated, there were 25 rail workers, 12 miners, and 15 print workers.

Ron Todd, describing COSATU, the new mass union federation formed late last year, as a 'great ad-

By Pete Clifford

vance for working people', echoed Oliver Tambo's call to the last labour conference for 'people's sanctions'. He applauded recent trade union boycott actions by Dunnes store workers, Southampton dockers and Portsmouth health workers and called for a 'dramatic extension of actions into our industries and across our services.'

The growing Portsmouth action, which began only six weeks ago on 13 January, won health steward Andy Lavender a standing ovation and a collection of over £250. NUPE's leadership, which backs the action, has circulated branches appealing for support and solidarity actions against South African goods.



WORLD IN ACTION

Egypt

THIRTY-SIX died, many more were injured, and over 2,000 people were arrested when Egypt's special security police rioted on Tuesday and Wednesday 25-26 February.

The riot was sparked by rumours that their length of service was to go up from three to four years. The 300,000 security police, a conscript force whose only job is to stand guard on public buildings for up to 12 hours at a stretch, get about £1 a week and two meals.

Riot areas included three districts of Cairo, Ismailia on the Suez Canal, and Sohag on the Nile, South of Cairo. Targets were luxury hotels and the rich quarters. The rioters also stormed the Tourah prison in South Cairo, freeing political prisoners and convicts.

Egypt's oil revenues, which last year reached \$2bn, have halved in the oil crisis and its debts total \$32.5bn with a trade deficit of \$7.7bn per year. Popular discontent amongst the city poor has taken an increasingly anti-American and anti-Zionist turn. Attempts to refound a Nasserite party — illegal at present — are said to count on nearly 50,000 potential adherents.

Germany: doleful Kohl

Germany's ruling coalition suffered a severe defeat in local elections in Schleswig-Holstein, further intensifying its crisis. The Christian Democratic Union (CDU), which rules the region lost 12 per cent of its vote. Its partners, the Free Democrats lost 50 per cent of theirs. The Social Democrats' vote went from 34.6 per cent to 40.7 per cent and the Greens' from 3.1 to 7.4 per cent.

Last month over 200,000 workers downed tools for up to five hours against laws restricting social security payments to workers laid off through strikes.

To make matters worse Chancellor Kohl of the CDU faces renewed scrutiny of his role in a corruption scandal. Mr Otto Schilly, the leading parliamentary Green deputy, has produced evidence that Kohl lied in testimony given to an enquiry established in 1984, when it was found that the huge Flick company had been bribing German politicians to represent its interests in parliament.

Though the German economy is doing relatively well in capitalist terms, with a £22bn trade surplus, unemployment has risen to 10.4 per cent and — ominously — production has started to decline, an early sign of approaching slump.

Recent opinion polls give the Social Democrats 51 per cent to the CDU's 37. The general election is due in 1987.

Grenada

President Reagan's recent Grenada visit was not all smiles and welcomes. The week before he came police razed to the ground a St George's ghetto during a raid in which 25 persons were arrested.

The raid was conducted by the Special Services Unit (SSU) which is US-trained. Protestors say they beat youths with gun butts and threw broken bottles at them.

The authorities deny the decision to flatten the building had any connection with the large anti-Reagan picture on the front of it.

US economy

The US trade deficit for December reached a record high level of \$17.4bn, an increase of nearly 50 per cent over the previous 11 months. And January's deficit was \$16.1bn. This was not supposed to happen. Late last year agreement was reached between Japanese, European and American bankers that the time had come to devalue the dollar in order to restore US competitiveness in export markets.

Prices of US products have fallen in relative terms by 30-40 per cent and still the USA is importing more than it is exporting.

Underlying the trend to greater US trade deficits is the steady relative decline in US productivity. Recent statistics show the productivity differential between the US and its leading rivals is still increasing.

The latest results will fuel strong protectionist lobbies in Washington — by last August no fewer than 300 protectionist bills were making their way through the legislature.

In celebration of International Women's Day South African Women's Charter

NEXT SATURDAY, 8 March, is International Women's Day. South African women have played, and continue to play, a prominent role in the struggle to overthrow the apartheid regime. What could be a more fitting tribute to International Women's Day 1986 than to reproduce the Women's Charter, adopted at the 1954 founding conference of FSAW, the Federation of South African Women?

WE, the women of South Africa, wives and mothers, working women and housewives, African, Indian, European, and Coloured, hereby declare our aim of striving for the removal of all laws, regulations, conventions, and customs that discriminate against us as women and that deprive us in any way of our inherent right to the advantages, responsibilities, and opportunities that society offers to any one section of the population.

We women do not form a society separate from men. There is only one society, and it is made up of both women and men. As women we share the problems and anxieties of our men and join hands with them to remove social evils and obstacles to progress.

The level of civilisation which any society has reached can be measured by the degree of freedom that its members enjoy. Measured by that standard, South Africa must be considered low in the scale of civilised nations.

We women share with our menfolk the cares and anxieties imposed by poverty and its evils. As

wives and mothers, it falls upon us to make small wages stretch a long way. It is we who feel the cries of our children when they are hungry and sick. It is our lot to keep and care for the homes that are too small, broken, and dirty to be kept clean. We know the burden of looking after children and land when our husbands are away in the mines, on the farms, and in the towns earning our daily bread.

We know what it is to keep family life going in pondokkies (huts) and shanties, or in overcrowded one-room apartments. We know the bitterness of children taken to lawless ways, of daughters becoming unmarried mothers whilst still at school, of boys and girls growing up without education, training, or jobs at a living wage.

Privileges

These are evils that need not exist. They exist because the society in which we live is divided into poor and rich, into non-European and European. They exist because there are privileges for the few,



1983 meeting to celebrate international women's day

discrimination and harsh treatment for the many. We women have stood and will stand shoulder to shoulder with our menfolk in a common struggle against poverty, race and class discrimination, and the evils of the colour bar.

As members of the national liberatory movements and trade unions, in and through our various organisations, we march forward with our men in the struggle for liberation and the defence of the working people. We pledge ourselves to keep high the banner of equality, fraternity, and liberty. As women there rests upon us also the burden of removing from our society all the social differences developed in past times between men and women, which have the effect of keeping our sex in a position of inferiority and subordination.

We resolve to struggle for the removal of laws and customs that deny African women the right to own, inherit, or alienate property. We resolve to work for a change in the laws of marriage such as are found amongst our African, Malay, and Indian people, which have the effect of placing wives in the position of legal subjection to husbands and giving husbands the power to dispose of wives' property and earnings and dictate to them in all matters affecting them and their children.

Laws

We recognise that the women are treated as mirrors by these marriage and property laws because of ancient and revered traditions and customs, which had their origin in the antiquity of the people and no doubt served purposes of great value in bygone times. There was a time in the African society when every woman reaching marriageable age was assured of a husband, home, land, and security. Then husbands and wives with their children belonged to families and clans that supplied most of their own material needs and were largely self-sufficient. Men and women were partners in a compact and closely integrated family unit.

Those conditions have gone. The tribal and kin-

ship society to which they belonged has been destroyed as a result of the loss of tribal land, migration of men away from the tribal home, the growth of towns and industries, and the rise of a great body of wage-earners on the farms and in the urban areas, who depend wholly or mainly on wages for a livelihood.

Thousands of African women, like Indian, Coloured and European women, are employed today in factories, homes, offices, shops, on farms, in professions as nurses,

an earlier and different state of society are still applied to them. They are responsible for their own person and their children. Yet the law seeks to enforce upon them the status of a minor. Not only are African, Coloured, and Indian women denied political rights, but they are also, in many parts of the Union (of South Africa), denied the same status as men in such matters as the right to enter into contracts, to own and dispose of property, and to exercise guardianship over their children.

Society

The law has lagged behind the development of society; it no longer corresponds to the actual social and economic position of women. The law has become an obstacle to progress of the women, and therefore a brake on the whole of society.

This intolerable condition would not be allowed to continue were it not for the refusal of a large section of our menfolk to concede to us women the rights and privileges which they demand for themselves. We shall teach the men that they cannot hope to liberate themselves from the evils of discrimination and prejudice as long as they fail to extend to women complete and unqualified equality in law and in practice.

We also recognise that large numbers of our womenfolk continue to be bound by traditional practices and conventions and fail to realise that these have become obsolete and a brake on progress. It is our duty and privilege to enlist all women in our struggle for emancipation and to bring to them all realisation of the intimate relationship that exists between their status of inferiority as women and the inferior status to which their people are subjected by discriminatory laws and colour prejudices.

It is our intention to carry out a nationwide programme of education that will bring home to the men and women of all national groups the realisation that freedom cannot be won for any one section or for the people as a whole as long as we women are kept in bon-



1952 'Defiance' campaign against apartheid

teachers, and the like. As unmarried women, widows, or divorcees they have to fend for themselves, often without



Apartheid rests on black labour

the assistance of a male relative. Many of them are responsible not only for their own livelihood but also that of their children. Large numbers of women today are in fact the sole breadwinners and heads of their families.

Nevertheless, the laws and practices derived from



dage.

We women appeal to all progressive organisations, to members of the great national liberatory movements, to the trade unions and working class organisations, to the churches, educational and welfare organisations, to all progressive men and women who have the interests of the people at heart, to join with us in this great and noble endeavour.

Our aims

We declare the following aims. This organisation is formed for the purpose of uniting women in common action for the removal of all political, legal, economic, and social disabilities. We shall strive for women to obtain:

- 1 The right to vote and to be elected to all state bodies, without restriction or discrimination.
- 2 The right to full opportunities for employment with equal pay and possibilities of promotion in all spheres of work.
- 3 Equal rights with men in relation to property, marriage, and children and for the removal of all laws and customs that deny women such equal rights.
- 4 For the development of every child through free, compulsory education for all; for the protection of mother and child through

maternity homes, welfare clinics, crèches, and nursery schools, in countryside and towns, through proper homes for all, and through the provision of water, light, transport, sanitation, and other amenities of modern civilisation.

5 For the removal of all laws that restrict free movement, that prevent or hinder the right of free association and activity in democratic organisations, and the right to participate in the work of these organisations.

6 To build and strengthen women's sections in the national liberatory movements, the organisation of women in trade unions, and through the peoples' varied organisations.

7 To cooperate with all other organisations that have similar aims in South Africa as well as throughout the world.

8 To strive for permanent peace throughout the world.

• The text is taken from an ANC pamphlet issued in 1984, which the Congress declared 'Year of the Women'.

Other Books

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

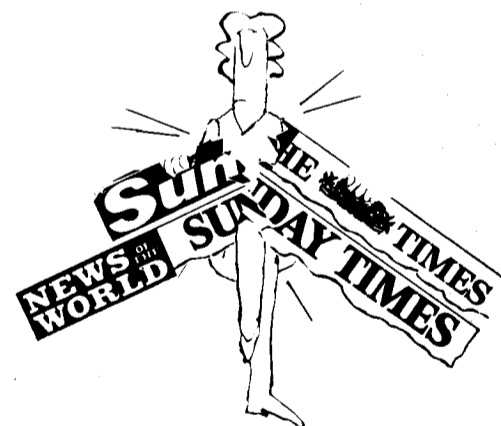
Make cheques or postal orders payable to IMRS. Orders with payment should be sent to: Other Books, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP. If the total value of books ordered is over £10, then simply add 15 per cent for postage and packing.

These and other books, together with a wide selection of magazines, posters and postcards are also available from Birmingham's Other Bookshop, 137 Digbeth (just off the main shopping centre) (phone 021-643 5904)

International Women's Day Solidarity with women in print

Women's March and Rally

Saturday 8 March



Assemble 5pm, Lower Thames Street (Tower Hill end)
March to Wapping for a rally starting 6pm

Speakers include Brenda Dean of SOGAT and Ann Lilburn of Women Against Pit Closures

On 8 March 1908 women garment workers in New York marched for the right to work and the right to organise. Two years later in recognition of their fight an International Trade Union Congress declared 8 March a special day to celebrate women workers everywhere. This year tribute is paid to the women in the print industry who have been sacked or whose husbands have lost their jobs. Women sacked by Murdoch and all other women print workers call on their sisters to join the march, and picket 'Fortress' Wapping on International Women's Day. We are part of a long tradition of struggle and resistance. We know which side we are on — show your support and solidarity.

JOIN US

For further details contact: 01-582 0996

Dubbins says 'build up the picket'

THE BIGGEST Saturday evening demonstration so far, marched from Tower Hill to Wapping last weekend. Led by the national council of the NGA, it included printers from most of the Fleet Street papers as well as NGA members from as far away as Trent. Among the other union banners were the Inner London Teachers Association, themselves in the centre of an ongoing dispute, and Point of Ayr NUM from North Wales.

Tony Dubbins, general secretary of the NGA, spoke at a rally at the end of the march flanked by banners of the London region of the NGA, and the London Press branch of the EETPU. He told the marchers:

'We keep getting told the dispute is about new technology. It isn't. It is about people. We have to get a clear message to Murdoch, he has to let our people work at Wapping, they have the right to a job. No government, no court, no law is going to stop us winning.'

'Do not believe the faint-hearted who say the

picket is not having an effect. The sales of Murdoch's papers are taking a dive. He is having to give a

By Pete Evans

40 per cent rebate to his advertisers in order to keep them happy.

'We have to tell the truth about the Tory law. No judge has the right to take away from us the right to work. We will not accept fines for picketing. You cannot fine and imprison principles.'

'We are told the EETPU has seen the light. They say they are back in the fold. Whether they are or

not, we will not forget what they did. We do not want any more fine words from them, we want action. If they are back in the fold, we want them on this side of the picket line.

'We want the Labour Party to stop ducking and weaving on this question. We want them up front. MPs should be raising the question of Wapping as often as possible in parliament.'

'And there is another thing they should sort out. One of those crossing the picket line, and NUJ member of the Sun, is a Labour Party prospective parliamentary candidate! His name is Malcolm Withers, PPC for Stevenage. They should sort that out.'

'We want you back again each Saturday. The picket has to be built up. And remember: NGA stands for Not Going Away!'



EETPU leader Eric Hammond: was also the subject of print pickets at Congress House

Interview with Paul Whetton NCB offensive in Notts

A MAJORITY of miners at Bevercotes colliery in North Notts have just completed a week of strike action in protest at the sacking of their NUM branch secretary Paul Whetton. Paul was sacked for posting notice of an NUM branch meeting at the pit. The strike, which involved UDM members as well as the NUM branch, crippled production at the pit.

The new wave of NCB attacks in Notts includes last Wednesday's sacking of Mark Hunter and Tony Geddes, Welbeck NUM members, for the 'unauthorised distribution' of NUM leaflets.

When this news was passed to a mass meeting at Bevercotes, in the words of NUM Area Vice President, Mick McGinty: 'A lot of lads got up from the floor and said that they would have the next two days off as well in protest at the Welbeck situation.'

At a number of other pits, including Ollerton, Bilsthorpe and Gedling, leading NUM members have been given final warnings by management for a

variety of alleged offences relating to NUM activity.

At Calverton colliery, an NUM members was suspended last week for allegedly removing a UDM poster. This poster calls on members suffering 'harassment' from an 'unrecognised organisation called the NUM' to report this to the UDM so that 'these people can be dismissed by the management'!

However, there are also increasing signs of rebellion from within the UDM. The NCB's assault on the NUM is a reflection of the difficulties now facing the breakaway.

Some UDM members voted to continue the ac-

tion at last Wednesday's mass meeting.

These cracks in the UDM have given NUM members in Notts a new confidence to rebuild their union, and to resist the NCB's new attacks. As Mick McGinty explains: 'We can't stand by and watch our members being picked off one by one... We've got to fight. We can't lie down and let them walk all over us.'

Paul Whetton, sacked NUM branch secretary at Bevercotes, explained his view of the situation in Notts.

'I was suspended allegedly for putting an NUM branch meeting notice up. In reality, it was in response to a letter from Area Industrial Relations telling managers to be extra vigilant. They couldn't get me on anything else — bad time keeping or any breach of the Mines and

Quarries Act. I believe the order went out to "get Whetton".'

'This highlighted the lengths that management are prepared to go to to stop the NUM and cushion the UDM. Even hardened UDM men have seen it and learnt the lesson, as with the UDM members who have come out and stayed out through this dispute. They can see it's a blatant victimisation for carrying out trade union principles and practices.'

'The strike at Bevercotes was called from an "open" branch meeting. It was "open" as we hoped UDM members would attend, which they did.'

'We're facing a concerted attack from the NCB because of the success we're having in recruiting back into the NUM. At our colliery we finished the strike with 100 members. When we held the political levy ballot in early December we'd got

200 members. Now we've 370.'

'You've only got to look at those figures, and the timescale and it doesn't take an expert to work out that within another couple of months we are going to have a majority at Bevercotes colliery. And it's not just here. At Ollerton, Linby and other pits they are steadily drawing members across.'

'Now, one of the things we were depending on was that the NCB would do its usual and put its foot in it. They've done exactly that! Every time the NCB or the UDM take action you can guarantee that we'll get another 20 or 30 members because they act in such a stupid, ham-handed and arrogant way.'

'The reality is that my job's gone, and I honestly don't believe that I'm going to get it back. But we're hoping by keeping the action on at Bevercotes we'll make the NCB think twice

before they contemplate moving against anyone else in future. I've no doubt that if we hadn't taken action they'd have already moved at pits like Ollerton.'

'In Notts men are being sacked for pinning up notices and distributing literature. The print unions are under vicious attack from Murdoch and Maxwell. The entire trade union movement is under attack from Thatcher and her cronies. And what the hell's the Labour Party doing about it? It's stabbing good trades unionists in the back and expelling them from the party. That's the last thing they want to be concentrating on. During the Westland affair my nine year old daughter could have attacked the Tories better than Kinnock did!'

'It's time that the rank and file, not just in mining but in all the other basic industries, started to

organise to put the backbone, the rank and file organisation, back into the labour movement.'

'A national campaign like the Justice for Mineworkers is important as this work has to be co-ordinated. We've all got to pull in the same direction. What happened with the jailings and sackings of mineworkers is going to continue in other sections of the trade union movement. In the print we're going to see the same thing. The attacks we've faced at Bevercotes will spread to other pits, and into the South Notts pits like Gedling and Cotgrave.'

'If they don't stand up and fight, it's going to be a green light for management to go ahead and do it. Otherwise the UDM members will say: "Why the hell should we join an organisation that can't even look after its own?" We can't just let this issue go.'



Monday 3 March meant no 'fair pay' for teachers

Teachers: the fight goes on

THE SELL-OUT deal stitched up by the majority of teacher organisations on Monday 3 March will not mean an end to the action in the schools. The largest organisation, the National Union of Teachers has rejected the settlement and has already received an 87 per cent vote to continue all non-strike action.

The deal, a 6.9 per cent increase for teachers, was due on 1 April 1985. With inflation running at around 5.5 per cent the settlement does nothing to win back for teachers the massive 34 per cent decline they have suffered over the last 10 years.

Worse still the majority group in the negotiations, composed of headteacher organisations, professional bodies and the scab Professional Association of Teachers (the teachers' UDM), have agreed to negotiate on pay and conditions together.

The NUT has opposed any trade off on conditions of service because any such agreement at the moment would be based on writing a tight contract

for teachers. The massive lobby of the Burnham pay

By Bernard Regan, NUT Executive (personal capacity)

negotiating body on Friday 28 February demonstrated the continued militancy of NUT members. The task now is to speedily begin the action for this year's claim which is itself due for settlement in April.

Inside the other TUC-affiliated union, the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers, there is clear evidence of opposition to their leadership's call for a return to 'normal'.

The NAS/UWT ballot seeking approval for the deal achieved 70 per cent vote in favour, and 30 per cent against. But after the ballot was announced they spent 9 hours with the employers in ACAS discussing what 'normal duties' meant.

Decisive action now by the NUT leadership could ensure that the momentum is maintained and that the NAS/UWT minority opposition will rapidly develop into a majority.

According to the agreed draft of the pay settlement the deal has to be accepted by the Council of Local Education Authorities/School Teachers which negotiates on conditions of service. Militants of the Socialist Teachers' Alliance are arguing that since CLEA/ST has not rubber stamped the sell-out then strike action should continue.

In agreeing the deal the

sell-out unions proposed a 6-month cooling-off, no-strike, period and have put the negotiations entirely into the hands of ACAS. Anyone who refuses to participate, such as the NUT, won't even be told what is going on.

While the NUT continues various forms of action the NAS/UWT leadership will probably authorise action in militant areas in order to try to prevent members leaving to join the NUT.

The settlement is a set back for teachers but the fight is not over. At Easter both unions will be holding their annual conferences. The STA will be putting forward a series of proposals to get the action moving, in particular seeking to link up with teachers in Scotland where action is still going on.

The message from the mass rally held on Friday was clear — the fight goes on.

A Socialist ACTION

'NUM-one year on and still fighting'

By Peter Heathfield



Finale at the Justice for Mineworkers launch concert last Sunday

Photo: MARTI VOLK



Photo: GM COOKSON

TWO YEARS after the beginning of the miners strike, and just over a year since we returned to work, the morale of the National Union of Mineworkers remains high. But we are facing, still, enormous problems on six fronts.

We have 550 members victimised as a result of our strike; the NCB continue to dismantle the conciliation and consultation procedures within the industry; the legal cases against the union are still pursued by the receiver; we are confronted with the employer-sponsored breakaway organisation which, unfortunately, diverts some of our energy away from fighting the real enemy, the National Coal Board; the attack on our jobs and our communities continues, regardless of the enormous cost to taxpayers; and, of course, the receiver still controls the financial affairs of the NUM which stops us operating effectively as a trade union.

All these problems make life for the NUM complicated. But they do not detract from the main principles for which we continue to struggle.

We have in excess of 1000 of the 2300 NUM South Derby miners with the National Union of Mineworkers. In that coalfields an overall majority of the workforce is part of the national union: through COSA, the power group, and the new South Derby NUM. We are very encouraged by this new situation which comes about as a result of the activities of loyalists in these areas.

I am confident that the UDM is already in decline. They just haven't had the impact they were claiming. They talked about recruiting 60,000-odd members by the end of 1985, and they continue to

claim a membership in the region of 40,000. But all the indications are that they would be fortunate now to have 25,000 members.

In addition, the receiver has been informed by the Coal Board that they will send to him the union contributions of Notts and South Derby NUM members. The check-off system of dues collection which is used has meant that NUM dues, which should have gone to the receiver, have been sent to the UDM by the area Coal Board management. In effect the NCB has been stealing the NUM's money. Now 5800 contribu-

tions will be redirected to the receiver who will also be claiming monies outstanding to our union. During the difficult last 12 months, the labour movement has given considerable help to the National Union of Mineworkers. In the weeks and months ahead we hope that this will continue, and that the movement as a whole will keep up their support the National Union of Mineworkers and especially our victimised members — fighting on behalf of the trade union movement as a whole.

● Justice for Mineworkers Campaign, p.5.

BRITAIN OUT OF IRELAND

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LAST MONDAY saw the true face of Ulster Loyalism. The strikes, riots, and intimidation in Belfast, and the rest of the North of Ireland, had nothing whatever to do with any form of progressive working class action. This was a reactionary mob solely roused in defence of its sectarian privileges.

What are the traditions and 'democracy' the Loyalists claimed to be defending? The 'democracy' to reserve the best jobs in the North of Ireland for protestants.

By James Francis

The 'tradition' of random sectarian killing of Catholics. A 'democracy' of excluding the Catholic population from even token participation in the affairs of the North. A tradition of pogroms. A demand that this entire system of sectarian prejudice and discrimination be paid for by Britain.

The North of Ireland state cannot rank in the scale of its horrors, or its final nature, with South Africa or Israel. But its supporters have the same mentality. The activities on Monday were those of a reactionary labour aristocracy baying for blood. Only the complete smashing of the North of Ireland state, the elimination of the Protestant privileges, will ever create any basis for unity between the protestant and catholic working class. And the sole means to achieve that is a united Ireland.

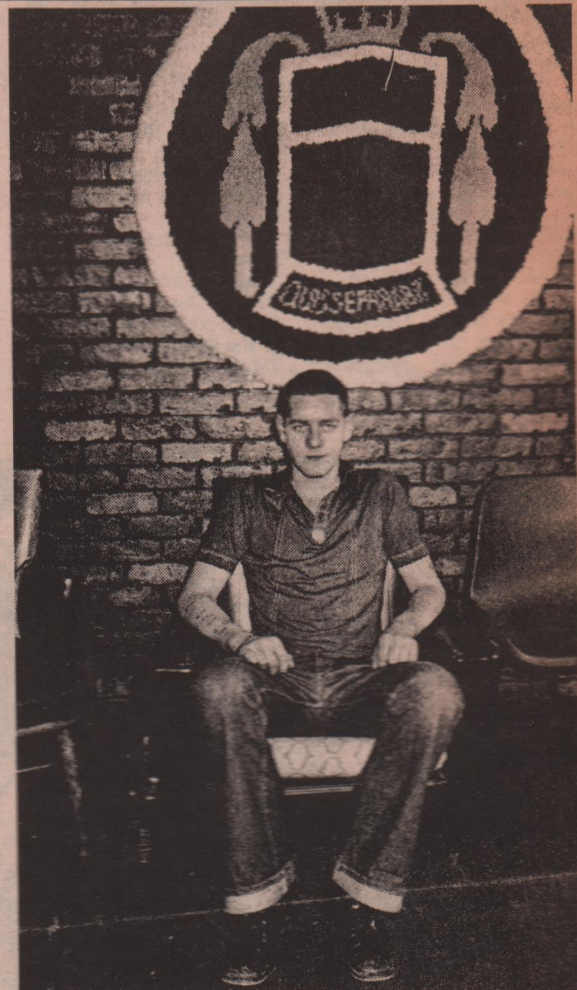
That sectarian North of Ireland state also showed itself in its true glory on Monday. Directed against the Loyalist thugs and bigots was none of the 'shoot to kill' policy used

against the Catholic population by the RUC and the British army. It was softly-softly all round. Off duty UDR members were reported aiding at barricades. The police did nothing to allow those who wanted to go to work, or move on the roads, to do so.

As *Republican News* warned before the strike there will now be an increase in sectarian killings by the Loyalists. Tom King, secretary of state for the North of Ireland, already started making concessions to the Loyalists last week when he announced the postponement of the next meeting of the Anglo-Irish inter-government conference. The aim will be to maintain the Southern government's acceptance of the partition of Ireland, codified in the Anglo-Irish Accord, while 'devolving' government to the Loyalist bigots in the North.

Unfold

But the British labour movement must also realise, as Monday again showed, that finally Loyalism is a paper tiger — one that could be easily smashed. Loyalism exists and thrives only because of the huge British subsidies to the North of Ireland the presence of the British army. Take



those away, above all the subsidies, and the privileged position of the protestants would collapse and disappear.

From the point of view of the unification of Ireland, from the point of view of the unity of the Irish working class, there

is only one way forward. That is for Britain to get out of Ireland.

That is the only way we will finally see no more of the sectarian bigot outbursts of the type of last Monday. Labour must demand British withdrawal from Ireland now.