

Socialist Challenge

Miners, Glasgow show that...

'WE ARE MANY, THEY ARE FEW'

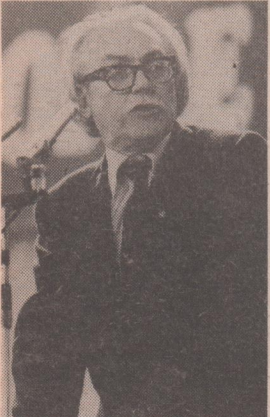
PULVERISED! That's the state of the Tory government after last week's conflict with the miners. Back-tracking on all their previous policies, at a stroke they have been forced to submit to the miners' demands to keep all the pits open.

In the coalfields there was a tremendous determination to batter the Tories — and in the face of the threat of an all-out miners' strike the Tories realised that the future of their administration was at stake.

There is no doubt that if a national miners' strike had taken place it would have received massive working class support.

The huge turnout and militancy of last Saturday's 75,000-strong demonstration in Glasgow showed the potential for a sustained onslaught against the government.

It was a stinging rebuff to the 'social



democratic' Gang of Four and their gaggle of right-wing splitters.

Now these giant gains must be built upon.

The waterworkers who want a living wage and the railworkers who call for investment in their industry to save jobs and provide a decent service should ram home their demands.

Power

The miners have shown that Thatcher can be beaten, and both the water and rail workers have the power to force the Tories to retreat.

The mass protests against unemployment have to continue. On Friday 29 May the unemployment march from Liverpool arrives in London on its way to parliament.

The Labour Party and trade union leaders should call for London's unemployment demonstration to be on that day. Since the demonstration arrives on a Friday, the Labour Party must call for a one-day strike.

Hundreds of thousands can be brought



onto the streets to put the Tories under siege.

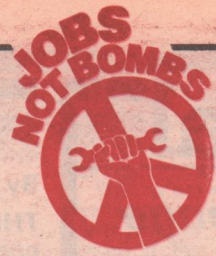
Michael Foot said it all when he commented at the Glasgow rally: 'We are

many, they are few'. He also told unemployed people to 'rise up like lions'. The forces are there, ready and willing to do just that. But they need to

be given a lead.

Michael Foot should declare his support for all those taking industrial action against Tory policies.

And he must ensure that the Liverpool-London march ends with the most gigantic protest seen since the war.



Job shock — vacancy at kindergarten!

By Tom Marlowe

NOW is the time to sell your television, stop buying your daily newspaper, and exchange your radio for a six-month sleeping pill.

Because, as no doubt you will know by now, THEY ARE TO WED.

From now until the summer when they walk down the aisle we will be deluged with pictures of them; acres of newsprint detailing every acceptable nook and cranny of their lives, television spectacles showing them in all their finery.

By the summer (when, incidentally, official unemployment figures will be around two and three-quarter million) there will be tee-shirts and books on them, and posters showing their radiant smiles.

So, it is time to head for your Royal Marriage Fall-out Shelter.

Don't blame Diana. She isn't exactly broke herself but by marrying him she will be boarding one of the thickest gravy trains in the business.

At the moment he receives £306,382 a year from us, the tax-payers. When he is promoted to the position his mother enjoys he will be getting, on current figures, more than ten times that.

The marriage will mean Diana can have the run of Buckingham Palace (which costs us £1,485,000 a year), Windsor Castle (£265,912), Holyrood House (£265,912) Kensington Palace (£483,000) and St James Palace (£763,000).

And then there is his new estate, Highgrove House in Gloucester, which we bought for him last year, costing over £1 million.

Train

Visiting all these different homes will be no problem for Diana. She can travel on the royal train (£385,000 a year), the royal airplane (£2,500,000) or even journey around the coast in the royal yacht (£2m).

What, you may ask, is in all this for you? Well don't be a spoilsport, look on the bright side. All you unemployed, now's your chance. There will soon be a job going at the kindergarten where she works, and you can bet your jubilee mug that won't fall foul of Mag,ie Thatcher's cuts.

But talking of cuts, wasn't it the first King Charles who had his head chopped off? No one surely, not even the most extreme extremist, the most terrible terrorist would wish that on our present Charles?

The kindest cut of all would be to chop the whole royal jamboree.

KICK OUT THE TORIES

Editorial

Socialist Challenge

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'Not so much a U-turn, more a somersault'

THE victory of the miners has punched a hole through the Tories' monetarist strategy. They have been humiliated by the miners into granting state aid to the coal industry.

The Tories' climbdown sent some of their most slavish supporters into a frenzied rage. Walter Goldsmith, director general of the Institute of Directors, called it a 'scandalous surrender' and moaned: 'We might as well ask the miners' union when it wishes to have the next general election.'

Just to rub the point home the 75,000 people who marched against unemployment through Glasgow last weekend saluted the victory of the miners. But there is more than one interpretation of this victory.

For Michael Foot and Len Murray (you remember him, he disappeared after 14 May last year) the success stemmed from the joint efforts of the miners and the Coal Board in campaigning for fewer coal imports and higher state subsidies.

The rank and file miners in South Wales, Scotland and Kent know differently. They realise that it was their immediate industrial action which forced the Tories' retreat, no matter what skilful manoeuvres Ezra of the Coal Board may have been up to. And they know that further industrial action will be needed to kick the Tories out and make those victories permanent.

Smash the 6%

Now the water, electricity and gas workers, and the civil servants are queuing up with pay claims in excess of the government's six per cent pay norm. And in Scotland the workers at Talbot Linwood and Greenock Lee Leisurewear have taken militant action to defend their jobs.

The Tories may have lost a battle but the war is not yet over. One swallow doesn't make a spring and one U-turn doesn't solve a crisis. It would be foolish to believe that the Tories will stop their attacks on working people.

The Tories stared into the abyss of a miners' strike and saw their possible downfall. They will do their utmost to prevent any other section of workers defeating them. And they will ensure that they are better prepared next time to take on the miners.

The labour movement must also prepare for war. The TUC should co-ordinate the pay struggles into a united fight to smash the Tories's pay policy. Full support should be mobilised for every struggle to save jobs. The Labour Party should organise a massive national demonstration against the Tories for the day the Liverpool trades council jobs march reaches London.

Throw them out

We have to generalise the fight against the Tories and mobilise tens of thousands to kick them out. The only good Tory government is one which has been thrown out.

The miners' action and the Glasgow demonstration have shown that 1981 will be a year of mass struggle. Let's make sure it's also the year which throws the Tories out.

By Patrick Sikorski

THE TORIES are confronting a series of pay demands which are threatening to lead to industrial action.

An all-out strike by the water workers seems likely next week, with the union leaders presently meeting to discuss national action. Unofficial strikes and overtime bans are escalating, following the overwhelming rejection of the employers' 10 per cent pay offer.

Lancashire water workers have already started indefinite strike action in support of the 30 per cent claim.

Next round to the water workers?

The effect of a national strike by water and sewerage workers is unknown. Last year, without a strike, two sewers collapsed each day and 50 water mains burst each week in the Thames region alone.

Contingency plans have been made for the use of troops but on the instruction of the local government union they will receive no help from supervisors and other managerial staff.

Water workers are in a position to strike another body blow to the Tories.

Civil servants are also on the move. They are threatening a one-day national strike on 9 March after the government's derisory offer of a 7 per cent pay rise. The civil servants want 15 per cent and they are prepared to follow the one-day strike with selective stoppages.

Such action can be

totally disruptive and the civil servants have a £3m fund and the success of the miners to keep them going.

Gas and electricity workers also look set to go into dispute over their wage demands. The Gas Corporation has offered an 8 to 9 per cent increase in response to the unions' 23 per cent demand. The Electricity Council has gone one better. It managed a 'nil' offer to the unions' call for a 20 per cent pay rise.

The employers' refusal to pay these increases comes at a time when gas and electricity prices are soaring. The two stage gas price rise

just announced, spread over 8 months, is part of the Tories' policy to bring domestic tariffs in line with industry's.

The 25 per cent gas price increase will mean huge bills for working class people. An average household which paid £170 a year at the end of 1979 will pay £272 after October this year.

As a spokesperson from the General and Municipal Workers' Union said: 'The main effect of a price increase will be to push Gas Corporation profits to a peak of £1,000m a year.'

And they say wages are the cause of price rises...

First the miners, then Glasgow

A week to remember

By Tessa van Gelderen

'AT the front, one banner sums it all up... "Save Linwood, Tories Out", said the *Scottish Sunday Mail* referring to the Socialist Challenge placards on the Glasgow demonstration.

The closure of Talbot Linwood, near Glasgow, was on the lips of everyone on the 75,000-strong march.

Delegations had come from every corner of the country and every section of the labour movement.

The victory of the miners against the Tory government inspired both the marchers and the platform speakers.

'The miners have shown the way,' said Tony Benn in a telegram. And Michael Foot called on the labour movement to 'rise up like lions' against the Tories.

The demonstration was led by 1,500 Linwood workers together with 1,000 Talbot workers from other plants in the country.

Engineers, miners, nurses, local government workers, steel and rail workers, Labour Party constituencies were all there. And youth came in their thousands, marching for jobs that most of them have never had.

Some workers threatened with redundancies were despondent about

their ability to fight for their jobs. 'The miners are in a different position from workers in the motor trade,' one car worker told Socialist Challenge. 'We depend on the miners to help us.'

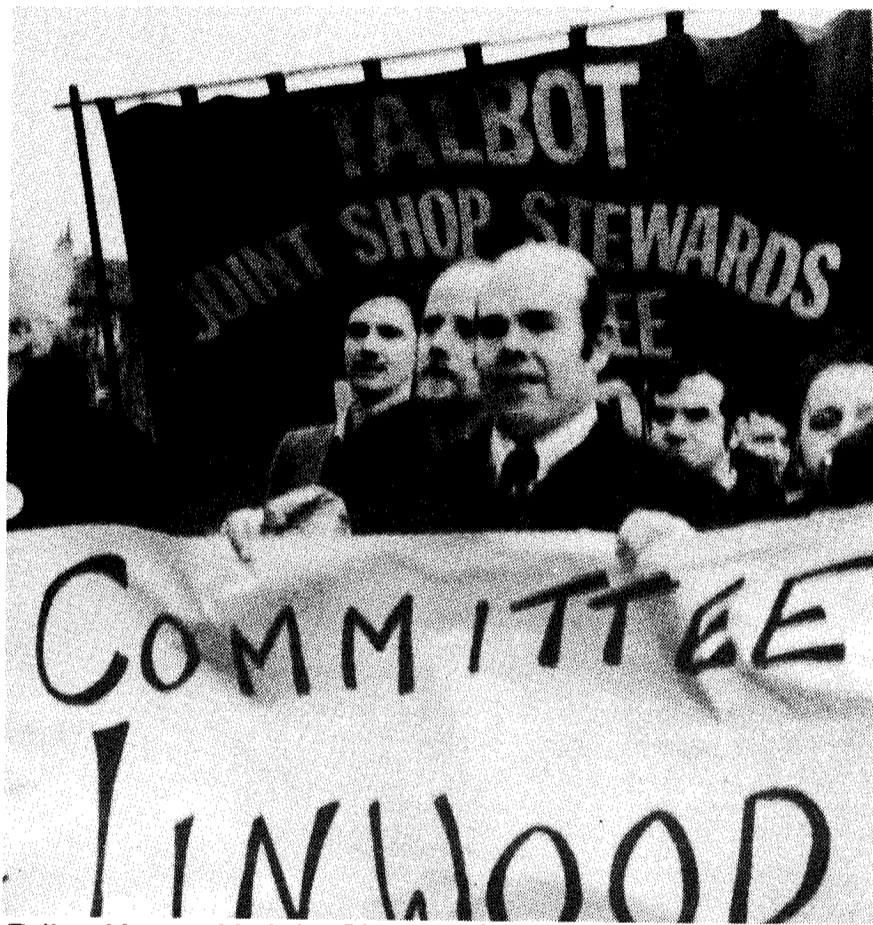
But they had no faith in the leaders of their unions to fight against redundancies. Women engineering workers from Sunbeam Electric, East Kilbride, had nothing but contempt for Terry Duffy.

One North London railway worker summed up many militants' feelings when he said: 'NUR is magic; Sidney Weighell is tragic.'

The demonstration was about jobs, but it was more than that. It was about getting rid of this vicious Tory government once and for all.

Socialist Challenge posters which lined the route of the march, thanks to the teams of supporters who had been out every day that week, summed up the mood: 'Jobs not Bombs, Kick Out the Tories.'

And that was the



Talbot Linwood led the Glasgow demonstration

main message of Socialist Challenge, hundreds of which were sold on the demonstration and on the coaches and trains transporting the marchers.

Our Manchester supporters sold 237 copies! Thousands of badges were sold: 'Glasgow against the Tories' and 'Save Linwood, Sack the Tories' had been special-

ly produced by Scottish Socialist Challenge supporters.

When the great demonstration was over, Glasgow supporters held a meeting to discuss the next steps in kicking out the Tories.

'There has never been a more exciting time for revolutionary socialists,' said BL shop steward Pat Hickey, speaking at the

meeting.

'We are part of the struggle inside the Labour Party and the trade unions on all the major issues: missiles, unemployment, the 35-hour week and Ireland. The tide is with us. Now let's build a left wing inside the labour movement committed to class struggle policies.'



Socialist Challenge meeting after last weekend's demonstration. From left: Denny Fitzpatrick, Des Tierney and Pat Hickey.



First victory in the war against the Tories

By Celia Pugh in Cardiff

A delegate conference of South Wales miners on 20 February voted to suspend their strike action.

They welcomed 'with caution' the statement by government ministers that all pit closure threats would be withdrawn, but threatened to 'reimplement immediately' their action should the government not stick to their promises.

But three South Wales lodges voted to continue strike action — Mardy, Penrhwi-ceiber and Tower.

Mardy lodge secretary Ivor England told *Socialist Challenge* after the meeting: 'We've had a victory, there's no doubt about that, and the Welsh miners led it. The government has been stopped in its tracks.'

'But the ingredients for closure of the South Wales coalfield are still there. We have no assurances on investment in new reserves or recruitment particularly among young people. 'Take Coegnant and

Tymawr-Lewis Merthyr for example, if there's no investment in these pits soon they will become unworkable and be shut by the review procedure between the unions and the coal board.'

'While we had the Tories on the run we should have stayed out to pressure them for recruitment and increased investment. We've seen the power of the miners to mobilise other workers. If the industry contracts we'll

lose this. 'The lie was sown in the meeting that the South Wales miners would be divided if the strike continued and that miners would drift back to work. I don't accept this. It was a rank and file members who pushed the strike forward.'

'Even though our strike was at an early stage the morale was tremendous. Four busloads came from the Rhondda yesterday to lobby the executive for no sell-outs. The momentum was building up all the time.'

Clearly these militant Welsh miners sensed an even bigger victory in the war against the Tories if their strike had continued. They know Gormley cannot be trusted not to sell their jobs in the future. But this spectacular defeat for the Tories has encouraged

thousands of other Welsh workers threatened by the Thatcher axe.

Ray Davies, chairperson of the Llanwern steel action group, told *Socialist Challenge*: 'The steel unions have trod the path of compromise with the Tories and lost 100,000 jobs in the process.'

'The miners have shown that it is possible to stop closures and win subsidies by taking the right form of action. Their victory is a victory for the rail and steel workers.'

'The miners have achieved more in 24 hours than the TUC has in 20 months. The Llanwern steel action group has consistently demanded that the TUC should fight for a national jobs strike. The miners have shown that this is the only way. Now it's about time our leaders did something about it.'

RED BETTESHANGER

By John Kreeger

THE Kent coalfield is an island of working class stubbornness in a sea of genteel middle class respectability. The winding gears of its 3 pits rise like ghostly mirages from the flat cabbage fields, observed by blank-eyed sheep. Near Deal, the postcard scenery is rudely scarred by the Betteshanger slag-heap.

The men who work far below these fields for our coal were gathered together in this spot during the depression. Driven by hunger and unemployment they travelled south, sometimes on foot, from Scotland, Wales and the North and from across the Irish Sea. After the war others came from Poland.

United by the need to sell their muscle power and mining skill, they formed a peculiar and unique culture from the dialects and languages of their past. The local populace saw them as aliens and trouble-makers, as indeed many were victimised militantly, rebels and gypsies.

In the '72 and '74 miners' strikes they played a vital role, sending out squads of flying pickets to the power stations of North Kent and London. They even sent a fleet of pickets up the Thames. Unofficial leaders were thrown up, who went on to capture positions in the local union leadership.

Again

The Tories under Thatcher tried to move against them once again, and last week the Betteshanger miners were out defending the jobs of their comrades at the Snowdown pit, and ultimately their own jobs, too.

Terry Harrison, secretary of Betteshanger branch, explained how the strike spread to Kent: 'There was pressure from South Wales, who were threatening to send flying pickets to shut down Kent.... Kent miners wouldn't tolerate that... so we took a decision to come out.... An injury to one is an injury to all.... The decision came from a mass meeting of 600 which was unanimous.'

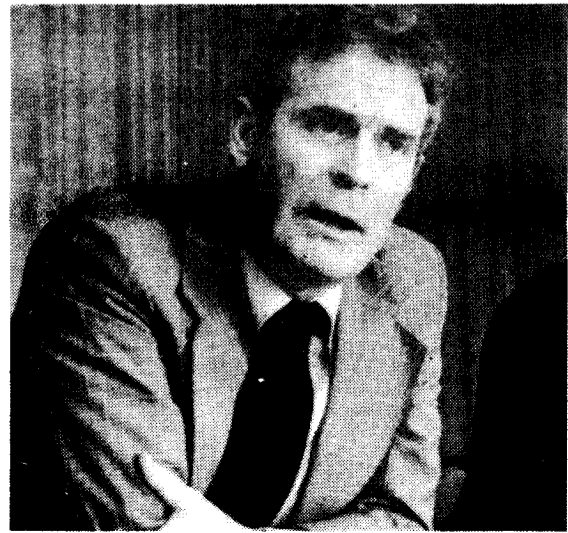
John Moyle, the Kent Miners president issued a statement saying that his



Snowdown colliery — the Coal Board want to close it

Deep

From their deep strongholds, they developed a reputation for toughness. In the war when the National Government and the Communist Party said 'more production' they said 'fuck production' and downed tools. When their leaders were imprisoned they surrounded Canterbury jail, with their families until they were released to a heroes' welcome.



Jack Collins, Kent Area NUM Secretary

members would picket power stations in defiance of the Tory Employment Act. If any picket was imprisoned, they would intensify their struggle.

The miners reject all arguments about the economic unviability of Snowdown. Terry Harrison sees it as a national economic and political problem: 'The spending of £15 billion on nuclear energy and £5 billion on Cruise missiles is insanity. We need a change of government.'

The effect of closing Snowdown would be to lop £2½m from the East Kent economy. It would cost £5m per year to maintain the unemployed. So now the local traders and shopkeepers, so hostile in the '30s, recognise that the miners are fighting in the interest of the whole population.

At picket headquarters in Magness House in Deal a group of miners discussed the issues during the strike. The group included: Terry Harrison (branch secretary), Dave Smith (committee member),

Norman McSloy, Bill Martin, Dave Pinkney, Paul Westie, Lennie Ingram, Dave Newall and Mick Morgan.

These were among their remarks:

'The Tories are out to get us, but they've miscalculated. With the steel workers and Leyland they launched a sustained media attack first. They tried to take us by surprise. If we give in now, they'll pick us off one by one. It's a class issue, it's a class struggle.'

'We've already lost 6,000 men from the pits in one year through natural wastage. Those skills aren't easily replaced. If we don't recruit, the pits will die. Teams are shorthanded now, this means working at the face is more dangerous.'

'Unemployment is a threat to us all. My brother-in-law was laid off from the brick company at 33. He's worked all his life and has 2 kids to support on £44.73 a week. Now he just sits

around, he's a vegetable.'

'Unless we show an interest in the unemployed we'll be joining them.'

Money

'Yes, the CND's a good way to involve the unemployed in a fight. We had a meeting locally to which 500 people turned up. The union offered them money, but they wouldn't take it because they say that they don't want to frighten public opinion.'

'There have been good developments in the Labour Party. Wembley was a victory, but its decisions were moderate. The membership of the unions and party as a whole should decide the leader. At the moment workers are joining ward branches.'

There is disagreement over who should be leader and which policies should be adopted, but some strong views are expressed: 'The Labour Party is a socialist party working within the boundaries of a capitalist

state. Benn isn't particularly revolutionary, he's left Labour Party. The media makes him into a bogey-man. There have been six Labour governments and all the old problems are still there.'

'We'd like to influence the Labour Party more at the local level but in general, younger workers won't get involved in politics unless an issue hits them in the face. There's always the TV, or the pubs to go to.'

'We'd like to change the leadership of our union and get rid of Gormley and Daley, but they're elected for life. The left nearly did it a few years back, but they chickened out at the last minute.'

'The NUM should open its books on the pension fund. The money's been misinvested, they could use it to build houses for the homeless.'

'There's too much buying off at the top, even Scargill's out for himself, he hasn't done anything yet, we don't trust him.'

'A local rank and file paper wouldn't be a bad idea, the main problem is financial, we prefer to do things by mass meetings.'

Hungry

The Betteshanger miners aren't hungry or intimidated like they were in the 1930s. They've experienced decades of relative prosperity and a decade of winning. They're well organised, well fed and well educated. They're confident of victory. If the pits closed their social world and their pride would collapse. That's why they'll never give in.

'We'll fight to the end. I'm proud of being a Betteshanger miner. We must lead the way. We've got to rag up.'

For the history of the Kent Miners and the '72 strike see 'The World on Our Backs' by Malcolm Pitt (Lawrence and Wishart) £2.95.

Labour Party — 80,000 join, four leave

By Tom Marlowe

THE membership of the Labour Party increased by 25 per cent last year, according to figures reported in last week's *Labour Weekly*.

Between 70,000 and 80,000 are estimated to have joined the party in 1980, bringing the total individual membership to between 335,000 and 365,000.

Swimming against this tide of support for the newly democratised Labour Party, four members announced their intention of leaving last week. These were the MPs Tom Ellis, Richard Crawshaw, Ian Wrigglesworth, and Tom Bradley.

The four are hardly household names, with only Bradley holding any important position within the labour movement, being a member of Labour's national executive.

Crawshaw is a barrister, and was described recently in the *Financial Times* as 'eccentric, identified more with his long-distance walking feats than any of the big issues currently facing the party'.

Jenkins

Ellis is a former colliery manager and Parliamentary Private Secretary to Bill Rodgers, while Wrigglesworth did the same job for Roy Jenkins.

Rather than these individuals, a more serious threat to the left in the Labour Party is the formation by members of the Parliamentary Labour Party of 'Labour Solidarity'.

Blessing

This grouping was launched on 17 February at a meeting chaired by Roy Hattersley. Over 100 MPs were reported to have attended, including deputy leader Denis Healey. According to newspaper reports, Michael Foot, while not turning up to the meeting, gave it his blessing.

Labour Solidarity is the coming together of the right and the centre in the PLP. Its purpose, said Hattersley, was 'a means of working for unity and recovering ground lost to the left'.

Labour Solidarity is a last-ditch attempt by those in the parliamentary party who are politically close to the Gang of Four to persuade Williams, Rodgers and company not to quit.

'To leave the party now,' said the statement issued after the meeting, 'is both defeatist and divisive'.

By putting himself at the head of Labour

Solidarity, Roy Hattersley has once again confirmed the high opinion he has of himself. Once described as 'Harold Wilson Mark II', Hattersley is probably the most opportunistic, careerist politician of all those in the parliamentary party.

It is ironic that it is he who is most associated with the launching of what has been described as the 'loyalty' group in the Labour Party: the suspicion is that Hattersley does not know the meaning of the word 'loyalty'.

Democracy

Certainly his old buddy, Roy Jenkins, would confirm as much. Jenkins did most to advance Hattersley's career in the party, and as a strong pro-Marketeer Hattersley was a firm supporter of Jenkins' 'into the EEC at any price' policy.

But when Jenkins resigned from the Labour shadow cabinet in 1972 over the EEC referendum, Hattersley switched horses. He ditched Jenkins and promptly accepted promotion to the same shadow cabinet Jenkins had left.

After that Hattersley became a flunky for James Callaghan and as Callaghan prospered so did he.

It was noticeable during the democracy



Roy Hattersley, architect of Labour Solidarity

debate in the Labour Party that Hattersley was criticised by many

colleagues on the right for refusing to fight the left. Indeed Hat-

tersley kept remarkably quiet about the whole business.

Sensing the move to the left in the party he also began to play down his own right-wing views. He made a point of changing the political description of himself from a 'social democrat' to 'democratic socialist'.

Now Roy Hattersley has apparently decided that the best way to further his career is to present himself as the healer of Labour's wounds.

Both he and the Solidarity grouping are dangers of which the Labour left needs to be aware. The right wing in the labour movement is now beginning to organise a real fight to reverse the decisions of the Blackpool and Wembley conferences.

Yet the overwhelming argument against these individuals is the 70,000-plus growth in Labour Party membership in the last year.

It is the left-wing policies adopted by the Labour conference that explain that growth: a return to the domination of Labour by the right of the party would only endanger it.

Shipyard workers back Greenock occupation

By Murdo Ritchie

AT THE Larchfield industrial estate in Greenock 240 women are occupying their factory to save their jobs.

They are fighting the enormous Vanity Fair corporation, best known by the brand name 'Lee' on the bums of thousands of pairs of denims.

Management threatened the women with the factory's imminent closure, blaming falling exports caused by a 'high pound'. The bosses rejected their workers' call for a shorter working week, and after that the 240 women immediately seized the factory, locking out the management to stop any

assets being removed.

They have now established a well organised three shift-system which is occupying the plant 24 hours a day, making the building resemble a fort rather than a factory. They say they can hold out 'indefinitely'.

Their determination stems from the fact that more than half the women take home the only wage packet in their family. That's why one hundred workers from the plant marched through Glasgow on the jobs march last Saturday.

A spokesperson for the strikers told Socialist Challenge 'Management has opened three factories in Ireland because it knows it can make bigger profits there. While we

are not against people in Ireland having jobs most people in this factory are teenagers and have no hope of work if they close the factory down.'

Unemployment in Greenock is already 15.2 per cent.

Now in the third week of their occupation, support for the women is building up, especially from the local shipyard workers. Boiler-makers' representative John Dacherty says: 'If anyone tried to put these lasses out, 5,000 shipyard workers will storm the factory gates and get them back in.'

Messages of support to: Ms E Monaghan, Convenor, 55 Cambridge Rd, Greenock, Scotland.

By Alan Freeman

'WHAT the whole experience of the National Enterprise Board and planning agreements has confirmed for me is that you cannot plan what you do not control and you cannot control what you do not plan.'

This is what a bitter delegate from Liverpool Trades Council testified to a worker's inquiry into the last Labour government's industrial policy.

The inquiry, organised by Coventry, Liverpool, Newcastle and North Tyneside Trades Councils, has been published as a book and those who took part are organising a conference this weekend in Coventry.

Talbot Linwood workers are presently being reminded of the lessons the inquiry has drawn.

They occupied and demanded nationalisation when Chrysler, the previous owners, threatened closure. But the Labour government persuaded the workers to opt for a planning agreement while it forked out £37m to bail out Chrysler.

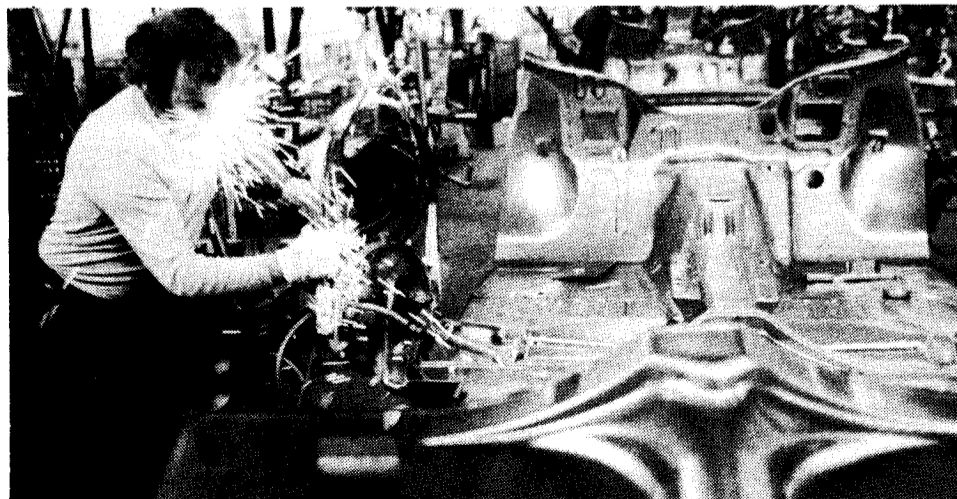
Failure

Chrysler repaid by selling out to Peugeot, which is now closing the plant.

Yet the authors of Labour's industrial strategy who include Tony Benn and Stuart Holland, have leapt to its defence. They say the industrial strategy failed only because it did not base itself enough on shop floor power which is where the inquiry's authors also place their emphasis.

This is an attractive view for many rank

'Workers Inquiry' needs national answers



The doomed Linwood factory — the bosses should be sent to Coventry

and file workers who saw 1974-9 as a betrayal but realised that the chief instrument of betrayal was the Labour right under the guidance of the IMF and big business.

What is doesn't take into account is why Tony Benn was not able to fight back against the Labour right. The industrial strategy fail-

ed, not because the Labour government would not hand over local control, but because at national level it refused to put power in worker's hands.

Instead of nationalising, it stuck to planning agreements. Instead of giving workers total control of an industry, it sought tripartite meetings where workers would sit down

with the very managers and civil servants who were trying to stab them in the back.

The inquiry pinpoints this weakness: 'The structures of the present type of state are so biased towards the private corporations that working class people cannot rely on a socialist government being able to destroy the power of these corporations.'

The importance of the Coventry conference is that it starts from this understanding, which offers a real chance of developing an alternative to the Labour left's bankrupt strategy.

National plan

So far the solutions offered are limited to building local and shopfloor power. This is important, but it will not prevent struggles being isolated by a future Labour government.

We need bold but effective solutions to the most pressing national problems workers face — such as the 35-hour week to fight unemployment — which embody the idea that workers should control the economy in their own interests, and can build up unity at a national level.

As well as local and sectoral workers' plans, we should be demanding that the TUC and Labour Party draw up a national plan for the economy based on social need.

We should be fighting for worker's action against closures, following the miners' example, and national solidarity for every occupation against redundancies.

In this way we would put the Labour and trade union leaders in a position where they could not sell out again without being replaced by others who really will serve our interests.

Southall racists on the move

By Oliver New from Southall

THE Sarwar family in Southall have been viciously harassed by racist neighbours for over four weeks. Gangs of youth carrying sticks and iron bars have paraded outside their house; their windows have been broken; minicabs and ambulances have falsely been sent to their house and they have even been subjected to indecent exposure.

The police have shown no particular interest in dealing with these attacks. They were so irritated by the Sarwar's complaints that they assaulted Mr Sarwar and threatened to arrest him!

Racists are becoming increasingly confident and with every reason. When black victims of racist violence go to the police they find little sympathy.

And if the government's Nationality Bill, which has now passed its second reading in the Commons, becomes law police harassment will increase on the grounds of searching for illegal immigrants.

At the same time there has been systematic press censorship of racist violence. When firebombs were planted recently in a Southall furniture ware-

house you would have needed a magnifying glass to find reports in the papers.

Compare that to the reports on the bombing of RAF Uxbridge (just a few miles down the road) which was carried out by Irish republicans.

The escalation of racism seems to be heading for another showdown in Southall. On 23 April 1979 thousands of baton-wielding police ran riot in Southall. They were theoretically 'protecting' a St George's Day election meeting organised in the centre of Southall by the National Front. Blair Peach died as a result of that police violence.

Southall faces a repeat performance. The NF Constitutional Movement

intend to hold an election meeting on the same day this year. Some religious and community leaders — including Councillor Piara Khabra JP, president of Southall IWA — have called on the community to ignore the fascists.

They want the issue of racist attacks to be swept under the carpet, possibly with the help of a few state bans on fascist marches.

But despite this cowardice and the press censorship campaign, Southall is likely to see a huge mobilisation on 23 April, not only from the local community but from anti-racists all over the country. This time the police will find a repeat operation politically very difficult.



Paul Ruddock, 13th victim of the Deptford fire massacre

Photo: WEST INDIAN WORLD

Country-wide meetings build Black People's Day of Action

By Toni Foster

IT'S a mass movement,' says John Lerose, chairperson of the New Cross Massacre Action Committee, describing the response to the demonstration that is to be held on Monday 2 March.

'People are responding because there have been so many murders of blacks recently which the police have not solved, and which they always disclaim have any racial motive — all the authorities are indifferent. The formation of the NCMAC has provided a framework for people to express their rage and dissatisfaction.'

Branches of the committee have been set up in virtually every major town in Britain.

Young people in the schools, polytechnics, colleges of further education, and universities have been rallying their forces in anger at the murder of the 13 black youths.

sent at the meeting on Tuesday last week.

West Indian, Asian, African and black people born here make up the planning committee for the march.

The movement is based on the organisations of the black community, such as the Asian Youth Movement, the Manchester Black Parents' Organisation and Afro-Caribbean Societies in the colleges.

Leaflets

Black people in many areas are distributing leaflets at work, but the Labour Party and trade unions have so far stood aside from official support.

Hundreds of people have attended meetings in Leeds, Bradford, Sheffield, Manchester, Liverpool, Huddersfield and Preston. More meetings are being set up in Nottingham, Birmingham, Rugby, Leicester and London.

It has been decided that only the banners of the action committee will be carried on the march and that these will include the names of the 13 dead. The committee recommends that placards be restricted to the slogans which it will provide to any organisation that requests them.

Black People's Day of Action **DEMONSTRATE** On March 2nd 1981

Assemble 10am at Fordham Park next to Moonshot Community Centre, Pagnell St, London SE 14. The march passes 439 New Cross Road, where the massacre took place, and goes on to Central London.



Black community mourns its dead

'What march?' asks the local Labour MP

By Geoffrey Sheridan

THE Rt Hon John Silkin, shadow leader of the House of Commons, and MP for Lewisham, in whose constituency the fire took place, told Socialist Challenge on the weekend that he will not be joining or supporting the 2 March demonstration.

His comment was: 'There's nothing to support. Information about the march has come to me third hand — no one's been in touch with me. It's being held on my surgery day. I can't give that up.'

To give Mr Silkin his due, he did say it was 'a terrible thing' that no one had contacted him, so Socialist Challenge offered to tell him the phone number of the organising committee.

'No,' he replied, 'the right thing is for the organisers to take it up with Lewisham Council for Community Relations



and then we've got it on a proper basis. I don't know,' he added, 'if they're Lewisham people.'

'The fire is a Deptford tragedy. A lot of black and white people are extremely concerned.'

Mr Silkin said he did not know whether the fire was connected with racial violence in the area, 'but what worried me is that the black community thinks that it was a racist attack. It shows a split in the community that's regrettable.'

And on that philosophical note the conversation ended.

Appeal Fund

The direct action committee has set up a fund for the relatives of the dead. Send donations to: New Cross Massacre Action Committee, 74 Shakespeare Road, London SE24. Tel. 01-737 2268.

For example, the student union at Thames Poly, in Woolwich, which has not been given to militancy in recent times, resolved to close the Poly on 2 March so that students can join the demonstration. A collection raised £70 and the student union is donating £200 to the action committee.

A motion to overturn the student union's policy of 'No platform for fascists', which was taken just after the speaker from the action committee, received eight votes from the more than 150 students at the meeting.

Assembly

In Deptford itself, assemblies open to all nationalities, ethnic or racial groups have met weekly.

Some 300 people representing different organisations were pre-

They demand

- Stand up against the attacks by white racists on black people
- Stand up against the mass murder of black people
- Stand up against the British Movement, the National Front and Column 88
- Stand up against the lies and confusion spread by the newspapers, radio and television
- Stand up for the rights of black people to have their parties without interference
- We will not let the police play around with our lives.

Black people unite against fire massacre

ACCORDING to West Indian World, the Deptford fire massacre has led to the black community in Britain being totally united for the first time in many years. Tension and anger, says the weekly newspaper, is running at fever pitch.

Thirteen young black people died in the fire on 18 January, and many more were injured and are still in hospital. It is generally believed that the fire attack was racially inspired.

The New Cross Massacre Action Committee says that the source of the fire was close to the front window of the terraced

house in New Cross Rd, South London.

This was consistent with an incendiary device having been lobbed through the window.

A witness, Carl Wright, says that he saw a man make a throwing action, heard breaking glass, and then the person walked to a white Austin Princess car.

The police have made statements to the effect that the fire was caused by paint thinners stored in the middle of the front room. They have also suggested that there were fights at the party, cannabis smoking and gate-crashers.

Although violent racial incidents have occurred in the area

over a period of years, including fire-bombings, the police refuse to consider any possibility of a racially motivated attack as the cause of the Deptford fire.

West Indian World has offered a £5,000 reward for information leading to the conviction of the arsonist. The newspaper has received several racist letters.

One stated: 'What a pity only 12 stinking niggers died. I've seen in MacDonalds they are offering Roast Nigger Burgers at a special price if you take 12...'

The rising tide of racist attacks must be stopped. Join the black community on the demonstration on 2 March.

Stop the missiles

Anti-missile Action Guide

WHAT'S on against the missiles? The following events are listed by CND. If you have a film show a demonstration, a public meeting or other anti nuclear event, please send the details to us and CND.



27 February: No to Cruise Missiles. Oldham Against the Missiles public meeting. Michael Meacher, MP speaker. Werneth Park Music Room 7.30pm.

28 February: Socialist Challenge Open Forum in Manchester. 'Detente can it work?' Redmond O'Neill author of 'Why die for Thatcher?' Labour Cllr A. Spencer and a speaker from the Communist Party. UMIST, Lecture Theatre, Rm 7, Renold Bldg., Sackville St.

28 February: Ealing CND picket of local civil defence bunker.

7 March: Bristol CND labour movement conference: 'Jobs not Bombs'. Sponsored by Bristol Trades Council and Tony Benn. Shepherds Hall, Old Market, 10am-5pm. Films, workshops, creche.

7 March: Jobs not Bombs march. Clapham Common to Wandsworth Town Hall. Assemble Clapham South tube at 1pm.

10 March: Picket Stockport Council against their civil defence plans, 6 o'clock at the Town Hall.

14 March: Sheffield nuclear disarmament demonstration and rally. Assemble 10.30/11.30am, Carlisle St. Rally in the City Oval Hall featuring Neil Kinnock MP, Ray Buckton ASLEF, Bruce Kent CND.

4 April: 'Jobs not bombs' march in Stockton (Bill Rodgers' constituency). Speakers from LP, CND, Trades Council; Assemble Norton Green, 12.30pm. Details tel. 0642 2444316.

11 April: Youth CND conference in Birmingham.

12 April: Trans-Pennine march starting in Leeds — through Rochdale to Manchester.

18 April: Mass demonstration called by CND and Manchester Against the Missiles to greet the Trans-Pennine March. Details tel 061-236 4905.

Easter: No Aldermaston march will take place. There will be large events in all regional centres.

May Day: National CND conference in London. Details from: CND, 11 Goodwin St, London N4. Tel 01-263 4954.



Cruise missiles — no one wants to work on it

Help the US military say no to Cruise

ALL concerned citizens can help solve the problems of the US military — by coming to the CND Labour Movement Conference on 28 March, writes PHIL HEARSE.

As one of the aims of the conference will be to discuss how to take the issue of the siting of Cruise missiles in this country into the labour movement it might seem strange that this will benefit the Pentagon.

But the US nuclear weapons industry is having problems at the moment.

There is an acute shortage of people willing to work in this death industry, and according to an official report from the Pentagon released recently this problem will be 'compounded' when Cruise starts rolling off the assembly line.

The shortage of personnel has already led to a dramatic increase in accidents at missile sites in the US, particularly those storing the Titan intercontinental ballistic missile.

From 1970 to 1973 there were six accidents

at Titan sites. But this rose to 18 in 1979, and there were 21 'mishaps' last year, 12 of which were caused by what is described as 'human error'.

The Titans are stored in three states, buried in silos. Each missile carries an eight megaton hydrogen bomb warhead, the biggest in the US's land-based armory.

The strain involved in working with such pieces of equipment appears to have sent many of the service personnel involved round the twist.

Each year, according to the Pentagon report, between 150 and 180 missile crew members and maintenance workers are thrown off the job and given a dose of the 'Personnel Reliability Programme', which is designed to cope with 'emotional' difficulties.

For her part, Margaret Thatcher seems perturbed about these and other dangers associated with the missiles.

Thatcher

In an interview published in *Time* magazine last week, she requested: 'Stop Mr Foot from coming to power and carrying out his threat to send the Cruise or other nuclear missiles back to the United States.'

Hopefully, similar determination, but this time in the opposite direction, will be seen at the CND Labour Movement Conference, which will be meeting at Manchester's Institute of Science and Technology Students Union. The conference has been sponsored by the Labour Party and the Transport and General Workers Union. It is delegate based.

Fill in the slip and help stop missile madness.



Alexander Haig, ex-NATO chief, now US Secretary of State, laughing all the way to the missile bank

Reagan's budget of death

By Geoff Bell

PRESIDENT Ronald Reagan told the US Congress on 18 February: 'We are proposing a much shorter write-off time than is presently allowed. We are proposing a five year write-off.'

The President was referring to grants for businesses which have obsolete machinery, but the rest of the speech, and Reagan's budget proposals that went with it, suggested that it was the human race which the ex-actor had decided to 'write-off'.

The main proposal in Reagan's budget was to step up military spending over the next five years by a massive \$169.5 billion.

To pay for this Reagan announced cuts on social spending specifically aimed to hit the poor, the sick and the unemployed. Full details of what exactly Reagan is proposing to buy in the arms markets of the world have yet to be announced.

But leaks in the US newspapers have given some indication, and Reagan has

specified where the money will come from.

IN comes a new nuclear powered aircraft carrier costing approximately \$2 billion.

OUT goes unemployment benefits for workers who have lost their jobs because of competition from imports. This will 'save' \$1.5 billion.

IN come two more guided missile cruisers, totalling \$2 billion.

OUT goes federal grants to states to assist the educationally, physically, or financially disabled. A 'Saving' of \$2.6 billion.

IN comes six new F-14 Tomcat fighters, costing altogether \$200m.

OUT goes \$100 millions worth of food subsidies for the very poor in this year alone.

IN comes eight new Intruder attack planes, totalling \$240m, and four new Prowler electronic warfare planes, costing \$280m. That adds up to \$520m.

OUT goes a series of payments for the disabled — a 'saving' of \$550m.

IN comes the AV-SB jumper fighter (\$670m.) and 24 more F-16 fighters (\$14m. each). Total cost, just over \$1 billion.

OUT goes payments under Medicaid, a restricted version of this country's NHS. This will 'save' \$1 billion next year.

But if the poor, the disabled, the sick and the unemployed are savaged by Reagan's budget, there are

cuts of a kinder nature for the better off. Reagan is proposing the largest cut in income tax ever seen in the US. Of these, the *Financial Times* judged 'the wealthy will be the main beneficiaries'.

A family of four earning \$20,000 a year will have their income tax cut by \$470; the same size family if it earns \$50,000 will benefit by \$1,883, and if the family was lucky enough to be earning \$100,000 a year, Reagan's tax cut will be worth an annual \$6,869.

The wealthy business class will also benefit from Reagan's machinery 'write-off' grants. This hand-out to private business comes to \$45 billion.

What Reagan's proposals amount to is a return to the stone-age of capitalism. It is probably the most ferocious anti-working class budget ever seen.

It's not simply a question of the poor getting poorer and the rich richer. The savage cuts in welfare payments mean that many will die — and many of them will be the blacks in the poor urban areas.

And the threat to the rest of humanity is just as real. The aircraft carriers, missiles, fighters and bomber planes are not being built for fun. In total, the military's share of the budget rises from 24.1 per

cent to 32.4 per cent.

That is an economy that is geared for war. 'I have painted a grim picture,' said Reagan, announcing his budget. If it is grim for him it is much grimmer for the rest of us.

Labour goes into action in Teesside

By Dave Carter, secretary of Cleveland Association on Trades Councils in his personal capacity

OPPOSITION to Bill Rodgers' role in the Council for Social

Democracy (CSD) is giving added impetus to labour movement activity against the missiles in Teesside.

A march through Rodgers' constituency of Stockton scheduled for 4 April was to demand that the Labour shadow defence spokesperson should defend party policy on unilateral disarmament. It is now likely to turn into a protest against the anti-labour, pro-imperialist stance of the CSD.

At the meeting of Teesside-Thornaby constituency party, where Ian Wrigglesworth, MP, an-

nounced his support for the CSD, delegates unanimously voted their support for the Stockton march.

Anti-missile activists in the area are also planning a week of action from March 9 to 13 which will include showings of the film 'The War Game'.

Socialist Challenge supporters are holding a public meeting on March 20.

Middlesbrough Trades Council has circulated all its union branches about the Labour Movement Conference on Missiles and the Cleveland County Association of Trades Councils have elected two delegates.

More coverage on Poland, please

WHILE grateful for your coverage of Poland, I think you should be giving far more space to the events there. These events represent a potential turning point in world history and it is impossible to overrate their significance.

For a start, they confirm the correctness of the mainstream Trotskyist view that socialist property relations already exist in the East: the Polish workers do not raise — because they cannot raise — a single demand that implies a fundamental restructuring of property-relations in their country.

They demand workers' democracy on the basis of the existing (socialist) property relations.

Second, the events show how the 'state capitalist' theoreticians have ignored a most important aspect of the question. Whereas in the West the chief obstacle to socialist revolution is the hold of bourgeois ideas on the working class, in the East this obstacle does not exist.

The ruling bureaucracies have had, willy-nilly, to criticise bourgeois ideology over the years, and today they find themselves in the ironical position that they can only attack 'Solidarity' as... 'non-socialist'!

Third, there is no way the Polish events can be contained. The East today is not what it was in 1956 or even in 1968. Higher living standards, better education, travel, and improved communications generally make it impossible to 'isolate' the Polish movement.

The same demands will be taken up in East Germany, Hungary, and, of course, in Russia itself.

The consequences are incalculable: if the movement is successful, revolutionaries in the West will have, for the first time in over 50 years, a convincing model of society that combines socialist property relationships with workers' democracy.

Since this will undoubtedly spell the beginning of the end of Western capitalism, we can be sure that Reagan and his like are already busy trying to subvert the movement by giving support to the obscurantist tendencies in Poland — the Church, the better-off peasantry, those intellectuals who hanker after the feudal past, and so on.

Capitalism can live with bureaucratic dictatorships in the East; it cannot live with socialist economies plus workers' democracy.

A NORWEGIAN READER

I WOULD like to correct a number of errors that crept into my review (12 Feb) of Mike Cooley's book *Architect or Bee* during the editing process.

First, the technical designers of the large Birmingham factory who demanded 'parity with the machine' were in the AUEW-TASS, not the AUEW.

Secondly, there is no

Fault in editing technology

such thing as an 'oil telechiric pipeline'. The human control technology described in the book is a telechiric device ('hands-at-a-distance') for maintenance workers on oil pipelines.

Thirdly I originally

wrote that in a planned economy car-body welders *may* (not *would*) be happy to transfer their skills to a robot device. I was arguing against the implication in Mike's book that skills are *always* to be preserved — it's an open question

whether workers in a socialist society would want to retain their skills or learn new ones.

But I would definitely agree with Mike that a vital factor in the development of technology under socialism are the wishes of the

workers whose skills are affected.

Maybe such inaccuracies in an article could be avoided if the edited version of a signed article could be checked by the person who originally wrote it.

Finally *Architect or Bee* can be obtained from Hand and Brain, 95 Sussex Place, Slough SL1 NN, Bucks, price £2.50 a copy. For postage include 50p for single copies, and 10p for each additional copy. All proceeds go towards the Lucas Aerospace Corporate Plan.

PETE ROSNER, LONDON

SOCIALISM AND DEMOCRACY

Replacing the Labour Party

AS A sympathiser of Socialist Challenge I would like to take up the arguments of SWP member Geoff Collier about the newspaper and the Labour Party (12 Feb). In my view he commits a disastrous error in his criticism.

According to Geoff, Socialist Challenge is arguing for a mass campaigning Labour Party and thus retreating on the need to build a revolutionary party.

In my view he is absolutely right to stress that the Labour Party is incapable of carrying through the transformation to socialism. Let's not forget that Lenin (as opposed to some so-called Trotskyists) described the Labour Party as a *bourgeois* party albeit with a mass working class base.

It is *not* a workers' party which happens to have accidentally acquired a bourgeois leadership. The task of revolutionaries therefore is to replace this party with a revolutionary party.

But there is a problem, which Geoff Collier and the SWP seem totally oblivious to.

There is not a single example in history of a mass revolutionary party being formed without a split in the reformist party — a revolutionary party will only be formed by a split in the Labour Party and not by individual recruitment one by one to a new revolutionary nucleus.

How a split comes about is another matter. Geoff Collier himself says that 'entrism can be a necessary tactic under certain conditions', but completely fails to give any explanation of why it is, with the emergence of the biggest left wing in the Labour Party for 25 years, that the conditions are absolutely wrong for any kind of intervention inside the Labour Party today.

This is not unnatural since the SWP as a whole is having increasing difficulty explaining this very point! At any rate, it is a completely improbable variant that a split in the Labour Party to form a revolutionary party could take place without a Marxist core existing in that party.

The Labour Party could only be won to revolutionary socialism if it broke with its leadership, its programme, its structures, its history, and its methods of organisation.

Such a transformation is highly unlikely without a vertical split — the Council for Social Democracy affair shows that the right would never allow the left to gain control of the LP without splitting — we need a *new* party.

The Labour Party could only be won to revolutionary socialism if it broke with its leadership, its programme, its structures, its history, and its methods of organisation.

Cheap slur

I'M WRITING to protest about your centre-spread (5 Feb) where, beneath a picture of Shirley Williams, you wrote: 'Catholic anti-abortionist and ex-Labour MP'.

This is offensive and gives the wrong impression, firstly that there is something wrong with being Catholic, and secondly that all Catholics are anti-abortionists.

Of course you can say the caption is simply factual — which it is — but two other pictures on the spread are captioned: 'Merchant banker and bon viveur Roy Jenkins', and 'Persecutor of social security claimants Reg Prentice'!

My attention was

drawn to this by a close workmate who was flicking through the paper for the first time and was angry and offended by it.

He said: 'Is this supposed to be a slur?' When I started umming and ahing he shut the paper and said well if that's an example of your paper, the rest must be a load of lies and bias.

Now we did get talking and it turned out that he is both from a Catholic background and personally opposed to abortion — but not because he's toeing the 'religious party line'.

And he was prepared to listen to our point of view about abortion being a choice for women, not MPs, doctors or the church.

I explained too that our paper has always defended the Catholic minority in the north of Ireland, regardless of disagreements of faith or conviction. But he convinced me of the way in which your caption appears a slur and a cheap substitute for argument.

We must not talk to the politically converted, nor forget that we stand for the maximum collective and individual freedom in the society we wish to build on the ruins of this violent, destructive, unequal and sexist one.

That includes the freedom of worship and the freedom to disagree, man or woman, with abortion — though not the freedom to impose

that view on other people.

Can I suggest from this some articles the paper could run?

1. Our view on socialist democracy, especially as regards religion;

2. A Marxist explanation of the roots of religion and why we think it likely religion would wither away along with the state;

3. The feminist socialist arguments about the 'unborn';

4. More articles like 'Arguments for Socialism' directed at the general reader — and not so tucked away.

DAVE PASSINGHAM, Burnley



Comrade Collier should step back from his tactical prescription and look at the basic programmatic questions involved.

PAUL ANDREWS, London

Labour Party — not a simple choice

D Hughes' letter (12 Feb) misses the point.

In wanting Socialist Challenge to decide between forming a revolutionary party outside the Labour Party or working wholly inside to extend the struggle for democracy he forgets the fundamental relationship between the LP and the unions.

Unless trades unionists also fight for democratic representation inside the unions then the block vote is a democratic sham.

This does not mean that we should argue for a separation between the LP and the unions, but rather extend the fight within the party into the unions.

To have a clear position on this does not mean that SC should make up its mind in relation to the LP — it is not a simple choice of either

inside or outside because the trade union role is crucial.

The other point comrade Hughes misses is the role of a paper like SC and its effects on its readers. The fact that he writes to SC reveals one of its areas of influence — that it is read by members of the LP and that the ideas expressed in its columns not only reflect but also develop and extend debates in that party.

A newspaper cannot in that sense be a 'mere observer', just as the bourgeois press is not a passive reflector of events, but interprets them to support the system.

What comrade Hughes misunderstands is that it is perfectly possible for a paper representing revolutionary ideas to intervene and rework those ideas with the left of the LP in the joint struggle to achieve socialism; we in the LP should be pleased by its support rather than dismissive because that support is only now evident.

JANE KELLY, Peckham Constituency Labour Party

Other

THE BOOKSHOP

Edited by Raphael Samuel
People's History and Socialist Theory

Routledge and Kegan Paul, £6.95

This comprehensive collection of Marxist essays on history brings together and develops the work done by feminist history groups, community publishing projects, labour history societies and others. Its contributors include Perry Anderson, Sheila Rowbotham and EP Thompson, and it covers a wide range of topics such as feminism, fascism, African and labour history.

Edited by Mike Prior

The Popular and the Political

Routledge and Kegan Paul, £6.95

This collection of essays written mainly by members of the Communist Party provides a reappraisal of socialist strategy for the 1980s taking into account the failings of the left in Britain in the past and the rapidly changing nature of popular involvement in politics in recent years.

Available from The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper St, London N1 2XP. Tel: 01-226 0571. Please add 15% if ordering by post.



Peasant supporters of the FMLN Last week the United States threatened to escalate the struggle one stage further by blockading Cuba, in retaliation for allegedly supplying arms to the Salvadoran resistance.



Government troops in Guatemala. Increasingly the conflict in Central America is becoming a regional one. In Guatemala the government is fighting the Guerilla Army of the Poor, in Salvador the FMLN guerillas already control sections of the countryside, and the Honduran army is poised to intervene to back up the Salvadoran dictatorship.

IN 1976 Donaldo Alvarez Ruiz, recently appointed minister of the interior to the then president of Guatemala, Eugenio Laugerend Garcia, decided to set up a press and public relations office to improve the bad image of his ministry.

At that time I was secretary-general of the media workers' trade union, having previously been active as a student leader at the University of San Carlos and later in the Guatemalan Journalists Association.

For these reasons the minister's advisers thought that I would be the right person to head the new office and the minister personally asked me to accept the post.

I talked it over with the leaders of the Guerilla Army of the Poor, of which I was and am a member. They suggested that I should definitely take advantage of the opportunity to infiltrate the government.

So I gave up my job as union secretary, changed my lifestyle, and did everything I could to get a reputation as a reactionary, traitor, and social climber. This wasn't difficult since it is common practice in Guatemala for the government to buy off mass leaders by offering them well-paid jobs in the public service.

In this way I managed in the space of a year to become a confidante of the minister and re-

Inside the

THIS article, translated from the Italian magazine L'Espresso, details the experience of ELIAS BARAHONA Y BARAHONA, a member

mained one until several weeks ago when I took advantage of special leave to flee Guatemala in accordance with orders from the EGP leadership who were afraid that I might be unmasked at any time.

However the four years I spent at the ministry were enough for me to find out the tactics the government uses in its work of repression of the progressive organisations.

In Guatemala there are two very active far right paramilitary organisations: the Anticomunist Secret Army (Ejercito Secreto Anticomunista - ESA) and the Squadron of Death (Escuadron de la Muerte).

Together they have been responsible for the slaughter which has in the last months taken the lives of over 2,000 people, including mass leaders,

peasants, workers, professionals, and religious organisers and July last year were murdered or kidnapped.

The members of the Squadron of Death even spare women, the elderly, and the young sons of the University who had themselves escape an ESA attack.

Another example of the shooting of people at the funeral secretary of workers union, Melgar. In this of the dead and other people who homicidal madmen

CENTRAL AMERICA VERSUS THE PEOPLE

CENTRAL America is in turmoil. The small states in the isthmus have traditionally been dominated economically by the United States and ruled by right-wing military dictatorships — backed politically and militarily by the US.

But today the workers and peasants are fighting back. In Nicaragua the Somoza dictatorship has been overthrown and replaced by a workers' and peasants' government. In

Guatemala the regime of the Guerilla Army of the Poor is going on between the rebels.

Above we publish a photograph of a Guatemalan woman supporting the Guerilla Army of the Poor who is

'The most important role belongs to the workers'

Q. There's been some confusion about the character of the 10 January offensive. People had been expecting the guerilla forces to strike a decisive blow at the regime.

Ramon Medrano: We considered the offensive as a qualitative step forward for our struggle. It was the transition from a stage of the struggle aimed at the defense of the population towards the stage of a military offensive.

As the regime had been carrying out a war of extermination for the previous few months, the population was expecting a military response by the FMLN.

We considered it essential to open up a new phase in the confrontation between the people and the reactionary forces. So we prepared for a military offensive.

We had no illusions about the possibility of winning a decisive victory, since over the past few years the regime's forces have been heavily equipped by North American imperialism.

A permanent airlift has been delivering at least ten plane loads of weapons a day to Llopango airport. There are now also at least 100 American advisers in the country — a larger figure than the term 'military assistance' would imply.

Just like in Vietnam, 'military assistance' preceded the sending in of the troops.

Q. What then was the objective of the offensive?

JRM: Our intention was to create an offensive capacity among our fighters, and to test out



Ana Guadalupe Martinez at a conference

our military leadership capabilities in the framework of a generalised offensive.

Until now the junta's army has been on the offensive, attempting to crush our ability to mobilise important forces — as they succeeded in doing in the Morazan region.

But in the offensive we proved that we were capable of dominating the situation on the military level. Our objective was not to conquer the enemy garrisons. Our overall offensive has not been completely successful, but we succeeded in widening the regions under our control.

Unlike the junta's forces, we didn't concentrate our forces around San Salvador — we under-

Guatemalan junta

of the Guatemalan guerilla army of the Poor, who infiltrated the government. The translation is by the Australian Trotskyist paper Direct Action



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ple stops at nothing.
On the morning of 14 July I was talking with minister Ruiz in his office when he was informed by phone that a police chief, one Natareno, had been executed. The minister flew into a rage and called the chief of the secret police, Manuel de Jesus Valiente Telles. 'Manolo,' he said, 'they've killed Natareno. You know what you have to do.'
Half an hour later about 40 hooded men armed with machine pistols arrived at the San Carlos university campus and began firing at the crowd of students who were getting off the buses to go to their lessons. Twenty-five were killed and 14 injured. I later heard that the Squadron of Death had claimed responsibility for the attack.
As for the Anticommunist Secret Army, on June 21 an ESA

commando unit burst into the offices of the National Workers Federation (Central Nacional de Trabajadores — CNT) which is three blocks from the residential palace and alongside the headquarters of the second corps of the national police.
In one room 35 leaders of the main workers' unions were holding a meeting. The ESA force compelled the unionists at gunpoint to leave the building, and also destroyed the office files. Since then nothing has been heard of the 35 unionists, but it isn't difficult to guess their fate.
Intellectuals form another persecuted group. In the month of July alone 20 university teachers at San Carlos university were killed, most of them along with their wives. This was because the ESA struck when they were leaving home together

to go to work.
Recently five priests were murdered, their sole crime being that of preaching the need for a land reform for the peasants.
I've made this brief summary of the massacre that is under way in my country so that the world may realise the size of the tragedy being suffered by the Guatemalan people. This personhunt, as far as I was able to ascertain, is being carried out in the framework of a 'pacification programme' to eliminate communism.
The programme's inventors were the president of the republic, Lucas Garcia and his gang of generals, as well as Anibal Guevara Rodriguez, the minister of defence, Rene Mendoza Palomo, commander in chief of the army and, of course, Donaldó Alvarez Ruiz, minister

of the interior.
They are the brains behind the ESA and the Squadron of Death, while the middle level co-ordinators are finance minister, Hugo Tulio Buscaro, colonels, Hector Montalban and Oscar Perucina, heads of military intelligence and German Chupina, superintendent of the national police.

Carter

The 'pacification programme' was suggested by the United States a short time before President Carter launched his human rights policy. Its aim was to cut off all popular protest and perpetuate the power of the military government which had already been in control for 12 years, thanks to electoral fraud.
I learned of this plan in mid-1978, when Ruiz called me to ask for some suggestions for a propaganda campaign that would serve to divert people's attention from the large number of murders which were already being openly attributed to the government. 'Elias, think of something that would explain so many deaths without the blame falling on the government,' the minister told me.
He then put forward his theory of the 'opposed extremisms' which consists in attributing killings and kidnappings to underground groups of the extreme right and extreme

left, thus making the Lucas Garcia government appear as a victim, and hence interested in finding means to carry out a pacification.
In fact the 'struggle against the opposed extremisms' became from that time the slogan used by the government both inside the country and for international public opinion.
The governments of Israel, Chile and Argentina are also giving logistical, military and political support to the Guatemalan government.

Chile

Ruiz, the minister for the interior, went to Chile in October 1979 where he was decorated with the Order of the Liberator by Pinochet himself. The minister returned from Chile enthused by the school of the Chilean carabineros and a little put-out by the fact that, while the Guatemalan army had 100 officers down there undergoing training, his police had not even sent one.
As a result he seconded 75 police officers to Pinochet's school so that they could be trained as well as the army officers. But that's not all: an almost equal number of police and army officers from Guatemala are presently in Argentina to learn interrogation techniques and the tactics of repression.

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ment, and, below, an interview with two leaders of the El Salvador rebels. They are Ana Guadalupe Martinez, a leader of the Peoples Revolutionary Army (ERP), and José Ramon Medrano, a member of the leadership of the FMLN (Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front), the co-ordination of the military wing of the rebel forces.

uprising.
So now we have to consider the general state of morale of the masses. If no victories are won, then the masses won't take part in an uprising. Thus the military side of the struggle has great importance.
The leadership of the movement has to have the capacity to accurately assess the morale of the masses. The appeal for a general strike was launched in San Salvador when the masses were not really convinced it was a generalised offensive.
They didn't know of the severe losses inflicted on the junta forces. From that point of view, the call for a general strike was a political mistake. The triumphalism which prevailed in the description of the military situation led us to think that the masses would take part in the strike.
Q: Has the FMLN enough arms to arm the population?
That's the wrong way to pose the question. If we just limit ourselves to considering the capacity of the FMLN to arm the population, then we are making an error because the solution isn't just military, but political.
What's at stake isn't strictly military; it's the political death of the junta. If we were only to see the struggle as a conflict with another army it

would be a disaster — we can't militarily match up to an army equipped by a military power like the USA.
We are waging a revolutionary war in which military questions play a role, but that is not the most important role — that belongs to the masses.

Q. In the zones controlled by the FMLN, will a revolutionary democratic government be formed?
AGM: This depends on the evolution of the struggle. At present it is not possible to install a regime of dual power.
The strikes didn't achieve all the expected results. To be sure, in the Morazan region there are villages where there are new popular political structures but still on a limited scale, which we have to spread to the whole country.
Only then will we be able to form a new government. It has to be set up in the country itself, not in exile, and represent a real alternative power.
Because of this, we are having difficulties in convincing other countries to break diplomatic relations with the junta, insofar as there is no alternative government.
Our principle task now is to form a bloc of countries which oppose American intervention in El Salvador.

Tory lies on El Salvador

By Phil Hearse

TWENTY-ONE members of the faculty of the University of El Salvador were recently arrested by the junta's army during the weekly curriculum meeting. While 13 have since been released, eight members of the faculty are being held as the instigators of a 'subversive meeting',

that is the curriculum meeting.

ITN reporter Jon Snow commented in a report from San Salvador that 'no one is putting money on the eight ever being seen alive again'.

Last October Felix Ulloa, rector of the university, was assassinated by agents of the junta. Letters from academics to British government officials

asking them to take up this case received a typical Tory response.

Sir Ian Gilmour, Lord Privy Seal, in a letter to World University Service Chairperson Sir Robert Birley commented: 'It would appear, as you say, that the junta is not wholly in control, though we do not believe that it has actually connived at these outrages.'(!)

Gilmour added: 'You may wish to know that I have recently received a personal assurance from the Salvadorean foreign minister of his government's respect for human rights within the framework of the law.'

In another letter F Trew, an official at the British Foreign Office, wrote: 'To intervene in El Salvador's internal affairs where no demonstrable British interest is involved would not be altogether appropriate.'

Denounce

Just to show that he has an honest and clear-minded view of what's really going on in El Salvador, Trew commented: 'I understand that such military assistance as the United States gives to El Salvador is limited to non-lethal items.'

It is wholly appropriate for working people all over the world to intervene in the internal affairs of El Salvador to defend the people against the massacres and torture of the junta.

We should demand that the British government denounces the repression.

A big responsibility lies with Michael Foot and the other leaders of the Labour Party to speak out clearly and repeatedly raise this question until the British government stops its slavish support for the US intervention.

US HANDS OFF EL SALVADOR!

Support the struggle of the Salvadoran people

Saturday 4 April 2.30pm

'The Plains', Oxford — march through city centre

Where you can buy Socialist Challenge

ABERDEEN: SC sold Saturdays outside C&As — for more info ring Colin, 574060.

BATH: SC on sale at 1985 Books, London Road, and Saturdays 2pm-3pm outside the Roman Baths. Phone 20298 for more details.

BIRMINGHAM: SC on sale at The Ramp, Fri 4.30-5.40, Sat 10-4. For more info phone 643-0669.

BRADFORD: SC available from Fourth Idea Bookshop, 14 Southgate.

BRIGHTON: SC sales regularly every Sat outside Open Market, London Road, from 11am-1pm.

BRISTOL: SC on sale 11-1, 'Hole in Ground', Haymarket. More info from Box 2, c/o Fullmarks, 110 Cheltenham Rd, Montpellier, Bristol 6.

BURNLEY: SC on sale every Sat morning 11.30-1pm St James St.

CARDIFF: SC sales Newport Town Centre outside Woolworths 11-12.30; Cardiff British Home Stores 11-12.30. Also available from 108 Books, Salisbury Road, Cardiff.

CHESTERFIELD: SC supporters sell outside Boots, Marketplace, Saturdays 11.30am-12.30pm.

COVENTRY: SC available from Wedge Bookshop. For more info about local activities phone 461338.

DUNDEE: SC available from Dundee City Square outside Boots, every Thursday 4-5.30pm, Friday 4-5.30pm, Saturday 11-4pm.

EDINBURGH: SC sales every Thursday 4.15-5.15pm Bus Station, St. Andrews Square; Saturday 11.30-2pm East End, Princes St. Also available from 1st May Books, or Better Books, Forrest Rd. More info on local activity from SC c/o Box 6, 1st May Bookshop, Candlemaker Row.

ENFIELD: SC available from Nelsons newsagents, London Rd, Enfield Town.

GLASGOW: SC sales every Thur/Fri 4.30-5.30pm at Central Station. Also available at Barretts, Byres Rd; Clyde books, High St; Glasgow Bookshop collective, Cresswell Lane; Hope Street Book Centre.

HACKNEY: supporters sell SC every Saturday morning at Ridley Road market E8.

HAMILTON: SC on sale 8-11 every Sat, outside County Bar Almada Street, every Sat outside Safeway 1.30-5. For more info contact Paul, 17 Clyde View or John at 54 Elliot St, Hamilton.

HUDDERSFIELD: SC supporters sell papers every Saturday 11am-1pm, The Piazza. SC also available at Peaceworks.

KILBURN: SC sales every Sat, 10am in Kilburn Square.

LAMBETH: SC available from Village Books, Streatham; Tethric Books, Clapham; Paperback Centre, Brixton; Oval tube kiosk. Also sold Thur and Fri evenings and Thur mornings outside Brixton tube.

NEWCASTLE: SC on sale every Sat 11-1pm outside Fenwicks. Also available at Days of Hope bookshop, Westgate Rd. For more info ring Phil or Pete on Newcastle 737507.

MANCHESTER: SC supporters sell 11-1pm Sat at OLDHAM outside the Yorkshire Bank, High St; at BURY in the shopping precinct and at Metro Books; at BOLTON in the town centre; and in MANCHESTER outside the central reference library in St Peter's Square and at Grassroots and Percivals Bookshop. Tel: 061-236 4905 for further info.

NEWHAM: SC sale every Saturday, 11am to noon, Queen's Rd Market, Upton Park.

OLDHAM: SC sold every Saturday outside Yorkshire Bank, High Street. For more information about local activities, Tel: 061-682 5151.

OXFORD: SC supporters sell every Fri 12-2pm outside Kings Arms and every Sat 10.30-12.30pm in Cornmarket.

STOCKPORT: SC sold every Saturday, 1pm, Mersey Way. Can be delivered weekly: phone 483 8909 (evening), 236 4905 (day).

SWANSEA: SC sales outside Co-op, Oxford St, 11am-1pm, Saturdays.

SWINDON: SC on sale 11-1 every Sat., Regent St (Brunel Centre).

TESSIDE: SC on sale Sat lunchtime in the Cleveland Centre, and in Newsfare, Linthorpe Road, Middlesbrough, and outside Woolworths on Stockton High Street.

WOLVERHAMPTON: SC sales on Thur/Fri at Poly Students Union from noon-2pm and British Rail 4.30-6pm; on Saturday near Beatties, town centre from 11am-2pm.

Is your town or city mentioned above? If not, send in details to this sales column.

SC Events

HACKNEY: Socialist Challenge supporters' jumble sale on Sat 28 Feb, 2pm. At St. James Church hall, Powell Rd, E5.

CAMDEN: Socialist Challenge 'Fight the Tories' jumble sale at 2pm, Sat 28 Feb. At Camden Labour rooms. If you have jumble ring 278-8089 to arrange collection.

SOCIALIST CHALLENGE: organisers' fraction on Sat 14 March at national centre.

BRENT: Socialist Challenge 'Russian evening' on Sat 28 Feb. Tickets, ring Tessa or Pam on 359-8288. Food & 'Battleship Potemkin' film.

MANCHESTER: Forum on 'Detente — can it work?' Sat 28 Feb, 7.30pm. Speakers from Socialist Challenge, Communist Party, Labour Party. Venue: UMIST Renold building lecture room 7, Sackville St.

NORTH WEST: School on 'Socialism, Pacifism and War'. Sessions on Reagan, Thatcher and the War Drive; Socialism and Pacifism; lessons of the anti-Vietnam war movement and CND. Sat 28 Feb, 10.5pm. Venue: UMIST Union, Sackville St, Manchester. Open to all SC supporters.

Spanish police murder Basque militant

By Frank McBride

A ONE-DAY general strike paralysed Euskadi (the Basque country) on 16 February after a Basque separatist militant was tortured to death by Spanish police.

Jose Arregui, allegedly a member of ETA-Militar, was arrested on 4 February in Madrid. After nine days in police custody he was rushed to a prison hospital where he died of pneumonia aggravated by internal haemorrhages and second degree



News from the Fourth International

burns on his feet. The Spanish press openly refers to this as 'death by police torture'.

The head of the Spanish police and five other senior officers have

resigned in the ensuing scandal, and the head of the Madrid special branch and a police doctor have been dismissed for negligence.

For the government and the reformist parties

the killing of Arregui is a disaster. They had begun to undermine the strength of the nationalist movement following ETA-Militar's assassination of a top nuclear engineer at the Lemoniz nuclear centre near Bilbao.

This ill-judged assassination led to the first-ever general strike against an ETA action and to the establishment of a 'Front for Peace' movement.

The latest protest strikes against the police torture of Arregui have been much larger than the 'peace' strikes, mobilising 80,000 demonstrators and

leading to a total industrial shutdown of the major cities in Euskadi.

These events follow the recent visit to Euskadi by King Juan Carlos. The highlight of his trip was the interruption of his speech in the Basque Parliament by radical nationalist MPs singing the Basque national hymn.

Two members of the LKI (the Fourth International in Euskadi) were arrested during the royal visit for 'insults to the head of state'. They were caught putting up posters satirising the king and now face weeks or months in jail awaiting trial.

A message for all Socialist Challenge supporters:

Get delegated to the missiles conference!

By Phil Hearse

THE *Observer* magazine last week gave a graphic account of the vast nuclear stockpiles in Britain. One fifth of all US air-force personnel abroad are in Britain — over 20,000 of them.

A large proportion of the 7,000 'theatre' nuclear bombs which the USAF has in Europe are also in Britain, and the smallest of these weapons has a yield several times that of the bomb which destroyed Hiroshima.

Britain is the key base for the F-111 bombers, each of which can carry 'tactical' nuclear weapons 23-times more powerful than the Hiroshima bomb.

Carrier

It's easy to see then why the *Observer* repeats CND's accusation — that Britain is 'Uncle Sam's aircraft carrier'. We pay out huge amounts to play host to this insane array of weaponry, and Thatcher intends to make us pay out billions more for Cruise and Trident missiles.

No wonder, then, that support is building up for CND's Labour Movement Conference against the Missiles, to take place in Manchester on 28 March. There is no doubt that feeling in the labour movement against the missiles is growing all the time.

Deal
But there's a problem. Michael Foot shows every sign of being prepared to

compromise with Labour's right-wing on the question of unilateral nuclear disarmament. He appointed anti-unilateralist Brynmore John as 'defence' spokesperson, and assured a meeting of the right-wing Manifesto group that he wouldn't take any precipitate action on unilateralism.

Foot should be forced to sack Brynmore John and reaffirm his commitment to unilateral disarmament. The labour movement conference will



be an important step towards deepening this campaign.

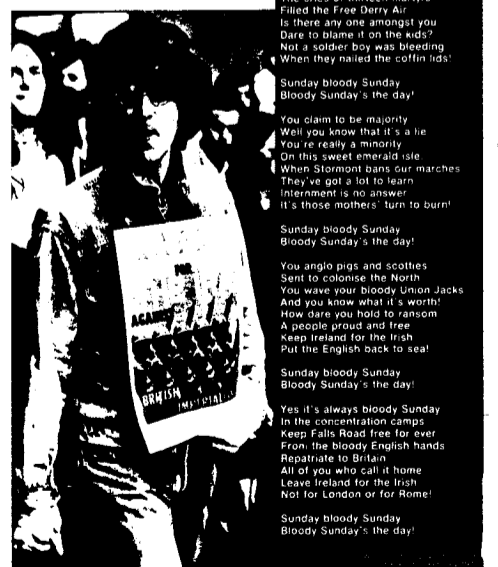
There's now only a month to go before the conference. Socialist Challenge supporters should pull out all the stops to get their local Labour Party and trade union branches delegated, to ensure the maximum turnout — don't leave it too late! Make sure that when you have your

next get together to discuss paper sales, you also discuss who's going to the missiles conference and which local bodies will be represented.

Don't be afraid to approach as many local labour move-

ment bodies as you can get in touch with — even those who don't usually support left-wing causes will often support CND. Act now, and we'll help to make the conference a massive success! See page 6 for details.

JOHN LENNON 1940-1980



SUNDAY BLOODY SUNDAY
Well it was Sunday bloody Sunday
When they shot the people there
The cries of thirteen martyrs
Filled the Free Derry Air
Is there any one amongst you
Dare to blame it on the kids?
Not a soldier boy was bleeding
When they nailed the coffin lids!
Sunday bloody Sunday
Bloody Sunday's the day!
You claim to be majority
Well you know that it's a lie
You're really a minority
On this sweet emerald isle
When Stormont bans our marches
They've got a lot to learn
Internment is no answer
It's those mothers' turn to burn!
Sunday bloody Sunday
Bloody Sunday's the day!
You anglo pigs and scotties
Sent to colonise the North
You wave your bloody Union Jacks
And you know what it's worth!
How dare you hold to ransom
A people proud and free
Keep Ireland for the Irish
Put the English back to sea!
Sunday bloody Sunday
Bloody Sunday's the day!
Yes it's always bloody Sunday
In the concentration camps
Keep Falls Road free for ever
From the bloody English hands
Repatriate to Britain
All of you who call it home
Leave Ireland for the Irish
Not for London or for Rome!
Sunday bloody Sunday
Bloody Sunday's the day!

Thousands bought in Glasgow!

Two of the most popular badges in Britain



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Just £1. Bulk orders (over 5) are post free, otherwise, send 30p p&p.
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By Michael Margusee

ONE of the most arresting developments in the fine arts since the Second World War must be the championing of self-consciously 'modern' art by the institutions of the ruling class.

In Britain, the Arts Council, the British Council, the Tate, Hayward and Bond Street galleries have all done their share in promoting abstract, minimalist, pop and conceptual art — all styles which have been defended on the grounds that they challenge or indeed overthrow established conventions.

In America the pattern is even more striking. In the '50s abstract expressionism became a new orthodoxy. With the patronage of the Rockefellers and considerable assistance from the CIA, it was promoted all over the world as a triumph of modern American culture.

To the Cold War ideologues 'modern' art served as an example of the freedom enjoyed by Western

Beyond the crisis in art

artists in contrast to the blatant ideological subservience of the arts in the Soviet Union.

Peter Fuller argues in his new book* that the real Western counterpart to official Soviet art is not to be found in the work of the 'fine art professionals' but in the ubiquitous imagery of what he calls the 'mega-visual' tradition of monopoly capitalism — advertising.

Through its use of the technology of reproduction and transmission, it permeates society with its lies to an extent that even the state-supported art of the Soviet Union, with its own lies, does not.

As this tradition has come to occupy a more and more central position in our culture, the fine arts have become increasingly marginalised. They survive beyond their historical era very much as the Christian

Church has survived its era and, like the Church, they resort more and more to the devices of the world which has rejected them — pop art is the obvious example.

In our society fine artists are given the freedom, and in some cases the means, to do almost anything they like and call it art. But to what end do they work? To whom is their work addressed?

As Fuller points out, the freedom of the artist in the West is built upon the absence of the one freedom without which the others are meaningless, the freedom to act socially.

Now, with cuts in education and the arts and increasingly direct interference by the government, this freedom is gradually being exposed as the illusion it always was.

Of course many artists are acutely aware of the crisis in the fine art tradition and have responded in diverse ways. In-

deed, the sheer variety and incoherence of the art scene, particularly over the last decade, is its most striking feature.

Response

Yet this proliferation of experiments meets with little or no public response. At times this indifference can be orchestrated, when it suits the bourgeois press (as it did in the case of the Tate 'Bricks'), into outright philistine hostility.

Fuller opposes this kind of criticism, just as he opposes government attacks on the arts. But he argues that artists have opened the door to this kind of reaction by their own rejection of the material bases of the fine art tradition, the practices of painting, sculpture, and drawing.

Throughout this collection of essays, reviews and interviews, Fuller polemicalises

on two fronts. On the one hand he attacks the bourgeois formalists for whom the art object contains within itself a timeless value bearing no reference to the outside world.

On the other he disputes with the left avant-garde who abandon the art object altogether and believe that it necessarily expresses the dominant ideology of its time.

In the end, Fuller presents the two positions as mirror images of each other, both idealist reductions of art which denigrate the creative human subject and the possibility of its social expression through the skills of painting, drawing and sculpture.

Fuller does not advocate a return to the conventions of 19th century naturalism. He protests against the emptiness of late modernism in the name of the great promise held out by modernists of the

early part of the century such as Cezanne, Picasso, and the revolutionary artists of the Soviet Union.

Undoubtedly, painting, sculpture and drawing are historically determined phenomena and have acted as the carriers of a tainted ideology. But that does not make them the same as that ideology or necessarily bound to it.

Through them the imagination can be brought to bear upon the real world and the elements of that world can be transformed into a new unity, not merely reshuffled or ignored altogether as in so much contemporary art.

It is because these practices afford art a material base, something deeper than passing ideologies, that art, even in the bosom of bourgeois culture, can stand against that culture. As Trotsky said in scourging the Stalinist art of the '30s, 'Art can become a strong ally of the revolution only insofar as it remains faithful to itself.'

**Beyond the Crisis in Art* by Peter Fuller is published by Writer and Readers Publishing Cooperative. Price £5.95

Asante: Kingdom of Gold

Bringing black history to light

By Antonia Gorton

YOU probably remember the ballyhoo over the Vikings exhibition at the British Museum. The advertising titillated with visions of 'rape and pillage'. The Queen came to open the exhibition; TV cables snaked everywhere; and queues stood five-deep around the museum, and Magnus Magnusson developed a television series based on its material.

Asante: Kingdom of Gold opened this week at the Museum of Mankind in Piccadilly, London. The King of Asante opened it, but there won't be queues or much TV and so far there hasn't been a lot of press attention.

The difference is a question of colour. Even allowing for promotional differences between 'loan' material and that which is a museum's own, black culture isn't a big seller in the British museum world. It doesn't attract the sort of money that the *Sunday Times* forked out for the Vikings.

Kumase

This is a shame because *Asante: Kingdom of Gold* is a very good exhibition. It disproves the propaganda about how 'Africans were all just a bunch of savages living in the jungle that we British had a moral duty to civilise.'

The kingdom of the Asante is in West Africa in what is now Ghana. Europeans have been trading on the Gold Coast since the 1500s, but at the end of the 17th century it became apparent that a group further inland had become dominant.

This was the Asante under the leadership of Osei Tutu, who brought a group of towns and

states into a confederation centred on Kumase.

Their confederation developed into an extraordinarily complex system of economic, political and military power. It was very rich in gold. The British finally invaded Asante in 1874, destroyed part of Kumase and left — to return in 1896, removed the King and his court — and exiled them to the Seychelles. This effectively smashed up the fabric of Asante life.

Photos

Asante is visually delightful and children will love it.

There are reconstructions of Asante life as it was in the 19th century when the British first came into contact.

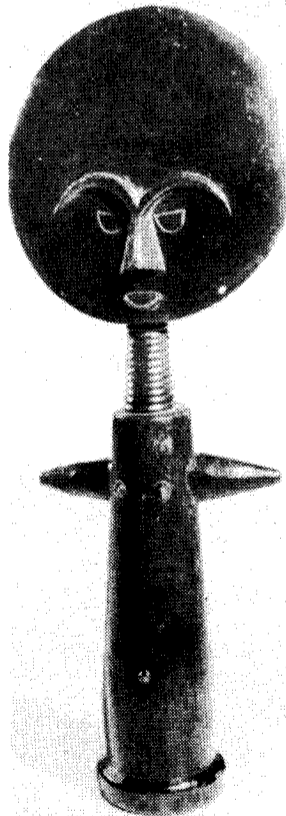
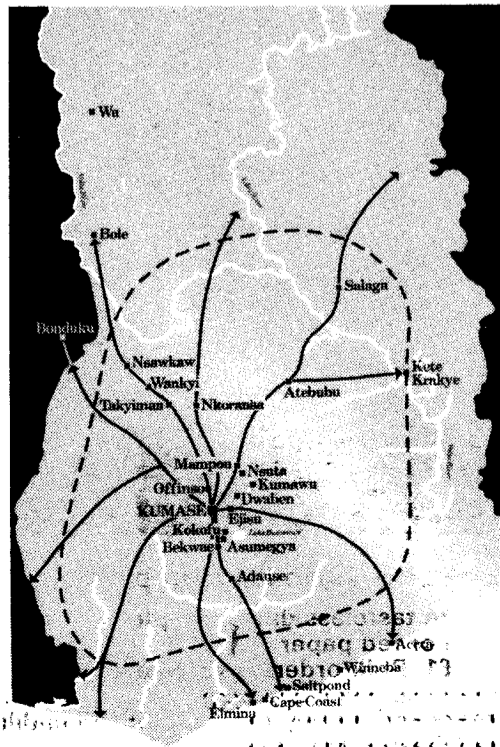
There's a forest with a great big snake; there's village huts to walk in; there's the main street of Kumasi with a shade tree; there's a pitch black room with the beautiful gold glowing and life-size figures of the king and the people of his court.

A bonus is the use of the 19th century photographs, especially in the final section which deals with the decline of Asante.

The photos of the British colonels with their polished cavalry boots sitting in the midst of their black 'subjects' illustrate the mentality of



Anti-witchcraft figure



Fertility doll

the colonialist better than any text.

The personality of the Asante comes through particularly in their gold weights with which they depicted the objects and proverbs of their daily life.

One of the most common shows two crocodiles crossed at the stomach. Although the creatures have a single stomach the heads still compete to swallow the food, meaning that it is futile for individuals to grab what is needed for the common good.

Other areas of interest centre on the ancestral stools; colourful umbrellas; the fetishes and fertility dolls.



Executioner with victim's head

In conjunction with the exhibition, a book on the Asante has been written by M D McLeod, keeper of the Museum of Mankind, which is extremely informative and simply written.

Unfortunately the subject matter has been treated in a most timid and conventional way by its publishers, with appalling misuse of photographs and is expensive along with it.

Among the themes is the social structures of the Asante. For example: 'The social system of Asante, to a large extent based on the matrilineal group, produced a variety of residential patterns. These constantly shifted and altered.'

'Early in a marriage man and wife might cohabit but the wife could also spend a great deal of time elsewhere — with her mothers and sisters in her matrilineal house, travelling to trade, or with her husband on their farm.'

'Children might live a while with their fathers and then stay with their mothers' brother from whom they could eventually inherit property, rights and duties.'

But there are questions raised by exhibitions like *Asante*.

Should national treasures be returned to their country of origin? Everyone knows that the British Museum is jammed full of things stolen from countries all over the world where the British Army imposed its will. Those who believe that Britain has no moral right to retain them would be hesitant to hand them over to some of the corrupt regimes that exist today.

There are warehouses full of the heritage of centuries of human skill and invention. Ninety per cent of it is seen by no one but academics, and it is often uncatalogued and uncared for.

What is needed is the preservation and display of historical artifacts in the context of their society so that more people can benefit from a knowledge of the past.

Asante: Kingdom of Gold is at the Museum of Mankind, Burlington Gardens, London W1. Admission is free. Open 10-5 Sundays 2.30-6. *The Asante* by M D McLeod is published by British Museum Publications. Price £12.95.

A lot of people want you to come to the abortion conference

By Judith Arkwright

SUPPORT for the labour movement conference on abortion and positive legislation is escalating.

On 28 February the South-east Region of the TUC is holding a special meeting to build for the event. Several branches of the Public Employees union are organising transport to come to London for the 14 March conference.

The Labour Party NEC is discussing a recommendation from its home policy committee to sponsor the conference — the absence of Shirley Williams will make this a definite possibility.

With barely three weeks to go the time to get delegated is now!

Here's what some of the supporters of the conference have to say:

JUDY MALLABER,
National Union of Public Employees:

'AS a union we've always supported a woman's right to choose, because we have so many women members and because of our involvement in health. The conference is important because we're always on the defensive on this issue and at last we're beginning to discuss a way of going forward.

'We've always opposed restrictive legislation but we'd like to see if there's anything positive we can do. This does not mean we don't carry on the fight against restrictions — we are particularly concerned about the affects of cuts on abortion facilities.'

RAY COLLINS,
Transport and General Workers' Union:

'We fully support the aims of the conference. Any issue which affects the rights of our members is of vital concern to us as a union.

We see the issue of abortion as a matter of democratic rights; not a

moral issue. We think that the '67 Act should be defended, but we also think that more facilities should be made available to women.

'A woman must have the right — wherever she lives, whatever she does — to choose whether or not to have an abortion.

'We don't have a policy on new legislation as such, but we generally support TUC policy on this issue and there is need for discussion on the ways and means of implementing a woman's right to choose.'

CHARLES GRIEVE,
general secretary,
Tobacco Worker's Union:

'It is still essential that the labour and trade union movement maintains a campaign in support of both TUC and Labour Party policy on abortion.'

The anti-abortionists do not give up easily, despite their recent resounding defeats.

The latest direct attack on abortion rights has been the altering of the green form which women obtaining an abortion have to complete. The changes mean that no record will be kept of how many abortions are done on the NHS.

This is an attempt to cover up the fact that fewer and fewer abortions are done on the health service and an increasing number of women have to pay.

The conference is a vital step in continuing the fight for a woman's right to choose.

It is being organised by the National Abortion Campaign and the Labour Abortion Rights Campaign. Get delegated!

Further information, leaflets etc, from: NAC, 374 Gray's Inn Rd, London WC1 Tel 01-278 0153.

By Valerie Coultas

IN RECENT months feminists across the country have taken action to explain their attitude to sexual violence: occupying the offices of the Sun to protest at page three; daubing paint in cinemas showing sexually violent films like Dressed to Kill, and collectively challenging press and police dictats that women should stay at home (as if women were to blame for rape).

Such protests have focused public attention on the debate about rape in a more dramatic way than ever before.

No woman is safe from the threat of rape. Rape is carried out by men of all classes, in all situations. Figures from the annual report of the Birmingham Rape Crisis Centre suggest that there is a one in three chance that a woman will be raped in her own home, and there's a fifty-fifty chance that the man will be known to her.

The police cannot be relied upon to protect women from rape. Out of 1,170 rapes reported in England and Wales in 1979, only 824 cases were cleared up (26 per cent were not even investigated). More than a third of the cases reported to the Birmingham centre were not reported to the police.

The myth that women cry rape to spite husbands or lovers does not square with the facts. New York's all-female rape squad found only two per cent of complaints to be false, about the same level as for other crimes.

However, when we look at the underlying philosophy of the women leading campaigns against violence against women some questions come to mind. When Women Against Violence Against Women argue that 'all men benefit from the threat or use of violence against women', what exactly does this mean?

Is it true that all men benefit from rape?

Many feminists have accepted a revolutionary feminist analysis of rape and socialists have been defensive about the issue.

Individual men get a thrill out of the rape act. Pornographic magazines would not sell if many men did not find the idea of rape titillating. But this phrase is meant to explain more than individual actions and feelings. It ascribes the social roots of rape to the power that all men have over women because of their privileged position in society.

Rape embodies male power for the revolutionary feminist. And all men have a vested or class interest in defending their privileges over women, through the use or threat of rape.

Revolutionary feminists from Leeds expressed this view in a letter to *Big Flame* (February 1981): 'Not every man has raped little girls, or made sexist

jokes, or hit his wife, or bought porn or groped women in cinemas. Yet all men benefit financially, legally, socially, sexually — from the way these activities control the behaviour of, and police, all women.

'If flashers, bottom-pinchers, whistlers etc are the bobbies-on-the-beat of male supremacy, the Yorkshire Ripper is the Commander-in-Chief.'

I cannot agree with this analysis. It's like saying that all white people are bobbies-on-the-beat of white supremacy and therefore benefit from racial attacks. The racist views held by many white people do, of course, legitimise racial attacks. But it is the capitalist class that is the real bobby-on-the-beat.

They gain higher profits from cheap labour. They maintain control of society by encouraging divisions within the oppressed. It is their police force which harasses blacks.

Similarly with women. In treating women as inferior beings, men legitimise violence against women. Despite the servicing role that women provide in the home, men do not cause or materially benefit as a group or class from female oppression in the same way as do the capitalists.

Men think of women as their property because



As Alexandra Kollontai explains in *Sexual Relations and the Class Struggle*: 'It is the bourgeoisie who have carefully tendered and fostered the ideal of the absolute possession of the contracted partner's emotional and physical "I", thus extending the concept of property rights to include the other person's spiritual and emotional world.'

Sexual double standards are strongly reflected in the rape laws themselves. It is impossible in law for a man to rape his wife because the holy marriage vows mean that a woman's consent is forever and she is now the property of her husband.

This contempt for women is not an innate characteristic of men. It is a product of centuries of oppression and discrimination which women have faced, par-

Rather than entrencing male prejudice against women by looking only at the conservative attitudes of men, why not try and break male collusion with bourgeois values about women?

It is the capitalist class which gains most from women's cheap labour and free domestic labour, and from women's reticence to identify as trades unionists.

Our job is to show how much better the lives of the entire working class would be if both women and men earned decent wages. We want both sexes to join in the fight against the bosses and the government to secure their rights and freedoms.

Would not both sexes be better if women were allowed to grow up expressing their personality and sexual desires to the full? Wouldn't working



Spraying paint onto sexist photographs displayed at the Institute of Contemporary Arts

women have been subordinated for centuries and because the capitalist system encourages them to view women that way. The marriage relationship codifies that oppression. The wife, having contracted to marry a particular man, becomes the total possession of that man.

ticularly their social and economic dependence on men.

This is daily reinforced by the roles women and men are ascribed within the patriarchal family; by the exclusive responsibilities that are still accorded to women for childcare and domestic

class men be a whole lot better off if women were liberated?

The class which controls power — through parliament, the courts, the press, the army — is quite prepared to use violence to defend its privileges. In fact the capitalist system encourages male children to associate the violence of rape.

and brutality of war assertiveness at a very young age. It is not a male's which does this but a capitalist one.

It is not possible to treat the state as an impartial arbiter that can be called on to defend women against male violence. Any strengthening of the repressive apparatus of the state can potentially be used against any group which is prepared to challenge the capitalist class's monopoly of power.

The arrests and enormous fines that women face for daring to protest at sexually violent films show this to be the case.

For this reason we have to come out clearly against any form of censorship or pornography. We do want to give the state the right to decide on these matters. Banning films above will not solve the problem.

It is not possible to evolve a strategy for fighting rape that simply isolates male power as an independent social force in society.

Demands need to be placed on the state rather than concentrating our efforts on men as individuals. The capitalist class is let the hook you can end with a reformist strategy for fighting rape — a main question becomes fighting patriarchal attitudes, demanding higher sentences for convicted rapists.

Socialists have to be honest in discussing rape.

There will always be rape in a class society. There will always be rape as long as sexual relations between the sexes are alienated. It is only within the framework of a totally new society where relations between the sexes are free relations, entered into and continued under financial, social or sexual compulsion — where women are no longer dependent on men — can we talk of ending rape.

That new society will be coloured by how we fight in this society and the transition to socialism.

It is vital that a strong popular and independent women's liberation movement is built to fight on all aspects of female oppression because this can ensure that women's concerns like sexual violence — not pushed aside at a stage in the struggle.

But to create such a society we cannot simply tinker with the system. We have to throw out the capitalist parasites and establish a new power — power of male and female workers. This has to be our long-term goal, even when fighting against rape.

Photo: PETE GRANT (Socialist Challenge)

Photo: ANDY HOLMES

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ABORTION and POSITIVE LEGISLATION

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'It is still essential that the Labour and Trade Union Movement maintains a campaign in support of both TUC and Labour Party policy on abortion.'

— Charles Grieve, General Secretary, Tobacco Workers' Union

— ... you be represented? —

E AND CLASS

Be kind to
pets, but
women...

Come back 'Jack the Ripper', all is forgiven — from a leaflet put out by the Rossiter Road Residents' Association in Balham, South London, calling for action against prostitutes in their area.

Bra-less typist 'grabbed by boss', headline in the *Sun* on 10 April 1980 for an article about a woman who was dismissed from her job after complaining that her boss had assaulted her. The article included humorous puns about 'bust-ups' in the office.

Leeds killing — it's the Ripper. Headline for an article next to a pin-up in the *Yorkshire Evening Post*, 19 November 1980.

Kidnapped — with a cuddle. The *Daily Star's* headline for an article on 22 November 1979 about a 'dashing medical student' who abducted his ex-fiancee.

Could you rape this woman? The unacceptable face of feminism. Caption under a photograph of NUS secretary Fiona McTaggart, in the Oxford student paper *Cherwell*.

Bubble and shriek — headline on a report of 'why Pete scalped his missus' in the *Daily Star* on 27 October 1979. Pete had punched his wife in the face, cut off her hair, and hit her with a frying pan.

Three open buttons on her blouse spelt death for a holiday-maker — the *Daily Star* again, on 26 June 1979. The article described how a waitress's exposed chest, attempted to rape her, and then beat her to death when she fought back.

A woman, a dog, and a walnut tree; the more you beat them, the better they be. A Frank Muir wise-crack on Radio 4, 8 February 1981.

Most of these examples are from a report by Birmingham Rape Crisis Centre.



Photo: Joanne O'Brien

ON the march to Reclaim the Night last Saturday. Some 1,500 women joined the demonstration in Central London called by NUS. They marched along Fleet St to condemn violence against women, but the police prevented them going through Soho. Singing and chanting were the order of the night.

Reclaim the Night

Though Eve was made from Adam's rib,
Nine months he lay within her crib;
How can a man of woman born
Thereafter use her sex with scorn?
For though we bear the human race,
To us is given but second place —
And some men place us lower still
By using us against our will.

If we choose to walk alone,
For us there is no safety zone,
If we're attacked we bear the blame,
They say that we began the game.
And though you prove your injury,
The judge may set the rapist free:
Therefore the victim is to blame,
Call it nature, but rape's the name.

Chorus:
Reclaim the night and win the day
We want the right that should be our own,
A freedom women have seldom known:
The right to live, the right to walk alone,
Without fear.

A husband has his lawful rights,
Can take his wife when'er he likes;
And courts uphold, time after time,
That rape in marriage is no crime.
The choice is hers, and hers alone,
Submit, or lose your kids and home.
When love becomes a legal claim,
Call it duty, but rape's the name.

And if a man should rape a child,
It's not because his spirit's wild:
Our system gives the prize to all
Who trample on the weak and small.
When fathers rape, they surely know
Their kids have nowhere else to go.
Try to forget, don't ask us to
Forgive them, they know what they do.

(Chorus)

When exploitation is the norm,
Rape is found in many forms:
Lower wages, meaner tasks,
Poorer schooling, second-class.
We serve our own, and like the men
We serve employers. It follows then
That body's rape is nothing new —
But just a servant's final due.

We've raised our voices in the past,

And this time will not be the last!
Our body's gift is ours to give,
Not payment for the right to live.
Since we've outgrown the status-quo,
We claim the right to answer NO!
If without consent he stake a claim,
Call it rape! For rape's the name!

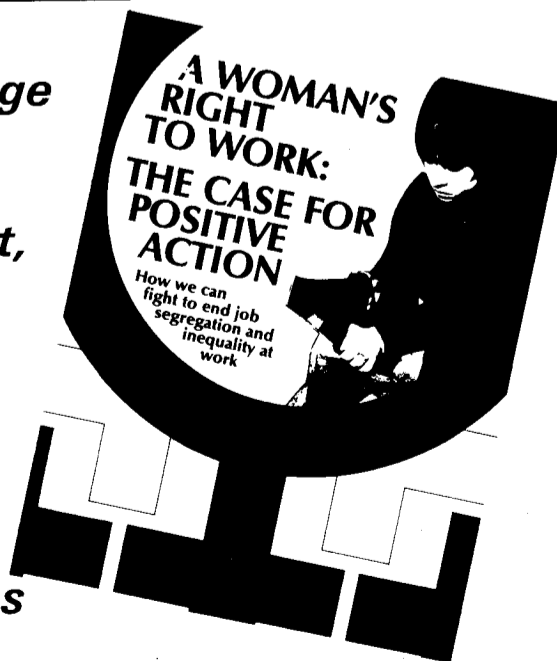
(Chorus)

Words and music, Peggy Seeger

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Confronting sexual violence

- Self-defence is no offence — women cannot rely on the police to protect them. They should have every right to defend themselves. Self-defence classes should be available to all women free of charge.
- All anomalies in the rape laws should be removed. Rape should be defined as any form of sexual assault. Married women should be able to sue for rape. Compensation should be awarded to women who are raped. Judges should no longer have the right to question women about their sexual history. The status of 'common prostitute' should be abolished and brothel owners and pimps should be penalised in jail.
- Sex education should be about sexual freedom, not sexual repression. Young people need to learn how to treat the opposite sex with integrity, not to conform to the double standards of adult society. Feminists should be consulted far more about sex education in schools. The age of consent laws, which codify those double standards for young people, disallowing these under 16 voluntary intercourse, should be abolished.
- Rape crisis centres and battered women's refuges should have public funds, available to advertise these facilities, which should remain under the control of women themselves.
- A code of practice should be drawn up by the trade unions and the women's movement dealing with material which is sexist and titillating in the mass media and in advertising.
- Sexual harassment at work must be designated as sexual discrimination and become part of equality legislation. The trade unions, which have ignored this question, and the women's movement need to work out what kind of redress is necessary for women who are harassed or assaulted at work.

How should Northern Ireland be governed?

THE Labour party has produced a consultative paper on its Irish policy. A series of questions are posed and CLPs and affiliated unions are asked to submit their views.

Socialist Challenge is running a series taking up these questions, and this week we deal with the third question, 'How should Northern Ireland be governed?'

The consultative document asks:

- Should Northern Ireland have a devolved government?
- Should Northern Ireland be fully integrated into the UK?
- Should Britain make a declaration of intent to withdraw?
- Should it be prepared to withdraw from Northern Ireland without the consent of the people there?
- Should the Republic of Ireland have a part in the Government of Northern Ireland?
- Should Britain encourage and attempt to negotiate an independent Northern Ireland?

HISTORICALLY, the view of the Labour Party has been to favour the unification of Ireland.

This was the position of the party at the time of the partition of Ireland and was even proposed by Harold Wilson during the period of the Heath government, when the then leader of the Labour Party proposed a policy involving British withdrawal from the north of Ireland over a period of 15 years.

Unfortunately, both this policy and that of anti-partition, pro-withdrawal, which was adopted by the party in 1920, were forgotten once Labour formed a government.

It is obvious that most of the other options proposed in the discussion paper have been tried and failed.

Integration

Devolved government, involving 'power-sharing', was brought down by the Loyalists through the Ulster Workers' Council general strike of 1974. Similar proposals put forward by the present Northern Ireland Secretary of State, Humphrey Atkins, have now been dropped as unworkable.

Integration is, in effect, the present policy, and one favoured by the last Labour government when the Loyalist parties were promised extra seats at Westminster in return for supporting, in parliament, the Labour government.

It is obvious that this policy has brought neither peace nor justice to the people of Northern Ireland.

Outcome

Total independence has not been tried but this was the de facto situation until 1969 when the Unionist government in Northern Ireland ruled without any interference from Westminster. Massive discrimination and repression against



A LABOUR PARTY CONSULTATIVE PAPER

the Catholic community were the consequences. If the Loyalists were again allowed to be 'masters in their own house' with, as would be probable, Ian Paisley as president of an independent Northern Ireland the consequences for Catholics would be too horrific to imagine.

These three options involve, to one degree or another, a surrender to the Loyalists, and give the Loyalists the right to veto any proposed political settlement. The blunt truth is that they represent a surrender to Loyalist blackmail.

Crossman

Yet it was exactly this type of policy which in 1921 allowed the partition of Ireland to be imposed in the first place, an act which is at the root of the present conflict. That root needs to be weeded out.

This means accepting the following judgement of the late cabinet minister Richard Crossman, written in September 1971:

'This (Northern Ireland) is not a natural state of any kind at all. It is an artificial political product created to destroy political rights and to maintain one group of people in permanent power. By its very essence it denies every principle of democracy and always has from the time this House of Commons created it.'

In other words, the Northern Ireland state should be dismantled and the partition of



Ian Paisley — one Labour option would hand him power

Ireland on which it is based should be ended.

This would involve handing over to all the people of Ireland the right to determine the future of Ireland and how that country should be governed. Whether this would involve a centralised unified Ireland, a federal Ireland, or any other constitutional arrangement in a 32-county context would be left to the people of Ireland to

decide.

To say, as the Labour Party discussion paper does, that this would mean the 'expulsion' of Northern Ireland from the UK, or as the paper implies that the Loyalist majority should have some inalienable right to veto any decisions, is to accept the legitimacy of a partition and the Loyalists majority in the Northern

Ireland state.

The Labour Party needs to adopt the socialist principle of self-determination for all the Irish people. To give such a principle practical effect it has to declare its support for an unconditional British withdrawal from the north of Ireland.

To Armagh on International Women's Day

WOMEN in Ireland have made an international appeal for support for a demonstration outside Armagh women's prison in the north of Ireland on 8 March, International Women's Day.

Two years ago a group of women mainly from Belfast and Dublin held a peaceful demonstration in solidarity with the women prisoners in Armagh.

This demonstration was broken up by the RUC, and 11 of the women were arrested and charged. Two were later imprisoned in Armagh for non-payment of fines.

On International Women's Day last year over 500 people, including 200 women from England, Scotland and Wales, attended a protest at the prison.

'This year,' say the organisers, 'we intend to

return to Armagh in even greater numbers.'

By the time the protest takes place the new hunger strike by prisoners in H-Block — to be joined by a number in Armagh — will have been in progress one week. This provides an additional reason for those in Britain who support the prisoners to travel to Armagh that weekend. Men and women are invited to participate.

Further information from: Di on 01-691 8298.

The Insane Society



Prince Charles and Allibar

Justice must be done

by Bob Pennington

A BUCKINGHAM Palace informant tells me that Liz and Phil are doing all they can to stop an inquest being held into the death of their son's horse Allibar. They are frightened that the great British public will found out that it was murdered.

The *New Standard* let the cat out of the bag when it admitted that Charlie had spent 'many hours talking to the horse alone'.

Okay, if you had a family like Charlie's, you would prefer talking to horses than to your mum and dad. Nor can you blame the lad for socialising with his intellectual equals.

But he had no right to do what he did to Allibar. Clearly his Royal verbal inanities bored poor old Allibar to death and the horse just crumpled up and died.

Why should Charlie be allowed to get away with this? Supporters of justice must demand he be brought to the Old Bailey to account for Allibar's cruel death.

Social Democratic claret

THE trickle of former National Union of Students stars joining the Council for Social Democracy is threatening to become a flood. Sue 'I haven't changed my politics' Slipman and her colleague Penny Cooper are off in the direction of good claret.

Now we hear the Limehouse crusaders are getting new recruits from yesterday's rebels.

The grapevine says ex-NUS president,

Trevor Phillips — now reporting for *London Weekend Television*, and ex-vice president Alan Christie — are just dying to join Britain's best-fed and we suspect shortest lasting political party.

One elated member of the CSD says: 'We have recruited the first woman president of the NUS, now we can get its first black president. What is to stop us getting its first-ever president?' Told he was dead, the guy replied: 'Well that did not stop George Brown joining, did it?'

Sorry about that

NORMALLY Ian Paisley is about as funny as that other boring Ulster comedian Frank Carson. But he did cause a ripple of laughter last week when the reverend claimed that the Ulster Unionist Party were threatening to bump him off.

Ian has never liked violence and murder. It was just a coincidence that one of the three men convicted in 1966 of murdering a Catholic barman in Belfast said when arrested: 'I am terribly sorry I ever heard of that man Paisley or decided to follow him.'

Like his follower, we too are sorry. The announcement by the UUP that it is not sending a hit man after the priest is neither fair to Ian nor to humanity in general. Why disappoint the reincarnation of Tutan Carson, ex-pharaoh of the Orange Empire?



Sue — slipsliding away

Reinstate the ILTA 8

By Ray Sorotkin, Lambeth NUT in personal capacity

'AT A time of crisis in inner city education the teachers union (NUT) would be more welcome fighting the cuts than sniping members who protest against those cuts,' said Stuart Holland MP at last week's press conference to defend eight teachers suspended from the NUT.

The teachers were all suspended for supporting the strike against the cuts by council workers in Lambeth earlier this month. Three of those suspended were also candidates in the Inner London Teachers Association (ILTA) elections.

Lambeth Central MP John Tilley has also protested to NUT president Fred Jarvis, saying: 'I was shocked to learn that you had suspended from membership several Lambeth teachers whose only crime was demonstrating to save the jobs of their fellow public service workers. The trade union movement in Lambeth has asked me to make the strongest possible representations for their immediate reinstatement.'

John Esterson, secretary of Lambeth Teachers Association is one of those suspended. He told the press conference: 'You wouldn't get disciplinary action taken against the South Wales miners even though Gormley was against their action.'

Dave Picton, another suspended member, added that a letter has been sent out to all local NUT associations forbidding any discussions of the suspensions! The right wing in the NUT are becoming desperate.

Robert Richardson, right-wing general secretary of ILTA, is threatening charges against other NUT members for the 'crime' of attending the ILTA annual general meeting. Among those threatened is Mike Loosley the incoming president.

The union executive further showed its 'impartiality' by calling in the police against a 150-strong teachers' picket protesting the suspension on 20 February.

Opposition to the suspensions is growing. Six Labour MPs, six Inner London Education Authority members and various trade unions, Labour parties and teachers' associations have protested.

Show your support to those victimised by attending the picket of the disciplinary hearing from 8.30am on Sat 28 February at Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, London WC1.

On Friday 6 March, at 5.30pm at Central London Poly there will be a mass rally in support of the ILTA 8. Speakers invited include Jo Richardson MP, Jack Collins NUM, Bernard Connolly ISTC and Stewart McLellan CPSA.

'No buts, there's got to be buses'

By Chris Nash, TGWU 3/111 branch

BRISTOL busworkers returned to work on Monday after a 14-day lock-out by management for refusing to implement new fare rises of 14 per cent or to accept extensive redundancies.

Many of the busworkers feel that they were sold out by their national officer who had been shouted down at a mass meeting last week for advising them to return to work.

The nine dismissals and 900 suspensions of busworkers have been withdrawn. The busworkers have now been forced to implement the fare rises.

Throughout the dispute the country services and the maintenance and fitters, all in the Transport Union, had crossed the

picket lines because their regional office refused to call them out.

Last Saturday saw a thousand busworkers and local trade unionists march through the city centre to a meeting at the Corn Exchange. Bristol MP Tony Benn addressed the meeting and underlined the need for a united fightback against the Tories.

He also called for an inquiry into the company's management. The same theme was taken up by a local Labour councillor.

Their memories are very short-lived — it was the Labour-controlled city council a few years ago which sold off their 50 per cent share in Bristol Omnibuses.

The company still proposes one thousand redundancies, 410 platform staff in Bristol alone, for May or June, Mike Hall, the busworkers' branch secretary, told other busworkers, 'The fight is not yet over'.



Taking the offensive — Gay Pride march summer 1979

Photo: GIM COOKSON (Socialist Challenge)

GAYS RESIST POLICE ROUND-UP

By Jamie Gough

POLICE in Huddersfield have been conducting a witch-hunt of gay people. They have been:

- Picked up at home and at workplaces, with employers being informed that this was because of homosexual offences.
- Stopped on the street and questioned.
- Forcibly medically examined.
- Diaries and address books have been confiscated.

The police have compiled a bulging dossier which they say will lead to charges being brought.

They have announced that they will keep up their investigations for another three months — which shows that it is their hatred of gays rather than the nature of the 'offences' that determines their activities.

Raids

The police now intend to shut down the town's Gemini club, which is the major gay club in West Yorkshire. This follows a series of raids on the club.

An action committee was formed earlier this month at a meeting at the Gemini, attended by over 100 people. It is now organising the lobbying of local councillors, MPs, and labour movement organisations to stop the closure of the club.

The action committee has also booked two coaches to go to the demonstration against state repression of lesbian and gay people in Manchester on Saturday 28 February.

National

The repression in Huddersfield is not an isolated instance. Over the past couple of years the number of police witch-hunts has mounted. In the last few months alone, there have been major operations in Stockport, Stoke, Hull and Edinburgh.

And it's not just the police. Lesbian and gay people are continually discriminated against in the courts, in schools, in mental hospitals, in public employment. The demo this weekend is an opportunity to begin to turn this tide.



THE Polish official news agency has announced that the new trade union law has been drafted.

Originally designed to enshrine the new freedoms won by Polish workers in last year's Gdansk agreements, the draft includes a proposal that strikes be outlawed by the authorities in 'exceptional economic circumstances'.

This anti-union measure looks likely to disrupt Poland's so-called 90-day truce. In Britain the Labour-Poland solidarity committee has called for a labour movement

Hands off workers' Poland

demonstration in support of the Polish workers on Saturday 15 March from Hyde Park to the Soviet embassy at 2pm.

Socialist Challenge supports this demonstration, backed by the East European Solidarity Campaign and labour movement bodies, and urges its London supporters to attend it.

Chile human rights concert planned

THE Chile Committee for Human Rights is holding a fund-raising concert in Islington Town Hall, Upper Street in London on Saturday 4 April.

Among the artists appearing will be the Chilean folk groups Karaxu and

Saraguro and the Persian folk singer Shusha.

With the recent increase in repression, torture and murder by the Chilean government, as well as the country's dire poverty and unemployment the work of the committee is vitally important.

Tickets can be obtained from the Chile Committee for Human Rights, 266 Pentonville Rd, London N1

French communists step up racist campaign

THE FRENCH Communist Party has launched 'a war against drugs'. The war is being fought against immigrants. The first victim was Mohammed K, a Moroccan immigrant worker in Montigny.

Acting on a tip-off from an Algerian neighbour who had a running feud with the Moroccan family the Communist mayor led a protest march to Mohammed's flat accusing him of drug peddling. Slogans on the demo included the charming 'End this poison'. Mohammed is now suing the mayor for defamation of character.

These moves follow the call from CP leader George Marchais for an end to all immigration and his support for the CP mayor of Vitry who bulldozed down a local immigrant hostel on Xmas eve. And in Amiens, Rennes, Lyons and Ivry-sur-Seine communist councils have led anti-immigrant campaigns.



The CP mayor of Montigny

When will the Morning Star disassociate itself from this disgraceful racist campaign by its French counterparts?

Labour peer authorises raid on Oxford hospital

By Dominic Johnson, NUPE shop steward, Oxon NHS in personal capacity

Lady McCarthy, chairperson of the Oxfordshire Area Health Authority and well known member of Oxford Labour Party gave the go-ahead to a raid on Longworth Geriatric Hospital on 10 Feb.

Members of COHSE (the health service union) in the hospital had occupied the hospital for ten weeks to prevent the closure of the top floor and 13 beds.

The four patients still on the top floor were snatched and moved to another hospital, as police sealed off

roads leading to the hospital. One picket was assaulted by ambulance staff as he tried to close the gates.

The raid caused great distress to staff and to the other patients who feared that they might also be moved. Nursing auxiliary Kate



Festival for women's rights against Tory attacks

New badge available for 9 May festival

20p each or 50 for £8.

Write to: Festival Organising Committee, 374 Grays Inn Road, London WC1.

Socialist Challenge

Miners, Glasgow show that...

'WE ARE MANY, THEY ARE FEW'

PULVERISED! That's the state of the Tory government after last week's conflict with the miners. Back-tracking on all their previous policies, at a stroke they have been forced to submit to the miners' demands to keep all the pits open.

In the coalfields there was a tremendous determination to batter the Tories — and in the face of the threat of an all-out miners' strike the Tories realised that the future of their administration was at stake.

There is no doubt that if a national miners' strike had taken place it would have received massive working class support.

The huge turnout and militancy of last Saturday's 75,000-strong demonstration in Glasgow showed the potential for a sustained onslaught against the government.

It was a stinging rebuff to the 'social



democratic' Gang of Four and their gaggle of right-wing splitters.

Now these giant gains must be built upon.

The waterworkers who want a living wage and the rail-workers who call for investment in their industry to save jobs and provide a decent service should ram home their demands.

Power

The miners have shown that Thatcher can be beaten, and both the water and rail workers have the power to force the Tories to retreat.

The mass protests against unemployment have to continue. On Friday 29 May the unemployment march from Liverpool arrives in London on its way to parliament.

The Labour Party and trade union leaders should call for London's unemployment demonstration to be on that day. Since the demonstration arrives on a Friday, the Labour Party must call for a one-day strike.

Hundreds of thousands can be brought



onto the streets to put the Tories under seige.

Michael Foot said it all when he commented at the Glasgow rally: 'We are

many, they are few'. He also told unemployed people to 'rise up like lions'. The forces are there, ready and willing to do just that. But they need to

be given a lead.

Michael Foot should declare his support for all those taking industrial action against Tory policies.

And he must ensure that the Liverpool-London march ends with the most gigantic protest seen since the war.



Job shock — vacancy at kindergarten!

By Tom Marlowe

NOW is the time to sell your television, stop buying your daily newspaper, and exchange your radio for a six-month sleeping pill.

Because, as no doubt you will know by now, THEY ARE TO WED.



From now until the summer when they walk down the aisle we will be deluged with pictures of them; acres of newsprint detailing every acceptable nook and cranny of their lives, television spectacles showing them in all their finery.

By the summer (when, incidentally, official unemployment figures will be around two and three-quarter million) there will be tee-shirts and books on them, and posters showing their radiant smiles.

So, it is time to head for your Royal Marriage Fall-out Shelter.

Don't blame Diana. She isn't exactly broke herself but by marrying him she will be boarding one of the thickest gravy trains in the business.

At the moment he receives £306,382 a year from us, the tax-payers. When he is promoted to the position his mother enjoys he will be getting, on current figures, more than ten times that.

The marriage will mean Diana can have the run of Buckingham Palace (which costs us £1,485,000 a year), Windsor Castle (£265,912), Holyrood House (£265,912) Kensington Palace (£483,000) and St James Palace (£763,000).

And then there is his new estate, Highgrove House in Gloucester, which we bought for him last year, costing over £1 million.

Train

Visiting all these different homes will be no problem for Diana. She can travel on the royal train (£385,000 a year), the royal airplane (£2,500,000) or even journey around the coast in the royal yacht (£2m).

What, you may ask, is in all this for you? Well don't be a spoilsport, look on the bright side. All you unemployed, now's your chance. There will soon be a job going at the kindergarten where she works, and you can bet your jubilee mug that won't fall foul of Maggie Thatcher's cuts.

But talking of cuts, wasn't it the first King Charles who had his head chopped off? No one surely, not even the most extreme extremist, the most terrible terrorist would wish that on our present Charles?

The kindest cut of all would be to chop the whole royal jamboree.