

Socialist Challenge

↑ JOBS NOT BOMBS ↓

Jobs for Youth Demo

29 November 11am Hyde Park

Socialist policies can smash

SDP

ON Friday 13 November Islington MP John Grant voted in Labour's shadow cabinet elections. Three days later he joined the Social Democratic Party. Grant had a clear conscience in this crazy affair. After all a good portion of the shadow cabinet agree with the policies of the SDP anyway.

Last week's row over Tony Benn's Commons speech defending Labour Party policy on renationalisation of hived-off state assets, illustrates the problem very clearly.

Michael Foot, Peter Shore, Roy Hattersley and the rest of the Labour right wing want a shadow cabinet veto over conference decisions — to allow the parliamentary party to prevent the implementation of socialist policies.

Tony Benn, far from being 'provocative' was the victim of a provocation from the right wing. He was absolutely right to refuse to respect shadow cabinet 'collective responsibility'. Such an undertaking would have made him a prisoner of the right wing's

manoeuvres

Behind all the disputes is a simple question: How can the Tories and the Social Democrats be defeated? Foot and the right wing say that party feuds are damaging Labour's chances.

But nothing will ensure defeat for Labour more surely than the tired old anti-working class policies inherited from Wilson and Callaghan.

The only way to defeat the Social Democrats and their media bandwagon is to challenge them with socialist policies.

Labour needs to put to the working people of Britain policies which can solve the capitalist crisis in their interests — socialist policies such as opposition to unemployment, nuclear war and the EEC, and for the nationalisation of the monopolies and the banks.

In reply to the attack from the right, the fight for Labour Party democracy and socialist policies should be stepped up. A Labour Party which goes into a general election with SDP policies, will always be defeated by the real SDP.



Photo: GM COOKSON (Socialist Challenge)

Ford workers in the front line

By Mick Drake, Dagenham assembly plant
FORD'S 54,000 workers are once again in the front line of the fight against government pay policy.

Their claim for £20 a week more, 35 hours and better pensions has been rejected out of hand by the company. In its place Ford are offering a vicious productivity deal.

At stake is not only a wage cut but thousands of jobs. Greater mobility of labour between jobs, an end to demarcation and co-operation in the introduction of new technology and work methods are only part of Ford's 'less money more work' Efficiency Payments Plan.

At Halewood on Merseyside, there have been fifteen walk-outs in a seven week period, including a one day all out strike in the transmission plant.

from among them to work in the garage when everybody else was laid off.

Ford workers are beginning to realise that disputes and unpaid lay-offs like these will be regular events if the company's Efficiency Payment Plan is accepted.

The aim is total management control over line speeds and working practices. The choice at the mass meetings, therefore, is not between war and peace, but in reality on whose terms the war will be fought.

However, it's wrong to paint a picture of Ford workers raring to go and simply held back by a hesitant union leadership. The present disputes are largely defensive reflexes to management provocations.

Riot

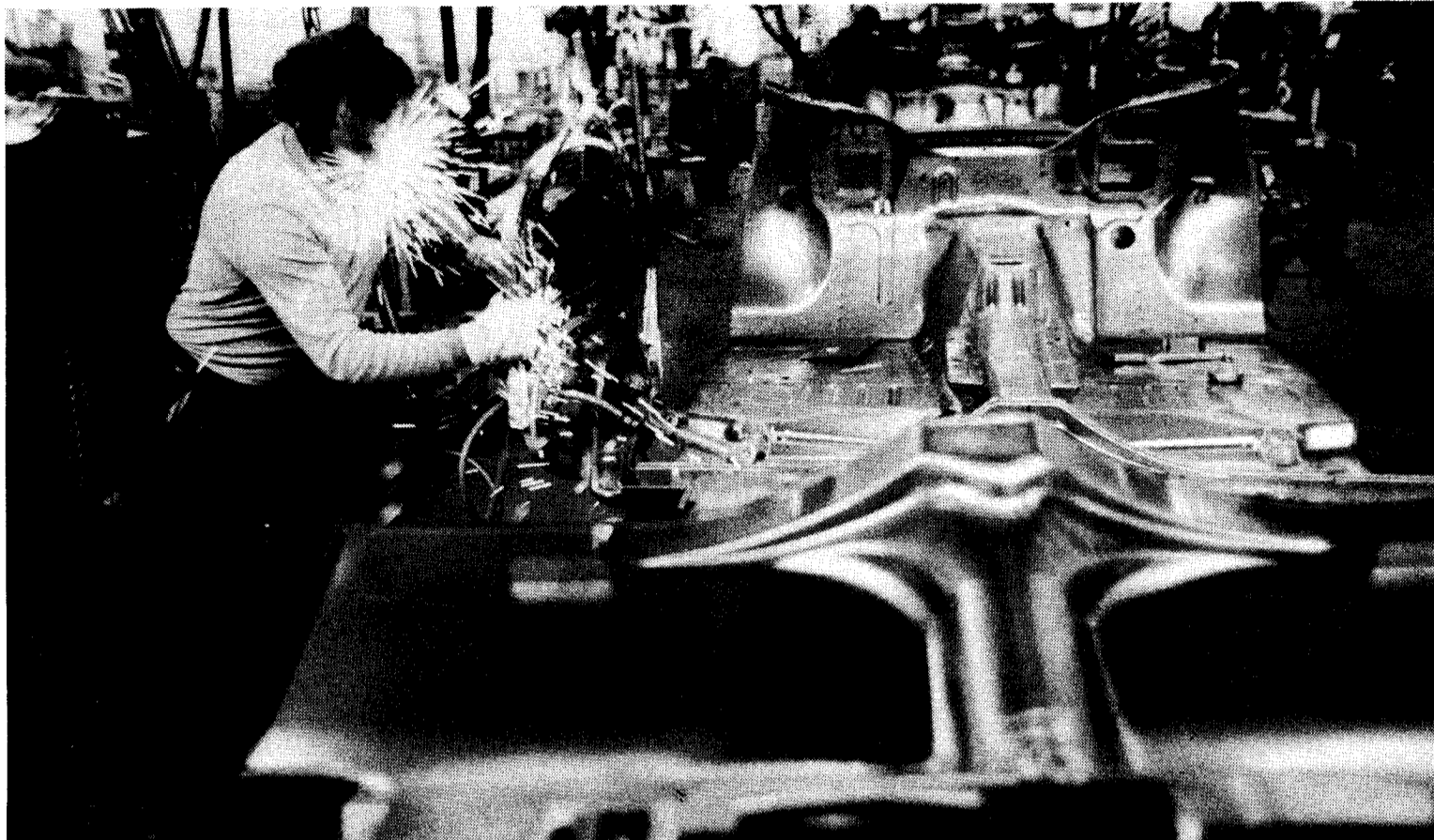
Two stoppages in the last ten days in Dagenham body plant have led to the whole plant being laid off without pay. The current stoppage involves body welders protesting the sacking of two co-workers for alleged clocking offences.

A stoppage in the paint shop over mobility of labour led to widespread lay-offs in Dagenham Assembly Plant. A near riot and further stoppage ensued on the return to work when workers found out that selected individuals had been picked

Attacks

Short time working has taken a heavy toll in most plants over the last eighteen months leading to the bleeding off of 4,000 jobs. Insecurity has been increased by the lengthening dole queues outside.

Both national union leaders and the stewards'



Cars on assembly line at Dagenham are getting smashed up in protest against conditions

Photo: LARRY HERMAN

plant leaderships have been unwilling or unable to deal with a situation where it is no longer possible to answer attacks on jobs, staffing levels and work practices at a section by section, plant by plant level.

Political solutions at a national level are now required to deal with many

day to day problems — especially the 35 hour week and worksharing without loss of pay to deal with new technology and job loss.

This power to win has to be organised. The days of the sit at home strike are over.

Regular mass meetings

are needed to fully inform and involve all workers in what is happening. Shop stewards committees should be transformed into fighting strike committees with extra militants from the shopfloor and union branches elected to them.

The union organisa-

tion must be geared up to win through mass involvement in pickets and delegations to other workplaces.

And Ford workers should not have to fight alone. Claim after claim well over the Tories' four per cent limit are pouring in coupled with demands

for shorter hours.

Pressure should be applied to the national union leaderships to pull these together into common action.

Such united action would not just force the bosses to retreat and Thatcher do a U-turn. It would flush the Tories right round the S-bend.

Transport for the people, not profit

By Hazel Macpherson and Martin Eady

The drastic reductions of fares on London buses and tubes has been the Labour GLC's most popular measure to date, whatever Lord Denning may rule. The next Labour government should develop this policy at a national level. Transport is a basic and essential service that has to operate in the interests of working people. It is the life blood of any industrial society.

The inefficiencies and wastefulness of capitalism are highlighted by the present transport system which allows one section to compete against another, instead of utilising all the resources as fully as possible.

An integrated transport system is needed that works for the benefit of people, not the profit of the capitalists. A Labour government would need to take special measures to develop such a system, in particular a massive programme of public investment in transport, with no strings attached.

It would also need to nationalise the road haulage industry without compensation. Thatcher has sold off the freight traffic that once went by rail to her friends in the private road haulage sector.

Private firms are now legally entitled to operate passenger services while rail fares are deliberately raised, putting rail travel out of many people's reach and making the private services look more attractive. All transport

workers — regardless of which sector they work in — have no interest in the privatisation of the transport industry.

The next Labour government should also renationalise all the privatised sectors on rail with no compensation. When the rail was nationalised in 1947 massive compensation payments were awarded to the private owners, and we're still paying for it today.

But to commit the next Labour government to such radical policies means campaigning now inside the unions. Unfortunately, the leaders of our rail unions, in particular the National Union of Railwaymen, has worked hand in glove with management instead of in the interests of its members.

The Railwaymen's Charter, published by the NUR at the end of 1979, laid great stress on a 'common approach' between the British Rail Board (BRB) and the unions. This approach has continued with the union leaders making joint approaches with the BRB to the government in the hope of achieving increas-



Transport workers have no interest in the privatisation of the transport industry

Photo: CHRIS DAVIES (Report)

ed investment in rail.

The 1981 pay settlement and its understanding on productivity was another step along the same road. Speaking at the 1981 TUC conference in support of a resolution defending nationalised industry, Sidney Weighell explained that the Tory government was opposed to the public sector.

However, he went on to say: 'These attacks are spearheaded by the Prime Minister against management and workforce — month after month the efforts of management and workforce are deliberately denigrated by a government which set out from the day it was elected to deprive these industries of investment and resources.'

We only need to look at Sir Peter Parker's £12,000 pay rise to see just how much he is denigrated by the Tory government!

We have to make it clear to our union leaders, the membership and the public that the BRB's strategy for the industry is the same as the Tories — destroying a vital and public service.

Sid Weighell sends in his spy

By Mary Jacobs

LAST week a Mr Dudley visited the offices of Socialist Challenge to obtain some back copies of the paper that had featured articles on rail.

Later he phoned asking for a copy of the 'Rank and File' leaflet which had been exposed two weeks previously as being a right wing provocation.

Claiming to be a member of the National Union of Railwaymen working in London, Mr Dudley was reluctant to answer any questions about where exactly he worked.

When asked if he did in fact work for the NUR itself at Unity House, the telephone conversation came to an abrupt end. Mr Dudley, it appears, heads up the NUR's Organisation Department and is considered to be general secretary, Sid Weighell's, right hand man.

Mr Dudley phoned the next day to say that he was sure 'Mr Weighell would be interested in the leaflet when he got back.'

We explained that we felt sure he would be — not to expose the right wing and fascist elements operating inside the union but to further witch hunt the left. The leaflet was designed to do precisely that.

We suggested to Mr Dudley that when Mr Weighell returned, he should contact us.

Mr Dudley's reaction was that Mr Weighell might be interested in taking some action against the paper — presumably for quoting his vigorous defence of the right for members of the National Front to be members of the union.

Although coming along to pick up back copies of a paper is generally considered too demeaning for the likes of him, Mr Dudley obviously thought the visit worthwhile.

In the meantime, the whole labour movement should take up the defence of militants inside the NUR who are being hounded by the leadership, in particular by Mr. Sid Weighell.

This is the age of the Jobs Train

By May Jacobs

'I've been forced into a position now where I've realised what's going on in the country. I've seen the way the fight for jobs is being "led" by the Labour leadership, and the need for a change.'

After seven months on strike, Laurence Scott worker, John Pandolfo told Socialist Challenge why he is going on the Jobs Train: 'I'm going to tell people on the Jobs Train how to fight for jobs — and the need to stick together, unemployed and employed.'

The Jobs Express, which leaves Newcastle on 23 November and arrives in London four days later, is part of the National 'Jobs for Youth Campaign' sponsored by the TUC and a number of youth organisations.

Much has been said by the media, MPs and Ministers, about the waste and despair of youth unemployment. There is nothing despairing about the youth who were on the 24 October CND demonstration shouting 'Jobs not Bombs' and 'Kick out the Tories'. They know they are fighting for their future and have learnt the hard way that they can't rely on their own leaders.

Phil Penning, 20 year old TASS steward from Laurence Scott, spells it out: 'Boyd and Duffy stabbed us in the back. I'm going on the Jobs Express to tell people when you fight for jobs you have to take on the bosses and the union leadership. But I'm also going to tell them that



Phil Penning



John Pandolfo

we intend to win and in so doing begin the process of kicking out the likes of Duffy and Boyd.'

The Jobs Express could be an imaginative way to bring that message home to people, especially youth, round the country. Unfortunately, except for a demonstration and a lobby of parliament in London, the youth appear to be fed a diet of rallies, festivals and discos.

For Kerry Wade, who is 16 and sponsored by Bury Trades Council, this is not the best way to spend their time. 'We need to get round the factories in each town, have demonstrations at every stop. We

should be making contact with workers like Laurence Scott who are leading the fight for jobs.'

Kerry knows what it's like to be unemployed. She was on a Youth Opportunity Programme scheme and was sacked when she tried to stick up for her rights.

'Once I'd done the basic training it turned into slave labour. The boss tried to make me pay for some paper that was ruined. I told him he couldn't make me pay so he started trying to get me to work an hour's overtime "for a few weeks" to pay for it. When I told him I wouldn't do it, he sacked me.' Now Kerry is trying to get an apprenticeship in

engineering.

But the youth face obstacles at every level. John Pandolfo explains: 'I've been at Laurence Scott since I left school. I'm now 22 and I've served my time there. But it's going to be very hard to get another job — I've not got enough experience.'

But the experience of the struggle for jobs at Laurence Scott has made people like John and Phil understand what needs to be done. John told us: 'We've learnt that the fight for jobs is a political thing. It's shown that you've got to stand up and fight.'

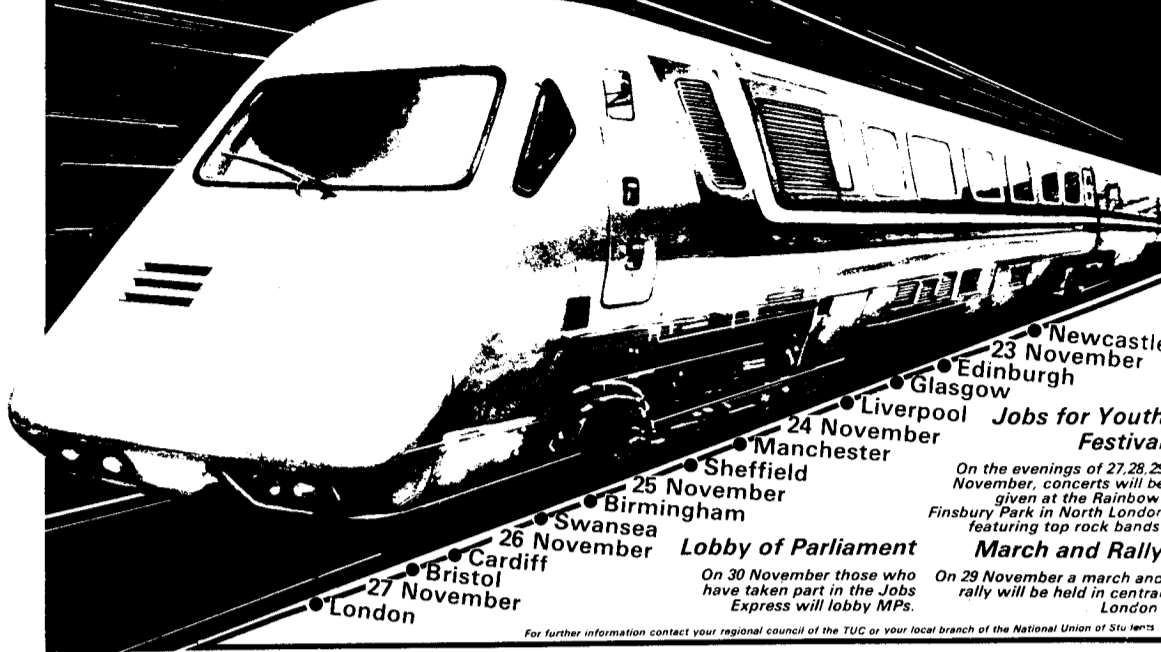
Phil Penning knows what he's

going to do when he gets aboard the train. 'I'm going up and down talking to everyone and at all the towns we visit. I'm going to explain that the best way to get jobs, for everyone including youth, is to support those fighting for jobs, like Staffa and us at Scotts.'

'And I'm going to tell them that what we're doing is not just taking on our boss, Arthur Snipe, or our union leaders, but the Tories and their whole bloody rotten system.'

MEET THE JOBS EXPRESS

Support youths' demands for jobs, education, training and a voice.



Picket Snipe!

By Tessa van Gelderen

NOTHING'S getting through. That's the message from the picket line outside Mining Supplies in Doncaster. On Monday the Laurence Scott strikers began the round-the-clock picket of the parent company to finally bring Mining Supplies boss, Arthur Snipe, to his knees.

The conference called for:

1. All trade unionists to respect and support our 24 hour picket of Doncaster Mining Supplies starting from next Monday. In the event of the picket being attacked we call on all trade unionists to support the picket line. We are calling for a mass picket on Monday 23 November and the following Mondays.
2. All trade unionists to black all Laurence Scott/Mining Supplies motors.
3. The continuation of the campaign inside the AUEW for the recall of the AUEW National Committee and the Final Appeal Court. We appeal for sponsorship from AUEW bodies for a national mass picket of the AUEW executive.

On behalf of Yorkshire's 68,000 miners I extend our best wishes to all workers at present in dispute with Laurence Scott, who are fighting for the right to work not merely for themselves but for all other workers in Britain as well. We wish you every success and assure you of our continued support.

Arthur Scargill, President, S Yorks NUM

We would request all union members not to cross our members' picket lines, and to render the maximum support and assistance to ensure work removed or destined from the Manchester factory should not be worked upon, to ensure that the dispute be brought to a satisfactory and successful conclusion.

John Tocher, No 29 Confed District Committee Secretary

After seven months on strike fighting to save their jobs, they have taken this action in defiance of the union leaders. Full support for this picket is vitally necessary.

Last time the Scott workers organised a picket at Doncaster, Snipe was prepared to make an offer. It was at that point that the union leaders, led by Duffy and Boyd of the engineering union, insisted that the strikers accept the offer.

Without a guarantee of no enforced redundancies, the workforce refused. Boyd and Duffy withdrew official support and have abused and misused the rule book against the strikers.

Thus it was no coincidence that the Laurence Scott solidarity conference held on Saturday discussed how to win the dispute hand in hand with how to democratise the unions.

Jonathan Silberman, a member of the AUEW in Manchester, summed up the feelings of the majority of the 203 delegates at the conference: 'Laurence Scott shows you can fight back against 3m unemployed. There are people in the labour movement, like Boyd and Duffy, who are an obstacle to that fight back: 650 workers have started to put the skids under the feet of Boyd and Duffy.'

The conference had a number of MPs speaking

as well as local officials from the AUEW. Representatives from disputes all over the country spoke, bringing greetings and informing the conference of their struggles. And the message was the same — you have to take on your own leaderships as well as the boss to win.

Writer Jim Allen pointed out that the Tories could not get away with strengthening the police, the army and the judiciary without the agreement of the right wing in the Labour Party.

Longbridge steward Grant Keir told the conference that it was the right wing in the labour movement who had organised the BL sell out; it was Michael Foot who was now the leader of the right wing in the labour movement.

Three crucial tasks emerged from the conference: supporting the Doncaster picket; organising blacking, particularly in the mines, and building a picket at the AUEW headquarters.

Within one day of the picket starting at Doncaster, the local National Union of Mineworkers had blacked Laurence Scott and Mining Supplies. The pressure is now on Arthur Scargill and the Yorkshire NUM to do likewise.

Doncaster miners joined the picket line on Mon-

November 1981

5p

LAURENCE SCOTT STRIKE BULLETIN

Issued by Laurence Scott Joint Shop Stewards Committee

Available strike headquarters
20 Roundcroft, Romiley Cheshire

Donations and messages of support welcomed.



day, while the South Wales NUM sent observers to the conference, led by vice president, Des Dutfield, who pledged full support.

Arthur Snipe tried to counteract Monday's picket with a loudspeaker system and a disembodied voice. The pressure on him has to be kept up. That is why the strikers have called a mass picket for the next two Mondays — 23 and 30 November; that is why they still need full support for their struggle, both against Snipe and Duffy.

As TASS steward from Scotts, Phil Penning, said: 'We've struggled bloody hard for the last seven months not to go on the dose.'

Laurence Scott workers are now in the front line for jobs and justice. I welcome this conference and hope that the whole labour movement will give it full backing.

Tony Benn MP

Laurence Scott Benefit

Saturday 5 December
Concorde Suite
Droylesden, Manchester
7.30 till late

Live bands, Cabaret disco
Organised by Manchester City Labour Party
Tickets £1 available from Laurence Scott Strike Committee of LP members

The murky past of Michael Foot

By Geoff Bell

It is easy to dub Michael Foot a hypocrite and a poacher turned gamekeeper. For example, his ultimatum to Tony Benn, and his insistence that shadow cabinet policy supercedes conference policy, can be contrasted with the following incident recorded in the recent book on Foot by Simon Hoggart and David Leigh:

'When Foot arrived at Westminster (in 1945)... he lost little time in making it clear how he intended to carry on. In October, at the first full meeting of the new Parliamentary Labour Party, he seconded a motion moved by Barbara Castle, worded in feline fashion to call on ministers "to preserve the unity of the party" by consulting the PLP before they took decisions which went against the annual conference.'

Heretics

Or take the following paragraph written by Foot in 1958:

'The British Labour Party can be made a most powerful instrument for achieving socialism at home and peace abroad, so long as perpetual remedial action is taken to prevent hardening of the

arteries, softening of the brain, the domination of the young by the old or the domination of the heretics by the stuffy and the ultra-orthodox, the office-seekers and the power maniacs.'

Today, it is Tony Benn who is judged to be the 'heretic', it is Michael Foot who is 'stuffy and orthodox', and it is Neil Kinnock and other acolytes of Foot who are the 'office-seekers' and 'power maniacs'.

And yet, it is a bit too simple to explain what has happened to Michael Foot by saying that he has 'sold out' or reneged on his past. For, in many ways that past is not so inconsistent with Foot's present politics.

Foot's radical reputation was established because of the stand he took on a number of issues. Support for

the Labour Party whereby, in return for a financial donation, it was given two pages of *Tribune* in which to put over the official party line. This arrangement coloured the other pages in *Tribune*, which became less and less critical of the Labour government at the very time that this government was lurching more and more to the right.

Backed

When, in September 1949, there was an economic crisis and devaluation, *Tribune* backed the government's policy 'even though it carries with it some increase in the cost of living', and even though 'slight unemployment may be inevitable'.

When public spending cuts were introduced in October, Foot was critical of the government only for 'not presenting the cuts in a more understandable way.'

In the context of the economic crisis *Tribune* called for 'sacrifice' and 'self-discipline in the cause of British socialism'.

All this was written when Michael Foot was meant to be a darling young leftie. What it foretold was the Michael Foot who served in the Wilson and Callaghan cabinets, and who sought to justify the rise in unemployment and decline in living standards

of the working class from 1976-79.

Although this support for the government by *Tribune* in 1948 may have been influenced by the financial contributions *Tribune* was then receiving from the national Labour Party, Michael Foot ran the newspaper in such a way as to suggest that his own sympathies were moving away from the left rhetoric which *Tribune* had built upon.

Thus he solicited articles from non-Tribunites such as Roy Jenkins, who became the newspaper's main correspondent on financial matters and from Anthony Crosland. Significantly, *Tribune* published a series of Jenkins' articles in a pamphlet form with the title *Fair Shares for the Rich*.

Cuddling up to the Labour right was one thing, but the treatment *Tribune* gave to those on its left was something else. Under Foot's leadership the newspaper became vehemently anti-Communist, both at home and abroad.

NATO

Internationally, *Tribune* had previously sought a 'third way' between American imperialism and the Soviet Union. Now it became pro-American. In March 1949 *Tribune* expressed support for NATO saying 'any increase in world ten-

sion resulting from its formation was a necessary risk.'

US intervention in Korea was enthusiastically welcomed. Although admitting this intervention was a 'pre-meditated attack', *Tribune* consoled its readers with the news that 'the West had shown it will fight'. Woodrow Wyatt in a column in *Tribune* even pondered whether or not the US should be advised to drop an atom bomb on North Korea.

The expression of such views was a consequence of the cold war period. Foot became a spokesperson for British imperialism wherever it was challenged.

Tribune defended UK-US intervention in the Greek civil war, declared that British presence in Malaya was necessary to prevent the country going over to 'communist bandits', and insisted: 'We need not apologise for our mission in Africa. Whatever the reasons that took our forebears there, we must stay.'

Bans

In Britain as well, *Tribune* encouraged witch-hunts against Communists. It supported moves to sack Communist Party members from the civil service and defended the ban on Communists from becoming office-holders in the Transport & General Workers Union.

This variety of politics which Michael Foot was fundamental in promoting in *Tribune* may seem at variance with the allegedly liberal, warm-hearted, open minded, peace-loving Michael Foot. But

the contradictions can be explained by the different contemporary political circumstances in which 'Foot the lefty' and 'Foot the anti-lefty' operated.

The Michael Foot of CND and the anti-Vietnam days was alive when the crisis of world imperialism and British imperialism was not quite so acute as in 1949/50 and 1981. It was possible to be liberal without being anti-imperialist.

Luxury

In the cold war period and today such an option becomes a luxury, and Michael Foot and Tribunism are forced to take sides.

In 1949 Foot took the side of British and US imperialism, and called upon British workers to make sacrifices for them. Foot's 'sacrifice' was to store away his left wing 'conscience' for the good of the 'nation', the Labour government and the Labour Party. For him it mattered little if that government, nation or party was dominated by capitalism and its agents.

Today, the story is being repeated. He demands silence from Benn, he demands a halt to left wing activities for the sake of 'unity'. But Foot's own history has shown what such 'unity' leads to.

For the left in 1949 it led to a liquidation of its socialism, and for the Labour Party it led to 13 years of Tory government.

The lesson of Michael Foot and the Tribunism he represents is that Tony Benn should just not stand his ground, but he should march forward.



Michael Foot — young witchhunter, old Callaghanite.

Labour Party



Photo: JEREMY NICHOLS

Witch-hunt bid in Birkenhead CLP

By Tom Marlowe

FRANK FIELD, MP for Birkenhead, and his supporters the constituency Labour Party are going on the witch-hunt trail. This Friday, supporters of Socialist Challenge are to have their membership of the local party questioned by the executive committee of Birkenhead Labour Party.

Two of the Socialist Challenge supporters under attack have been 'invited to attend' the executive meeting. There, a resolution will be discussed which says: 'At a public meeting of the Birkenhead Labour Party a leaflet was distributed on behalf of the International Marxist Group. The leaflet named two people to contact ... who we believe are members of the Birkenhead Labour Party.'

'International Marxists are believed to have stood against Labour candidates, so we would like the two members to explain their situation.'

This motion was originally passed at the general management committee meeting of the party. There, the chairperson of the party, Labour right-winger Peter Roberts, ruled any discussion on the motion 'out of order'.

The leaflet referred to in the resolution was handed out at a public meeting earlier this year at which Frank Field, Roy Hattersley and others spoke. But it was a Socialist Challenge leaflet without any mention of the IMG.

There are many supporters of Socialist Challenge in Birkenhead Labour Party and indeed in constituency parties throughout the country.

No leading body of the Labour Party has accepted that supporting Socialist Challenge is incompatible with Labour Party membership. Only last week, Alex Kitson, recent chairperson of the Labour Party conference, wrote an article for the newspaper.

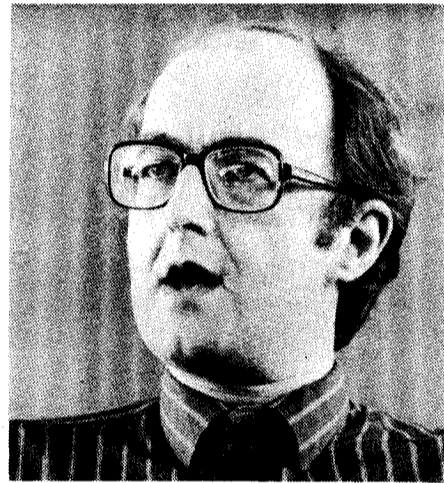
It is ironic that it is Frank Field's allies in Birkenhead Labour Party who are leading this witch-hunt. For Field himself, in a letter to *The Times* on 7 October, advocated the standing of parliamentary candidates against official candidates of the Labour Party.

Field gave advice to any MP who failed to be re-elected. Such MPs, wrote Field, should 'consider fighting by-elections' under the label of 'sitting Labour MP', against official Labour candidates.

Whether or not Field has technically broken the rules of the Labour Party by encouraging such divisive moves is a matter for interpretation, but certainly, if Birkenhead Labour Party wants to examine the credentials of any of its members it seems more suitable to examine those of Field rather than Socialist Challenge supporters.

Interview with Reg Race

'We need a new organisation...'



Reg Race

Following Tony Benn's front bench speech last week in which he advocated re-nationalisation of hived off North Sea oil assets without compensation, he seems certain to be excluded from the Shadow cabinet. Phil Hearse talked to left Labour MP REG RACE about the row that has resulted and the ongoing struggle inside the Labour Party.

Tony Benn's speech has been presented by the right wing as a provocation. But was it party policy? Why was he asked to do the speech? Was he set up by Michael Foot and the right wing? Is this a declaration of war by the right wing of the PLP?

I don't think that there was an attempt by Michael Foot to deliberately set up Tony Benn. But I do think we have to be clear what party policy is. The document 'Peace, Jobs and Freedom', agreed by the Wembley Conference two years ago, and carried by over 5m votes to 6,000, said quite clearly that we were in favour of re-nationalising assets taken into the private sector from the public sector without compensation. There has been no change in conference policy since that time.

This is a dispute which would have eventually occurred no matter what the issue. There are those in the PLP leadership who would have taken issue with Tony Benn no matter what he had said — they were looking for an issue to try to isolate him in the parliamentary party.

The right wing are trying to use resolutions to the shadow cabinet to counter the weight of the left in the party.

It looks as if Tony Benn won't be elected to the shadow cabinet just a couple of months after he got almost 50 per cent of the votes in the deputy leadership contest. Doesn't this mean the right have declared war on the left. Shouldn't the left go on the offensive to clear out all these people who refuse to respect party policy?

The established procedures like reselection and the electoral college have got to be used. The response of the left is very important. We have to set up an organisation on the left which seeks to unite the left in the constituencies and inside the trade unions.

We have to do that as a delegate body with delegations from organisations inside the Labour Party to construct an organisation with a number of clear aims in view.

The first of these objectives must be to reverse the right wing gains on the NEC and win back control of the NEC for the legitimate left, the real left.

Second we have to run a campaign to defend the Labour Party's policies against those in the shadow cabinet and the PLP who seek to undermine them. We can only do that by building up a campaign in the working class as a whole.

That's very important because just ask yourself the question: who is going to attack the SDP and the great threat it poses to the unity of the labour movement from the shadow cabinet? It's obvious that there are those in the shadow cabinet who agree with the SDP's policies even if they disagree with the formation of the SDP. They are therefore unwilling to get involved in serious criticisms of the SDP.

What we have to do in this new left organisation is to go all out and attack the SDP as the capitalist party that it is.

The question of a contest for the leadership or deputy leadership next year is a question which still has to be discussed — we have to see if it is tactically correct, at a time when we're coming up to a general election.

What you propose, the setting up of a Labour Party organisation uniting constituencies and trade unions, sounds very good. But didn't the last conference show the decisive strength of the right wing is its control of certain important unions — like the AUEW for example. Doesn't

any organisation of the Labour Left which involves trade union activists have to fight to solve that problem?

That's true. At the moment the block vote tends to be split down the middle between left and right — a big advance from the fifties and sixties. We have to defend and extend the gains which we have made in the trade union movement for left wing policies, and show the trade unions that the implementation of those policies is in the interests of their members.

The answer to the right wing domination of unions like the AUEW, APEX and EEPTU is the formation of broad left organisations and the bringing together of those organisations into a more potent grouping.

But the prerequisite is that the members of those unions have to change those unions themselves. We can support them from the outside, but they must do it themselves.

Coming back to the question of the leadership, isn't it clear that Michael Foot is a willing ally of the right wing not just its prisoner?

This is a very important question. There are those in the Tribune group who think that Michael Foot is still the romantic starry-eyed visionary left wing figure that he was in the fifties and sixties.

There are others who say that Michael Foot is now the Michael Foot in

the last Labour government who did several important jobs for Callaghan, and protected the Callaghan-Healey leadership very effectively from criticism from the left.

I found Michael Foot's statement issued on Friday very interesting in that regard, because the crucial phrase was that members of the shadow cabinet who disagreed with party policy had an effective veto.

That must be seen as a total capitulation by Michael Foot to the right inside the shadow cabinet. It means in practice Denis Healey and others being able to veto the defence policy of the Labour Party, the common market and crucial areas of the alternative economic policy, like a big extension of public ownership.

It means that Labour Party policy won't be implemented by the next Labour government. Michael Foot has come off the fence and thrown in his lot with the right wing inside the shadow cabinet.

Should there not therefore be an ultimate objective to replace Michael Foot as leader?

Yes, quite right. At an appropriate time there should be a candidate of the left for leader and deputy leader. There is a great desire in the party for unity.

Our line is to say, 'We are perfectly willing to unite on the basis of accep-

ting party policy.' If the right wing agree with that, we could all be brothers and sisters tomorrow. But that is hardly likely.

Is the Tribune group an adequate form of organisation for the left in the PLP?

Whether it is adequate depends on what you consider to be the tasks of left organisation inside the Labour Party. If you think that the task of organisation is to unite the left in the three wings of the party — the constituencies, the trade unions and the MPs, then it's important to ask what the Tribune group has been doing about it. Actually it hasn't been doing anything.

Indeed the Tribune group has traditionally taken the view that it shouldn't get involved with extra-parliamentary activities. I think that is a

great mistake — if the Tribune group wants to influence events in the constituencies and the trade unions it has to organise.

If you also think it is necessary to fight the right wing then that is something that also has to be done by this organisation. Since the Tribune group has made this fatal mistake, then I'm in favour of a new organisation.

The second problem about Tribune is its membership. Some of them are not on the left at all. Some of them voted for Denis Healey in the deputy leadership, many more abstained. It's very difficult to sit down with Denis Healey supporters and discuss what the left should do! I hope we'll be able to carry a majority of Tribune group members along with a new organisation.

Stop the missiles

CND conference: A FALTERING STEP

By Steve Longman

HUNDREDS of delegates met last weekend at CND's annual conference in London. At last year's CND conference Socialist Challenge coined the slogan 'towards a demonstration of a quarter of a million'. One year later that demonstration has taken place, the culmination of a year of massive growth of the anti-missiles movement.

Most of the conference delegates were from CND groups and regions. While their decisions reflected the experience of the last year, they also showed that not all the lessons of the rebirth of CND have been learned.

Among the most positive decisions of the conference were those to re-affirm CND's campaigning opposition to NATO, and to call for an internationally co-ordinated day of action against the missiles. This would aim to mobilise five million people on the streets of Europe.

NATO

The decision on NATO is significant, despite being 'only' a re-affirmation of CND policy. Powerful friends of CND in the Labour leadership support

unilateral disarmament but are opposed to withdrawal from NATO. Indeed this has been the decision of the Labour Party conference two years running.

Although the resolution was moved by Communist Party member John Elliot, a delegate from Sheffield CND, some members of the Communist Party at the conference opposed the resolution, on the grounds that British withdrawal from NATO would leave the British peace movement 'isolated'!

The opposition to NATO reflected a year's experience of the realities of the world. Nobody in the debate defended the idea that the Soviet Union and the United States were 'equally responsible' for the arms race.

The discussion on an international day of action

against the missiles was in many ways the high point of the conference. The proposal for such a day of action was moved by Redmond O'Neill from Greater Manchester CND, who argued for the action to be co-ordinated with a joint CND-TUC-Labour Party demonstration in Britain.

CND national council member Alasdair Beal argued against the proposal on the grounds that CND could not 'impose' such an action on movements in other coun-

Youth

tries, and that the proposal represented 'British arrogance'.

O'Neill replied that the proposal, far from representing British arrogance represented 'the spirit of internationalism'. The proposal was overwhelmingly carried, reflecting an increased grasp of the power and potential of the movement.

Some of the problems were shown however in the debates on youth and the labour movement. In the debate on the labour

movement a detailed resolution was moved by Kevin Holmes, representing Edinburgh CND. He argued for priority use of the slogan 'Jobs not Bombs', for a campaign for support from the labour movement at every level, and for labour movement representation in all CND activities.

It represented the feeling of a large section of the conference that the decisive weight for winning the campaign against the missiles was to be found inside the labour movement.

Although it was clearly carried on a show of hands, it was lost on a card vote. Instead a resolution stressing the importance of campaigning for 'socially desirable alternative work in the armaments industries' was carried.

The net effect of passing this proposal was to downplay the 'jobs not bombs' theme, and to deprioritise the orientation to the labour movement.

The discussion on youth only reached the conference floor after a long fight in the youth 'workshop' and in the compositing committees. While this represented a

small victory, it highlights a bizarre situation.

Anyone who took part in the 24 October demonstration will realise that it was overwhelmingly composed of young people. A resolution was put to raise the age limit of youth CND to 25 and to make youth CND autonomous and self-governing.

This was defeated in favour of a resolution to keep the age limit at 21, and for YCND to remain a 'special interest group' like Christian CND, Teachers CND etc.

Although the resolution stressed the importance of youth, it still reflected the caution of the CND leaders in recognising the decisive role of youth, and in organising the hundreds of thousands of young people who can be won to the campaign.

The failures of the conference in relation to youth and the labour movement demonstrate that the structures of CND are not geared to representing these crucial areas in the decision-making processes, nor to maximising their involvement in activity.

This year's conference voted to increase the membership of the CND national council, but this reform is pitifully inadequate.

The conference delegates in effect only really represented the local CND groups and CND regions. But the existing CND activists are overwhelmingly middle class — the youth and labour movement are not organised in CND groups. We need a more open structure so that major CND conferences can have delegates from labour movement and youth bodies with decision-making powers.

Cruise

This isn't a question, as some CND leaders argue, of making the labour movement the *only* area of activity, but of recognising the decisive weight and importance of the organised working class. Nonetheless this year's conference marked some important steps forward, representing a year of mass campaigning.

Finally, a surprise occurred when veteran Communist Party 'peace' campaigner John Cox was defeated as CND chairperson and replaced with left Labour Party member Joan Ruddock. This reflected the decline in the grip of the CP on the apparatus of the movement.

Joan Ruddock later told Socialist Challenge that although the task of stopping Cruise missiles by 1983 was a difficult one, the enormous growth of the movement made it a possible objective. That is certainly true — provided CND starts to organise its mass base in the labour movement and the youth.

NATO will use nuclear weapons first

By Paul Lawson

'THERE SEEMS to be some confusion' said US President Ronald Reagan at his press conference last week 'about whether NATO has a contingency plan to fire a nuclear missile first as a warning in the event of war with the Soviet Union'. How remarkable that the US president is unable to find out what NATO's battle plans are!

The confusion of course is a result of contradictory statements on the topic by US Secretary of State Alexander Haig and Defence Secretary Caspar Weinberger. The issue of whether NATO could fire a 'warning' missile is part and parcel of the debate about whether it is US policy that a 'limited' nuclear war could be fought in Europe without being escalated into a generalised nuclear exchange between the USA and USSR.

The contradictory statements indicate that the US is becoming worried about rising anti-American and anti-nuclear feeling in Europe. But the facts of the matter have been clear for years — it is just that Reagan's unfortunate confirmation of them, and Haig's confirmation of Reagan's remarks are untimely to say the least.

In the first place, it has been NATO policy for at least a decade and probably a lot longer that it might be necessary to use nuclear weapons first. Since the 1950s NATO planners have estimated that in the event of a conflict on the 'central front' (ie on the East-West German border) NATO would be unable to hold the supposed advance of Soviet tanks for more than a few days. It would then become necessary to begin using 'tactical' battlefield nuclear weapons in order to avoid defeat and the occupation of Western Europe.

In this sense, the notion of limited 'theatre' nuclear war is not new. The whole debate about 'escalation' in the early 1960s was precisely about this point.

The neutron bomb is just a confirmation of this scenario. One of the major uses of the neutron bomb would be against Soviet tanks if conventional warfare breaks out. If it were the calculation of NATO planners that a limited nuclear war was impossible, and that once nuclear weapons of any kind were used then an all-out exchange was inevitable, there would be no point in constructing such weapons.

In fact, the whole range of new weapons — Cruise, Pershing, and the neutron bomb, are all either 'battlefield' weapons or short and medium-range missiles designed precisely for a war limited to Europe.

Reagan's confusion about whether NATO would fire a warning missile, presumably against a Soviet city or military installation is hilarious but irrelevant. It has always been part of NATO battle plans to use nuclear weapons first if it were necessary to avoid losing a conventional war.

What is different now, since the systematisation of 'theatre' warfare plans is that instead of it being assumed that there is a grave danger of this first use of nuclear weapons turning into a generalised exchange, it is more and more assumed that the Soviet Union would not launch missiles against the USA in retaliation for strikes against individual Soviet targets — whether these targets were Soviet tanks or targets inside the Soviet Union, hit by Cruise missiles

If such a proposition is valid it means that nuclear war could be confined to Europe, and the Soviet Union could suffer a humiliating defeat, accepting nuclear attacks against its forces and even one of its cities, but not retaliating against the USA for fear of ultimate total destruction.

Such is the temptation for NATO's 'new thinkers' — a series of assumptions which make nuclear war thinkable. It's because of that that Reagan's 'confusion' takes on a decidedly unfunny light.



US — keep out of Central America

By Megan Martin

THERE is growing evidence that US military intervention in Central America is imminent.

In response there has been a general military counter-mobilisation in Cuba and Nicaragua. The governments of these countries have become convinced that the Reagan administration is planning to move militarily within a matter of weeks.

The call is to mobilise in action everyone who defends the right of the peoples of Central America and the Caribbean to determine their own future.

On 4 November unidentified US administration officials leaked to the press that Secretary of State Haig had asked the Pentagon 'to study a show of force' around Cuba. The *New York Times* reported on 5 November that this was to be 'a show of airpower, large naval exercises, a quarantine on the shipment of arms to the island, a general blockade as part of an act of war, and an invasion by American and possibly Latin American forces.'

Leak

The 'leak' came in the midst of a meeting in Washington of Latin American army chiefs. A number of Latin American diplomats in Washington said that the conference focussed specifically on El Salvador and on US charges of Nicaraguan and Cuban involvement there.

In October the *Latin American Weekly Report* reported that Argentine army commander General

Leopoldo Galtieri was to visit Washington in November 'to discuss the final details of plans to send Argentine troops to El Salvador'. In fact, several Latin American countries had been asked if they might join in some kind of military operations in El Salvador.

Worse

It is the development of the civil war in El Salvador that explains the increased threat of US military intervention in the region.

Even US administration spokespeople now acknowledge that the military situation in El Salvador between the FMLN/FDR-led guerrillas and the Junta's army is in a 'stalemate'. Other reports indicate that, from Washington's point of view, the situation in El Salvador is much worse. In recent weeks the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front has widened its areas of operation and

dealt sharp blows to the Junta.

On 15 October the strategic Puente de Oro (Golden Bridge) over the Lempa River was demolished by FMLN commandos. This greatly complicated transport and troop movements between the capital and south-eastern El Salvador.

Damage

The guerrillas have also inflicted heavy damage to the country's electric power network, sometimes blacking out up to one-third of El Salvador. On 7 November FMLN units staged heavy attacks on army installations in San Miguel, the third largest city in the country, and the main provincial capital in eastern El Salvador.

Headway

Things don't look so good from the other side, however. Almost every week since March a new 'counteroffensive' by the Salvadoran army has been announced. But not even the elite 'Atacatl Brigade', trained and advised by US Green Berets, has been able to make headway against the FMLN.

At the same time the FMLN and the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR) have taken the of-

fensive against the Junta and Washington on the diplomatic front, calling for a political solution to the conflict. On 7 October, Nicaraguan leader, Daniel Ortega, presented the FMLN/FDR peace proposals to the General Assembly of the United Nations.

Failed

In Nicaragua also the Reagan administration is faced with a revolution advancing rapidly. Washington's two-year effort to pressure and bribe the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) into blunting the anti-capitalist course of the revolution has failed.

On 19 July, the second anniversary of the overthrow of the Somoza regime, Daniel Ortega declared before a rally of half a million people in Managua:

'From this day on, the FSLN, the government and all the people of Nicaragua are deciding the rules of the game. We are not going to permit the capitalists to keep on playing around with our revolution.'

Arrests

Ortega reaffirmed this stance on 22 October when he announced the arrest of four big-business leaders. They were charged under a provision of the 9 September economic emergency decrees.



This provision makes it illegal 'to incite foreign governments and international lending institutions to carry out actions or make decisions that cause damage to the national economy'. Ortega declared: 'This revolution is not going to be turned around.'

In response to the arrests *Newsweek* reported on 9 November that 'the Reagan administration has almost abandoned its last faint hopes that Nicaragua's Sandinistas could be persuaded to

follow a pluralist path — and the hardline US policy toward Central America has turned even harder.'

Cuban and Nicaraguan leaders have made it clear that their governments have the right to come to the aid of the popular forces in El Salvador in the event of a direct foreign intervention. Cuba has also reaffirmed its solidarity with the Nicaraguan and Grenadan revolutions.

Since the Cubans sounded the alarm the response of US government officials has only served to confirm the charges. *The Guardian* reported on 13 November that Haig had 'refused to rule out the possibility that America might attempt to overthrow the Nicaraguan government.'

Britain

To some extent the bourgeois press has sought to portray the situation as a policy dispute between Haig and the Pentagon. According to this version 'it is highly doubtful that the American public and Congress would support military intervention'.

Certainly, military intervention would not be popular. Despite protests

from the Administration, the US Senate recently voted by 51-27 to attack a series of conditions on future aid to El Salvador. But Washington is determined to halt the advance of socialist revolution in Central America and the Caribbean and the range of options is narrowing.

The only response open to those who defend the right of self-determination is to mobilise immediately and massively against the threat of US military intervention.

An Anti-Intervention Front was launched at a press conference in London on 30 October as a joint initiative of the Central American and Caribbean solidarity campaigns.

Its aim is the creation of an anti-intervention movement of the greatest possible breadth and unity in Britain. It calls for a halt to US political, economic and military aggression against the people of Central America and the Caribbean and for an end to British government support for US policy in the region.

The Anti-Intervention Front can be contacted at: 29 Islington Park St., London N1.



Pictures on this page are from 'El Salvador: Repression and Revolution', an exhibition by Camerawork and the El Salvador Solidarity Campaign. Picture at top of page shows

guard at US embassy in San Salvador. The exhibition is at Camerawork 121 Roman Rd, London E2. Telephone 980 6256/7/8 for details.

Kitson attacks Haig

SOLIDARITY with Cuba, Nicaragua and the people of El Salvador was urged last weekend by Alex Kitson, acting general secretary of the Transport and General Workers Union and a member of the Labour Party NEC.

Speaking at a labour movement rally in Glasgow, Kitson said that it was shameful that the British government should be supporting Reagan's policies in Central America.

Haig's latest threats to intervene in Cuba and Nicaragua could very easily lead to a holocaust in Europe.

'Our people think that Cuba is nothing to do with them because it is 7000 miles away,' said Kitson. 'But it is only 5 minutes away when it comes to nuclear war. We have to say to our people that this is something important.'



Coventry: 100% wage cut - no thanks

By Maureen Shevlin and Val Jones

4,000 school workers in Coventry, members of the public employees union (NUPE) are in the second week of their strike in response to the Labour-controlled council's attempt to impose the following cuts in their pay and the services that they provide:—

- 1) A 10 per cent cut in the hours and wages of all school cleaners
- 2) The removal of cleaners' option to work in the school holidays thus reducing their income by 50 per cent.
- 3) A reduction in caretakers' income by cutting the hours allowed for essential boiler duties over the weekends.
- 4) An increase in caretakers' rent by a further £2 per week.

5) A reduction in the hours of school meal staff to take effect from 30 November, in line with the gradual run down of school meal services and price rises.

These cuts are the outcome of the fake referendum on rate rises or more cuts staged by the Labour council at a cost of £88,000 which helped to set the scene for Heseltine's new legislation on local government rates. Rather than organise a campaign with the trade unions, tenants and community groups against the Tory government, the council referendum gave workers a choice of a cut in their income through rate rises or a further cut of £2.3m in services.

Rather than challenge

the government's withdrawal of funds to local government, the council is quite happy to continue doing the Tories' dirty work — by increased charges and cutting jobs and services. Now they want to cut the pay of NUPE members.

The fight for socialist policies in the Labour Party must not be sabotaged by the right wing of the Labour group on the council. Labour Party activists in the wards and constituencies should seize the opportunity to isolate these traitors by going out to build support for the NUPE strikers in the workplaces and on the council estates, and try to impose a 'no cuts no rates raises' policy in the Labour group.

'The Council must withdraw its proposals'

Interview with John Doran, senior NUPE shop steward

Why do you think NUPE members have been singled out for these cuts in pay?

The local council thought we were the weakest section of council workers because many of our members are women who work part time as cleaners and school dinner staff. They think that women just work for pin money. But you just can't keep a family on one wage. Also with the present level of unemployment some of our members are the only breadwinner in the family.

How important do you think this dispute is?

We must win this one. Defeat will open the floodgates for other authorities to alter the conditions of service for their workers. If we lose, it could be the transport workers, teachers and NALGO members next in Coventry. Already we know that the city council will try to cut £3½m off the budget for 1982/3.

What has been the level of support from other local government unions?

Most unions have sent out instructions to their members not to carry out

NUPE members work. Large collections have been held in schools for the hardship fund but NUT members have received an instruction from national level to cross our picket lines.

The local NALGO branch officials seem to be sitting on the fence. They have instructed members to respect our picket lines but refuse to instruct them to close the schools or organise a levy on members. Nor have they organised support for members who refuse to cross our picket line.

This is despite a petition calling for the union to give such a lead. The TGWU stewards called for a one-day stoppage in support of NUPE of all local council workers and no crossing of picket lines to make deliveries.

It is clear that action must be escalated and supported by other unions to completely shut down the schools and colleges if we are to defeat the council.

While they can offer some form of schooling our action will be undermined.

What efforts have been made to inform workers outside the local

authority of the reasons why NUPE members are on strike?

A special strike bulletin has already been distributed to engineering firms and the local coal mines, and NUPE stewards have spoken to other local unions at workplaces.

On what basis can you see a return to work?

The Council must withdraw the letter containing changes in terms of employment. If we return to work on any other basis it will be a defeat. We cannot negotiate on the basis of accepting any of the proposed cuts in our wages. Some people say that the council is quite happy for us to stay out because it will save them money this way. But it stands to save a lot more if we are defeated.

Interview by Maureen Shevlin and Val Jones.

SUPPORT NUPE STRIKERS

On £12.50p strike pay for full-time workers and £6.25p for part timers, NUPE members will soon run into financial hardship. Send messages of support and donations to the strike fund, c/o Joe Little, branch secretary NUPE office, South Fields School, East St., Coventry.

London Fares: no getting off the bus now

THE DECISION by the court appeal under Lord Denning that the raising of a supplementary rate by the GLC to pay for its cheap fares is illegal poses a massive challenge to Ken Livingstone and all his supporters. In effect it is their last chance to show that they can push policies in the interests of working people through in the absence of a Labour government to back them up.

Until now, it had been thought that the major challenge to the Labour GLC would come in the new year when Heseltine's new bill went through. That legislation, despite some concessions made by Heseltine last week in the Commons, would have deprived local authorities of the ability to make firms pay a major share of the cost of providing class high spending programmes.

In effect, the passing of the legislation will mean either that councils implement the cuts, put up household rates enormously — or alternatively, in a united fashion, start a massive campaign of mass action to defeat the government's moves.

Livingstone's crunch has come earlier than expected however. If the Appeal Court decision is upheld by the Lords, either fares in the London transport area will have to go up 60 per cent (at least) or the GLC's finances will be thrown into chaos. Either way, a major plank of Labour's GLC manifesto will have been torn up, and it will be a matter

of time before Ken Livingstone is evicted.

The class and political character of the appeal court decision hardly has to be pointed out. Leaving aside the incidental factor that Lord Denning, Master of the Rolls, has a unique belief in the 'creative' interpretation of the law, the decision shows the ability of the legal system to defeat progressive social change. It is another vivid indication of the inevitable confrontations with the apparatus of the bourgeois state which any progressive government, local or national, will inevitably be faced with.

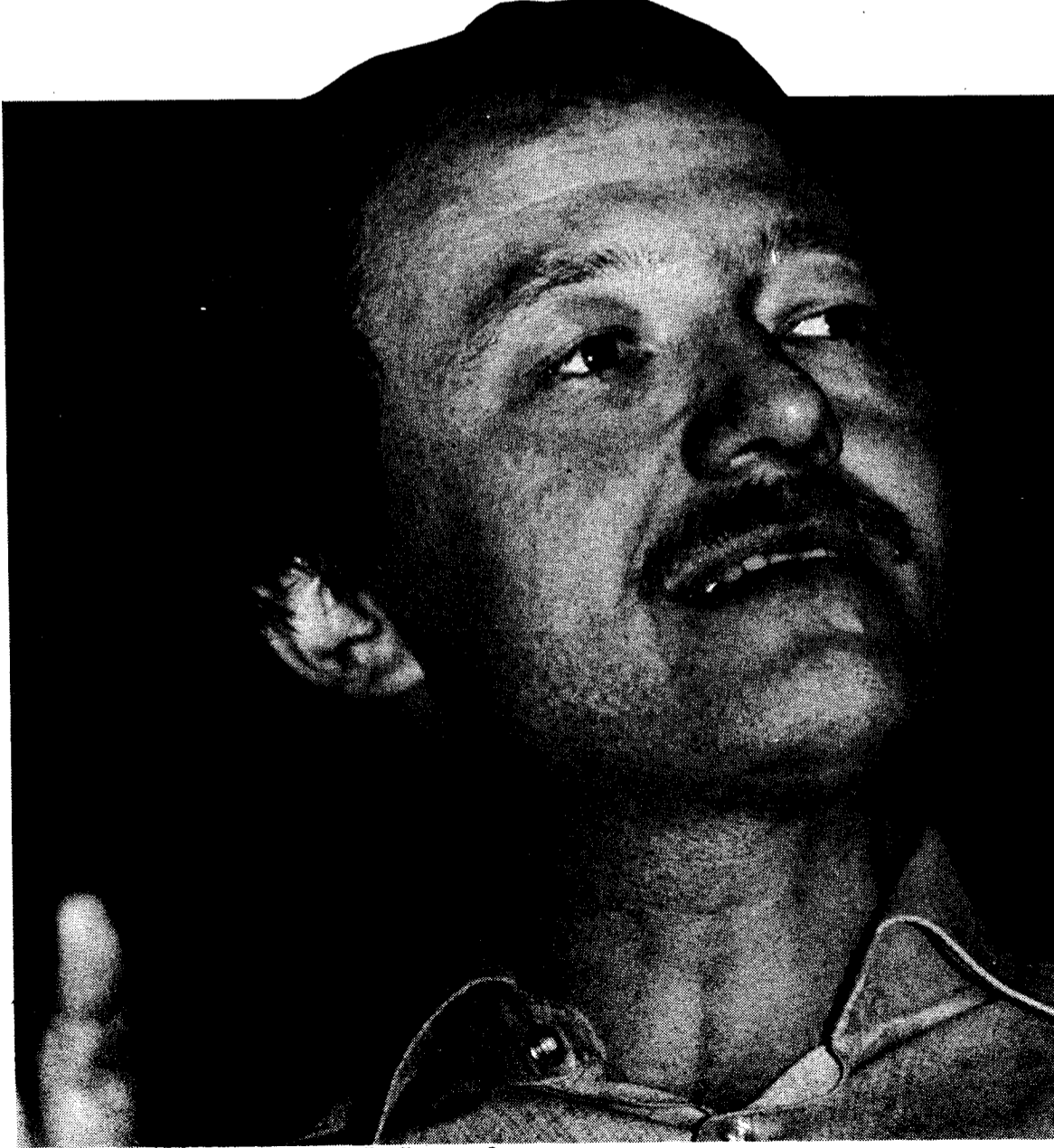
Ken Livingstone has always said that in a decisive confrontation he would appeal to the London labour movement for mass action to defeat the Tory attacks. Unless the House of Lords overturns the decision of the Appeal court, the time for that mobilisation will be here.

The Northwold branch of Hackney CLP has passed a resolution calling for the GLC to publicly declare its intention to defy the ruling and to call on the transport unions to refuse to collect the increased fares, and to call for wider industrial action to back up the fight. This is exactly what is needed.

There is no doubt that cheaper fares are enormously popular. It is a measure so obviously in the interests of working people that it is good terrain to take on the courts and the Tories.

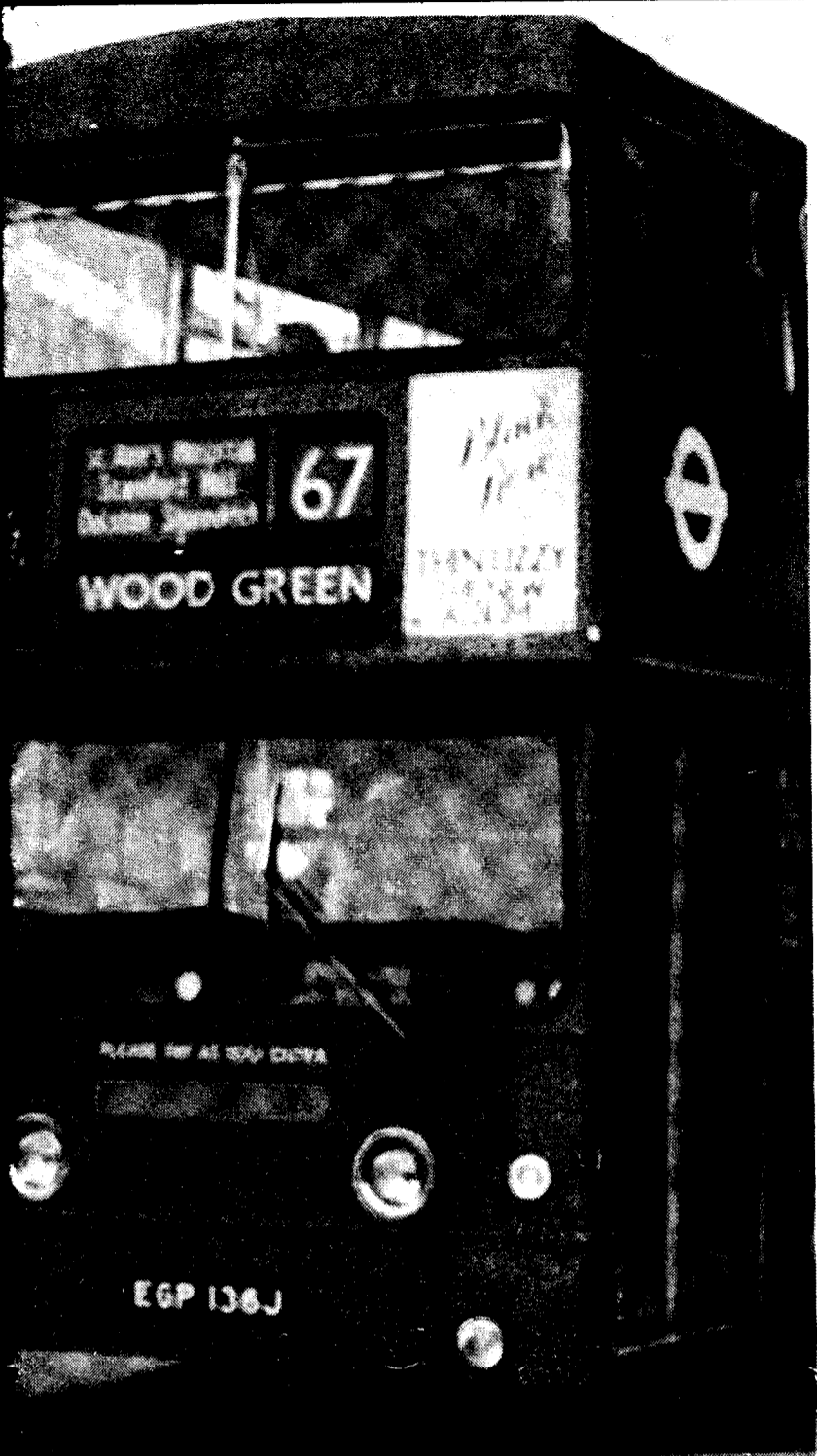
A fight on this issue can motivate and mobilise the whole labour movement.

Photo: PETE GRANT (Socialist Challenge)



Ken Livingstone: has the crunch finally come?

Photo: ALAN LENTON



Defeating Heseltine

By Ken Livingstone

THE LABOUR Party finds itself in a dilemma. For years we have increased the rates in order to provide services and jobs and to minimise rent and fares increases. Because over 50 per cent of rate income is from industry and commerce there has been a redistribution of wealth in favour of ordinary people flowing from this policy.

In Britain the 20 largest private firms paid no tax at all last year so their only direct contribution to the provision of public services was via the rates. This is the reason that industry and commerce have been demanding that the Tories change the rating system in their favour.

This Heseltine has now agreed to do under the guise of restricting rate increases. The new legislation which he intends to push through parliament before next year's rate making has several features which hit at domestic ratepayers. First Heseltine will decide how much each council should spend.

If councils spend more, then the extra spending will fall almost entirely on domestic ratepayers with commerce only paying a small proportion. In London next year the average domestic ratepayer should spend £1.07 a week in order to keep fares at the present level but under the new system the cost would be £2.65.

Those councils most above the new Tory guidelines would have to double the rates next year for domestic ratepayers or make cuts in services on a scale which would lead to the loss of a quarter of a million jobs.

Already some council treasurers are talking about rent increases of £6 a week, doubling fares and massive redundancies for teachers, firemen, transport workers and other council staff.

If council fails to make the

cuts then the extra income required is to come in the form of a supplementary rate in October which would be subject to a referendum.

To ask ordinary families to double their rates while wages are pegged at a 4 per cent increase would be as unacceptable as making the cuts required in order to avoid the rate increase.

This requires Labour also to revise our strategy. In the first place we must fight the legislation with every means possible. We must also reconvene those bodies which drew up the manifesto in order to determine a response to these changed circumstances.

There is no way in which we can fudge the issue or muddle through. There will be some comrades who will argue that we should resign from councils, let the Tories make the cuts and boycott the resulting by-elections or contest the elections on the grounds that we will refuse to take our seats.

Such a course would be completely wrong. It would leave the workers in each council exposed to massive attacks because they cannot run away from their jobs. Ordinary families in the community would never understand why the Labour Party failed to defend them and left them to resist the cuts alone.

But the basis of our policy needs to be changed in response to the government and the new situation in which we find

The 'impartial' Lord Denning

KEN LIVINGSTONE has good reason for hoping that the law lords will overturn Lord Denning's ruling on London's fares. In the first four months of last year they rejected ten out of ten of his judgments. These 'judgments' included the following:

- * Steel workers were acting illegally when extending their strike to the private sector.
- * Secondary picketing at *Express* Newspapers was unlawful.
- * Documents relating to sanctions busting in Rhodesia need not be disclosed by Shell and BP.

The Master of the Rolls is 83, eight years past the age at which judges now have to retire. He believes that judges should have the power to set aside new laws they think unreasonable and tries to put that into practice.

It was Lord Denning's ruling this year that refused Youth CND permission to march in London at a time of selective bans on demonstrations.

It was his ruling that stated that Harriet Harman, National Council for Civil Liberties' lawyer, had no right to show documents to a reporter which had been read in open court.

But in case anyone thinks that Lord Denning's judgments have shown just a teeny weeny bias on his part, remember the words of one Margaret Thatcher, commenting on Denning's latest ruling: 'Judges give decisions on the law and the evidence before them. They do so totally impartially.'

What more is there to say?

ourselves. Labour councils must refuse to vote for cuts in services or rent and fare increases. But we must also refuse to vote for rate increases under the Tories new system.

There is no way in which Labour councils can balance the books under the new system. This is the classic case of the final straw breaking the camel's back. Labour councils have struggled through the last 2½ years increasing rates in preference to cutting services and jobs because they saw this as the lesser of two evils.

By closing off that option Heseltine may now unite Labour councils in opposition which will take them outside of the law.

There is no point in Labour councils trying to calculate what rate increases they would have supported and refusing any increase beyond that. Labour councils have been forced into massive rate increases by government cut backs in Rate Support Grant.

We should merge our campaigns for a restoration of the RSG cuts with our opposition to the new legislation by imposing a full rates freeze in next year's budget and voting down any proposals from the Tories for increases in rents and fares or in services and jobs.

We must now prepare for this struggle by a major winter campaign involving the trade unions and community groups. Trade unions must realise that the fight is now and they will not be able to wait until after the legislation is carried if they are to defend their members' jobs. Our campaign must unite the widest possible spectrum of opinion behind our stand.

Labour Party Conference in an emergency motion voted to back councils which defy Heseltine's new law. We must now carry that decision into practice.

The movement has been badly damaged by the last two year's debate on rate increases. In uniting us against him Heseltine may be doing more than any other Minister (with the sole exception of Norman Tebbit and his anti-trade union legislation) to hasten the fall of this government.

Reprinted from *London Labour Briefing* November 1981.



Master of the Rolls — a law unto himself

The unions should act to maintain lower fares

Interview with Martin Eady, President of the London Transport District Council of the National Union of Railwaymen (personal capacity)

WHEN THE fares were reduced, by the Labour Greater London Council, there were two attitudes from railworkers. The majority were completely in favour of it because they could see that this would be an insurance for their job. The more people who travel on the transport system, obviously the better it is for our jobs.

The union leadership played upon a fear present among some of the more backward sections of the workforce by claiming that the reduction in fares reduced the value of our free pass. In fact we got a one off payment in response to that and the union leaders played on that by beating the old drum about having cheap fares at the expense of railway workers.

The reaction in the depots and stations to the Appeal Court's ruling on fares is that it's an obvious and open intervention by the state machine in local democracy. People still have a lot of illusions in bourgeois democracy.

Publicly

I think the unions should come out very publicly and say that Lord Denning's ruling is a totally unwarranted interference. They should state that they're in favour of lower fares and that they're prepared to take some kind of action to maintain them.

It's a very difficult area to get into. There are many legal problems with refusing to collect fares at all or refusing to collect

parts of fares. But this is the sort of approach we should be taking.

I've a feeling, however, that our right wing leadership in the NUR will be saying very little and quietly chuckling over the situation. The London Labour Party should issue a call for industrial action, particularly on behalf of council employees.

Strategy

The special London Labour Party conference on 12 December, which has been called to discuss a strategy for fighting the Heseltine Bill, seems an ideal opportunity to begin that process.

There would be a battle with some of the unions, obviously, but the more shop stewards and middle and lower level officials that are involved in the conference, the better the chances of winning. A call for industrial action could come out of the conference.

Emphasis

It's worthwhile emphasising the point that the capitalist state will come crashing down and will not allow democratically elected

local governments, or indeed national governments, to carry out the policies that they wish to if it's not in the interests of capitalism.

Split

My understanding is that the Labour group in the GLC is split down the middle between taking a Lothian line of implementing cuts and taking a line of opposing cuts one way or the other.

Resign

Obviously there are different ways of doing this — putting up the rates or whatever. The putting up the rates option is being squeezed out by events as Socialist Challenge has been saying for a very long time.

My own feeling is that either resigning and calling a new election on this one single issue or moving into opposition whilst retaining a majority on the council would be the sort of areas which would have to be looked at.

Others

The other Labour councils up and down the country that we don't hear anything about which are also cutting fares, South Yorkshire and the West Midlands, in particular, must be drawn into the campaign. People talk about not letting them get chopped off on their own like Lothian did.

This has got to be put into action. It's got to be organised on a national basis.

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DUNDEE: SC available from Dundee City Square outside Boots, Thur 4-5.30pm, Fri 4-5.30pm, Sat 11-4pm.
EDINBURGH: SC sold Thur 4.15-5.15pm Bus Station, St. Andrews Square and bottom of Waverly steps 4.30-5.30; Sat 11.30-2pm East End, Princes St. Also available from 1st May Books, or Better Books, Forrest Rd. More info on local activity from SC c/o Box 6, 1st May Bookshop, Candlemaker Row.
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Wales

BANGOR: Sat 10-12 town centre.
CARDIFF: every Sat in Bute Town 10.30-12. Also available 1-0-8 Books, Salisbury Road.
NEWPORT: every Sat in town centre 11-12.30
PONTYPRIDD: SC sales every Sat outside Open Market 11-1pm.
SWANSEA: SC sales outside Co-op, Oxford St, 11am-1pm, Saturdays.

England

BATH: SC on sale at 1985 Books, London Road, and Saturdays 2pm-3pm outside the Roman Baths. Phone 2028 for more details.
BIRKENHEAD: SC on sale at Labour Club, Cleveland st, Thur nights; in precinct outside Littlewoods, Sat 11-12.
BIRMINGHAM: SC on sale at The Ramp, Fri 4.30-5.40, Sat 10-4. For more info phone 643-0669.
BOLSOVER: Cross Keys, every Fri 8-9pm, Bluebell 9-10.
BRADFORD: SC at Fourth Idea Bookshop, 14 Southgate.
BRISTOL: SC on sale 11-1, 'Hole in Ground', Haymarket. More info Box 2, c/o Fulmarks, 110 Cheltenham Rd, Montpellier, Bristol 6.
BURNLEY: SC on sale every Sat morning 11.30-1pm St James St.
CHESTERFIELD: SC sold outside Boots, Marketplace, Sat 11.30am-12.30pm.
COVENTRY: SC available from Wedge Bookshop.
HEMEL HEMPSTEAD: SC sales in Time Square, Sat 10.30-1.30pm.
HUDDERSFIELD: SC sold Sat 11am-1pm. The Piazza. SC also available at Peaceworks.
LEEDS: Sat 11-1 at Lands Lane Pedestrian Precinct and 10.30-12.00 at Headingley Arndale Centre. Corner Bookshop, Woodhouse Lane.
LIVERPOOL: SC on sale from News from Nowhere, Whitechapel and Progressive Books, Berry St.

Bookshops

BANGOR: Rainbows, Holyhead Road, Upper Bangor, Gwynedd.
BRADFORD: Fourth Idea Bookshop, 14 Sandgate.
BRIGHTON: The Public House, Little Preston St.
BRISTOL: Fulmarks, 110 Cheltenham Rd, Bristol 6.
BIRMINGHAM: Other Bookshop, 137 Digbeth, Birmingham.
DURHAM: Durham City Co-op Bookshop, 85a New Elvet.
ILFORD: South Essex Bookshop, 335 Ley Street.
MILTON KEYNES: Oakleaf Books, 109 Church Street, Wolverton.
OXFORD: EOA Books, 34 Cowley Rd.
LEICESTER: Blackthorn Books, 70 High St, Leicester, and V Karia, 53A London Rd, Leicester.

What's Left

RATES for What's Left: 5p per word or £4 per col inch. Deadline: noon Sat prior to publication. Payment in advance. Phone 01-369 8180.
SPARE BOOKS? Any books you don't want taking up valuable space on your bookshelves? Send them to the Other Bookshop, 328 Upper St, London N1 2XP.
BADGES: Make money for your organisation or branch. Huge reductions on anti-racist, Irish solidarity, women's badges and many more. Write for lists of incredibly low bulk rates — from as little as 5p. Free offers for large orders. Send to: SCD Badges, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.
BADGES available from Revolution Youth, 20p each plus postage. Big discount on bulk orders. Write to: Revolution Youth, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.
BADGES MADE: Glasgow SC supporters have badge-making machine, will make badges quickly and cheaply for your campaign/union/Labour Party — and all the money goes back into the struggle for socialism! Write for details/quotes to: SC (Glasgow), PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.
IRELAND: Which way forward conference organised by Greenwich Labour Party, Sat 28 November 9.30-5.30pm. Goldsmiths College students union, New Cross. Speakers include: Richard Balfe, EuroMP, Clive Ley MP, Mike Biggs ex-Captain British Army, Carl Gardner City Limits, Padd Logue H Block/Armagh Committee, Des O'Hagan Sinn Fein Workers Party, Prof John Murphy University College Cork. Creche available. Lunch provided. Registration £2.50 from Greenwich Labour Party, 32 Woolwich Road, SE10.
IRELAND: Manchester Martyrs commemoration on Sunday 29 November, assemblies St. Patrick's church, Oldham Rd, Manchester 1.30pm Coaches leave Acton Town Hall at 9am to go to march. (Bloody Sunday commemoration march in Coventry 31 January 1982 organised by Bloody Sunday Commemoration Committee).

MANCHESTER SC sold 11-1pm Sat at OLDHAM outside the Yorkshire Bank, High St; at BURY in the shopping precinct and at Metro Books; at BOLTON in the town centre; and in MANCHESTER outside the central reference library in St Peter's Square and at Grassroots and Percivals Bookshop. Tel: 061-236 4905 for further info.
NEWCASTLE: SC on sale every Sat 11-1pm outside Fenwicks. Also available at Days of Hope bookshop, Westgate Rd. Every Friday outside Newcastle University between 1-2 and outside Newcastle Polytechnic between 12-1 every Monday.
OLDHAM: SC sold every Saturday outside Yorkshire Bank, High Street. For more information about local activities, Tel: 061-682 5151.
OXFORD: SC sold Fri 12-2pm outside Kings Arms and every Sat 10.30-12.30pm in Cornmarket.
SHEFFIELD: SC on sale Thursday, Pond St, 4.30-6pm; Saturday, Fargate 10.30-12.30pm.
STAFFORD: SC on Sale Market Sq Sat lunch-time.
STOCKPORT: SC sold every Saturday, 1pm, Mersey Way. Can be delivered weekly: phone 483 8909 (evening), 236 4905 (day).
SWINDON: SC on sale 11-1 every Sat, Regent St (Brunel Centre).
TEESIDE: SC on sale Sat lunchtime in the Cleveland Centre, and in Newfarsley, Linthorpe Road, Middlesbrough, and outside Woolworths on Stockton High Street.
WOLVERHAMPTON: SC sales on Thur/Fri at Poly Students Union from noon-2pm and British Rail 4.30-6pm; and Saturday near Beatties, town centre from 11am-2pm.
YORK: on sale every Thursday, dole office Clifford Street, 9.30-11; University Vanburgh College 12-2; Saturday at Coney Street 11-1.

London

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

LIVERPOOL: News from Nowhere, 100 Whitechapel, Liverpool L1
LONDON: Central Books, 37 Grays Inn Rd; Colletts, Charing Cross Rd, WC2; Paperback Books, Brixton and Charlotte St; Kilburn Bookshop, Kilburn High Road, NW6; The Bookplace, Peckham High St, SE15; Books Plus, Lewisham; Balham Food Co-op; Housmans, 5 Caedonian Rd, N1; Compendium, Camden Town NW1; Owl, Kentish Town; New Beacon, Seven Sisters Rd, N4; The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper St, N1; Bookmarks, Seven Sisters Rd, N4; Centreprise, 126 Kingsland High St, E8; Dillon's, OMC, Page One, E15; The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper St, N1; Reading Matters, Wood Green next to Sainsbury's.
YORK: Community Books, Walmgate.

IRELAND and the Missiles: a public meeting of the Labour Committee on Ireland. Mon 23 November, 7.30pm, Basement Theatre, Manchester Town Hall. Speaker: Pete Evans, member of NW CND and GMWU shop steward.
WHOSE Grouse moors? An open meeting to discuss plans for commemorating the 1932 Kinder Scout Mass Trespass. Wed 25 November 7.30pm, Roebuck pub, Tottenham Court Rd, Organised by Red Rope, the socialist outdoor club. All walkers welcome.
REVOLUTION in the Americas — Acid Test for the Left: why the Nicaraguan, Cuban and Grenadan leaderships are revolutionary and what the response of socialists internationally should be. A 32 page pamphlet available from most left bookshops at 50p or from Socialist Action, PO Box 65, London SW16 1NN for 70p inc. p&p.
SCIENCE at the Crossroads: a meeting to commemorate fifty years of the British Radical Science movement. Speakers: Margot Heinemann, Gary Wersky, Hilary and Steven Rose, Bob Young. Fri 20 November 7pm, Imperial College, Chemistry Theatre B, Imperial Institute Road, SW7. Details from: BSSRS, 9 Poland St, W1.
A LUTA CONTINUA: a study conference on political developments and the transition to socialism in Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde. 10-5.30pm, Sat 5 December at University London Union, Malet St, WC1. Registration (incl lunch) £3 in advance; £3.50 on door; £1.50 unwaged and students. Details of programmes and advance registration from: Mozambique, Angola and Guinea Information Centre (MAGIC), 34 Percy St, London W1.
Socialist Challenge events
NALGO fraction: Sat 21 Nov 12 noon to 5pm. Venue from SC office.

Socialist Challenge News

Towards the Labour Party

By Ray Burns
LONDON: — Over 500 delegates, observers and guests met from 29 October to 1 November to hear the discussions at the conference of the International Marxist Group (British Section of the Fourth International).

Interest in the items on the agenda — Poland, Central America and Ireland — was reflected in the attendance of visitors from the New Jewel Movement, the FDR of El Salvador and from Peoples Democracy of Ireland.

The other major discussion, around the significance of the rise of the Bennite current, attracted a number of visitors from the Labour Party and the unions.

Opening the conference a moment's silence was observed for those who had fallen at the hands of the class enemy since the last conference of the IMG, particularly the ten heroic hunger strikers of H Block murdered by the Thatcher government.

Grenada

Solidarity with the fight against imperialism was a continuous theme in the conference.

The growing threat of direct US intervention in Central America and the Caribbean was the subject of a resolution passed unanimously by delegates pledging support for the building of an anti-interventionist front both in Britain and internationally.

A standing ovation was given to representatives from the revolutionary movements of the region.

In a stirring speech Frederick Emmerson brought greetings to the conference from the political committee of the New Jewel Movement. Stressing the tremendous obstacles that had been put in the way of the Grenadan people by the previous dictator Gairy, comrade Emmerson thanked the IMG for bringing their case to the attention of the British labour movement.

Poland

Jaime Lopez, British representative of the El Salvadoran FDR, also underlined the role that the British labour movement could play in assisting their struggle against the Duarte regime.

Of key significance to the outcome of both these revolutions is the support of Cuba. Delegates began a discussion which will continue after the conference evaluating the Castro leadership team and its relation to building the Fourth International today.

The major event since the last conference of the IMG was undoubtedly the rise of the ten-million strong workers movement in Poland.

Delegates heard a report by an IMG member who had returned that week from Poland explaining the roots of the Polish crisis and the birth of Solidarity.

Again delegates decided to continue the discussion on Poland after the conference and pledged full solidarity with their

Polish brothers and sisters. The importance of practical internationalism was underlined by greetings brought by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International; the IKB (Dutch section of the Fourth International) and the sister organisations of the IMG: Peoples Democracy of Ireland and the American Socialist Workers Party.

The session on political perspectives had been preceded by four months of discussion in local IMG branches around documents submitted by the majority of the outgoing Central Committee.

Unlike the Labour Party and the Communist Party, IMG members have equal access to a discussion bulletin, and no bureaucratic bans are put in the way of members organising into 'tendencies' to fight for their views.

During the pre-conference discussion two tendencies, A and B, were formed against the line of the majority of the Central Committee and a third, Tendency C, gave critical support to that line. Equal time was given to tendencies to present their views to the conference on their points of difference.

Labour

The reporter for the CC Majority stressed the fact that British politics was at a turning point. In order for the IMG to take advantage of these changes and to begin to lay the foundations for building a mass revolutionary party, it had to continue its efforts to implant itself in the core sections of the working class in industry to step up its activist orientation towards developments in the Labour Party, and to continue putting major resources into building Revolution Youth, the youth organisation in solidarity with the IMG.

Particularly important in the latter task would be reaching out to the hundreds of thousands of youth mobilised behind the demands of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament.

The importance of Socialist Challenge as a paper which supported the objectives of the IMG was stressed time and time again by delegates.

Pledge

The tasks resolution moved by the CC Majority received 72.5 per cent of the votes of delegates after amendments proposed by Tendency C were accepted and they dissolved. Tendency A received 8 per cent of votes for their counter line document and Tendency B gained 21 per cent of votes cast for their positions on the Labour Party.

The incoming Central Committee was elected to reflect the views of the organisation and again,



All Photos: COLIN HEADWORTH (Socialist Challenge)

Greetings to the Laurence Scott

By Phil Penning

ON BEHALF of the members at Laurence Scott Engineering I welcome this opportunity to speak at this conference. The conference occurs at a time when Thatcher and her government seem hell bent on destroying jobs, unions and the strength of people like you and me. At Laurence Scott's we aren't kidding ourselves that we alone can change the political outlook of this country. But we can give it a lead. We have led by saying: 'Enough is enough'. We

have led by occupying our factory and telling the boss to piss off. That we were sick of being preached to like Hitler.

I was looking back the other day at some of the things we've been up to during the seven months of our struggle; secondary picketing, occupying, eviction, court actions, withdrawal of official backing.

In spite of the union leaders such as Duffy and Boyd; in spite of the Communist Party, who've been dragged

unlike the reformist and Stalinist parties, representation of minorities on the leadership was in line with the support they received in the conference. In this way the whole organisation can go forward to test the policies decided by majority vote at the conference.

Industry

Progress made in the objectives of building the IMG's presence in industry and among youth since the last conference of the IMG was reflected in the composition of delegates attending the conference. Of these, 65 per cent were male and 35 per cent women; 35 per cent of delegates were under 26, with 26 per cent being members of Revolution Youth; 75 per cent were union members, of whom 31 per cent were in industrial unions; 7 per cent were students and 18 per cent on training schemes or unemployed.

The role which the IMG had played in promoting industrial struggles was borne out by the greetings from the Laurence Scott strike committee and the £2,000 collection raised after delegates had heard an account from a Longbridge steward of the fight against Michael Edwardes in British Leyland.

Youth

Delegates also pledged full support to building the conference of Revolution Youth on 18/19 December after hearing greetings from the National Committee of the 200-strong organisation.

Throughout the conference delegates confirmed the need for the IMG to strike out boldly in the fight to build the foundations for a mass revolutionary party in Britain.

The importance

ALONGSIDE the fight for a class struggle programme we have the aim of building a class struggle left wing in the unions and the Labour Party. This left wing, similar in type to that of the Minority Movement and the National Left Wing Movement of the 1920s will, in this period, be built as a product of the evolution of the Bennite current.

The decisive feature of this current in relation

to the left wings of the 1930s and the 1950s is its mass base both inside the constituency Labour Parties and the mass industrial unions. This base, still moving to the left, aims to prevent any more anti-working class governments of the Wilson/Callaghan type.

Control

To this end it fights to bring its bureaucratic leadership under democratic control, starting with the Parliamentary Labour Party.

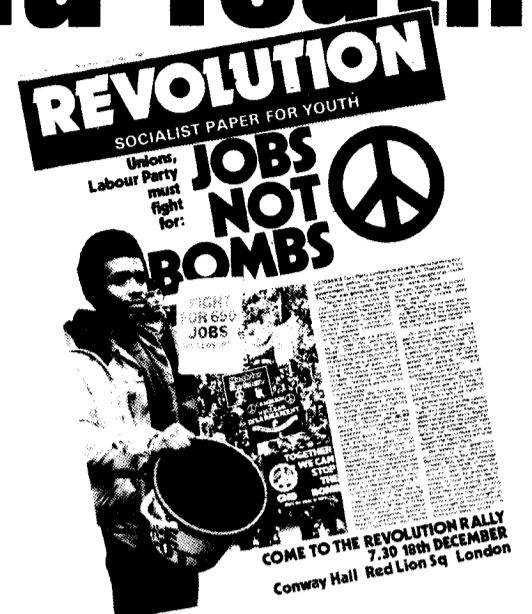
The movement supports important aspects of a class struggle programme; notably opposition to wage restraint, the reduction of the working week without loss of pay and unilateral

SEE page 14 for report of the Socialist Workers Party conference and its decision to close down Womens Voice groups. A future issue of Socialist Challenge will assess the recent Communist Party congress.

Party, Industrial Battles and Youth



Federick Emmerson from the New Jewel Movement gives greetings to the IMG conference



Appeal to Socialist Challenge readers Help build a revolutionary youth organisation

By Richard Rozanski

AFTER THE SELL-OUT at British Leyland a young militant from Longbridge told *Revolution*: 'Personally I can survive on the money I get. I could have turned round and said "I'm all right Jack". I was fighting for the older workers who have families and a mortgage to pay off.'

Within a week the Longbridge workers were out on strike for a shorter working week led by the young militants.

Throughout the world it is young people who are leading the fight against misery and oppression. In Ireland ten young anti-imperialist fighters heroically gave up their lives for the right to be treated humanely in prison. And it was the youth who led the mass campaigns of solidarity with these hunger strikers.

In El Salvador the vast majority of workers and peasants led by the young fighters of the FMLN are facing up to the mighty power of US imperialism.

In one month's time on 18 December *Revolution Youth* will be holding a major rally in London to celebrate the struggle of youth worldwide for socialism. There will be speakers from Nicaragua and Grenada to explain their revolutions against poverty and exploitation. There will be a speaker from Peoples Democracy to bring greetings from the revolutionary youth in Ireland.

And speakers from *Revolution Youth* will show how our organisation has fought to unite youth in action against Cruise and Trident missiles through Youth CND, in support of workers fighting for jobs as at Laurence Scott and Staffa, and in defence of a woman's right to work and abortion.

On the same weekend, 19/20 December, *Revolution Youth* will be staging its first national conference since its launch in May 1980. Members and supporters of *Revolution* will meet to discuss the balance sheet of the last 18 months work and our perspectives for the next year.

The main reports will look at how youth can lead the struggle against the Tories as happened in this summer's youth rebellions around the country.

We will discuss the fight for black liberation as a major part of the struggle for socialism, as well as campaigns in solidarity with the revolutions in Central America and the Caribbean.

We will also assess the role of the paper *Revolution*, in particular the role of its supporters working to build a mass campaigning and democratic Labour Party Young Socialists.

The conference and rally will be a great opportunity for any young people interested in *Revolution Youth* to find out about our ideas and activities, and to meet *Revolution* supporters from across the country.

If you are interested in coming to the *Revolution* conference then fill in the form below and send it to: *Revolution*, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

Name.....

Address.....

Age..... Occupation.....

IMG conference from the strikers

along; in spite of the media, we've shown it's possible to fight.

The thing that made the difference at Scott's was that we took the fight out of the factory. We've organised by forging the different work places together and forcing the Labour MPs into the fight. And the response has been excellent. We have obtained over £100,000 in donations. It has shown that the working class wants a lead to take on the Tories.

The situation in our

dispute today is that we are out on the street with no strike pay, no official backing, but we are pushing forward by calling a national solidarity conference and campaigning for the recall of the Final Appeal Court of the AUEW to get back official support.

At last the workers of Laurence Scott realise that the so-called 'lefts' will not take the fight against the present right wing of the unions and Labour Party all the way.

We want the unions and the Labour Party to

be fighting instruments and we the Laurence Scott shop stewards believe that the IMG can and will give this lead within the labour movement.

The IMG's role in the dispute has been one of advice and help, particularly due to IMG members being in local factories.

And that's the reason why I'm here today to give greetings and thanks to you — the people who have helped us more than anybody else. Thank you.

Special Socialist Challenge NUM supplement

NEXT week *Socialist Challenge* will carry a special four page supplement on the mining industry, the NUM presidential elections, the pay claim and the fight back against the Tory government.

We will be making special arrangements to sell the supplement in some of the key mining areas, in particular in South Yorkshire, South Wales, Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire, and Scotland. These sales teams will be organised for the weekends of 28/29 November and 5/6 December before the results of the presidential elections are announced.

If you are interested in being part of these sales teams ring: 01-359 8371 and ask for the *Socialist Challenge* NUM sales team.

Conference boosts Socialist Challenge funds

A MAGNIFICENT £2000 was collected at the conference and donated to *Socialist Challenge*.

This money has given a considerable boost to our £16,500 Quarterly Fund Drive. This is the amount we need every three months to successfully produce our paper and run its campaigning activities.

Our quarterly total now stands at just under £8,000. So with seven weeks gone in the quarter we're close on half-way to our total. Now is not the time to let things slip!

There are still many regions where supporters have yet to send us anything — if we are to reach our target, it's up to you. We regard the conference collection as an expression of confidence in our paper and our campaigns over the last year and for the coming year.

A measure of the success of our fund drive is that we will in the next few weeks be installing our new computer to handle our subscriptions and accounts — a computer paid for by your donations.

of 'Bennism'

disarmament.

We unconditionally support this current against the right wing. We support Benn in the leadership battle that continues inside the Labour Party.

We build long-term alliances on specific questions of policy. We place ourselves within this current as part of its developing class struggle left wing.

The Benn leadership represents that small section of the bureaucracy which seeks to put itself at the head of the radicalisation inside the working class.

AES

The programme around which the leadership attempts to head off

this movement is that of the alternative economic strategy. But the movement as a whole does not share this political framework.

Struggle

We anticipate that as this movement increasingly collides with a leadership which is not prepared to wage a consistent struggle against the Tories and the right wing of the bureaucracy that the process of differentiation, which has already begun, will continue and divide the Bennite current between class struggle and class collaborationist currents from top to bottom in the labour movement.

Building a class struggle left wing needs atten-

tion now. We seek to build bodies like the Labour Co-ordinating Committee and trade union broad lefts from which we can reach a wider audience for our politics on the basis of:

*Practical support for struggles — industrial, social and international.

*Taking the question of government and Labour Party democracy into the trade unions, and fighting for political debate and accountability.

*Joining the debate on the programme for the next Labour government.

Extract from Tasks resolution passed at IMG Conference

'Winning the Peace'

VINCENT DOHERTY is a member of the National H Block/Armagh Committee, and the national committee of Peoples Democracy, the Irish revolutionary socialist organisation. He attended the Ard Fheis (annual conference) of Sinn Fein on the week-end of 31 October - 1 November. Below, he outlines his impressions of the significance of the outcome of the Ard Fheis for the future development of the Irish struggle.

In the course of his contribution to the Ard Fheis, Gerry Adams, vice-president of Sinn Fein, told the delegates that the Republican movement had to concern itself not merely with 'winning the war', but also with 'winning the peace'. A few years ago such a remark would have received short shrift from the delegates. This year it was warmly applauded.

The 'winning the peace' remark came during the course of a discussion on federalism which, along with election strategy, provided the major debates at this year's conference. On both questions the traditional leadership of the Republican movement suffered serious set-backs at the hands of what has been called the 'Republican left'.

The federalism debate was particularly important as it dealt with the nature of Loyalism. The federal policy of Sinn Fein was developed in the early 1970s when sections of the Republican leadership believed that the British government was seriously considering withdrawal from Ireland.

As one speaker at the conference put it, federalism was seen as 'an olive branch to Loyalism' with the proposal to establish four provincial parliaments within a united Ireland, one of which, a nine-county Ulster parliament, would have a Loyalist majority.

At the Ard Fheis the Republican left argued that this policy was outdated and that it represented a 'sop to Loyalism'. Danny Morrison, Sinn Fein director of publicity and editor of *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, went further when he stated that federalism was 'an inverted form of sectarianism'.

The speakers in favour of the retention of the federal policy read like a 'Who's Who' of the Republican 'old guard'. Ruadhri O'Bradaigh, Daithi O'Connell, Sean McStiofian, Richard Behal and Christine ni Elias saw federalism as a mechanism for centralisation and local control.

In the final contribution from the floor to the debate, Paddy Bolger, who is also associated with the Republican left, contended that if there was some validity in the federal policy after the 1972 overthrow of the Stormont junta, it now represented 'a policy of appeasement' towards Loyalism.

For him, federalism was 'the back door to a pro-imperialist solution'. He argued that Loyalism and the Northern State 'must be smashed'. The motion to drop the federal policy was carried by a substantial majority.

The other main debate at the conference was on elections. Only last year the Ard Fheis re-affirmed its traditional opposition to participating in elections, with the

Anti-H-Block/Armagh candidate



Vote Carron X

exception of local government elections in the 26 counties.

But the effects of the H Block struggle, and the electoral successes which accompanied it, North and South, changed all that.

This year's conference saw a complete turn-around, with a motion calling on members to take their seats if elected to Northern councils.

Practically every speaker who declared in favour of electoral participation pointed to the lost opportunities arising from the Republican movement's abstention from fighting the May local government elections in the North.



Photo: DEREK SPEIRS (IFL)

Danny Morrison, one of the leading left Republicans.

Even Daithi O'Connell, who moved a resolution giving the leadership authority to contest elections, said that the Republican movement was 'wrong on the Northern local government elections'. Such admissions of the fallibility of the Republican leadership are rare indeed, and correspond to a new mood in the movement.

The abstention of the Republican movement, the main anti-imperialist organisation, from the May elections left the ground open for an electoral victory for the collaborationist Social

Democratic and Labour Party and the Irish Independence Party, a more nationalist grouping which split from the SDLP in 1977.

The intervention of Peoples Democracy in these elections showed the real political potential of electoral participation. PD's Fergus O'Hare and John McNulty humiliated former SDLP leaders Gerry Fitt and Paddy Devlin and won two seats on Belfast's city council.

The opposition to electoral participation came from the ultra-orthodox Republican old guard led by Jimmy Drumm. He was supported by another Belfast Republican Mary McDermott.

She castigated the conference for 'abandoning the policy which has served the organisation for so long' because — in a reference to PD and the Irish Republican Socialist Party — 'a few Mickey Mouse organisations have had a few local government successes.' But such criticisms were of no avail: the opposition to electoral participation was defeated overwhelmingly.

The decisions of the Ard Fheis represent the growing confidence and political maturity of the Republican movement, in particular the Republican left. On many issues at least on a formal level, this left has proved itself to be far-sighted.

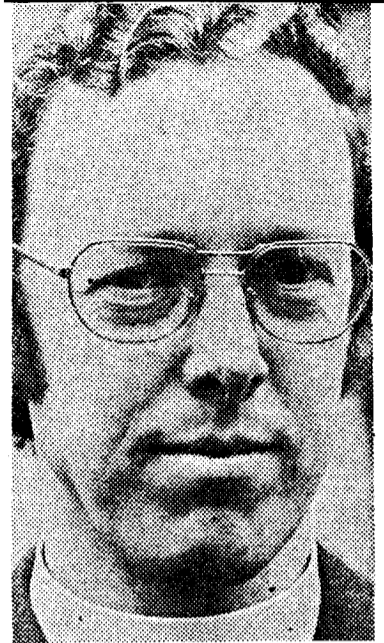
Certainly, work around political issues and in the trade unions remain seriously under-developed, but Sinn Fein must now be considered the largest anti-capitalist party in Ireland.

Gerry Adams, Danny Morrison, Jim Gibney and others represent a completely new layer in the Republican leadership: urban, working-class, class conscious, less ridden by taboo, more articulate and more open to criticism.

Where there was no criticism at the conference was on the armed struggle or 'the war' as it is called. This was despite the bombs in London. Support for the war is a testament of faith amongst Republicans, and it has been stated often enough that the war will continue until Britain indicates its willingness to withdraw from Ireland.

That much said, it must be concluded that the Republican leadership now seem determined to build Sinn Fein into a mass political party and to transform it from what it has been up to now, a support group for the IRA.

In the Marxist analysis, the IRA or any armed organisation must be the



Robert Bradford — a fan of Oliver Cromwell, mass-murderer of the Irish.

A man of God?

THE REV Robert Bradford, who was assassinated by the IRA at the weekend was an unsavoury, violent and sectarian individual.

He first came to prominence in February 1974 when, in the general election, he won the South Belfast seat as a candidate for Vanguard, then the most sectarian of all the Loyalist Parties.

He quickly won a reputation as a reactionary. In the mid-1970s he said that, 'British ineptitude' could lead to Loyalist politicians forming a 'disciplined army' to deal with 'IRA horror'.

In the course of a parliamentary career Bradford also called for the SAS to 'summarily execute' Republicans, and demanded the return of capital punishment for all members of the IRA.

He later switched to the Unionist Party, but that didn't modify Bradford's utterances. In May 1978 in the House of Commons he publicly named seven workers at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Belfast as being 'pro-IRA'. The seven all denied the allegation, but Bradford's naming of them left them prime targets for Loyalist assassination gangs.

Most recently, Bradford had voiced support for Ian Paisley's actions in mobilising hundreds of men for 'drilling' in the hillsides of County Antrim. 'I said five years ago that the day could come when we might have to become Queen's rebels,' said Bradford.

'Ian Paisley, myself and others have repeated Cromwell's words which are very relevant now: "Trust in God and keep your powder dry." Perhaps the moment has arrived for both prayer and defence preparation.'

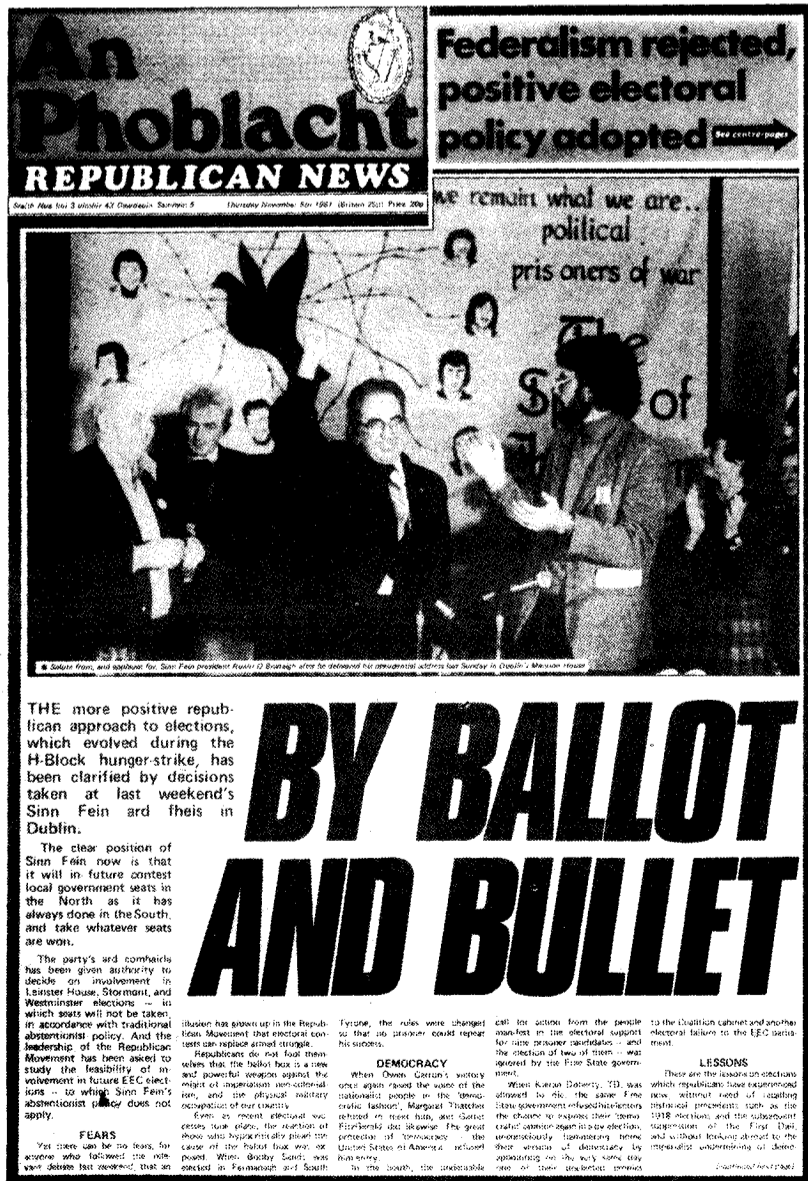
support group used only at the discretion of the revolutionary party.

Nevertheless, Irish revolutionaries and their supporters internationally can only welcome the growing politicisation of Sinn Fein.

As Vincent Browne, Ireland's leading liberal journalist put it this week: 'The recommencement of the English bombing campaign is only one of the many significant developments within the Provisionals of late, and perhaps the least important.'

'The old characterisation of the Provisionals as right wing, nationalist militarists could hardly be more inappropriate. For reasons of diplomacy they would object to the characterisation "Marxist", but this in fact is what they have become.'

Whether or not the Republican movement contains a Marxist current is open to debate. What is not in question is that the Provisionals have moved significantly to the left, and in the process have become more open to political dialogue. Revolutionary Marxists can only welcome such a development.



The front page of the latest *An Phoblacht/Republican News* spells out the Provisionals' new line.

BL: Despite the sell out the struggle goes on

By a TGWU shop steward Longbridge

THE workforce at BL's giant Longbridge plant produces a new Mini Metro once every minute. Over the past three years according to company figures the plant's productivity has risen by over 30 per cent.

Yet in the same time thousands of jobs have been lost and pay levels have decreased by thirty per cent in real terms. However these figures only tell half the story.

Direct production areas such as the production track have increased their productivity way in excess of the figures quoted above. It is these areas that earn the much talked-about bonus payments not just for themselves but for the whole factory.

These areas consistently reach maximum bonus



Mass meeting at BL earlier this month

payment targets and exceed them most of the time. Yet it was only last week that the maximum bonus payment of £22.50 was paid out for the first time ever. Ironically it was paid out during a week in which a strike over fur-

ther cuts in rest allowance, time and labour level had brought Longbridge to a standstill.

Thanks to Duffy (who else?) the implementation of the 39 hour week was supposed to be 'self financing'.

The company has used this catch-all phrase to try to force us into accepting a loss of 11 minutes rest per day shift as well as a cut in labour and an increase in track speeds.

Following the return to work after the sell-out

over the pay claim the management obviously chose Longbridge as a weak link in the chain of BL plants.

What they didn't bargain with was the fact that in general the direct

production areas such as the track, who suffer the worst working conditions, voted to reject the pay offer and went back to work undefeated, full of determination not to be sold out again by their national officials.

When the management attempted to force their proposals on the 39 hour week directly onto the workforce, following the failure to agree and exhaustion of procedure at national level, it was the stewards who had been most active around the pay claim strike who organised the shop meetings which decided to resist the management's imposition with strike action.

Small losses in rest allowance and labour levels and small increases in track speed may not sound very significant.

But when your every movement on the job is timed to a fraction of a second and a break from the track is a time to either have a cup of tea or go to the toilet, you cannot do both in the time they give you.

Every second of rest is precious, especially on night shift which is 10 1/4 hours long.

Furthermore winning a dispute like this one is an important step towards re-establishing the confidence of the shop stewards inside BL who have taken a real beating along with the membership over the past four years.

That is why this dispute is of significance not only to all BL workers who will be next in line for the chop if the Longbridge dispute is beaten but for all workers who are struggling against the Tory attacks yet find the gap between shop floor opinion and the union leaders their first biggest problem.

Photo: MIKE TURNER

BL Longbridge: 39 hours, no strings attached!

By a TGWU shop steward Longbridge

By the time you read this, the 1800 of us who have been on strike at Longbridge will have met to decide the next stage of our fight over the implementation of the 39-hour week. Management are trying to impose a cut of 25 per cent in breaks allowed to workers during a shift. Up until the week before last we were allowed 12 per cent rest allowance — three twelve minute breaks in addition to our lunch break.

Already we have been on strike for two weeks and the management have been playing the whole thing very quietly. They know they can sit and wait for our money to run out. Even if we get official strike pay this will only be £12 a week.

Rather than sitting at home we should have been mounting pickets to bring the rest of Longbridge out on strike with us stopping the movement of cars as well as going to other plants to look for support.

It was the direct production workforce in the assembly areas who started the strike and the decision to end it must be theirs and theirs alone.

It is a long time since the workforce and the stewards have been so united over an issue but the sitting on the fence of the works committee has not provided the leadership necessary to win this dispute. As always they can hide behind the decisions of the membership having advised them not to extend the strike and look for support.

We all know that it was Longbridge who the other plants blamed for the return to work but if we don't confront the problem of our local and national leaderships over this dispute together with other plants like Cowley then the problem will only return to haunt us again.

So far we have had unity but this is meaningless unless it is turned into effective picketing and blacking action. We must demand support from all levels of the union from the works committee up to the national officials themselves over this issue.

The company will not give us anything unless we organise to take it for ourselves.

Make the union fight! For a 39 hour week with no strings attached! Spread the strike action across BL!



Among MPs supporting Staffa from left to right are: Jo Richardson, Stan Orme, John Tilley, Ian Mikardo and Ernie Roberts

Staffa at the House of Commons Orme gives 'unqualified support'

By Toni Gorton

THE shadow cabinet minister for industry, Stan Orme, declared his 'unqualified support for the Staffa workers at a meeting on 12 November in the House of Commons. Staffa's 390 workers are now in the eighth week of their strike for jobs.

Ernie Roberts, MP for Hackney North, commented that the meeting between Labour MPs, Staffa workers and supporters was very unusual.

'It is the first time to my knowledge', he said, 'that a meeting of this sort has had such an "organising character", the first time that a strike committee has been set up in the House of Commons.'

Among decisions taken were:

- a national campaign to block the government grant of £4.5 million to aid management plans to move to Plymouth
- a resolution of support to go to the Labour national executive committee
- an early day motion to be debated in parliament

within the week

- the establishment of a steering committee, comprising Labour MPs, Staffa workers, and representatives of the Greater London Council to direct the campaign
- MPs to be organised to go to picket lines regularly

In discussion of the issues involved in the fight to save the Leyton plant, which is owned by Brown & Sharpe, a US-based company, Stan Orme declared: 'Your problems are the same as Laurence Scott in Manchester and Linwood in Scotland.'

Masks

'We can see how desperate the employers have become. At Laurence Scott when they used helicopters to break the picket line, the men who

jumped out had masks on, just like in a James Bond film.'

He went on, 'I am the shadow industry spokesperson in a situation where the government is destroying industry. You have my unqualified support, my committed support.'

'I am prepared to fight publicly for you. We are fighting for the maintenance of a manufacturing base to bring an end to the unemployment of three million people.'

Dave Green, the engineering convenor replied: 'This is the sort of support we're looking for. I would like this question taken up in the House of Commons. But I would also like to add something.'

'This campaign has got to be taken up in all the unions. We need a blacking campaign in every union. If we can get the support of London MPs and the embargo, then we'll win.'

The problem of job loss in the London area was referred to time and

again. George Antony, president of the London North district of the AUEW reported that his membership had gone down from 35,000 to 15,000 in a few years.

He urged 'have a go Staffa', saying, 'this dispute is a beacon in London. This will encourage other workers to put up resistance of the same character.'

Eric Deakins, MP for Walthamstow, pointed out that: 'For the first time a government grant is being paid for a move that results in an actual loss of jobs. Under the last Labour government, the treasury was very strict on this.'

Frank Gorton, trade union liaison officer for Hackney North Labour Party said: 'This dispute cannot be won in Parliament, but MPs can change the awareness of the public, so that when workers see Staffa and Brown and Sharpe on a machine or on a crate they will put it under an embargo. This will change

the balance of forces between Staffa workers and the management and between all workers and all bosses.'

Last week the bosses went on an offensive of their own, writing letters to all workers starting 'Dear dismissed ...'

They recommended that the strikers go back to work, and provided a ballot paper to vote on the issue.

Voted

At a meeting of AUEW members on 12 November a majority voted to continue the strike action. While the meeting was going on three lorries and a crane came to the factory site to remove machinery. The crane driver turned away when he realised that an official union strike was in operation.

Action must be stepped up in support of the Staffa strike. Use the model resolution and send all messages of support, donations and telegrams to Chris Newsom, AUEW Strike Committee, 59 Somers Road, Walthamstow E17. Phone 01-539 0886, or ASTMS on 01-520 4902 ext 3.

SWP changes direction

AT its recent conference, the Socialist Workers Party took a number of decisions about its future strategy which reflect a decisive shift in direction for the organisation. In our view, the comrades of the SWP are turning away from the broad political questions which confront the working class today and towards crude economic solutions.

The SWP's pessimistic view of the class struggle and their ostrich like attitude to the crisis in the Labour Party, have provided the basis for these errors.

In their conference report in *Socialist Worker* (14 Nov) the SWP states: 'The SWP itself has been affected by the lack of industrial struggle and by sectionalism... As a result, the SWP conference decided to shift our organisation, making our intervention around industrial disputes by every member the key to activity. The Right to Work Campaign is central to that shift.'

Shift

The clearest example of what this shift will mean is the proposal on *Women's Voice*. The conference agreed to disband the *Women's Voice*

groups although the magazine *Women's Voice* will remain.

JUDITH ARKWRIGHT argues that the SWP are in danger of turning their backs on the struggle for women's liberation.

When *Women's Voice* was set up in 1979, there was a growing movement of women who were prepared to take action to change their situation.

We disagreed strongly with the SWP at the time for setting up *Women's Voice* as a communist women's movement in the style of the German movements of the 1890s.

We pointed out that women were coming to politics from all sorts of different directions. It was

a sectarian approach to expect women campaigning around abortion, the right to work, battered wives, nurseries and so on, to join *Women's Voice* on the basis of solidarity with a full socialist programme.

Polemic

In our view, the comrades of the SWP had not understood the relationship that revolutionary organisations should have to broad social movements and united front campaigns. They persisted in seeing such structures merely as channels of recruitment to the SWP, and counterposed their own organisations and structures.

The decision to dismantle *Women's Voice* as an organisation, rather than correcting this sectarian error, has merely compounded it, accompanied as it is by a strong polemic against any kind of autonomous women's movement.

In his article in *International Socialist Journal* (ISJ Series 22 No. 13) Tony Cliff maintains that the whole history of the women's movement in Britain and abroad, from the time of the suffragettes has been one in which only the interests of bourgeois

women have been represented.

According to Cliff, working class women never have been and never will be able to stamp their needs and demands on these movements. Hence they are of no interest to the working class or to socialists.

Socialist Challenge starts from a rather different assessment, one which is shared with the Fourth International and its sympathisers who have been involved in the construction of the autonomous women's movements in various different countries around the world.

Everywhere in the last decade, women have been organising themselves to fight for their interests.

More and more, women's interests have been taken up inside the labour movement and among working class women: in Nicaragua there is a mass women's movement supporting the revolution; in Iran, the women's movement played a key role in drawing women into the struggle against the Shah; in Europe, the campaigns led by the women's movements for abortion rights have brought down two governments and have involved many working class women inside and outside the organised labour movement.

Fetish

Thus the autonomous women's movement is not a fetish or an abstract principle, it is a living movement all over the world which



has played the main role in driving women's issues into the labour movement.

The SWP baldly assert that only the working class has the power to achieve women's liberation and we agree. But working class women face a double oppression — as women and

as workers. It is they who have to spearhead the fight for their own liberation and it is they who will fight most consistently in the labour movement for their interests to be taken up.

The SWP are condemning themselves to the sidelines in this process —

turning out when there's some activity and trying to recruit a few members.

This type of attitude to the women's movement and indeed to the workers' movement as a whole will neither aid the struggle for socialism nor help build the SWP.

LIFE's tactics — a certain loser

By Yvonne Taylor

IN THEIR no-holds-barred fight to end legal abortion, Life has always been ready to plumb the murkiest depths. So it was no surprise to find them, in the run up to this year's Private Members ballot, hitting the headlines with another contrived medical horror story.

Because this is really what the whole Dr Leonard Arthur case was about. Life hoped that, in the aftermath of a successful conviction of Dr. Arthur they would be able to blur over the difference between the foetus and the newborn child to push through Parliament a new piece of anti-abortion legislation.

During the weeks preceding the Private Members ballot on 12 November, Life was busy circulating a model Bill through the House of Commons, hoping to find an MP to sponsor it.

The Bill has two clauses. The first part proposes to make it an offence to give a drug or to withhold treatment from a newborn baby, or any child, because of abnormality.

The second clause proposes to amend the 1967 Abortion Act in such a way that it would be illegal to give an abortion on the grounds of foetal abnormality — even if the mental or physical health of the mother would be damaged by having a handicapped child. Abortion on the grounds of foetal abnormality would only be allowed to save the mother's life.

Thus, women who contract rubella in early pregnancy, or who discover foetal deformity through screening, would be unable to have legal abortions.

The clause also proposes to make it illegal to have an abortion on the grounds of the foetus' sex, which now can be ascertained through pre-natal

screening.

Fortunately for us, Life heavily miscalculated. The last thing they wanted was to initiate public discussion about an issue which until now had been kept behind hospital doors. They were not interested in debating the dilemma which confronts all paediatricians and many parents who face this sort of decision.

They wanted public condemnation — what they found was public sympathy and a great willingness among people to think about and discuss the issues involved.

At first, Life must have been heartily pleased with themselves when the Director of Public Prosecutions agreed to prosecute Dr Arthur. Just previously, they had failed to convince the DPP to bring a case against Professor Hugh Jolly — a leading paediatrician — for allowing a Spina Bifida baby to die.

No doubt the DPP felt that Jolly's reputation, together with the severity of the baby's handicap,

would present a very strong case in court.

Dr Arthur was not so fortunate. He had no national standing in the medical profession and the baby he had allowed to die appeared, on the initial evidence, to be suffering from a lesser disability.

This makes it all the more surprising that he had such public support and sympathy — in much of the press, on the many television programmes which were shown on the issue and among people generally.

Both BBC's *Panorama* programme and the *Sunday Telegraph* (8 November) conducted their own opinion polls which indicated that most people supported the decision made by the Dr Arthur to take into account the wishes of the parents in deciding whether to allow a severely handicapped baby to die.

The draw for the Private Members ballot has produced at least two anti-abortionists who



Dr. Leonard Arthur

might be sympathetic to sponsoring Life's Bill. But given the overwhelming

failure of Life's tactics once again, it would be a foolish politician indeed

who was persuaded to place his money on a certain loser.

Anwar Ditta interviewed:

'The Labour Party should support the Bradford 12'

IT IS 7 months since Anwar Ditta brought her children in triumph to Rochdale. Here she talks to Jenny Flintoft about her life now the reporters and TV cameras have vanished from it.

Many people think all your problems are over now. That's not true, is it?
No. The defence committee still owes £1,100. We haven't any hope of raising that at the moment. My husband Shuja is still unemployed. The jobs' situation is terrible in this area, you know — all the mills closing.

Lots of Asian people work in the mills and they won't find any other work. There aren't even labouring jobs.

Shuja's a welder, a semi-skilled stick welder. There have only been 6 or 7 of those jobs advertised since he got the sack. He went for all of them but when he got there, they said the jobs had gone.

He gets dole money — £35 this week. We don't claim social security or family income supplement or anything. Mainly we live off my pillowcases. (The ground floor of Anwar's small terrace house was covered with pillowcases, and Anwar, Shuja and the children all worked on them as we talked.)

Do you still get paid the magnificent sum of 1p. for each pillowcase?

No, it's gone up — to £1.20 for 100! I have to do about 4,000 to make a living wage. The sewing-machine costs £4.50 a week to hire, and then I

have to pay tax and insurance. Homeworkers are really exploited — of course they have no unions. I go to a lot of meetings, demos and conferences, and then of course I'm not working. One week not long ago I only earned £2.50.

You're still going to just as many meetings?

Almost! I went to the Women's World Congress in Prague at the beginning of October. I spoke about my case and the immigration laws here, about deportations, and about the Bradford 12.

I met women from all over the world. Women talked about the problems of women in the third world. A woman from the US talked about how American Indian women are forcibly sterilised by the authorities. But the neutron bomb was the main issue.

Then today I'm going to Bradford to see the Bradford 12 people.

One of them was involved in your defence campaign, wasn't he?

Yes, Tarlochan Gata-Aura. He was the chairperson. It's dreadful, those young people have been in prison 3½ months, the police kept opposing bail applications.

The police have prepared a 500-page



dossier on them — what meetings they've been to, what demos and everything, trying to prove they're dangerous political activists.

Now they're out, they can't attend any meetings and they've got to be home by ten o'clock at night.

What kind of support has the action committee got?
After they were arrested, there was a public meeting

in Bradford, and about 800 people turned up — mainly Asians. Resolutions went through the Trades Councils in Bradford and Leeds.

I'd like to see the Labour Party more involved in it, doing more work around it. The committee is organising a demo in Bradford on 12 December — we want it to be really big.

How are your children getting on?

I worry about them. I won't let them answer the phone, because we get racist telephone calls. I don't like them going out alone — they get racist abuse. And even when they're out with me, people will say things like, 'that's Anwar Ditta. Those aren't really her children', and it upsets them.

What about school?

They have a lot of difficulty understanding the teachers. They do get some English language help, but only about half an hour a day. And there's been some bullying: they get called Paki, bastard, blackie.

But, you know, when I'm cooking a meal or something, I think 'I'm doing this for my whole family now', and it makes everything worthwhile.

You did say before that you were thinking of suing the Home Office for compensation.

I still am. We want to take the case to the European Court. But it will cost £200 for the solicitor's fee, and until we've paid off the £1,100 we still owe, we can't think about it.

The Anwar Ditta Defence Committee still desperately needs money. Donations/fund raising offers to Defence Cmttee, c/o 127 Crawford St, Rochdale, Lancs.



'I am proud to count myself a militant'

Scargill tells South Wales miners
By Barry Wilkins, Cardiff North CLP

LAST Sunday morning at 10.30 it was grey and cold in South Wales. But it didn't deter six hundred miners from packing a hall in Hopkinstown to hear Arthur Scargill present his policies as candidate in the December election for president of the National Union of Mineworkers.

'We must learn the lesson from the years of collaboration and moderation', Scargill said. 'Hundreds of pits closed, with hundreds of thousands of jobs destroyed. Our wages have lagged way behind inflation. To be a moderate is to do nothing about these insults to our dignity. To be a militant is to be prepared to stand up and fight them. I am proud to count myself a militant.'

His speech was constantly interrupted by applause and shouts of, 'that's right', as when he called for forty new pits to replace the jobs lost in recent years, ten thousand this year alone. 'Don't fall for the National Coal Board tactic of destroying a pit by failing to invest in it,' he urged, 'we don't have the right to destroy the job opportunities of our sons and daughters.'

South Wales miners, long experienced in picketing, particularly enjoyed his argument for a non-contributory pension scheme: 'If it's good enough for the police and army who stand on one side of the picket line, then it's good enough for us who stand on the other side.'

This election will be crucial for the future of the union and the industry,

Scargill explained. 'The NUM needs a new right wing president like a tree needs Dutch Elm disease'.

Scargill pledged himself, on the basis of his record, to fight for the interests of miners in every area. A militant president is essential, he said, since the NCB intends to continue to close pits if it can get away with it. 'I guarantee, if elected, never to betray the miners', he concluded, and was immediately greeted with an enthusiastic standing ovation.

Emlyn Williams, president of the South Wales NUM, predicted that Gormley would soon be given a place in the House of Lords. Williams claimed that Gormley had been offered a knighthood by the Wilson government, but had turned it down. The reason he gave was that he was waiting for a peerage because it carried more perks!

Williams, on behalf of the South Wales leadership, called upon the audience to campaign in their pits and clubs for an overwhelming vote for Scargill. The jubilant mood of the meeting indicated that Scargill will certainly have the strong support of the South Wales miners.

Wales Labour women back woman's right to work

By Helen Slyomovics, Plasnewydd women's section

A woman's right to work was the recurrent theme of the second annual conference of Labour Women Wales. A resolution calling for support for next June's Labour Party demonstration on this theme was passed unanimously.

Jenny Lynn from NUPE explained how women at Hoover in Merthyr Tydfil were fighting for equal rights as part of their general fight for jobs at the plant. And Ann Clywd, Wales EuroMP, pointed out: 'One in five women are now the sole breadwinners in their families.'

Unilateralism was also pushed to the top of the agenda when an emergency resolution was passed opposing Reagan's limited nuclear war plans for Europe and supporting the inclusion of unilateralism in the next Labour Party manifesto. As Jayne Hutt, South Glamorgan councillor, said: 'We don't want to be Reagan's puppets.'

There was a general air of militancy from the conference floor. Several resolutions were passed against the advice of the Wales Womens Committee, including a resolution on nationalisation.

Alan Williams, Swansea West MP and a Healey supporter, was invited as a guest speaker. Several women's sections and the Peace marchers from Greenham Common walked out when he began to attack Tony Benn.

'Edwardes didn't defeat us, Duffy sold us out'

ALAN JEFFRIES summed up the bitter mood of AUEW members returning for work at the Rover plant in Cardiff. Just 24 hours earlier a small majority at the 450 strong plant voted to defy Duffy's return call and to continue the strike.

One of the women pickets, Carmen Collins echoed the views of many when she told Socialist Challenge: 'Duffy's a wash out, we should sack him. As for Edwardes, he still thinks he's in South Africa with slave labour.'

Another AUEW member, Pauline Davies, explained why the usually moderate workforce went for strike action this time: 'We've had small disputes before, but there's never been feeling like this. This time we'd had enough.'

'There was a terrible atmosphere in the plant. Our working conditions are deteriorating all the time, we haven't even got a canteen. We have to eat our meals between the machines. We've been fair to the company before and now they turn round with a lousy offer.'

Rover workers on the Cardiff picket lines shared a fear that deteriorating conditions are just the thin end of the wedge.

There is obviously a need in Wales for the growing militancy in some of the women's sections to be reflected at the level of organisation

Their gear box production could be moved to Solihull and the plant wound up completely. Through the strike they hoped to make a stand against this.

Mervyn Mulcahy told us why the pickets in Cardiff were particularly angry with Duffy's sabotage: 'If we'd stick together we'd have stood a chance. Divide and conquer, that's Edwardes tactic. We could have kept this plant open. Now they'll walk all over us.'

But shop steward, Kevin Brady holds up hope that all is not yet lost: 'The vote at this plant was very encouraging. This is usually a moderate plant, but a lot of these moderates were on the right side when the vote to continue strike action came.'

'This vote shows that people want to fight redundancies. It is hard to tell if the sell-out will cut across this, we'll have to see what we can do when we get back in the plant.'

Convenor, Dave Coles confirmed this determination of the plant leadership to continue the fight when he told workers at the final mass meeting: 'After taking a stand we now have to recognise the national vote and go back together. But our vote shows there is a will and a foundation to build upon in this plant!'

and for this militancy to be turned outwards towards supporting struggles around unemployment such as at Hôber in Merthyr Tydfil.

Policeman accused of lying shock

MANJIT Singh Sehmi is lucky. He was in court charged with maliciously throwing a petrol bomb with intent to cause grievous bodily harm and to destroy or damage police property during the 10 July riot.

But the Old Bailey judge, James Miskin QC, ordered the jury to return a not guilty verdict and accused police witness Adrian Webb of lying to the court.

PC Webb had told the court that he had seen Sehmi throw a petrol bomb at police officers in Southall and chased him into an alley way. But Judge Miskin pointed out that this conflicted with evidence given by PC Webb in another court. 'One or the other statement may be true', said the Judge, 'the other is therefore false'.

That left the jury with the word of one other police officer to go on. Judge Miskin noted: 'No sensible jury trying a case where, in its view it had been misled by one police officer will ever believe



Not everybody thinks our police are wonderful

another in the same case, and who can blame them?' He therefore dismissed the case.

Manjit Singh Sehmi was fortunate. Young people convicted on similar charges in Manchester Moss Side have received

jail sentences of up to six years. But Manjit did not get off completely free. During the scuffle at his arrest he received a fractured skull and a broken nose.

Isn't our police force wonderful?

Socialist Challenge

Laurence Scott
Mass Picket
Monday 23 November

Mining Supplies
Carr's Hill Industrial Estate
Doncaster

IAN PAISLEY and the rest of the gang of bigots, thugs and reactionaries in the leadership of the Loyalists of the North of Ireland are threatening the Catholic community with mass murder.

That's what lies behind this week's rantings from Paisley, James Molyneux, the leader of the Official Unionists, and John McMichael of the paramilitary Ulster Defence Association.

On Monday, Paisley threatened to 'show that a third force' — a euphemism for Loyalist 'vigilantes' — 'has already started.'

On the same day James

Molyneux also talked of organising a 'third force' adding that it would be armed. And John McMichael declared: 'The Israelis have the right attitude. You seek out your

enemy and destroy them.'

For McMichael and the UDA the 'enemy' is anyone in the North of Ireland who happens to be born a Catholic. The UDA are the main organisation

behind the many sectarian assassinations of Catholics which led to the retaliatory killing of Robert Bradford MP.

Although Paisley,

Molyneux and the others issued their strongest threat after Bradford's death, they issued similar warnings in the days leading up to his assassination. On 7 November

Loyalists plan mass murder

Molyneux announced: 'It is with a deep sense of responsibility that I must state that the Union is endangered. To meet that we are taking immediate steps to form a Council for the Union.'

The next day Paisley paraded several hundred hooded men through villages in County Antrim. He promised a 'monster rally' on 23 November at a 'strange venue', interpreted as meaning a Catholic ghetto.

All these moves were in response to the talks between the British and Irish governments which agreed to establish an Anglo-Irish council.

Nevertheless, for the Thatcher government and the parliamentary leadership of the Labour Party the only injury they recognise, the only deaths they mourn are those on the Loyalist side in the North of Ireland.

Politician after politician stood up in the House of Commons on Monday to praise Robert Bradford who, in reality, was a violent bigot. Northern Ireland Secretary James Prior went on television to plead for Loyalists to remain 'calm'.

Such hypocrisy was well answered on Sunday by Ed McWilliams of the Belfast 'Silent Too Long' group, which represents people killed by Loyalists and the security forces. He said, 'There was none of this massive outrage when three Catholics, including a city councillor, were murdered in North Belfast by Loyalists three weeks ago. No-one was looking for greater security because three Catholics were killed.'

The question of security for the Catholic community now looms large in

the wake of the Loyalists ravings. Certainly, it seems unlikely that the leadership of the Labour Party is willing to recognise this question.

The party conference may have decided to 'campaign for a united Ireland', but in the Commons on Monday Labour spokesperson Don Con-cannon was playing the old bipartisan tune. He called for: 'The people of Northern Ireland to support Mr Prior's appeal for calm and to support the police and the security forces... we will continue to support the Secretary of State.'

The political situation in the North of Ireland, is one that has always exploded into violence or teetered on the brink of violence. That is because when the state itself was founded in 1921 the British government gave in to the physical threats of the Unionists and created 'Northern Ireland' against the wishes of the majority of the Irish.

Until there is majority rule of all Ireland there will be sectarianism, blood and death. And there will be political monsters like Ian Paisley. It is in the nature of the North of Ireland State to breed such creatures, because Loyalist sectarianism is what that state has always represented.

Whatever doubts socialists in this country may have about the Republican resistance to Loyalism, or about the methods that resistance employs, such as the killing of Bradford, full support for the defence of the Catholic community in the North of Ireland and for those who are doing the defending is the need of the hour.



Socialist Challenge

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