

Socialist Challenge

INSIDE



Riots and rumours of riots: a 'law and order' general election

see pages 8 and 9.

US hands off El Salvador

victory to the FMLN



GRAPHIC: El Salvador Campaign/Steelman

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Editorial

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El Salvador

Time to take sides

THIS WEEKEND phoney elections are taking place in El Salvador, a country in which 30,000 people have been killed in the past year.

The war in El Salvador has become the pivot of a huge upsurge in the whole of Central America.

In most of the countries of Central America — and in many more besides — the United States is supporting vicious right-wing regimes which defend the most miserable oppression. The economy of El Salvador is dominated by just fourteen families, while the mass of ordinary people live in dire poverty.

Every socialist, everyone concerned with basic democratic rights and social justice should support the people of El Salvador.

In 1979 the Somoza dictatorship in neighbouring Nicaragua was overthrown by a popular revolution, led by the Sandinista guerrillas. The Nicaraguan revolution spurred on the struggle in El Salvador and neighbouring Guatemala.

What is now at stake is the whole future of Central America, and the outcome of the present struggle will have tremendous implications for Latin America as a whole.

The only reason why the right-wing regime of Duarte has survived in El Salvador is that millions of dollars worth of US military aid, together with dozens of military advisors who make up 10 per cent of the officer corps, have been poured in.

Ronald Reagan and his buddies are responsible for El Salvador's agony.

Reagan is coming to Britain on 7 June. On 6 June tens of thousands — probably hundreds of thousands — will march against him on the demonstration called by CND.

But it is no accident that Reagan, the missile maniac, is also the butcher of El Salvador.

The nuclear missiles and the arms sent to the El Salvadorean junta are part of the same process of arming the United States to keep the world free for Western-dominated 'democracy' — in other words to keep it free for the profits of the American multinational corporations.

That's why Socialist Challenge says that on 6 June the fight against missile madness and solidarity with El Salvador should be linked together in the fight to stop Reagan.

EL SALVADOR

'Reagan can't send them morale...'

SALVADOR MONCADA is the British representative of the FDR. Phil Hearse spoke to him last week.

Q. Who do you think assassinated the four Dutch journalists killed last week and why — the death squads or the army?

A. I don't think you can differentiate between the government and the death squads. The death squads operate as part of the armed forces in El Salvador. The death squads do the dirty jobs the army doesn't want to do openly.

The Dutch journalists were assassinated because there are 300 journalists in the country to cover the so-called 'election', which everyone knows is a fraud.

The right wing sectors in the army, the death squads have decided to terrorise the journalists so they don't report about what is happening. So that there are no witnesses.

Q. It seems likely that among those few people who will vote, President Duarte could be defeated by death-squads' leader D'Abuisson. Why do you think that is, and won't it cause big problems for the United States?

facade, it will allow them to intensify the counter-insurgency war.

But if D'Abuisson wins he might pressurise the United States to call upon an international Latin American force to help them fight 'communism'. The United States have also considered this possibility but would prefer to implement it in their own time rather than being pressurised by the Salvadorean right.

Q. In January 1981 the FMLN launched its 'final offensive'. After its failure to overthrow the junta, the regime went on a counter-offensive. But now the regime is in retreat. How do you account for the military turn-around?

A. The offensive of 1981 was never called a 'final offensive' by the FMLN — that name was given to it by the media. The FMLN called it a 'general offensive'. At that time the FMLN army was only an army in formation, at a very early stage. It happened at the time when the political organisations were turning themselves into real political-military organisations.

We never thought this was a war which would be won in one big battle. Since the general offensive of 1981 the guerrilla army has developed into a real army, well organised and trained, led by people with dedication and great experience.

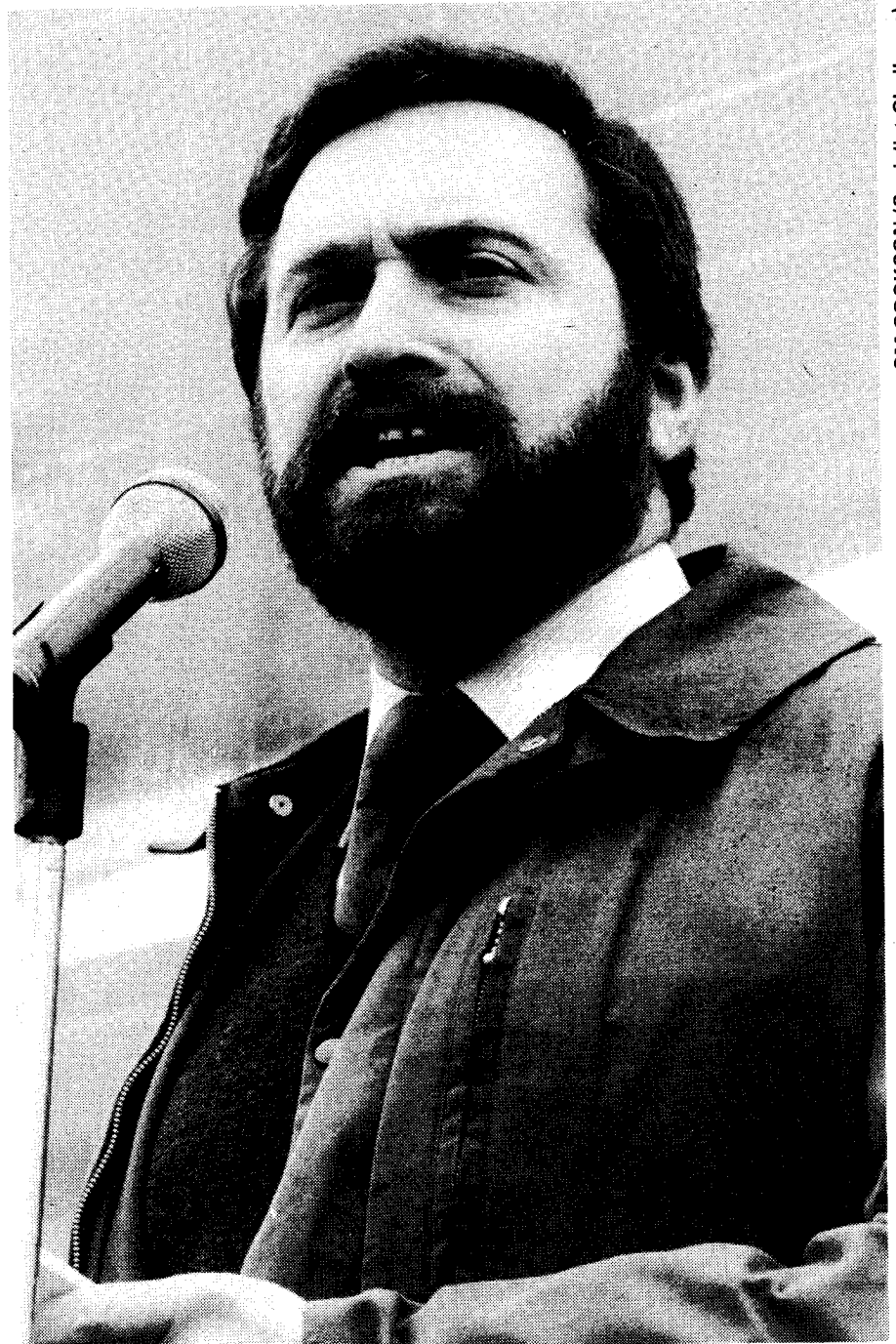
So the FMLN is more effective, despite the fact that there has been a great difficulty in obtaining arms and ammunition which are badly needed.

As far as determination, morale and discipline are concerned, that has changed qualitatively. At the same time the Salvadorean army has been falling to pieces, its morale is at a very low ebb. Mr Reagan can send the Salvadorean Army armaments training, helicopters, etc. but the one thing he can't send them is morale!

Q. Is it possible that the first major attack that the US will make will be on Nicaragua and not El Salvador?

A. The danger of an attack on Nicaragua is a very real one. The Nicaraguan government had to bring in a state of emergency because they are being constantly attacked from the Honduran border — two important bridges were destroyed a week ago.

The Nicaraguan government has called a meeting of the United Nations Security Council in which they have accused the United States of



Salvador Moncada, representative of the FDR

preparing to intervene.

But whether it might happen before, after or combined with an attack on El Salvador is difficult to say. I'm sure the US government is discussing at the moment the different possibilities.

Q. How do you assess the attitude of the British government?

A. John Pilger demonstrated in the *Guardian* that the United Kingdom had contributed over one million pounds to an IMF loan to El Salvador.

Britain is the only country in Western Europe sending observers to the election, the only country in NATO doing so, and one of only eight countries out of sixty-eight which were asked to send observers ... along with other 'democracies' like Uruguay, Argentina and so on!

Denis Healey in *Labour Weekly* suggests that Britain has agreed to send observers to 'curry favour with the United States'.

ment in the negotiations over Trident missiles'.

I think that in general Britain hasn't got a policy towards the region — except aligning itself with the United States.

Q. What are the main points of the programme of the FDR/FMLN — what kind of society are you fighting for?

A. We want a just and democratic society, free from outside intervention. We work for the majority — the peasants, the workers, the intellectuals, the middle classes and against the tiny oligarchy who run the country.

We are going to establish an agrarian reform, to develop a mixed economy with a private and a public sector, we shall carry out a literacy campaign. We are a revolution against imperialism and against the oligarchy which run the country.

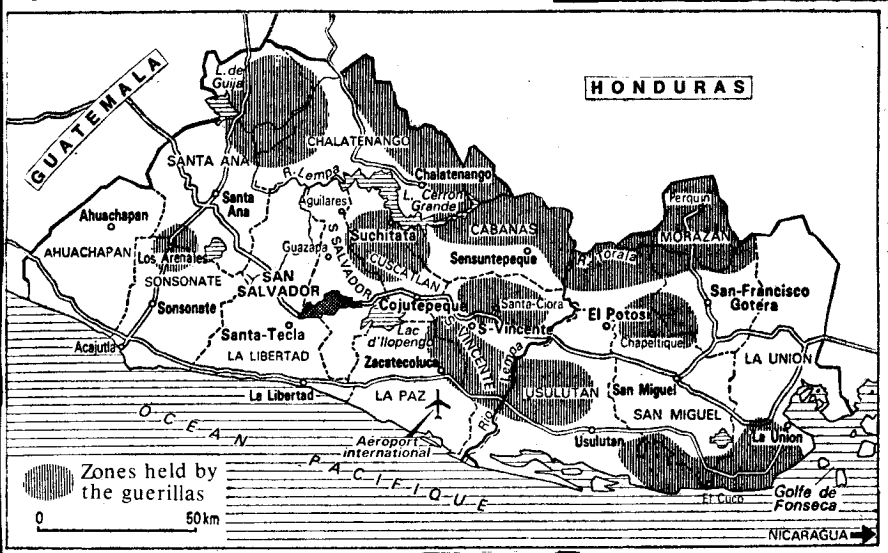
Q. So what kind of international solidarity do you look for?

A. International solidarity from the peoples of the world has been very important. We understood that from the very beginning.

If the people of the world didn't know what was happening in El Salvador, the killing, torture and the rest would probably be a hundred times worse. International support has helped to restrict the war of aggression against the Salvadorean people. We would also like material support as well.

We ask people in Western Europe and especially Britain to put pressure on their governments not to support the United States in another misadventure of the Vietnam type.

The British people should demand of Margaret Thatcher why Britain is sending observers to the elections, why Britain is participating in NATO manoeuvres in the Caribbean and tell her to stop supporting Reagan's periodic policy in El Salvador.



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A. As a result of the war and the position of the FDR/FMLN, there will be a high level of abstentions. That leaves voting to the middle sectors in the cities, and the upper middle class and the oligarchy.

Some of those people call Duarte a 'communist'. They don't want even tiny reforms; they would love to have as president someone like D'Abuisson, who openly represents their interests.

I don't think it will be very embarrassing for the United States if D'Abuisson wins. Whoever wins in El Salvador will be all right for the United States. If Duarte wins, and they would prefer that because it will preserve the democratic

El Salvador

By Jean-Pierre Beauvais in El Salvador

Night fell a few minutes ago. The darkness is almost complete, barely touched by dim moonlight and the fluttering flames of two modest candles.

In the 'encampment', the centre of the organisation for life in the zones controlled by the revolutionists, it is the time for 'political discussion'.

Arturo, the discussion leader, comments on the reports given by the FMLN radio — actions that took place the previous day throughout the country, failure of the offensive that involved more than two thousand government soldiers in the key area around the Guazapa volcano, reactions to Reagan's speech to the Organisation of American States in Washington, international solidarity, and so on.

The radio station is decisive. In such a remote place, which can only be reached by following a tortuous road and then continuing on foot for several hours, the radio keeps everybody aware every day that they are part of something bigger than an isolated nucleus, that their fight is part of a growing nationwide struggle, that they have the support of a vast movement of international solidarity.

Radio

The radio station is the symbol of, and an extraordinary means for, consolidating the growing political authority of the FMLN and of its leadership. Tonight there is to be a discussion of the directives broadcast to the population for 28 March, the day scheduled for national elections:

'Evacuate houses close to military bases; these bases will be attacked. Keep away from military patrols; on 28 March they will all be targets. Travel as little as possible; many roads will be mined at strategic points. Assist the actions of the guerrillas by building barricades in the surrounding areas to obstruct the movement of the genocidal armed forces.'

In practice, this concerns very few of the poor peasants who live in this tiny valley. What are elections? None of those at the meeting tonight have ever voted. Maybe their votes were cast for them at the military base in the nearest town, four hours away by foot. But they don't know anything about all that. Besides, for months no army patrol has ventured in here. So, 28 March will be almost just another day.

Blind

Such night meetings have already become routine in the innumerable guerrilla camps like this one. And these circles of men and women sitting on the ground, as these people are this evening around Arturo, between a few hammocks and two tiny peasant huts with walls of dried mud, are the best illustration of the reality and the meaning of this struggle of an entire people.

You would need all the ill will, prejudice and ignorance, and blind self-interest of a Reagan, Haig, and other such criminals to see in this 'hand of a foreign power'.

It is not Cubans,

Nicaraguans, or Russians that inspire the hopes that flash in otherwise timid eyes — eyes that contrast with the marks left forever on these people's faces by years of hunger, sickness, and resignation. The simple language spoken here reflects a conviction borne out of a daily experience of superexploitation — a conviction that the old society cannot be endured any longer, a conviction that there must be a revolution.

Remote

These liberated zones today cover a good third of the territory of El Salvador. But generally these areas are also the most remote, the most backward, and the least 'useful' economically in this country, which is no larger than five French departments (or a couple of American, British or Irish counties).

The existence of the zones and their constant extension reflects the advances of the revolutionists. They are the expression not only of the overwhelming popular support for the actions of



Life in a liberated zone



When the soldiers came to Guazapa province



organised primarily among the workers in the workplaces, and whenever this is possible, within the framework of the trade-

union structures that have managed to survive underground.

'When we called for a

this gave rise to a lot of discussions. Our conclusion was that the attitude of the workers who didn't follow the call was the expression of a high level of politicisation. A good part of the working class which has to face the military's repression every day, estimated correctly that we did not have the capacity to defend the strike.' That was the way an FMLN cadre explained it to me. He added:

'Given the degree of repression that there is in the capital, the precondition for any major mass action is not just a real capacity for self-defence and protecting mobilisations. Besides that, the workers have to be convinced on the basis of their own experience that the capacity exists. The decisive thing in eliminating hesitations has been the growth of the territories under our control. This has enabled everyone to judge how the military relationship of forces has been shifting in our favour. It has almost made it possible to accelerate the organisation of militias in the cities.'

Health

The effective health care in the liberated zones was described variously by the FMLN leaders I talked to: as 'rearguard bastions' and 'strategic reserves'. They are also areas in which certain basic points in the FMLN programme are already put into practice.

Agrarian reform, literacy programmes, the organisation of a new system of public health, setting up a network for collectivised distribution of goods — all this work is being carried on in conjunction with the tasks of self-defence and military training and organisation.

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The gains of the Cuban revolution

By Dave Smith

CUBA plays an absolutely central role in the politics of the Central American region.

The leaderships of the struggles in El Salvador (the FMLN), in Nicaragua (the FSLN), in Grenada (the New Jewel Movement) and now in Guatemala identify fully with the achievements of the Cuban revolution, with the militant and uncompromising stance of the Cuban leadership against US imperialism and its determination to extend the revolutionary process in Central America.

In fact these leaderships consciously use the Cuban model in developing their strategy for socialism.

One of the most striking features of the Cuban revolution was that it proved that forces other than those coming from a Stalinist tradition can come to power in a revolu-

transformed by the Cuban revolution. In reviewing these accomplishments it is suitable to make comparisons with other Latin American countries. However, this tiny island can even stand comparison with advanced industrialised countries.

Malnutrition, let alone famine, has entirely disap-



Cuba is key target of US imperialism. 'March of Fighting People' in April 1980 showed determination of Cuban people not to back down in the face of Washington's threats

Reagan steps up pressure on Cuba

IN THE face of the new revolutionary advances in Central America, the United States has stepped up its pressure on Cuba.

NATO is presently conducting a naval exercise off the Cuban coast. British ships are participating. This exercise will include a provocative landing by US troops of the Guantanamo military base which the US still illegally possesses on Cuban soil.

Reagan is forcing further measures. He is pressuring Western banks not to reschedule Cuba's \$1.5bn foreign debt made necessary because of serious shortfalls in foreign currency earnings from sugar and nickel.

He is also expected to announce soon the banning of any ship from US ports that moves cargos to or from Cuba.

Washington is also preparing restrictions on US residents visiting Cuba.

tionary upheaval.

They have maintained power for nearly 23 years without degenerating into societies of the ilk of Jaruzelski's Poland or Brezhnev's Russia.

The position of the Cuban masses has been

peared in Cuba. The World Health Organisation estimates that Cuba has the highest calorific intake in the whole of Latin America. Of course there are scarcities — but not of basic necessities.

Such scarcities, in-

evitable in an underdeveloped country, are made infinitely worse by the permanent blockade by US imperialism — the natural trading partner for a country a mere 90 miles away.

Think of the additional labour and skills needed to make spare parts from scratch. Think of the massively increased transport costs to obtain necessary imports from half way across the globe.

Nonetheless more and more consumer goods are available to Cubans. Coveted mechanical and electrical items are distributed not through the shops but the workplace, where the workers decided on merit who should have the items.

Cubans enjoy an educational system which is free up to the age of 16. Health care is free with a ratio between medical staff and patients which

compares with any advanced country.

Tremendous strides have been made by the Cubans in the fight against women's oppression. Needless to say prostitution has been totally eradicated. The Cuban government favours positive action to allow women to take their place in the workforce.

Before the revolution only 200,000 women were employed — mostly in domestic service. Today 800,000 women make up 30 per cent of the workforce.

Discrimination on the basis of sex is punishable by law. Rape has been virtually eliminated. Abortion is free and fully available. There are 900,000 places available in nurseries with plans for an annual increase of 10,000 each year. They are open 24 hours a day with education, food and clothing provided free. The

number of public laundries and cafeterias is growing.

The involvement of women in political life is growing. This is likely to be reinforced by the fact that over 80 per cent of Cuban women are organised in the Federation of Cuban Women.

To be sure, heterosexuality is presented as the norm in Cuba. But homosexuality, whilst frowned upon, has been decriminalised.

Militias

Racism has been eradicated. In pre-revolutionary Cuba black and white were segregated on the beaches. Now black pride is promoted in hundreds of different ways.

The Cuban leaders have consistently mobilised the Cuban masses to defend the revolution. In Cuba, and following their example in Nicaragua and Grenada, hundreds of thousands of workers are organised in popular militias.

Defend

Thus in Cuba it is the people who are called upon to defend the revolution. Their determination to do so was shown by the millions who demonstrated in the 'March of the Fighting People' in 1980.

What frightens Reagan is that the Cubans seek to defend their own revolution by extending it to other countries in Central America.

Gains

The Cuban government and people have consistently supported the struggles in Guatemala and El Salvador, and defended Nicaragua and Grenada against US imperialism.

The great gains of the Cuban revolution have only been achieved by breaking the hold of imperialism on Cuba, and establishing a workers' state. This example is the one which must be followed to gain victory for the workers and peasants in the whole region.

Potel speaks on Poland

JEAN-YVES POTEL, French Trotskyist and author of the new Pluto Press book *The Summer Before the Frost*, is currently on a speaking tour of Britain. He has already spoken in Oxford and Birmingham. Other meetings include:

Wed 24 March Glasgow Polish Solidarity Committee meeting, 7.30pm at McLellan Galleries, Sauchiehall St.

Thu 25 March Manchester Socialist Challenge meeting, 7.30pm at Unicorn pub, Church St, Piccadilly.

Fri 26 March Guest speaker at Hackney Socialist Challenge/Revolution meeting on El Salvador, 7.30pm at Family Centre, Rectory Rd, N16.

Tue 30 March Other Bookshop/Big Flame meeting, 7.30pm at Marchmont Community Centre, Marchmont St, Kings Cross. 50p entrance.

Wed 31 March National Union of Students conference meeting at 10pm, Cumbrian House, Savoy Hotel.

Labour Focus on Eastern Europe

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Edinburgh Polish Solidarity Committee, c/o Edinburgh & District Trades Council, 12 Picardy Place, Edinburgh.

Greater Manchester Polish Solidarity Committee, c/o Jon Silberman, 51 Montrose House, Crete St, Oldham, Lancs. Ring 061-620 2885.

Leeds Polish Solidarity Committee, c/o Dave Feickert, 28 Roundhay Mount, Leeds 8, Yorkshire. Ring 0532 490927.

Birmingham Polish Solidarity Committee, c/o Roger Murray, 28 Blackford Road, Birmingham 11. Ring 021-773 5396.

Cardiff Polish Solidarity Committee, c/o Mark Jenkins, 87 Beatty Ave, Cardiff. Ring 0222-764195.

Coventry Solidarity Committee, John Fisher c/o ASTMS, 26 Queens Rd, Coventry.

Oxford Labour Committee on Poland, 468 Banbury Rd, Oxford. Ring 0865 58238.

Eastern Europe Solidarity Campaign, 10 Park Drive, London NW11. Ring 01-458 1501.

Labour Focus on Eastern Europe, Box 23, 136 Kingsland High St, London E8.

Polish Solidarity Committee, 69 Edinburgh Rd, London E13. Ring 01-422 2218 for London speakers, or 01-249 2665 for out of London.

Solidarnosc Trade Union Working Group in UK, 64 Philbeach Gardens, Earls Court, London SW5. Ring 01-373 3492.

Labour Poland Solidarity Fund, c/o Co-operative Bank, 110 Leaman St, London E1.



May Day in Managua, 1981. FSLN follows example of Cubans in relying on mass mobilisation to defend revolution



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Manchester trade unionists adopt Polish prisoners

By Jonathan Silberman
PIOTR Kozlowski, Solidarnosc convenor at the giant Ursus tractor plant, returned to Manchester last week for another successful tour organised by the Greater Manchester Polish Solidarity Campaign.

A dozen workplace meetings set up through shop stewards committees and union branches heard Piotr explain the long march of the Polish workers in the struggle for socialist democracy. Piotr, who has altogether addressed thirty labour movement meetings in Greater Manchester, explained how the labour movement could aid the Polish workers.

'Send letters to the Polish embassy,' he suggested, 'calling for the lifting of martial law, release of prisoners, recognition of Solidarnosc and return of its property. Raise money for the families of interned militants and the growing resistance. Adopt prisoners to campaign on their behalf and let Polish workers know that the international working class supports the struggle of Polish workers for democracy and freedom.'

This appeal met with an enthusiastic response. At the Bolton engineering firm of Beloit Walmsley, which has a trading licence with Poland, shop stewards' chair Tony Whelan explained that management had tried to resist the holding of the meeting and refused to allow the press on site, not wanting to harm relations with the Jaruzelski regime.

But the stewards gave their answer. They took badges for sale on the shop floor, gave a commitment to do a shop floor collection, and they adopted an engineering worker, Jan Rulewski, chairperson of the regional committee of Bydgoszcz Solidarnosc, who is at present being held in the Strzebielinek internment camp.

Another enthusiastic workplace meeting was at Manchester Steel. Kozlowski told the stewards how

workers had occupied the Katowice steel works, holding the rolling mill for a number of days despite an attack on the occupation by the militarised police, ZOMO. The stewards decided to adopt a worker at Katowice, Ryszard Blaszcak, a member of the presidium of the National Commission of Solidarnosc, also held at Strzebielinek.

This type of response was repeated at every factory. Rubber workers at the Hyde factory of Miles Redfearn decided to twin with the Stomil Rubber factory in Grudziadz and to take up the case of five Stomil workers at present being held at the Potulice camp. One worker at the factory has entered the Manchester marathon and is seeking sponsorship to raise money for Solidarnosc.

Altogether fifteen prisoners were adopted and a number of bodies, for example both AUEW District Committees in Oldham and Stockport, decided to con-

sider the question at their next meeting.

At a number of the meetings, Piotr Kozlowski was asked to explain what type of society Solidarnosc was fighting for. He replied with the same words each time: 'Solidarnosc does not want a return to capitalism. We want true socialism, democratic socialism. A defeat for us in struggle will be a defeat for all those struggling for democratic rights throughout the world — in Turkey, Chile, El Salvador.'

During the tour commitment was sought for a national labour movement campaign in solidarity with Solidarnosc. The Greater Manchester Polish Solidarity Campaign has agreed to launch a national labour movement conference in solidarity with Solidarnosc.

This follows the call endorsed by Eric Heffer at last week's Labour Party rally on Poland in London for a na-

tional labour movement demonstration on Poland in December on the anniversary of the imposition of martial law. The task for socialists in the coming months is to maximise the labour movement support for Solidarnosc.

STOP PRESS Michael Meacher MP successfully organised Piotr Kozlowski to speak at the North West Labour Party conference last weekend. He received a standing ovation and some £300 was raised for Solidarnosc. The following Labour Party MPs and councillors sponsored the appeal for the labour movement conference on Poland: Eric Heffer, Frank Allaun, Michael Meacher, Ken Livingstone, Ted Knight.

Sorry!
An error crept into our report last week of the Greater Manchester CND meeting. A resolution that the 6 June march should include the slogan Hands off El Salvador was referred to a future meeting for discussion. Sorry.

Reagan rejects nuclear freeze

By Bob Pennington

SOVIET LEADER Leonid Brezhnev's call for a freeze of the deployment of nuclear missiles in Europe met a predictable response. President Reagan said it 'didn't go far enough', while insisting on the need for Cruise and Trident missiles to be stationed throughout Europe.

But Reagan has problems in his own back yard — a fast-growing pro-freeze movement in the USA. Already five state legislatures have declared themselves in favour of a freeze on nuclear weapons, while 139 members of Congress have joined the chorus calling for Reagan to stick at the present nuclear arms level.



Pro-freeze senators such as Edward Kennedy are concerned that the bellicose policies of the Reagan gang could trigger off a nuclear conflict, which at this stage they do not believe serves the best interests or needs of US capital.

Furthermore, Kennedy and his ilk are not against nuclear weapons: their difference with Reagan is about how best to handle the Russians, and to keep the US people in tow behind the strategy of imperialism.

They are scared that Reagan, by brandishing nuclear weapons like a 'B' movie Western gunman,

will bring home to the American people the dreadful implications of all their nuclear policies.

The anti-missiles movement should welcome Brezhnev's offer of a unilateral freeze on the deployment of Soviet intermediate missiles, and calling for NATO not to position new Cruise and Pershings in five Western countries.

However, Brezhnev's proposal is very weak.

A call by the USSR for the renunciation of all nuclear arms would deal an almighty blow to capitalism's war plans. It would gain mass support in the capitalist world

among a fast-growing movement that supports unilateralism, including millions of people in the USA itself.

What is more it is from a military point of view something that the USSR could only benefit from. There is no possibility in a 'traditional' military conflict that the capitalist nations could defeat the Soviet Union. The only way that the USSR and its allies could be defeated in a war is by a massive nuclear strike — a fact that every shrewd capitalist politician knows only too well.

The defeat of the war drive does not lie through Edward Kennedy, or the 'astute' moves of the Russian bureaucracy, who aim

their strategy towards the so-called progressive sections of the ruling class rather than working people, who have nothing to gain by a nuclear shoot out. The developing anti-war and anti-missiles movements growing at the grass roots, including in the USA, are the best guarantee against a nuclear holocaust.

We can help to build this movement by preparing the biggest demonstrations possible against Reagan's visit to Britain, France and Germany. This will show that there is a mass movement across Europe that is not going to let this gangster and his associates blow us all to hell.



TEN WEEKS TO STOP REAGAN

THERE will be a warm reception for Ronald Reagan when he visits Britain in early June. Labour parties, trade unions, CND groups, El Salvador support committees, around the country are rushing to endorse the call for a mighty demonstration against Reagan on 6 June in London.

The Reagan Reception Committee, backed by Labour MPs, Socialist Worker and Socialist Challenge, is also calling for a picket of the US Embassy on Monday 7 June at 5.30pm to protest against Reagan's policies in Central America and in siting Cruise missiles in Europe.

Socialist Challenge appeals to all its supporters to make building massive opposition to Reagan's visit and building solidarity with the revolutions in Central America their number one priority for the coming months. We urge our supporters in every locality to work through CND, the unions and Labour Party, and local Reagan Reception Committees to make Reagan's visit one he won't forget in a hurry!

Socialist Challenge FUND DRIVE '82

£2,500 needed

By P Ryan

TWO AND A HALF thousand pounds — that's what we need from YOU, our readers, within the next week if we are to meet our fund drive target for this quarter.

If you don't send the money rapidly we will have to cut back on our planned activity for the next quarter — and that's when the mass murderer Reagan is coming.

Reagan's visit is an affront to all working people and we aim to make that clear to him and to the Tories who invited him ... Posters, stickers, flags, placards, banners, meetings, rallies, they all cost money. We haven't got any and you are our only hope.

We're all tightening our belts here in London as the new doubled London Transport fares come into being — you are the ones with the money which can keep us going. We don't have rich capitalist backers. Only our readers finance our paper. Help us reach our quarterly target!

Our thanks this week to the following readers:

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Anon	100.00	Edinburgh	67.50
Women's Day Rally	56.73	Swansea	65.00
Swindon	34.00	Hemel Hempstead	32.00
Anon	3.00	G Mastrantone	6.00
Anon	400.00	Glasgow	30.00
Wolverhampton	19.75	Huddersfield	5.00
Islington	30.00		
L Wilde	15.00		
Haringey	166.50	TOTAL	£1,770.43
Outer West London	41.25	Total so far	£13,485.04
Bristol	12.00	April 1 target	16,000.00
Newcastle	51.00	NEEDED THIS	WEEK
Brent	40.00		£2,515.00

Scottish Campaign Against Trident

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Labour on defensive in Hillhead

By Des Tierney

WE GO TO PRESS before the result of the Hillhead by-election. But, whatever the outcome Hillhead is not about to be overwhelmed by the rising tide of support for the SDP/Liberal Alliance.

Although this is a constituency with a previous Liberal presence, a large percentage of home owners, white collar workers and middle management, all the polls indicate that the Alliance will not have a Crosby replay.

The Tory majority has crumbled from 15,000 to 2,000 over the twenty years that Tam Galbraith held the seat. Those Tory voters who are left are particularly loyal to the Tory cause and are unlikely to be put off by Thatcher's brand of Tory policies.

At the same time, the Tories have managed a few vote catching policies which undercut the support for the Alliance throughout the campaign. The budget received a very warm reception from Tory supporters in the constituency and the Chancellor's budget speech, with six references to Scotland in it, would do the Hillhead Tories no harm.

Even more brazen as vote catchers were the announcements of the construction of a major new exhibition centre within the constituency, a £90m order for John Brown Engineering (just outside the constituency) and a hint that the government was considering taking measures to save the British Aluminium Smelter at Invergordon.

Neither is the novelty of the Alliance something which will attract many votes in Scotland. The Scottish National Party broke the mould of Scottish politics ten years ago.

At the last election Labour was

only 2,000 votes behind the Tories. The main issues of the campaign facing the electorate are unemployment and nuclear weapons — issues which would split the middle class vote.

Such a victory would inspire all those forces presently fighting the Tories whether on nuclear weapons or on unemployment, to redouble their efforts. It would start the campaign for a Labour victory in the next general election.

Instead, Labour has a very defensive and routinist attitude to the campaign. Half way through the campaign Helen Liddell, the Labour Party's Scottish secretary, is quoted as saying: 'Our voting is holding solid. We are seeking to hold our vote without indulging in any conversion work and so far our tactics have worked.'

The candidate himself, David Wiseman, a member of the Labour Coordinating Committee at the beginning of the campaign, has shifted rightwards at an alarming rate. Under the guidance of the party's Scottish leadership and a local right wing MP, Donald Dewar, he has increasingly distanced himself from the left of the party.

His main concern has been to portray himself as a representative of the mainstream, moderate, soft left current. When asked about the *Militant* tendency and Pat Wall's speech, he unequivocally stated that: 'When the results of the inquiry come out and we find that they are a separate organisation with separate policies, membership and constitution, the Labour Party will then clearly have to deal with that fact.'

Hillhead has 20 per cent unemployment. Albion Motors, one of the threatened parts of the Leyland Group is in this constituency, and yet



Labour candidate David Wiseman: running fast to the right

the Labour candidate has purposely avoided any references to the growing movement of factory occupations in defence of jobs.

Wiseman has also been busy distancing himself from the call made at the Scottish Labour Party Conference for action involving civil disobedience to stop the construction of the Trident base.

At a special meeting to discuss Labour's policy on women, the audience were astounded to hear one of the main speakers denounce the setting up of women's sections in the Labour Party, none of the speakers mentioned the women's right to work event and Wiseman declared himself perfectly happy with the working of the 1967 Abortion Act.

The Labour Party's campaign could have aroused the anger of Scottish working class people; instead it has been a low key routine affair.

In Scotland where the Scottish National Party retains significant support, this approach by Labour could be especially dangerous. The Scottish Nationalist Party message for Scottish workers (and they're concentrating their efforts in the working class areas) is simple.

Scotland is an oil rich country, yet

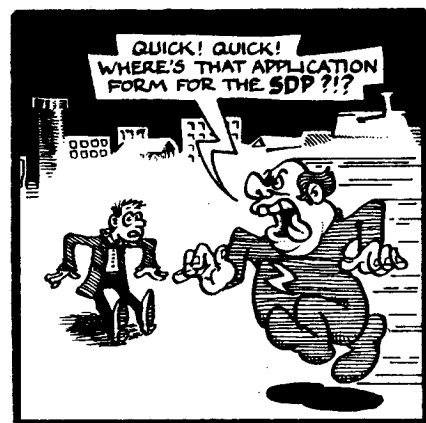
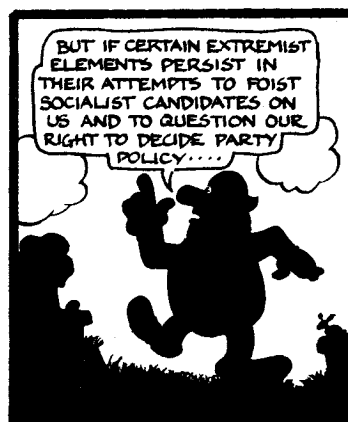
its people are poor. The government is extracting massive revenues from North Sea oil, yet the social services of Scottish people are being cut. The final insult to the Scottish people, they say, is that the major target in a nuclear war — the Trident missile base — is being constructed less than 25 miles from the main population centre of Scotland.

What benefits, says the SNP, do Scottish people get from electing Labour MPs when they can do nothing to stop the Tories' attacks on our living standards? Wouldn't it be much better to vote for the SNP and get the London based parties worried about Scotland again?

This by-election may mark the beginning of a resurgence of support for the Scottish National Party.

Whatever the result of the Hillhead by-election, one issue has already been answered. The agreement of Bishop's Stortford has meant a pulling back from the advances of the left inside the Labour Party and continued attacks on the democracy of the party. Such an approach will spell disaster for Labour in the next election.

Win or lose in Hillhead, that's one result which Labour activists will have to fight to reverse.



Over 2000 people recently inquired about jobs in a hotel in Glasgow. The campaign in Hillhead has nothing to offer these workers while the Scottish Nationalist Party has homed in on the key issues.

No coalition, says Benn

By Alan Freeman

'THERE CAN be no question of Labour entering a coalition government,' Tony Benn said on Saturday 22 March to thunderous applause from over 200 delegates attending an Institute for Workers' Control conference in Nottingham.

Labour will win if it now makes it clear, he said, that it will not accept a new version of the Liberal-Labour pact which was responsible, after 1976, for the abandonment of so many policy commitments. If necessary Labour should be prepared to govern alone, and return early to the polls to win a decisive majority on the basis of its record.

The usual excuse presented by Labour whips — lack of parliamentary time — should not obstruct many of Labour's most important commitments, Benn continued. The decision to accept Trident had been taken without parliamentary ratification, and could be cancelled just as easily using the Prime

Minister's prerogative in foreign policy matters. Similarly Britain could withdraw its support for the Treaty of Rome.

Benn also suggested a number of parliamentary 'enabling' measures which would increase the executive powers of MPs and ministers and decrease Whitehall's ability to interfere with the implementation of Labour policy.

The conference, entitled 'How to Win', took place against the background of a growing discussion in the Labour Party over policy, which will lead up to the presentation of a report from Labour's Home Policy Committee on the manifesto and from there to conference.

The public debate over policy has already been

opened by the Shadow Cabinet, however, during the launching earlier this month of an £80,000 publicity campaign around the theme, 'See what happens when you don't vote Labour'.

In the opening shots of the campaign both Michael Foot and shadow employment secretary, Eric Varley, hinted at a new social contract, and Varley spelt out in a radio interview that Labour's job-creation plans would be dependent on a successful wages agreement with the unions.

Tony Benn emphatically rejected incomes restraint. He explained that in his view the idea of a National Economic Assessment, now being put forward as part of Labour's proposals, would have to include freedom for collective bargaining at all levels — including plant level — and would have to include discussion of company investment plans by unions and government.

TAKE ON TEBBIT

Kind hearts and bureaucrats

By Pat Hickey

AS THE FIGHT against Norman Tebbit's anti-union Bill gets slowly into gear, the British Communist Party has produced a new pamphlet on its strategy for defeating it.

Tebbit's Bill — Kill It by Mick Costello, the CP's Industrial Organiser, explains the new Bill clearly: how it will give a £20,000 bribe to scabs and free-riders to attack the closed shop; render trade unions and trade unionists liable to punitive damages for strike action; and make the closed shop almost impossible to achieve.

It points out that a 'major aim of the proposed legislation is to stop workers acting in defence of their interests as a class'. If the Bill is passed for example, it will be unlawful to refuse to handle machinery transferred from a plant resisting closure, and the 'Triple Alliance' will be unlawful. The strong will not be allowed to help the weak.



Laurence Scott workers up against the law: Duffy says he opposes Tebbit's proposal to use the law against unions, but sells out workers fighting it now.

Tebbit's Bill would have made these illegal:

- *Grunwicks' solidarity*
- *Blacking of Aero Engines for Chile*
- *Most refusals to cross picket lines by lorry drivers*
- *Walkouts to join the 'People's March for Jobs'*
- *Strikes against cuts — for example this year's strikes in South Yorkshire*

If Tebbit's Bill becomes law you could be fined up to £250,000 or jailed for similar action.

This aspect of the Bill is given a great deal of attention in the pamphlet. The scale of the attack is brought home forcefully. 'Many actions taken in recent years by workers would be unlawful if Tebbit's Bill had been law,' explains Costello.

In the face of this attack the pamphlet calls for 'a programme of mounting industrial protest' and the 'promotion of demands for action of general strike proportions up through the grass roots of the trade union movement,' to 'bring the trade unions nationally and the TUC General Council to throw their full weight into this struggle.' It calls on the trade union movement to:

- Continue to conduct industrial disputes in the most effective way with no regard for anti-union laws;
- All forms of solidarity to be afforded to unions and workers who are arraigned;
- Union members' money should not be wasted on futile and expensive legal fees but contributed by unions to a special TUC fund for propaganda agitation and action;
- No appearance before the courts where judges will be implementing anti-union legislation;
- The unions on an industry level, and the TUC nationally, should organise massive protests against the Bill. These should include meetings in

working hours, demonstrations and lobbies to prepare the movement for stoppages of general strike proportions.

Bosses

But while calling for rank and file pressure and for workplace organisation, the pamphlet does not deal with some of the most important obstacles to a united campaign against Tebbit.

The pamphlet points out that an important aspect of the legislation is aimed at getting union leaders to 'do the bosses' dirty work, to police the act'. The union is not liable if the rules exclude the action or if the executive repudiates it. But it

draws no conclusions from this on how some of the union leaders might act.

Union leaders like Chapple and Duffy will need little encouragement to turn on the membership. Virtually the whole TUC leadership signed the 'Concordat' with the Callaghan government which aimed at outlawing unofficial strikes, undermining the right to picket, and removing wage bargaining from rank and file control.

In the 1970s it took massive and determined rank and file pressure to force 'left' leaders like Hugh Scanlon to fight. When the pamphlet says that 'compared to the last time such legislation was defeated the leaders of the

trade union movement today are more united in seeking to kill the Bill,' it is expressing a fond hope. The leaders may oppose the Bill. But will they smash it?

A serious challenge would mean mass action against it, defiance of the law, and most importantly of all, support NOW for struggles such as Laurence Scott where the law is being used against trade unionists. The leadership's record doesn't suggest they will do this willingly.

Instead of discussing how the leaders may be called to order and forced to act, the pamphlet directs attention towards getting support from 'sports and cultural personalities, representatives of all churches and religions.'

LCDTU

This approach has led the Communist Party to convert the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions from the huge force it represented in the seventies into a pale shadow. They have made no effort to involve other forces on the left in it, have put little work into building it, and seek to use it merely to tail-end the latest left declaration from the union leaders.

The LCDTU would do better to demand that leaders such as Benn and Scargill now begin campaigning across the movement, regardless of the right's hesitations and job in the campaign for the removal of the likes of Chapple and Duffy.

The approach outlined in this pamphlet makes quite clear why the CP has not been prepared to take this course of action.

Youth join fight against Tebbit

By Cliff Williams, AUEW National Committee Youth Representative (in a personal capacity)

THE AUEW will now be recruiting Youth Opportunities' scheme workers to its ranks, delegates to the AUEW youth conference were told on 19 March by union president Terry Duffy.

Duffy's announcement follows months of demonstrations and rallies, mainly organised by the LPYS-backed YOPs Trade Union Rights Campaign. Both the Transport and General Workers' Union and the National Union of Public Employees have already come out in favour of unionising YOPs.

On 24 February 3,000 YOPs workers lobbied parliament in a massive

display of anger and frustration at the 'no hope' future being offered them by the government.

The campaign provoked a public clash with Norman Tebbit, whose new proposals on youth unemployment amount to little more than slave labour.

It seems that with 1¼ million youth on the dole Tebbit feels drastic measures are needed. The £23.50 per week which the government now pays bosses who take on YOPs workers wasn't a big enough incentive for exploitation.

So Tebbit's new training schemes will give the bosses £15 per week for three days' work which

will go, not to the youth but to their parents. If school leavers under 18 refuse they will be docked six weeks' dole.

Tebbit's new proposals, linked to his anti-union legislation, are part of a concerted Tory drive to push down workers' living standards and smash their ability to fight back.

Youths' fightback against Tebbit can add punch and inspiration to the campaign against his anti-union Bill — if the unions reach out to it.

Unfortunately although unions have responded to the YOPs workers' growing anger, they restrict themselves to calling for an increase in the wage allowance to £30. But this will still allow the Tories to undercut all wages, as it will be cheaper to employ a YOPs worker

to do the same job as an older worker but for half the price.

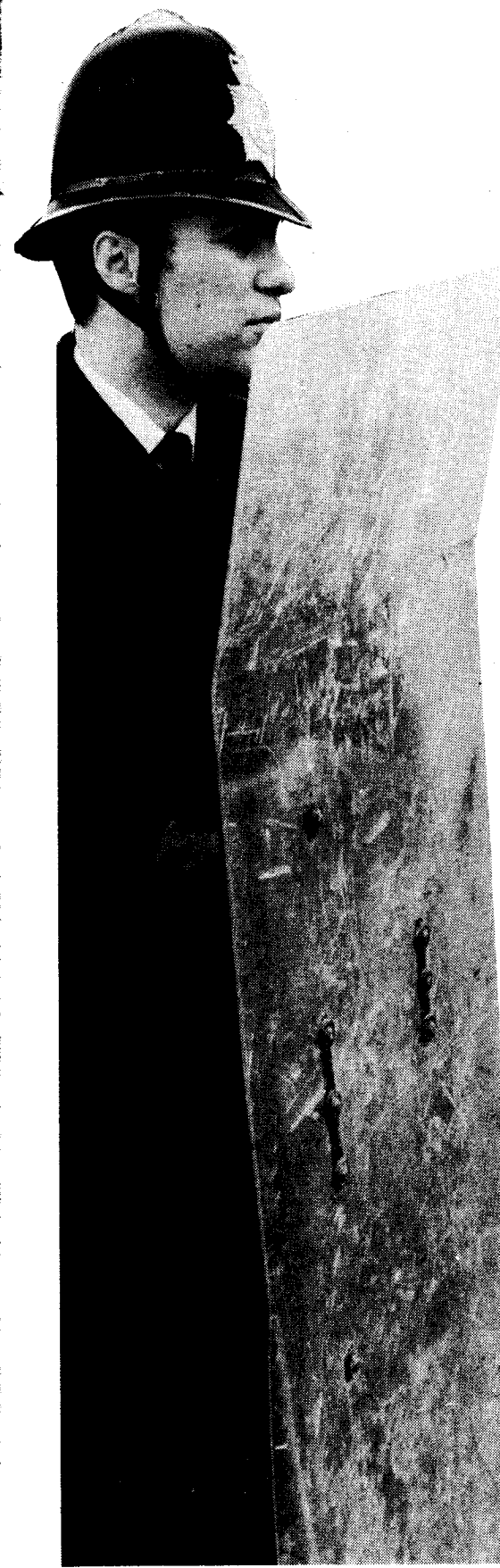
The AUEW's decision shows that a determined mass campaign can force even the Duffys of this world to offer a lead. But success depends on organisation at rank and file level.

Region Five (Midlands) TGWU Broad Left has decided to campaign for T&G branches to recruit YOPs workers and unemployed youth. This is the kind of campaign that union branches up and down the country should be waging.

By campaigning together with the YS to set up fully democratic and functioning youth structures, it will be possible to unite YOPs workers with factory militants against Bootboy Tebbit's latest attacks.



Youth on February 24 lobby of Parliament



The Tories say it all

TORY minister of State Timothy Raison spells out very clearly what Thatcher's government has managed to achieve in the realms of 'law and order' in a speech given on 17 March, extracts of which we print here.

IT HAS been suggested that we at the Home Office are not fulfilling our manifesto pledges. In fact we have carried through, and are already carrying through, a very high proportion of our specific undertakings.

- We have spent more on fighting crime while we economise elsewhere.

- We have implemented the Edmunds Davies' report and greatly improved police pay, conditions and numbers.

- We have introduced the short, sharp shock regime in detention centres (and we are providing more compulsory attendance centres).

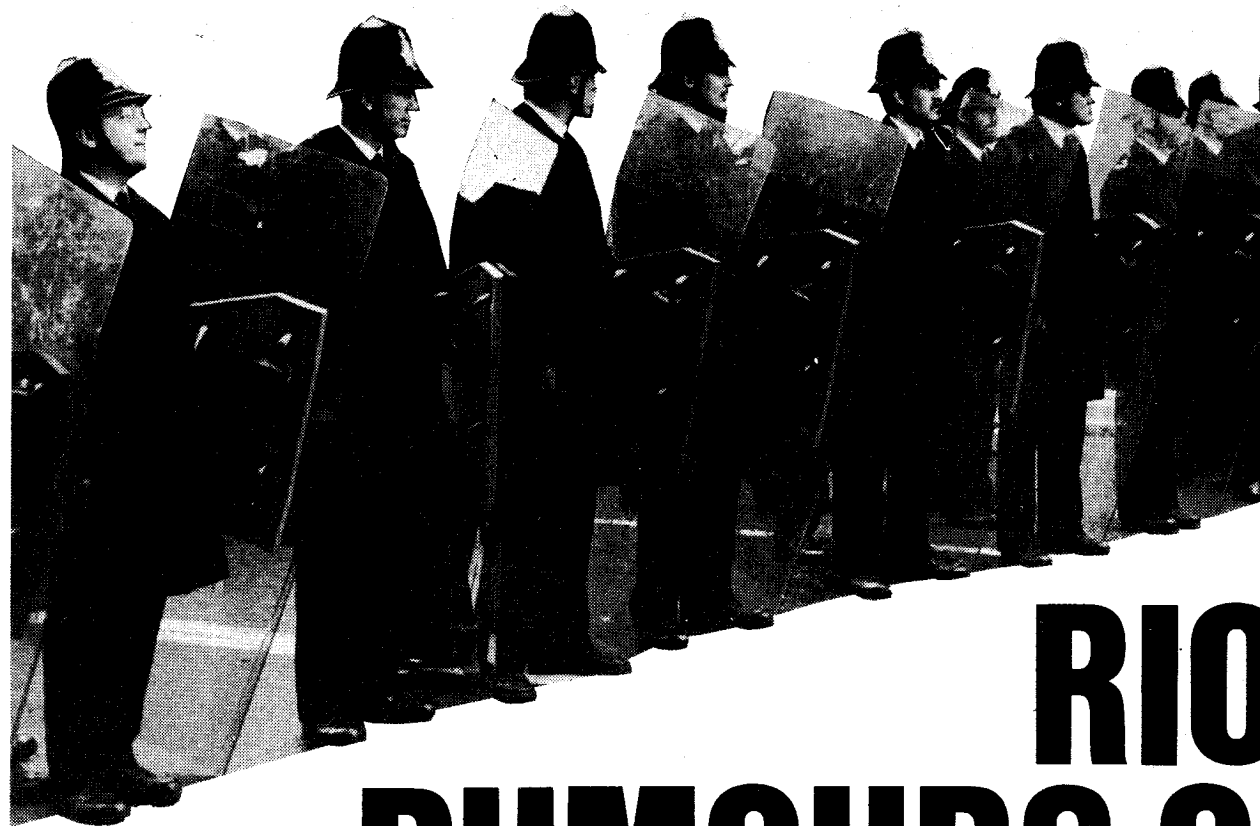
- We are, through the Criminal Justice Bill, providing the courts with a proper range of custodial sentences for young offenders; giving magistrates the power to make residential care orders on juveniles; increasing the use of community service orders to offenders aged 16; giving compensation orders greater weight; and making sure that parents may be liable to pay fines or compensation orders incurred by their children.

- We also have the first significant prison building programme for decades.

- We have given parliament the opportunity for a free vote on capital punishment.

- We have brought in new immigration rules and are now seeing a substantial fall in immigration.

- We have put the new British Nationality Act on the statute book.



RIO RUMOURS O A 'law and order' general election

IT'S HAPPENED. Britain's war in Ireland has finally come home. Sir Kenneth Newman, chief of the Royal Ulster Constabulary until 1980, will be the next Commissioner of New Scotland Yard, in charge of London's Metropolitan police.

It was Newman who headed up the RUC when Amnesty International reported it to the European Court of Human Rights on charges of torture.

It was Newman who hunted freedom fighters in Palestine at the end of the Second World War.

It was Newman who was responsible for the policing of the 1968 Grosvenor Square demonstrations against US involvement in Vietnam.

It is Newman with his vast experience of CS gas, water cannon and plastic bullets in the North of Ireland who will lead the London police against the youth of Brixton, Hackney, Southall, Notting Hill, and Finsbury Park.

It will be Newman who advises the police chiefs of Manchester, Liverpool, and Bristol how to handle their young people.

And it will be Newman who will bring his experience from the North of Ireland to police future demonstrations against imperialism's role in Central America.

Newman's appointment follows the opening of the Tory 'law and order' campaign towards the next general election.

As part of establishing law and order as the central issue before the country, the deliberate racist interpretation of the crime statistics in mid-March was followed by:

- the launching of the Police Federation campaign to bring back hanging
- a call from Manchester Chief Constable, James Anderton for the disbandment of 'political' police committees
- the establishment of fascist-like vigilante squads in at least one area applying for official recognition
- a promise by Whitelaw to further strengthen police powers.

By whipping up fear and hatred of the black community, the Tories hope to win the allegiance of the middle classes and sections of the white

A law unto himself

By T. James, Openshaw, Manchester

JAMES ANDERTON won't have much to learn from the new Metropolitan commissioner. The Chief Constable of Greater Manchester hasn't even waited for Tebbit's law to come to pass.

Anderton and his thugs in the Tactical Aid Group (Manchester's SPG) smashed up the Laurence Scott picket line on Tuesday 16 February to allow scab lorries into the factory.

The Greater Manchester Police Committee passed a vote of no confidence in Anderton last Friday 19 March. He had refused point blank to answer questions put to him by chairperson Peter Kelly on the Laurence Scott exercise.

James Anderton wants to abolish police committees and give the police what he calls a completely free hand in fighting 'crime in the streets so the force can be better able to serve the community'.

Perhaps Mr Anderton believes that strike breaking is 'fighting street crime' or harassing the locals as 'serving the community'. Local residents have been outraged at the police attitudes.

Throughout the eleven-day operation against Laurence Scott workers, people were stopped in



Anderton - he's got to go

the streets, indiscriminately questioned and generally harassed.

A petition from the community, with over 4000 signatures, protesting against the cost of the fiasco being borne by ratepayers, was handed to the Police Committee. Church-goer Anderton was not impressed, although he did say that he felt like Christ on trial before the crucifixion.

This make-believe world of Anderton extended to the number of police he claimed were present on 16 February outside the Louisa Street factory. A mere 280 was his maximum figure while eyewitness accounts put the number at between 500-600.

A similar discrepancy creeps in with the number of pickets. Anderton claims 350 was the maximum compared to the real figure



Anderton was in charge of the massive police operation against trade unionists at Laurence Scott Electromotors. Will we be seeing this regularly on the streets of our inner cities?

of 200.

The Chief Constable of Greater Manchester wants to be accountable to no-one. He is the Tories' ideal policeman. The labour movement should campaign to kick him out.

'I have lived in Openshaw all my life but I have never, ever seen anything like this. I call it a criminal abuse of power and ratepayers' money. What do they take us for?'
Amy Mitchell, 63-year-old pensioner

'I was walking down Louisa Street to see my friend and I came face to face with a massive police blockade. I asked an officer "who's paying for this?" He replied, "You will be, on your rates".'
Mary Borrell, petition organiser.



MARGARET THATCHER is betting on riots this summer. The police, the judiciary, the politicians, the Tory press are tooling up for confrontation with the black and white youth of the inner cities.

But Thatcher's moves aren't simply a response to the events of last summer. They are part and parcel of her political policies.

Monetarism is not just an economic theory, its implementation *depends* on a 'disciplining' of society. Monetarism can't work without a controlled working class, a non-combative working class.

In order to achieve this, Thatcher is on the offensive against the morale and the development of a new leadership of the working class and social movements.

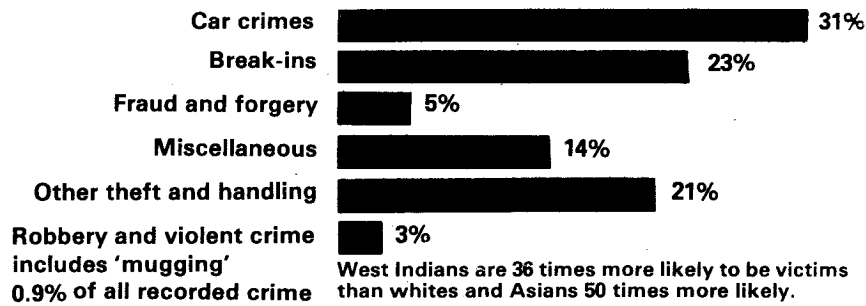
Through mass unemployment and racist attacks on black minorities, new laws such as Tebbit's Employment Bill and the Nationality Act, shifting decision-making from elected to non-elected representatives as in the case of Denning's low fares ruling and by increasing the repressive powers of the state itself, Thatcher hopes to smash the ability of the class to fight back. And Labour's leadership has done little to counter her. Here *Toni Gorton* looks at the issues involved.



TS AND RIOTS



The facts — believe it or not



working class who are frightened by the dramatic changes taking place.

The Tories also hope to divert attention from the violence of their rule against the poor, the sick, the youth, women and most vulnerable members of this society.

'Is it not the case that serious crimes, offences recorded by the police, ... declined each year when I was Prime Minister and have gone up each year since?'

James Callaghan, MP

Labour's response to the right wing offensive has been feeble. Whatever debate there may have been in the past about 'hard' and 'soft'



'Third force' in Britain

EVER since last year's upheavals the police force has grown, been given more intensive training and 'harder' equipment.

A third force of 'riot' police now exists in the 11,000 strong police support units who are formed on a divisional basis in nearly every force in the country.

Under Home Office contingency plans for large-scale disorders they form a national mutual aid system.

These special forces are provided with reinforced vans, modified NATO glass fibre helmets as used by the army in the North of Ireland, fireproof overalls, and short shields.

'Pig squirt' water cannon will be available through the Home Office from Ministry of Defence stores.

policing has been resolved in favour of tougher penalties on offenders, more sophisticated equipment, increased arming of police, laws and rulings that restrict the right of assembly.

Community policing, as Labour calls for, has been proven in areas like Handsworth in the Birmingham area to be used to control the community, not to extend the control of the community over the police.

The official Labour Party position still seems to see the police as a 'neutral' body primarily concerned with the catching of criminals.

According to *Labour Weekly*, official newspaper of the Labour Party, 'In a democratic society, the powers of the police must be limited.'

'There has to be a balance between effective policing — aimed at detecting crime and bringing offenders before the courts — and the rights of the individual and the community at large to be free from unwarranted intrusion.'

'Labour must formulate a clear and positive policy on the whole area of law and order, which will achieve the right balance of successful policing in a free society.'

What is missed out is that the police are now occupying the centre of the stage in the debate not about crime, but how to deal with the social upheaval caused by 3-4 million unemployed.

The Tories and the police think they have the answer. And while the present Labour leadership blathers about 'community policing' and democratic accountability, the police prepare for war.

'THE dramatic fall in the detection of crime — down to 16 per cent in London now — is one manifestation of withdrawal of community support.'

John Alderson, Chief Constable of Devon and Cornwall

The reply of the labour and black movement cannot remain on the level of trying to increase community control over the police, although all such measures should be supported.

Certain principles must be established.

- The black community must be defended.
- Blaming unemployment and unrest on black people must be turned back onto the Tories themselves.

- Tory attempts to intimidate the black community through deporta-

tions must be combated by support of anti-deportation campaigns such as around the Filipino domestics.

- The movements must unify in defence of the black youth of the inner cities, through a campaign for jobs for youth and against the slave-labour schemes.

- All forms of black self-organisation should be supported. The situation demands an alliance between the Asian and Afro-Caribbean organisations.

- Defence campaigns such as around the Bradford 12 focus national attention on issues which are key to the defence of the black community. In this case the use of the conspiracy

laws against black militants can set a precedent for their use in other cases this summer. The national demonstration in Leeds on Saturday 3 April should be supported.

- Initiatives should be taken in the Labour Party, the trade unions and the black community within the next period to present a co-ordinated, national response to the Tory offensive against the black community and the democratic rights of the whole working class.

Only a unified movement by black people and labour can roll back the Tory offensive and return a Labour government in the next general election.



Tory crime statistics

Registered unemployed up from 1,250,000 to 3,074,000
Total unemployed (TUC estimate) 4,000,000
Housing cut by 30% in 1980-81
School building cut by 15%
Real wages down 3%

My encounter with a vigilante squad

BARBARA is a young white woman living in the south London borough of Lambeth. On Tuesday 16 March she was accosted at Oval tube station on her way home from work. She spoke to Socialist Challenge about what happened.

It was about 8.30 at night. When I came up into the exit area there were four very large men standing two on each side of the door way. They were about 35 years old, heavy set and wearing expensive leather jackets. They looked like right thugs.

I could see two of them talking to a black guy who'd been in front of me. He was getting agitated and angry.

One of them came up to me and asked where I was going. I answered that I was going home — in some surprise, since the whole thing was a bit unusual. He said something like 'well you'd better make sure you get there'.

I don't know what the others said to the black guy but they let him go.

It seemed to me that it was a form of curfew that was being operated. I was wearing badges and there was the implication that if I had lived outside the area that I would have been more closely questioned.

I realised later that they were probably part of the group of ex-servicemen who said that they were forming a vigilante squad on Loughborough Estate following the Metropolitan Police report.

I found it quite worrying and I'm white. God knows how it affects the black people they've approached.

Irish prisoners demand rights

IN BRITISH PRISONS there are approximately 400 category A prisoners, those considered top security, and nearly 25 per cent of these are Irish political prisoners.

It is a fact that out of 44,000 prisoners in jail, 400 are category A and the Irish prisoners are all placed in this category. And even within this small minority, Irish politicals are discriminated against further, being called variously 'Special A', or 'Irish A' prisoners, the main form being the terrible visiting conditions which are imposed under the pretext of security, exclusively against the political prisoners.

Despite the Home Office recognising that Irish prisoners are different from other prisoners, albeit in the harsh measures taken against them, they refuse to transfer us to prisons in North-East Ireland.

None of the objections made by the government stand any kind of scrutiny and their only fall back is that they have the physical power to do whatever they like.

The first objection, that people should serve sentences where they are convicted, does not hold water when we see that nearly a hundred soldiers have been moved to England and Scotland after conviction in Ireland.

The second objection, that there is no procedure in the bureaucratic machinery

to Ireland as well as four Republicans who underwent a mammoth hunger strike in which Michael Gaughan died and for which Frank Stagg later died. Mrs Thatcher made

This desire to help Irish prisoners in Britain does not extend past the prison gates. When a sentence is completed the Special Branch are waiting to whisk the free man off to Ireland under an Exclusion

some of whom have been offered compensation for the injuries. Warders have been convicted of assault, only to receive paltry sentences. The plight of the prisoners is made worse by the anguish suffered by the relatives who have not only financial restrictions placed on them by travelling over from Ireland, but also restrictions on visits placed by the police and restrictions placed on mail by the prison censor.

Although every visitor is photographed and passed as 'suitable' weeks before a visit by the Special Branch many are arrested and questioned, the most tragic being the case of G Conlon who was arrested in London visiting his son and died in prison from a neglected illness.

REPUBLICAN PRISONERS Hull Prison

PS We thank Owen Carron MP for visiting us on 24 March and for the work he is doing on the transfer of Irish prisoners to Irish prisons.

Anyone wishing to help should contact Owen Carron MP at The Clinic, 7 Market Street, Enniskillen, Co Fermanagh, Ireland.



Prisoners revolt against Hull jail conditions

for transfers, is exposed as a lie when we see that a large proportion of Loyalists convicted in Britain are transferred

a venomous refusal to move prisoners recently and made it clear that the refusal was to aid a punishment.

Order. Added to this is the savage beating meted out to Republicans,

Understanding Militant

THE ARTICLE by S Butler on the *Militant* tendency in SC No 234 was a useful jumping off point in coming to grips with this current.

Militant is the most rapidly expanding group on the British left today and occupies a central position in the labour movement. It has to be politically confronted, its healthy elements — of whom there are many — won over, and the organisation marginalised and if possible destroyed.

This means being fully appreciative both of its strengths and weaknesses.

Militant has given up building a revolutionary international. While the revolutionary leaderships in Central America are regarded as being petty bourgeois or Stalinist, the social democratic Pasok government in Greece — a member of the Second International whose treacherous leaderships have sold out the working class on countless occasions — is treated as revolutionary!

This absurd state of affairs exposes *Militant's* adaptation to the bureaucracy, resulting from its deep entry tactic into the Labour Party. When struggles do erupt, like the rail unions' fight against flexible rostering, *Militant's* resolution-mongering is a positive brake on the struggle.

In line with the bureaucracy's narrow, sectoral and chauvinistic orientation *Militant* explains away class struggle in terms of wages, conditions and economic issues: the oppression of blacks and women, has until recently been a total non-starter for it.

Militant is a sterile sect,

insular in outlook, sectarian and opportunist in practice. But unlike any other left group it has consistently had a firm and growing base inside the Labour Party and Young Socialists, and a high presence in the trade unions and industrial workforce.

This overwhelmingly proletarian organisation is centrally placed to take advantage of the radicalisation of sections of the workforce.

Moreover *Militant* has taken advantage of this by operating as a highly trained and disciplined combat unit. It has been able to act as a pole of attraction to which workers have been recruited on the basis of agreement with a clear, albeit inadequate programme, and educated up to becoming political cadre dedicated to the funding and building of the tendency.

The way to take up and break *Militant* — a process already begun by SC and Revolution supporters, with increasing success — is to root themselves in the industrial unions and within that framework the LP and YS, and turn these organisations outward around propaganda and mass action, over those questions for which *Militant* has inadequate answers or none at all: Reagan's war drive and the struggle in Central America, Ireland, and the oppression of women and Black workers.

In this way radicalising layers of workers, particularly youth, will be won to our politics as opposed to *Militant's*, along with many workers from *Militant* itself.

MIKE LEVESON,
Brixton

Workers movement pays tribute to Sam Gordon

by Steve Potter

OVER A HUNDRED labour movement representatives, socialists and friends attended a crowded memorial service for veteran revolutionary Sam Gordon who died last week.

Dozens of messages were read out by Connie Harris to the assembly from Labour Party branches, women's groups and revolutionary organisations and militants from around the world.

In particular, letters came from the American Socialist Workers Party, revolutionary socialists in Holland, Sweden and Norway and from leaders of the Fourth International, including Ernest Mandel.

Tributes were made by a succession of speakers starting with CLR James who recorded the deep bond that existed between

himself and Sam in their pre-war days in Paris. Other speakers included Ken Tarbuck and John Archer as well as a Labour Party speaker.

Two speakers, Alan Harris and Charlie van Gelderen, spoke as long time comrades of Sam and for the International Marxist Group and the Fourth International.

Charlie van Gelderen recalled what he thought was the decisive contribution that Sam had made to the building of the Fourth International in maintaining and building the links between sections in the difficult years of the Second World War.

Alan Harris spoke in similar vein.

'Sam's life was dedicated towards helping resolve this most acute and difficult problem of our time — that of assembling a proletarian leadership capable of winning the vast majority of the

workers to a revolutionary socialist consciousness and practice,' he said.

Harris recalled that before Sam was 21 years old he was editing the *American Militant*. His literary work continued throughout his life on publications of the Fourth International and major translations such as Hilferding's book, *Finance Capital*, from German into English.

Sam became the administrative secretary of the leadership of the Fourth International in 1939 and shortly after was part of a delegation which met with Trotsky in Mexico. Prevented by the dictat of the American government from making his home in the USA, Sam spent the rest of his life in Britain following events in the British class struggle closely and providing advice and friendship for new generations of revolu-

tionary Marxists.

Harris concluded by summing up his and many others' impressions of Sam Gordon.

'Sam was one of the most gentle people I have known. He was objective and honest and told you in a frank and fraternal way what he thought about things. He was a comrade that you could always turn to for help. He was a

strong person too ... This is shown in the way he patiently fought for his political ideas and in the way he fought his illness for 20 years.

'The best way we can pay tribute to comrade Sam and the things that he stood for is by redoubling our efforts to build a society where the workers are in command.'

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Socialist Challenge News

DECLARATION OF FUSION

THE INTERNATIONAL MARXIST GROUP (British Section of the Fourth International) has fused with the League for Socialist Action. The fusion was agreed by the LSA Steering Committee in December 1981 and by the IMG at its Central Committee of 20/21 February.

The fusion has a political importance although it will not result in a significantly larger organisation. It takes place on the basis of an agreement commonly to build the Fourth International in Britain and to fight for its programme — the programme of revolutionary Marxism.

The fusion also represents the healing of a seven year old split. The origins of the League for Socialist Action lay in a number of members leaving the International Marxist Group in 1975.

In the last period there has been agreement between the two groups on the importance of building an organisation with a practically internationalist outlook, of rooting such an organisation in the industrial unions and of the centrality of the Labour Party for revolu-

tionary politics today. Both organisations are committed to the building of an independent revolutionary youth organisation. These positions were reaffirmed at the recent conferences of both organisations.

The fusion of the two organisations will

result in a strengthening of the process of building the British Section of the Fourth International and will also act as a greater pole of attraction for wider and larger forces that are moving towards revolutionary Marxism.

In particular in the last two years there has been a recomposition of forces calling themselves Trotskyist both in Britain and internationally. Internationally a split from the United Secretariat of the Fourth International led to the formation of

the 'International Committee'. This formation has now split into its original component parts. In Britain the Workers Socialist League and the International Communist League have fused under the name of the Workers Socialist League. They have no meaningful international affiliations.

The choice for all those groups calling themselves Trotskyist and who are committed to building the Fourth

International is clear; join the forces of the United Secretariat or exist as a national formation — that is not as a Trotskyist organisation at all.

The fusion between the LSA and the IMG is a step towards a strong united organisation which in the years ahead can intervene in the workers radicalisation and link up nationally and internationally with all those forces moving towards revolutionary Marxist positions.

SOCIALIST CHALLENGE is publishing the 'Declaration of Fusion' which announces the fusion between the International Marxist Group and the League for Socialist Action. We are also publishing a statement from Tony Roberts on behalf of the LSA on why it has decided now to fuse with the IMG.

Socialist Challenge has, over the past period, published articles which take up the basis on which revolutionary organisations should fuse. These positions reflect the views of the IMG as do many of the paper's articles.

The IMG will continue to take up any differences that may exist between the comrades from the two fused organisations, as is the norm in the IMG, within the common framework of building the party.



Statement from LSA

THE FUSION of the League for Socialist Action and the International Marxist Group heals a six year split among the supporters of the Fourth International in Britain.

Central to the differences was the approach of Marxists to the labour movement. In our view, the IMG had an ultra left and sectarian orientation.

From 1978 onwards, the LSA became favourable to healing the split. But the IMG's course at that time towards the British Socialist Workers Party made fusion impractical. We considered that what was at stake was not some 'tactical' difference but the whole meaning of a 'proletarian orientation'.

The decisions of the 1981 IMG conference, however, removed many doubts which we had on this score. In the face of the radicalisation in the labour movement, the IMG re-oriented towards building a homogenous party rooted in the working class.

Socialist Action

Faced with this new situation — which the LSA welcomed — the latter had no principled reason for remaining as a separate current, and contacted the IMG for fusion.

Any tactical differences that remain can be resolved democratically within the common framework of building a party of worker-Bolsheviks.

In particular, three axes were key for the LSA in building such a party. These are:

1. Deepening the turn to the industrial working class. As the class struggle intensifies, it is increasingly only industrial workers who have the power to stem the ruling class offensive. No single

sector of workers and their allies — blacks, women and so on — can offset the attack on their rights in isolation.

Rooting the IMG in industry is central to winning this decisive layer to class struggle ideas, to getting it to pioneer the rights of all the oppressed and exploited.

Socialist Action

It is only by bringing the composition of the party into line with our programme that we will be able to grow and lay the basis for a class-struggle left wing. Key to this process will be winning the most dynamic layers of working class youth to a revolutionary perspective. This is why both the IMG/LSA see building *Revolution* as a central aspect of the turn.

2. Adopting a correct orientation to the Labour Party. It is only within the framework of the turn that developments in the Labour Party can be correctly gauged.

The conflicts opening up in the party are due, above all, to the growing radicalisation among the union rank-and-file who form the base of the party. It is this which explains the shift left by the union bloc vote, at recent conferences, which has been key for democratising the party and adopting more radical policies.

Socialist Action

It is only by adopting this approach that Marxists can avoid adapting to left-reformist currents.

It is in the course of putting all currents to the test — on the key political

issues — that more and more workers will be drawn to revolutionary Marxist conclusions on the way forward.

3. Taking up the key national/international issues. Deepening the 'turn' does not mean adapting to the existing level of struggles around pay and conditions (vital though these are). It means taking into our union branches all the key issues of the day on which the labour movement has to give a lead.

Socialist Action

It is only by Marxists fighting in the unions and Labour Party branches to take up these issues — from defence of black rights to withdrawal of the troops from Ireland — that they can seek to unite working people and head off ruling class attempts to divide them on racist/sexist lines.

Particularly important is the need to fight for a clear internationalist class outlook. This means taking up issues such as Poland and — most important of all — Central America.

It is in Central America that the fight between our class and the imperialists has reached its sharpest point. Reagan and his allies are not only trying to drown the El Salvadorean liberation struggle in blood, but to roll back the major gains won by the Grenadian and Nicaraguan governments, and the Cuban workers' state which stands as a beacon of hope for all the oppressed in Latin America.

Socialist Action

It is the elementary duty of Marxists to rally support for those who, today, are in the front line of the fight against imperialism. Such a task is doubly im-

portant in view of the fact that we are witnessing, today the rise of a new revolutionary Marxist leadership — led by the Cubans — which can play a vital role in resolving the crisis of leadership facing the working class worldwide.

Socialist Action

As the Tory offensive deepens, ever-wider layers will be drawn into struggle and come into conflict with the pro-capitalist policies of their present leaders. This will create major openings for Marxists to advance clear class-struggle solutions for the problems workers face.

In order to take advantage of these openings, a strong homogenous combat party has to be built. Such a party has to be rooted in the industrial heartlands of Britain. It has to be an organic part of the class it seeks to lead.

Celebrate 50 years of World Revolution
Sunday 2 May 6.30 till late
A Tribute to Charlie van Gelderen
A member of the Left Opposition and a founding member of the Fourth International
Organised by Brent Socialist Challenge and Revolution, it will be an evening of entertainment which celebrates the revolutionary struggles over the last 50 years.
Tickets available from PO Box 50 London N1.
Cheques payable to Brent Readers Group.
Price £4 (£2.50 unwaged) includes 3 course meal.

Where you can buy Socialist Challenge

Scotland

ABERDEEN: SC available at Boomtown books, King St. For more info ring Bill 896 284.
EDINBURGH: SC sold Thur 4.15-5.15pm Bus Station, St. Andrew 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.
GLASGOW: SC sales every Thur/Fri 4.30-5.30pm at Central Station. Also available at Barretts, Byres Rd; Clyde Books, High St; Glasgow Bookshop Collective, Cresswell Lane; Hope Street Book Centre.
HAMILTON: SC sale every Sat 1-5pm outside Safeway, shopping centre. For more info contact John Ford, 53 Eliot Crescent, Hamilton or Paul Youngson, 18 Forrest Crescent, Hamilton.

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.
SOUTHAMPTON: SC on sale Sat 10am-12 noon at Above Bar Post Office (Shopping Precinct).
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).
TEESSIDE: SC on sale Sat lunchtime in the Cleveland Centre, and in Newfare, 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.

England

BATH: SC on sale at 1985 Books, London Road, and Saturdays 2pm-3pm outside the Roman Baths. Phone 20298 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 Fullmarks, 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.
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 at Gorton and Droylesden markets 11am-12.30 Sats and at Grassroots and Percivals 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 Caledonian 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; Dillons, QMC; Page One E15; The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper St, N1; Reading Matters, Wood Green next to Sainsbury's; Village Books, Streatham; Tetrico Books, Clapham; Paperback Centre, Brixton; Oval tube kiosk.
NOTTINGHAM: Mushroom Books Heathcote St, Hockley.
SOUTHAMPTON: October Books Onslow Road.
YORK: Community Books, Walmgate.

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LONDON: Central Books, 37 Grays

SC Events

BRISTOL: Joint Revolution/Socialist Challenge Day school on the Labour Party — 'Socialism and the Labour Party today' for our sympathisers. Sat 27 March, 11-5pm, Creche provided. For details of venue contact Bath (0225) 20298.
RAIL FRACTION: 27 Mar, National Centre, 10am

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.

Labour Committee on Ireland, Greater Manchester: Thursday 1 April 7.30pm at the Britons Protection pub, 61 Bridgewater St, Manchester 1. Speakers from 'Women in Ireland Group' (who visited Armagh on International Women's Day), May 8 organising committee, and the 'Irish in Britain representation group'. LP members only.
Commemoration of Bobby Sands: MP guest of honour Owen Carron MP plus other speakers. Thursday 6 May 7.30pm in the McNamara Room, Irish Centre, Murray Street, East London, NW1.
TURKISH trade unionists on 22-24 April. Between 24 March and 2 April leading figures from the Turkish trade union federation DISK will visit major cities in Britain to raise support for the 52 executive members of DISK currently on trial for their lives in Turkey. Meetings in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Manchester, Leeds, Sheffield, Newcastle, Bolton, Liverpool, Oxford and London.

WOMEN IN TRADE UNIONS

Sat 27 March
Conference 10am-5.30 at Kingsway Princeton College, Sidmouth Street, WC1. 29 topic workshops. Film: *Rosie the Riveter* and discussion led by Women in Manual Trades. Bop with TOUR DE FORCE. All-day canteen. Some facilities for disabled. Women only. Registration £3.50/£2 includes lunch and films. Contact: Women's Fightback 01-607 9052/5268.

Jobs for women

'YOUNG MEN have a street life, older men their pubs and clubs, but women are left at home.' This quote is used in a new pamphlet from the National Joint Committee of Working Women's Organisations entitled *Women's Right To Work* to illustrate the harsh reality of unemployment for Britain's women.

Being jobless means more than lost income for women. It means a step back to a traditional, 'invisible' role as housewife and mother, locked in the isolation of the home.

The pamphlet nails the lie that women work for pin-money. 'A third of all families where the wife doesn't work have incomes below £40 a week,' it points out. 'Without the contribution made by the wife's earnings the number of families living below the Supplementary Benefit level would treble.'

It could be added that in six million families women are the sole breadwinners.

Women have fared worse from unemployment. In 1972 they were 23 per cent of the unemployed. In 1978 they were 45 per cent. And official figures don't tell the whole story: the government conceals women's unemployment.

There were 300,000 unregistered unemployed in 1981, three quarters of whom were women. Disabled women are excluded from the figures: thousands of married women do not register because their husbands are working.

Women are losing jobs

faster because of their pattern of employment. Many are in the traditional manufacturing industries that made the British ruling class the richest in the world — textiles, footwear, paper, printing and electrical engineering — the very industries that are feeling the brunt of the recession as Britain's imperial past catches up with it.

The public sector is Maggie's No 1 target for cuts: here 44 per cent of the workforce are women, in jobs that are often first to go: school dinner ladies, cleaners, and low-paid hospital and clerical jobs.

Young women at school, who are channelled into traditional commercial courses, are being trained for unemployment. 'Women's work' in offices has become a prime target for automation by big business.

Labour's own legislation has failed to protect women from the employers' ruthlessness.

Fewer and fewer women have used the Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination legislation as they see how easy it is for employers to win their case at tribunals. Scandalously, women's pay is now starting to

decline in relation to men's. In 1977 it was 73.6 per cent of men's, in 1980 it was 72 per cent. Today it is probably even less as long dole queues push down the general level of wages. In 1980 10 per cent of women were earning less than the disgraceful wage of £50 per week.

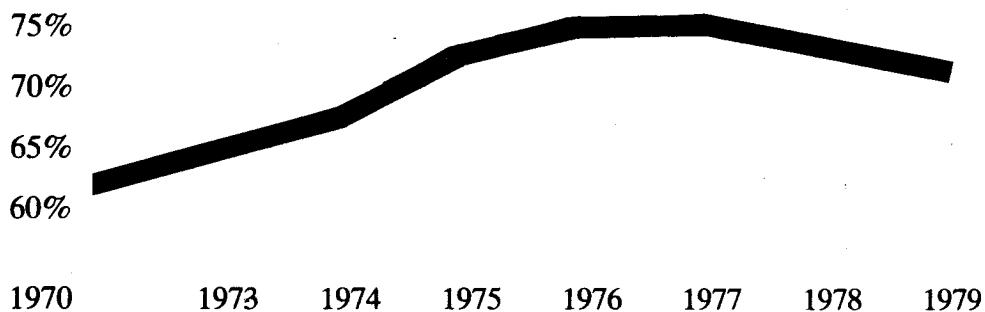
The pamphlet looks at the way society defines work. It points out that we must 'question our cultural attitudes to work in discussing strategies for the future'. Later it argues we have to 'upgrade those social and community services currently performed voluntarily, so that they become recognised paid employment open to men and women'. It criticises the 'Wages for Housework' demand not only for impracticality but also because 'it implies that caring for the home is women's work'.

Here the authors touch on an issue the socialist movement could well debate anew. Many women would agree with the pamphlet that in order for

Alternative Economic Strategies to mean anything to women they should 'challenge basic assumptions of working life,' that 'childcare and home caring tasks are to remain the sole prerogative of women' and instead give 'both men and women the opportunity to share work at home as well as their children.'

Women's earnings as a proportion of men's earnings, 1970-79.

Women's earnings as % of men's



But of course women want men to share responsibilities for domestic labour. Of course women want society to recognise that caring for the sick and elderly and children is useful to society, and that both sexes should take part in it. The point is: how will that come about?

Because the AES is ambiguous about planning the relations of production, it cannot help but be ambiguous about planning the relations of reproduction — relations in the home.

The AES proposes many good reforms for women. Therefore it must, say some feminists, challenge attitudes.

You cannot change the habits and traditions of centuries of female subordination simply by persuasion and legal reforms. You have to create new property relations to create

new social relations. To wipe out women's exclusive responsibility for domestic labour you have to wipe out the capitalist class that benefits from women's slave labour in the home and benefits from men's traditional attitude towards women. You will never change the male sex simply by asking them to stop behaving the way they do.

One important criticism: the pamphlet leaves out one of the most important arguments for a Woman's Right to Work. Women at work are leading some of Britain's most militant struggles, both on their own behalves and on behalf of all workers.

The pamphlet makes no mention of the young women at Lee Jeans who fought on for their jobs when the big Linwood factory backed down and forced the employers to give

them work. No remark is made about the Coventry cleaners who went out on strike for weeks to get a Labour council to listen to their union's case on jobs and pay.

To read the pamphlet you would not know that women had occupied the Lovable Bra factory in Cumbernauld, were in occupation at the Plessey factory in Bathgate — all in the cause of the defence of jobs. The leaders of the Labour Party are very willing to talk about a Woman's Right to Work; but perhaps they are not so keen on women taking action to fight for their jobs? Our job is to start where the pamphlet leaves off.

Women's Right to Work, published by the National Joint Committee for Working Women's Organisations, 35p.

El Salvador, Another Vietnam

Simon Lockwood reviews a new film

THIS IS the third film on El Salvador to come from the American Catalyst's media documentary group in the last nine months.

It makes sobering viewing, which is an immense tribute to the quality of the footage and the dryness with which it is covered.

The major political events of the past two years are covered in such a way as to leave no doubt as to historical accuracy.

Thus we are treated to an interview with President Duarte where he says that 'there is no repression in this country', followed by a film of the army attacking the National University and the merciless killing of a student.

We are shown an FMLN weapons workshop, where guerillas explain how they have to make all their own weapons. Cut to US state department spokesperson: 'It was a worldwide communist network ... supplied an immense amount of armaments ... to their friends in El Salvador.'

We see Archbishop Romero comment: 'There is an institutionalised violence provoking the anger of the people. It comes from the Right, in order to maintain its privileges through repression.' We are then shown his funeral — he was assassinated days after the footage was shot.

There is tremendous coverage of the FMLN, both in interview and in combat. As many women as men are shown in both aspects of the film.

But perhaps the most striking moment was when Enrique Alvarez, the first president of the FDR and a social democrat, explains how useless was the pity of other nations. Only the people of El Salvador can free themselves, he says, and only through revolutionary struggle.

Alvarez and five other FDR leaders were kidnapped and assassinated in November 1980.

El Salvador, Another Vietnam is showing at the Institute of Contemporary Arts until 4 April.



FMLN guerrillas in El Salvador

Mary digs it in Derbyshire

MARY ZINS, a miner from Pennsylvania for three and a half years, has been on tour in Britain. Last week she spent three days in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire visiting the pits and mining community. **JACK LAVIN** reports.

Sunday 14 March 3pm Socialist Challenge meeting in Mansfield. Mansfield is the centre of the Nottinghamshire coalfield.

The audience, mainly from the mining community, are interested in the situation in the American labour movement, health and safety and, of course, women working down the pits.

The debate is lively and sharp. Some miners argue that it would be a backward step for women to go into such a dirty, dangerous job. Mary comes back by saying that what is necessary is for men and women to fight together for safer conditions.

Monday 15 March 7.30am Meet the branch president at Warsop Main in North Derbyshire.

8.20am Arrive at Welbeck pit in North Notts.

Mark, a Socialist Challenge supporter who works at the pit, has arranged an underground visit. The gate is about 12 foot high and 20 foot across.

The air is filled with the sound of the huge cutting machine which dominates the gate. When the cut finishes we go into the face. We edge under the huge hydraulic roof supports. Thick rubber pipes carrying cables seem to curl everywhere.

This is quite a good face — you can almost stand up and it's not too hot. In some areas it gets as hot as 98°F. The machine driver begins another cut.

The huge revolving cutting heads are pulled along by a thick steel chain. Mark tells us that the chain had snapped the

week before. Two miners were knocked out — they could have been killed.

Danger is ever present. As we wait for the paddy train to take us back, a deputy tells us to hang on as there's an injured miner coming up from the other side of the pit.

On top again, Mary is presented with a badge to commemorate the centenary of Notts NUM. One of the officials promises to put a 'Women miners can dig it too' sticker in his car.

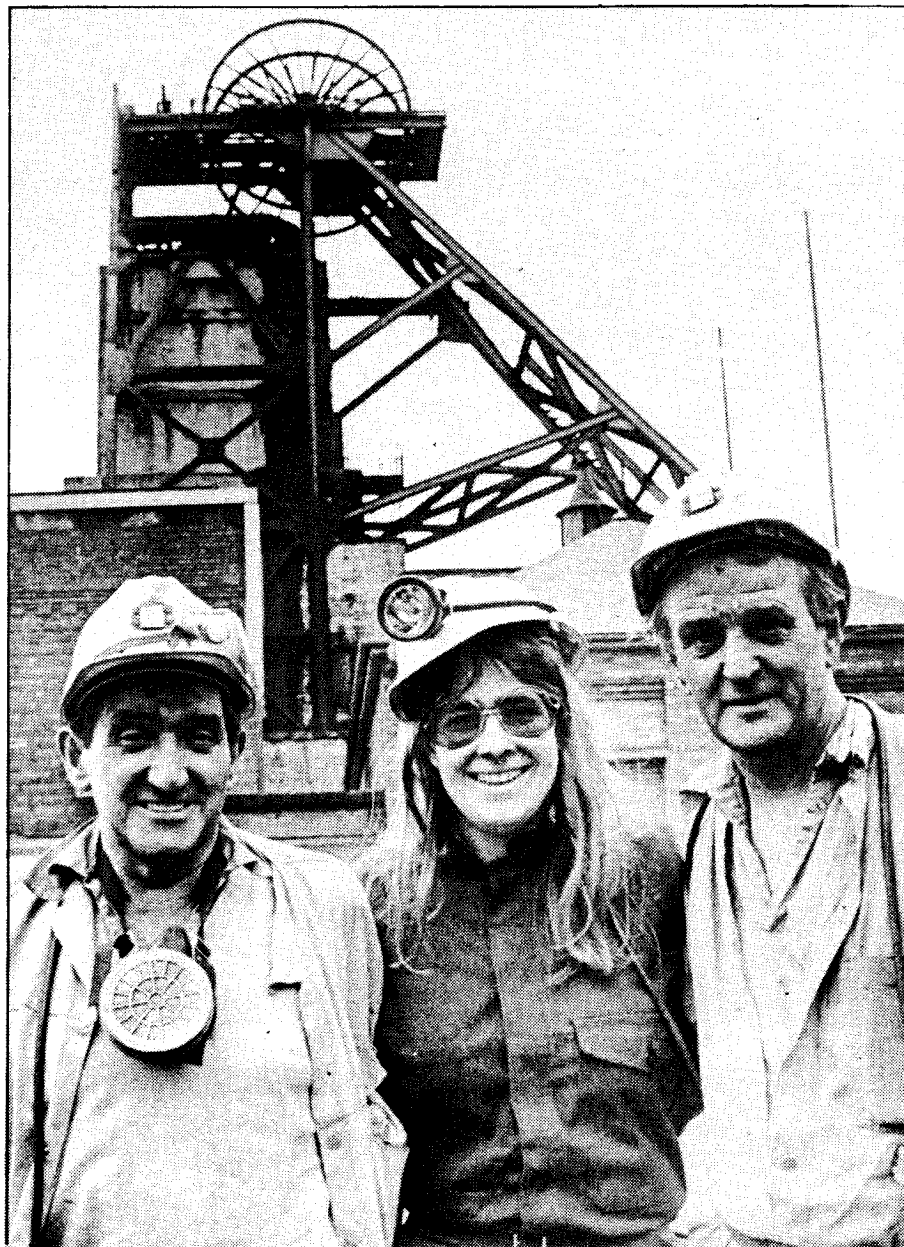
2pm. Arrive at Ollerton pit to meet the branch president.

2.30pm Meet with a group of miners' wives who have established a woman's group in the town. The women are curious and ask many questions about what it's like to work in the pits. They are concerned that women miners are treated as equals.

4.30pm The last visit of the day. We meet Joe Whelan, general secretary of Notts NUM and a member of the national executive.

Tuesday 16 March. We visit the headquarters of the Derbyshire NUM. General Secretary, Peter Heathfield presents Mary with a special plate commemorating the Derbyshire miners, as a gesture of solidarity with the American miners and the struggle of women for equality. It is something of an honour.

Mary's next stop is Sheffield. The time she's spent in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire has certainly stimulated debate on women down the pits. Mary has had a worthwhile, if exhausting time. It will be a visit long remembered in these parts whatever the views of the



Mary Zins, first woman miner down the pits in Britain for 140 years

people she met.

... and Sheffield, too

'IF MINING is not safe for women, it's not safe

for men.' That was Mary Zins' response to a miners' official in Sheffield who did not want women to go down the pits.

Mary's tour in the Yorkshire area was highly successful and caused a major stir in the local labour movement, in particular, the National Union of Mineworkers.

She went down Maltby colliery, the first woman miner down the pit for 140 years.

In answer to the claim that most women would not want to work down the pit, Mary replied, 'They should have the right to decide that themselves. It should not be against the law.'



Abortion trial reopens in Spain

The trial has reopened in Spain of 11 women and one man accused of having done or had abortions. The trial had been postponed on two previous occasions but was reopened on 16 March, when the case for the defence was presented. The prosecution is asking for heavy prison sentences up to 60 years and fines. There are three judges and no jury. A decision should be known by the end of this week.

A witness from the International Campaign on Abortion, Contraception and Sterilisation gave evidence in the trial. Contributions toward the fare to be sent to NAC, 374 Grays Inn Road, London WC1.

Send telegrams now demanding 'Amnesty for Bilbao trials. Legalise abortion in Spain' to President de la Audiencia, Provincial de Vizcaya, Seccion No 2, Bilbao, Spain.

Women's TUC in debate

By Judith Arkwright

THIS YEAR'S WOMEN'S TUC took place against a background of a worsening economic situation which is hitting women hardest of all.

Women suffer from unemployment in greater proportions than men. Motions for a shorter working week, for encouraging young women into non-traditional jobs and for no discrimination in redundancies were all carried.

But where was the action to implement all these things? It was tucked away at the end in a paragraph in the report supporting the Labour Party action for women's rights on 5 June.

Some delegates attended a fringe meeting called by the action committee for a woman's right to work. Mary Zins spoke about positive action as a policy for confronting the role of women in the reserve army of labour and fighting unemployment as a whole. It is becoming urgent to go out and build the 5 June event as the next step in the fightback against the Tories.

For the first time in its history, the Women's TUC took a discussion and resolution on rape and sexual violence, thus acknowledging that this is a trade union and a class issue. The resolution put by the Institute of Professional Civil Servants called for a condemnation of police attitudes and for written statements to be permitted in court where a woman is unable to testify as occurred in the Glasgow rape case.

The Women's TUC has not always been a talking shop. It did play a major role in fighting for action to defend abortion rights; this year an emergency resolution in defence of doctors threatened with prosecution for illegal abortions and against back door methods of changing the abortion act was carried.

But at the end of the day — or rather at the very beginning of the agenda — the Women's TUC voted, as it does every year to give itself as little power as possible. This year, again, a motion calling for five resolutions from the Women's TUC to go automatically to the TUC conference was rejected. Cries of short cuts and the danger of women being patronised were used.

Anna Coote, moving the motion from the National Union of Journalists, declared that women have waited too long to have a real say inside the trade union movement and that, yes, it's high time we found a few short cuts if we are to get anywhere. Women are a huge force in the trade union movement.

A movement which listens to and acts on our demands is immeasurably strengthened and it's a pity that the Women's TUC insists on denying women the chance to show the power that they have.

LABOUR PARTY

Women's festival

Women's right to
Employment
Child care
Services
Education

Rally with major political & trade union speakers
Music Theatre
Forums Stalls
Children's Events
Refreshments
CRECHE AVAILABLE

SATURDAY
5TH JUNE
Battersea Park
LONDON from 12 noon



Can't pay, won't move!

By Helen Flynn, bus conductor

WHY ARE London bus conductors collecting the new increased fares? A good question, and one that will probably be used against us from different sides in the battle over the Law Lords' ruling on subsidised public transport. So let's get a few things straight.

It's NOT because we support the higher fares — we don't, the vast majority of us believe the cheap fares policy was fantastic benefit to Londoners.

It's NOT because we aren't prepared to defend that policy. Our strike last week built up tremendous morale in showing that united action by all workers on London Transport can bring the city to a grinding halt.

But if one of the organisers of the *Can't Pay, Won't Pay* campaign were to have a look round my bus garage, or flick through the Public Service Vehicle Regulations for conductors and passengers, they might eventually begin to see why we've opposed their sort of campaign, why we have to collect the new fares, and why being a bus conductor must be about the most miserable job in the world this week.

Our garage has suddenly been plastered with directives, letters and notices from management informing us that we will be disciplined if we comply in any way with passengers

attempting to pay the old fares.

The concession by which you could offer your name and address in lieu of payment, intended to cover situations where passengers get their purses stolen or lose their travel permits, has now been withdrawn.

We are now expected to follow to the letter, the procedure in the rule book for dealing with fares refusals.

Basically, this means that if a passenger refuses to pay the full fare or to leave the bus, we have to call the police.

Management has also let it be known that large numbers of inspectors and



Ken Livingstone and Dave Wetzel

plain clothes LT police will be keeping an eye on us.

The threat of job losses that already hangs over our heads means that people are frightened of being sacked because of this campaign.

When Councillor Valerie Wise and 'Can't Pay' organiser was interviewed on the radio news at the weekend, she said, 'Yes, we want passengers to travel illegally because sometimes the only way

you can fight for what you want is to break the law.

It sounds like real fighting talk. Unfortunately, the lack of a lead from the Labour GLC in defying the Law Lords' ruling has left the union leaders off the hook.

Our one day strike should have been the spring board for further industrial action. Instead, like the GLC councillors, our leaders want us to take individual heroic actions.

With 3,000 jobs up for grabs in London Transport, it just is not good enough to say if any worker gets victimised there will be an all out strike.

All that does is perpetuate isolated actions and that is not what trade unions should do. It is collective action that makes the union strong. *Can't Pay, Won't Pay*, whatever its intentions only serves to weaken and divide us.

Coventry Massey Ferguson workers sit-in

By B Bella

OVER 3000 workers at the Massey Ferguson, Banner Lane plant in Coventry are indefinitely sitting-in to protest a situation where their unions are not getting information needed for negotiations.

Yesterday the company demanded a £12.50 a week wage cut if it withdrew redundancies. The unions are demanding short working time rather than accepting job loss.

Their wage rise last

year was well below the rate of inflation and 300 voluntary redundancies were given.

This year there will be no wage rise and the company is seeking 725, mainly compulsory redundancies.

Union reaction has been mixed. The joint engineering/transport union meetings decided to resist all compulsory redundancies with whatever action is necessary.

But staff areas so far

have been picked off one by one.

Some members of the white-collar section of the transport union tried to break out of this last week when they hit the national news by sitting on the tracks and stopping production in protest against being given redundancy notices.

The shop floor workers backed them up by barring any management attempts to remove them.

Plessey sit-in saves 80 jobs

By Toni Gorton

VIEWERS of ITN's News At Ten programme Friday 19 March may have been startled to see a new entry to ITN's weekly jobs report.

In addition to their normal 'jobs lost, jobs created' categories had been added 'jobs saved'.

The reporter matter of factly stated that the mainly women workers at Plessey, Bathgate and Lovable Bra in Cumbernauld had saved 80 jobs each through sit-ins at their respective factories.

A mass meeting of Plessey workers on 18 March decided to accept the terms offered to them.

At talks the previous Monday between Plessey and Arcotronics, the firm which will take over the Bathgate factory a guarantee was made to keep 80 jobs for at least one year.

Shop steward con-

venor, Ina Scott said that she was 'proud to have led the sit-in'.

'Although we felt like carrying on, we felt there was a danger we could be risking everything.

'Our fight was to keep a factory open here, not just for ourselves, but for the people of Bathgate and that's what I hope we have done.'

She added that she could not hide her 'bitter disappointment that no more than 80 jobs could be obtained'.

The sit-in, which began on 5 January, was notable for the determination of the women workforce to fight for the jobs while the men opted for redundancy.

Later, the bosses sacked those sitting in, depriving them of the thousands of pounds in redundancy pay and prosecuting them through the courts — all of which failed to shift



Shop steward convenor Ina Scott

the women. Their fight to keep the factory open was their main aim and in this they were successful.

International Book Fair Radical Black 3rd World Books

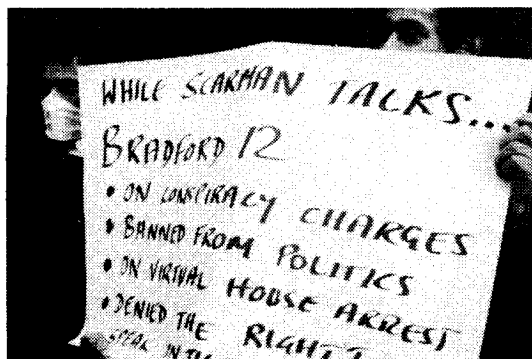
Islington Town Hall, Upper St, Islington, London N1

Sunday 28 March to Sunday 4 April

THE fair, to be opened by CLR James, author of *The Black Jacobins*, will have over 70 publishers participating from Africa, the Caribbean, Asia, Afro-America, Europe and Britain.

There will be a series of events including a variety concert compered by Linton Kwesi Johnson; forums on black writing, fascist attacks on black and radical bookshops, and poetry; an international food fair; and a concert for piano and flute with music by contemporary black and third world composers.

Tickets and programme available from New Beacon Books, 76 Stroud Green Road, Finsbury Park, London N4, 01-272 4889.



Free the Bradford 12 National demonstration Leeds Saturday 3 April

Further information from the national mobilising committee, Box JK, L.A.P., 59 Cookridge St, Leeds 2. London coaches leave York Way, Kings Cross at 8am. Tickets £4, unwaged £1.

LAURENCE SCOTT STRIKE BULLETIN

Number 4 Issued by Laurence Scott Joint Shop Stewards Committee

Lest we forget



AUEW exec - 'secret society'

By Toni Gorton

JOHN BOYD, general secretary of the engineers, is little more than a 'god-father' ruling over a 'secret society' which is the AUEW national executive, claims Phil Penning, a leader of the beleaguered Laurence Scott dispute in Manchester.

After 10 months of strike and bitter struggle against Laurence Scott boss Arthur Snipe, Manchester's top cop James Anderson and AUEW officials, the union executive are determined to block the ability of AUEW members to have any say whatsoever about how the union operated in the dispute.

A report in the *Financial Times* of 15 March stated that the executive committee of the AUEW has declared that all motions on Laurence Scott have been ruled out of order.

This is despite rule 14 of the AUEW constitution which states that the executive can be removed from office by a ballot of the membership provided that such a ballot is demanded by ten per cent of the union's branches and is agreed by at least two-thirds of the membership.

What is impossible to find out is how many branches have sent in resolutions. All correspondence goes directly to John Boyd himself and minutes are not distributed to relevant people such as Broad Left assistant secretaries Bob Wright and Ken Brett.

The only people who know what goes on in the AUEW executive are Boyd, Duffy and their cronies.

It's time to call a halt to their 'secret society'. Branches must protest this muzzling of their democratic rights. At least they should have the right to be informed. All AUEW members should be protesting this high-handed treatment and it should be an issue at the April national committee meeting.

Letters should be sent to the AUEW General Office, 110 Peckham Rd, London SE15 and a copy sent to the LSE Strike Committee, 20 Roundcroft, Romiley, Cheshire. Donations to same address.

The Laurence Scott Strike Bulletin is available at 5p each from the above address.

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Palestinian training camps prepare for attacks on Israeli oppressors

After Golan, is the West Bank next?

By Pam Singer

ISRAELI soldiers murdered a 17-year old youth during riots in the West Bank town of El Bireh. They forced open shutters of shops which had shut down during a three-day general strike to protest the dismissal of the town's mayor, Ibrahim Tawil, for refusing to meet with head of the civil administration, Professor Menachem Milson.

This is the real face of the supposedly humane administration set up 1 November 1981 to replace the military government that had occupied the West Bank and Gaza Strip since the 1967 war.

Officially, civil administration was meant to facilitate the transfer of local government responsibilities, including maintenance of law and order, from direct army control to the hands of 'co-operative' Palestinian functionaries. This was to lead towards some form of 'self-government'.

Tactic

But for the past fourteen years, the Israelis have had no success in actually finding such 'co-operative' functionaries who could serve as credible 'legitimate representatives' (that is, Palestinian collaborators) to undermine the strong influence of the PLO.

As their main tactic, the Israelis have revived an old British Mandatory policy — the creation of 'self-help' Village Leagues. These leagues

receive arms and government subsidies to improve local conditions.

In many cases, particularly in rural areas, the population has no choice but to go to these leagues for their daily concerns.

Rural

The Israeli government is counting on this dependency and on traditional 'rural backwardness' to establish a base for the leagues as a counterweight to elected urban representatives, such as the mayors of Nablus and Ramallah, who are openly sympathetic to the PLO. These leagues have gained no popular support in the cities.

From the very beginning, the populations of the West Bank and Gaza Strip have made their opposition to the 'civil administration' and Arab collaboration well known, with general strikes, demonstrations, mass meetings, and the assassination of Yussef el-Khatib, head of the Ramallah league.

The Milson administration has responded

with bullets, tear gas, curfews, arrests, censorship, closing down Bir Zeit University and Al-Fajr newspaper for their 'terrorist' connections.

Dissolve

But this has all been directed towards the 'extremists'. Now, disconcerted by the positive response of Village League representatives to Jordan's call for defections, the government has actually dissolved an elected local authority.

This follows last week's dissolution by Defence Minister Ariel Sharon of the National Guidance Committee, a loose coordinating body of the Palestinian nationalist opposition. Given that, in the past, Israeli authorities have banished mayors and planted bombs in their cars, this may come as no surprise.

Golan

Six weeks after the establishment of the Milson administration, the Israelis annexed the Golan Heights, an area never considered part of pre-1948 Palestine. With the recent announcement that evacuated settlers from the Sinai may be relocated in West Bank settlements, it is almost certain that the Israelis are have similar plans for the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem. We

can expect more Palestinian resistance rising out of the ashes of an already dead Camp David.

Grenada celebration

By Gary Erlisker

'THANK YOU Grenada. We will never let you down.' These words from Carlos Trejo of the Cuban embassy summed up the feelings of hundreds of people attending a rally in the Hammersmith Town Hall on 13 March to celebrate the third anniversary of the Grenadan revolution.

The gains of the revolution were dealt with at some length by Rita Joseph, vice-president of the National Women's Organisation in Grenada.

Taxes on the lowest paid 30 per cent of the workforce have been abolished; over the past year wage rises have outstripped inflation; unemployment has been almost halved in three years; free education has been established; child care centres have been set up to help women be able to fully participate in the new society. The whole concept of a social wage has been established, improving working people's conditions in all facets of life.

Despite natural disasters which frequently hit the Caribbean area, despite the international capitalist recession which determines the prices Grenada will get for its agricultural exports and despite the lack of valuable raw

Turkey: union leaders on trial

By Nick Robin

'IT'S NOT TRUE that we have tortured to death seventy prisoners — it's only fifteen', said a cynical spokesperson for the Turkish military junta last week in response to an Amnesty International report on human rights in Turkey.

This grisly admission is part of a growing catalogue of crimes against human rights perpetrated by the junta. On Wednesday 24 February, 44 intellectuals and professional people associated with the Turkish Peace Committee were arrested by the military junta.

□ □ □

Among those arrested was Orhan Apaydin, President of the Istanbul Bar Association and the most famous lawyer in Turkey. Apaydin is also chief defence counsel for the 52 DISK trade union leaders currently on trial for their lives in a converted sports stadium in Istanbul.

The DISK trial has been a total frame-up. Declaring the trial to be held in 'war conditions' the junta's judicial representatives have placed impossible restrictions on the defence. The trial which started three months ago, has been temporarily suspended with only half the 800 page indictment read.

Claiming that DISK is 'not a trade union but a secret Marxist-Leninist organisation' which is guilty of 'brainwashing the workers and making them slaves of socialist thought', the indictment charges DISK with 'forcing workers to go on strike' as a result of which 'some employers had to take their capital outside Turkey secretly'(!)

The aim of the trial is the total dismantling of independent working class organisation to facilitate the junta's 'Reaganomic' austerity programme. It is increasingly clear that justice for the 52 DISK leaders depends on international labour movement action on a massive scale.

The forthcoming speaking tour by DISK and other trade unionists organis-



ed by the Turkey Solidarity Campaign should be used to get the message across in the British trade union movement. The tour will be in London on 25 March, Glasgow 26 March, Edinburgh 27 March, Manchester 29 March, Newcastle and Leeds 30 March, Oxford and Sheffield 31 March and then London for two more days. The high point of the tour will be the rally at the TUC on Thursday 1 April. For more information: TSC, BM Box 5965, London WC1N 3XX.

■ ■ ■

Last Wednesday 17 March 40 people picketed the Turkish Airline to protest against the possibility of 27 Iranian students held in Turkish jails being deported back to Iran. They were arrested last October for demonstrating against the Khomeini regime.

Last year the Philippines deported students back to Iran and 8 were executed on arrival at the airport. At present there is a high level delegation from Turkey visiting Iran. Which makes the possibility of deportation more likely.

Further info from Iran Solidarity, BM Box 4344 London WC1N 3XX.

El Salvador and Nicaraguan ambassador Francisco D'Escoto brought greetings.

Richard Hart of Caribbean Labour Solidarity contrasted the gains of the Grenadan revolution to what was happening in Jamaica where a US-backed pro-imperialist regime is in power. While working people in Grenada are steadily moving forward, workers in Jamaica face restrictions on democratic rights and increasing poverty.

Hart was followed by Trade Union Congress chairperson Alan Sapper who pledged his support and explained the importance of the British labour movement giving support to the cause of Grenada.

Cuban representative Carlos Trejo blasted US policy, but explained that this would not hold back the revolutionary struggles in the areas. 'We look forward to being able in the near future to celebrate not just revolutionary Grenada and Nicaragua but also revolutionary victories in El Salvador, Guatemala and throughout the Americas', he said

to applause.

'It is not enough just to give words of solidarity', he said. 'The Cubans were also saying "Thank you Grenada. We will never let you down."'

Grenadan High Commissioner Fennis Augustine, speaking last, discussed Grenada's foreign policy. This is an internationalist policy, based on support for the rights of the oppressed and exploited throughout the world. Augustine singled out the revolutionary peoples fighting in the Americas for their liberation, the black fighters in South Africa and Namibia the Polisario Front in Morocco and the Palestinians.

Among the threats against Grenada from Washington there had been a few carrots offered, he said, if Grenada would compromise its principles. Grenada's reply, he added, is obvious.

This determination to stand up to imperialism was reinforced as the rally ended to chants of 'Forward Ever, Backward Never' and internationalist slogans.

Socialist Challenge

Tories to crackdown on youth

By Brian Grogan

VICIOUS new repressive measures are being planned by the Tories. In a desperate bid to divert attention from mass unemployment and the floundering British economy they are preparing a massive crackdown against youth.

In front of baying Tory MPs supposed Tory press 'softie' Home Secretary William Whitelaw

each year to accommodate them. The 'short, sharp shock' torture treatment of youth is to be extended.

★ **THREATENED** new stop and search powers to the police. This will restore the blatantly racist 'sus' law which had allowed police to arrest any black youth they cared to on 'suspicion'.

★ **APPEALED** to fascist-minded white 'vigilantes' that they join the part-time police specials.

These promises are in response to a Tory press campaign sponsored by the police. They indicate the next stage of Tory attempts to hang onto power. Despite the temporary rejection of a re-introduction of capital punishment, the 'hanging and flogging' brigade — always the apple of Mrs Thatcher's eye — clearly have the upper hand.

★ **PROMISED** full backing to 'snatch squad' techniques pioneered in Belfast to pick up 'ring-leaders' in any further youth rebellions.

★ **DEMANDED** that judges and magistrates give longer sentences. Two new prisons are to be built

An example of Tory

frenzy is the attempted censure of Labour GLC councillor Paul Boateng. He had criticised the police for being racist in the wake of the controversy surrounding the publication of racially biased street crime statistics by the London police.

This goes hand in hand with Whitelaw's targeting of 'liberal' police chief John Alderson for his calls for a return to 'community policing' rather than tackling hardline crusader James Anderton who has simply refused to work under even a semblance of 'control' by the Manchester police committee.

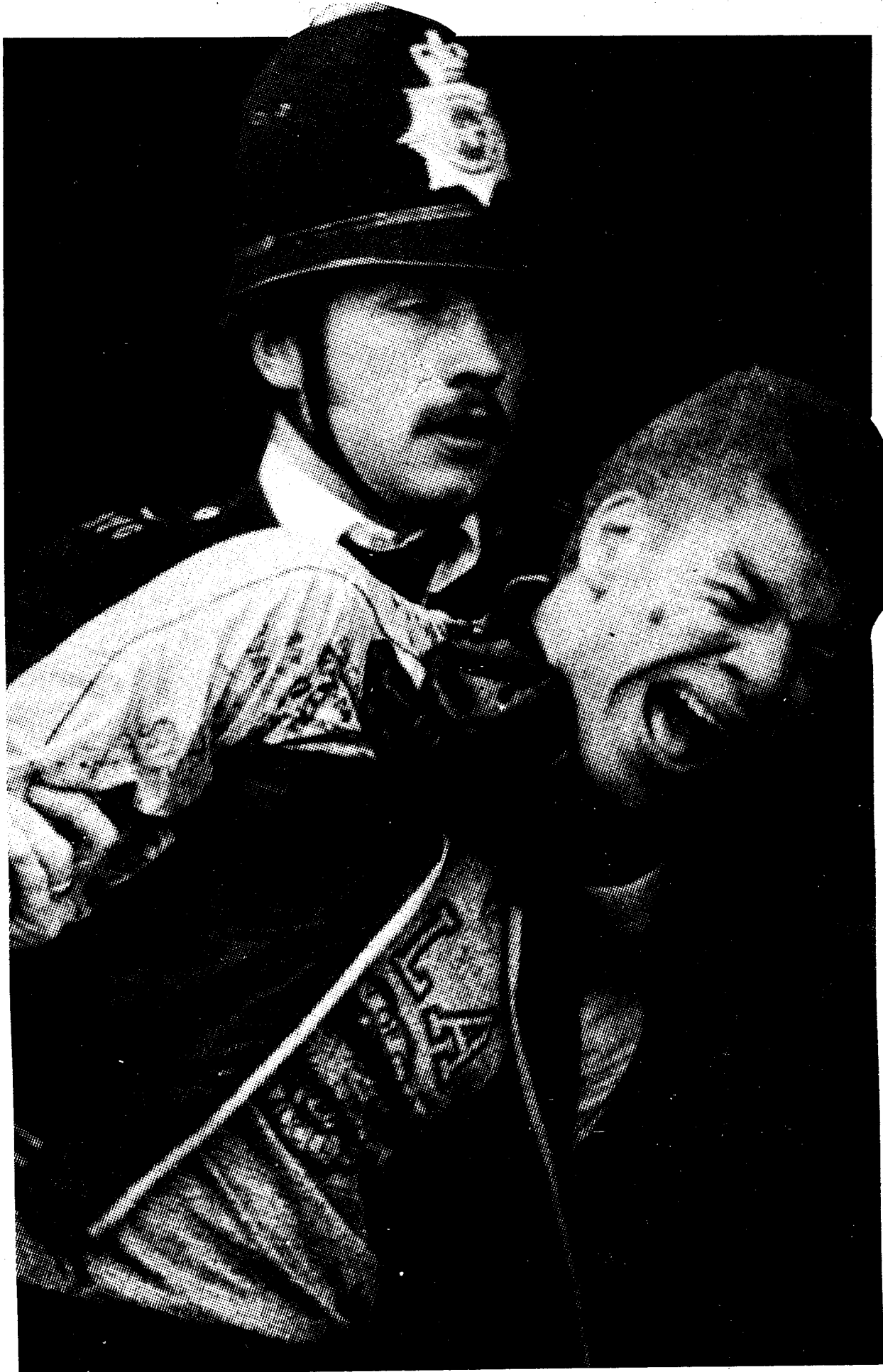
It is highly unlikely that youth, black youth especially, will be cowed by these new attacks on our democratic rights. The problem is that of the Labour leadership.

Last weekend's meeting of the North west Labour Party carried a Transport Union resolution demanding the resignation of James Anderton. This is good. But the labour movement cannot be content with responding to the most blatant manifestations of this campaign.

The Labour leadership already disgraced itself by its failure to defend the youth during last summer's uprisings. In the past weeks they have allowed the initiative to be in the hands of the Tory press to such an extent that Whitelaw is able to be presented as a moderate.

To simply demand a debate in the House of Commons on 'law and order' is pathetic. They should make it known that the Labour Party and the unions intend to defend youth and black people in particular against these new repressive moves and that the next Labour government will repeal all repressive legislation. This is the least that needs to be done.

● 'law and order' general election. See centre pages



Police grab demonstrator in youth rebellions last summer.

All out for national sales day!

1300 extra sales is our target for National Sales Day on 3 April! And our objective in the months leading up to Reagan's reception on 6-7 June is to keep those sales.

These extra sales are starting to come in. Birmingham readers have started a regular sale around the railway clubs every Friday. ASLEF and NUR militants who buy the paper are convinced that a showdown is inevitable on the railways. Socialist Challenge agrees and is helping to prepare the fight.

Manchester supporters have started a new market sale. Current sales are 20 and climbing.

East London supporters in the Labour Party will be canvassing for the Labour Party in the local government elections and canvassing for Socialist Challenge.

But in the next months hundreds of thousands of people will be starting to mobilise against Reagan's visit. Socialist Challenge will be at the centre of that mobilisation. It starts this weekend with the national demonstration in London against Reagan's bloodbath and in solidarity with the El Salvadorian revolutionaries.

Join our sellers!
Order your extra papers for national sales day.
(National Sales Day Action Desk, Sunday 2-5pm on 01-399 8371)

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Coaches to El Salvador demo: 1pm Hyde Park Sunday 28 March		
Coventry Pool Meadow 9.30am	Wolves Poly Students Union 9.30am	Manchester UMIST 8.00am
Leeds Corn Exchange 7.45am	Birmingham Hall of Memory 9.00am	Brighton Falmer House 7.30am,
Cardiff University 8.00am	Sheffield Harmer St 8.30am	St Peter's Church 8.00am
Oxford Magdalen St Giles 11.00am	Nottingham Salutation Inn 9.00am	

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