

Socialist Challenge

INSIDE

ASLEF —
standing firm
HEALTH —
days of action

BRITISH
RAIL
WHO NEXT



We're backing

ASLEF

THE strength and determination of the train drivers has forced British Rail to back off. It was not prepared to face the massive confrontation that would have ensued if it had gone ahead with its threats to sack the train drivers or shut down the railways. Faced with the massive show of solidarity from ASLEF, BR and the Tories have their backs against the wall. Now the whole labour movement has to throw its full weight behind the train drivers and the health workers to give the final blow to Thatcher.

Ever since the dispute on flexible rostering started it has been about bringing all rail workers to heel. ASLEF was the union that dared fight back which brought down on the union the venom of the Tory government, British Rail and the Tory media.

Despite all attempts by NUR leader, Sid Weighell, to break the solidarity of the strike it has failed to save him from the wrath of BR. Parker and the rail bosses have calmly torn up the guaranteed-week agreement and told Sid to go and get lost.

What is at stake in this dispute is not simply running a service more 'efficiently' or even running a service at all. The stakes are much higher than that — they include the future of the trade unions and the future of the Tory govern-

ment. This is why Weighell's treachery won't work.

Now the issues are so clear the labour movement must respond with the same singlemindedness and determination of the rail bosses. The TUC must call a day of action in support of the railworkers.

Foot has at last said ASLEF must be backed — good; let him drop the witch-hunt in the Labour Party and turn his full attention to supporting the workers who are fighting in the front line against the Tories. Let him take the Labour front bench onto the picket line. Let him call on every single member in the Labour Party to support the picket lines, collect money for the strike and urge solidarity action in their unions.

Thatcher would like to do another 'Falklands' at the expense of the rail and healthworkers. Only the organised strength of the labour movement can defeat her and Parker. A united labour movement can roll back the Tory offensive and settle accounts with the people like Weighell and his friends in the Labour Party, who are an obstacle to building such a movement. ASLEF have struck a vital blow on behalf of all trade unionists.

Socialist Challenge is with ASLEF. Make sure you are.



Photo: LABOUR HERALD

SUPPORT HEALTHWORKERS 19-21 JULY

How to stop the Tories' 'Ideal World'

'AN IDEAL world might mean no pay increases at all.' This was Sir Geoffrey Howe last week explaining the aims of his wages policy.

The Tories' new policy is part and parcel of their current offensive against the unions; their attempt to 'do a Falklands' on the train drivers and health workers. The government will be seeking to hold pay rises well under the current 4 per cent for the public sector.

Three days earlier the Chancellor gave his view of his 'ideal world'. In a speech to the summer school of the Tory party in Cambridge he outlined the programme that the Tories would carry out if returned to office at the next general election. The main points were:

- Further attacks on the unions through compulsory balloting procedures. Abolition of minimum rates in industries covered by wage councils
- Deregulating rents in the private sector
- Reducing controls on health and safety in industry
- Reduction of taxation on investment income
- Privatisation in local government, with services being put in private hands
- Privatisation in social policy particularly in the health service with the introduction of private insurance; voucher systems in schools to encourage private schools; loans for students instead of grants.

If the Tories were elected back into office and if they were allowed to put these policies into effect the result would be the destruction of most of the social gains made by working people since the Second World War.

The prospects for rolling back the Tories' recent advances are not so bleak. With every passing week new revelations about events inside the government in the period leading up to the Falklands crisis start to make the issue an embarrassment rather than a vote-winner. Neither has the offensive against ASLEF produced any easy victories for the British Rail management.

The key issue now throughout the labour movement must be to swing behind the healthworkers and the train drivers, taking the lead from the mineworkers conference last week, which put the faltering and treacherous 'support' of Len Murray and Michael Foot to shame.

But there must be a response politically too. The Tories are using the spectre of a general election to frighten away potential support for ASLEF. The only way this blackmail can be confronted is by the Labour Party declaring itself ready to take on the Tories in united action with the unions.

The Labour Party and the unions have to use the healthworkers' action on 19 July and support for ASLEF as the beginning of a campaign of industrial action against the government.

The fight for an alternative to the Tories must come out loud and clear from the labour movement. There has to be a fight for a Labour government committed to socialist policies. Such policies would include:

- End unemployment! For the 35 hour week! For worksharing without loss of pay!
- For the nationalisation under workers control of the commanding heights of the economy!
- Instead of a programme of remilitarisation a programme of public works to meet social need and employ the jobless!
- Against incomes policy! For protection of wages, benefits and social expenditure against inflation!

The elements of such a programme are already in policies endorsed by the Labour Party and TUC conferences. What is lacking is decisive leadership from within the labour movement; a leadership as devoted to the interests of our class as Thatcher and Howe are to theirs.

The elements of such a leadership are to be found in the decisions of the mineworkers conference, the 'new wave' of the left inside the Labour Party against the witch-hunt, and in the mass ranks of the disarmament movement.

Socialist Challenge will be fighting for the building of a new left wing that can draw on the strengths of this movement so that we can begin to see the way opened to our 'ideal world' — not that of Sir Geoffrey Howe's.

Private medicine cashes in

By Bob Pennington

AS THE NHS visibly crumbles before our eyes, the private health sector is booming. By the end of 1980 the number of private health subscribers in Britain was 1,647,000 which including their dependents represented a total of 3,577,000 privately insured people. In 1981 there was a 27 per cent growth rate. The expanding private sector has been encouraged by deliberate government policy as Tory Health Minister Patrick Jenkin made clear when within one month of the Tories taking office, he said: 'it is, of course, the government's policy to welcome the contribution that independent medicine can make to the health care of the nation.'

By 1980 the Health Services Bill was law, and the private sector had got the green light to go full speed ahead. Private hospitals with under 120 beds can now be built in any health district without authorisation from the secretary of state.

Regional Health Authorities no longer have to make first offer to government departments when they are selling surplus land. The guideline on the question of sale of land recommends the Regional Health Authorities to consider giving priority to private medical interests. As an added inducement for people to go private, the government gives firms big tax incentives to buy health schemes for their staff.

Return

Given a declining NHS, and the support of the government, the private sector is seen as a lucrative field of investment. Dunedin Private Clinic is a 38-bed private hospital in Reading run by a consortium of consultants. Its last annual report shows that its shareholders reaped a 55 per cent return on their capital.

No wonder the big three American 'health industry' firms: Humana Incorporated, the Hospital

Corporation of America and American Medical International are all scrambling to get a piece of the action.

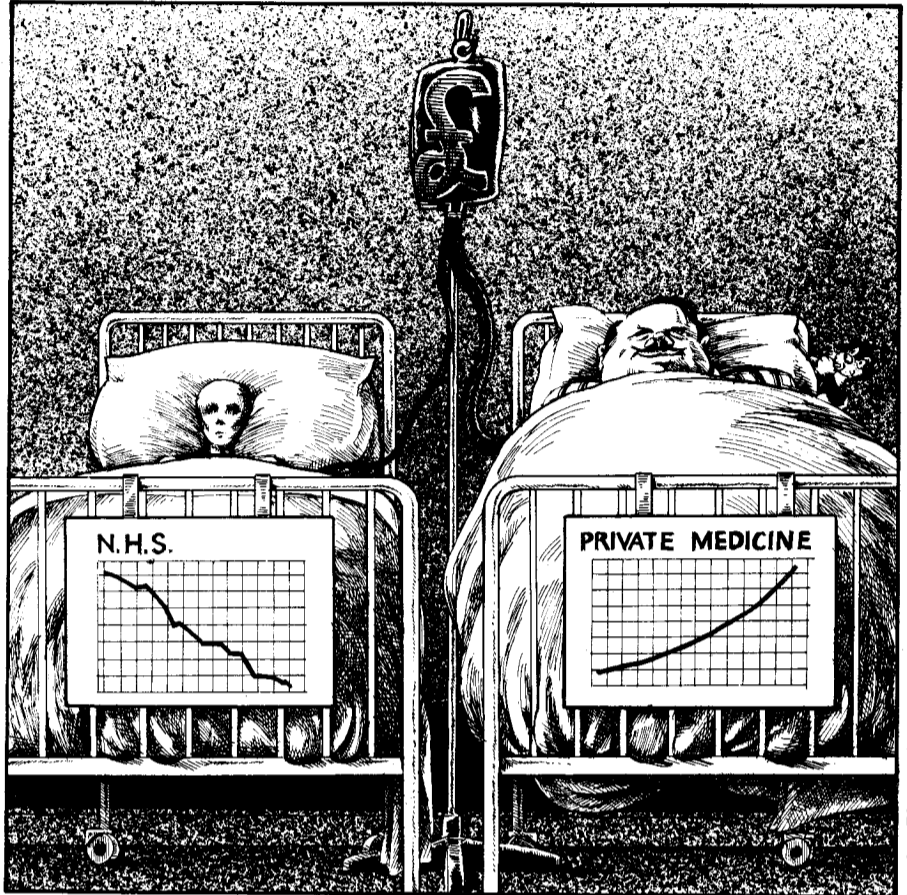
The latter firm in their report to US shareholders say 'Responding to the rapid growth of the private health sector in the UK, AMI opened its fifth and largest facility, the 149-bed Alexander Hospital in Manchester.'

The tables show the bonanza being enjoyed by these three US-based firms who are able to exploit the crisis inside the health service.

Although private hospitals right now provide only 10,000 beds against the 480,000 provided by the NHS they know that the government has openly stated that it wants to increase the involvement of the private sector to at least 25 per cent, so there is plenty of room for investment.

The Midland Bank which coyly describes itself as the 'listening bank' has obviously been listening to Patrick Jenkin and to the clang of the cash registers in the private sector, because it has agreed to stump up £100 million for one company to build 50 hospitals by 1990.

What makes private medicine such an attractive proposition is that it has little or no training costs. The overworked



Private medicine booms

	Profitability		Growth	
	Return on equity	Return on total capital	Return on equity	Sales
	5 yr av	Last 12 mnth.	5 yr av	5 yr av
Humana	23.7%	33.6%	9.2%	39.8%
HCA	18.7%	18.0%	8.9%	27.6%
AMI	16.2%	20.9%	9.0%	22.1%

and underpaid workers are trained by the state-run and state-financed NHS, while the doctors are products of the state financed medical schools and universities.

A nurse in the NHS in 1981 after getting the last rise was earning around £80 a week before tax. Meanwhile a nurse working for the privately-run Medical Personnel of Lon-

don, which is the agency of the American company Merican Medical Europe, was grossing £38 a week more, as well as getting a daily travel allowance and shoe allowance.

The private sector is therefore able to drain away trained staff from the beleaguered NHS, and the latest pay offer can only accelerate that process.

For years now we have

been moving in the direction of a two-tier health system. The principle that health care should be available to every one who needs it without the constraints of cash, or privilege, stopping people getting treated, is being undermined. Peoples' health needs are being cynically manipulated for profit.

Unless the labour movement sides with the fight of the health workers for better wages and conditions and supports their fight against cut-backs, the health of all the working people will suffer. The defence of the NHS is literally a matter of life and death.



The Wellington does better than this — but have you got £1,600 a week?

Profits before people?

● *Yorkshire Evening Post* 14 December, 1979 reported how an 81-year-old man, who was nearly blind wanted his wife, who was senile and mentally retarded, to go into hospital, as he could not look after her. But no beds were available. In desperation he strangled her and killed himself.

● On 30 January 1980 the *Daily Express* reported that a woman of 79 badly needed a hip operation. However, there was a 40-year waiting list. Her surgeon could only do one such operation a year because of a shortage of beds and theatre space. She was number 40 on his list.

● *The Inequalities in Health* a report headed by Sir Douglas Black,

found that babies of semi-skilled and unskilled workers were twice as likely to die in their first year as those born in middle class families. 'Longstanding illness' the 1980 report remarked, was twice as prevalent among unskilled men than among professionals, and two and half times more common among unskilled women than professional women.

● *The Guardian* reported on the 6 August 1981 how a 77-year-old patient was found dead in a Northumberland psychiatric hospital. The man had died of starvation. The pathologist said he was surprised '... from his general appearance that he was a patient in the

hospital for several months'.

● However, cheer up. All is not despair and gloom on the health front. At the privately-run Wellington Hospital there are £5,000 diamond and ruby necklaces in the hospital shop if you want to buy your favourite patient a little trinket. There is G-Plan chrome and leather furniture — none of that cheap nasty plastic stuff.

On every floor there are emergency trolleys and there are balconies overlooking Lords cricket ground if you get bored watching coloured TV and eating smoked salmon. This is freely available to everyone. All you need to do is to pay Humana — they own the joint — a piddling £1,600 per week!

Another Attack on Our Health Care

THE GOVERNMENT are striking another blow at Britain's deteriorating health services. Last week the closure of the Royal Dental School, Leicester Square, London was announced.

The Royal is one of the six dental teaching hospitals in London that has been providing training for dentists, dental nurses, and technicians. Patients have also been able to get free treatment at the Royal which includes specialist dental work, not available elsewhere. The NHS has claimed such treatment is normally too expensive and people will have to seek private treatment to replace the facilities now available at the Royal.

Again a closure threatens both patients and staff, and yet again, will give a boost to private dentistry, which is exactly what the government

wants. Meanwhile workers at the Royal are starting a campaign to keep the hospital open, which they have linked to the 12 per cent pay claim, as they see the fight on the 12 per cent as being tied up with the campaign to defend the NHS.

Dental school workers — members of ASTMS and NUPE — will therefore be taking strike action for the claim, and against the closure. Other health workers in the London area are urged to give their support to the rally at 2.00pm in Leicester Square on 21 July, which is for the claim and against the closure.

Pay the Health Workers

Pay the Health workers badges available at 25p each

**Orders for 10 or more badges — 20p each
Orders for 100 or more — 15p each**

Cheques payable to 'Cardinal Enterprises' and send to 'Badges' PO Box 50 London N1. Why not get your trade union or Labour Party branch to order some?

Labour's NEC must give a lead

JANE KELLY is a member of Peckham Constituency Labour Party management committee, and is the delegate from the constituency party to this year's Labour Party Conference at Blackpool. Below she tells Socialist Challenge what her Labour party has been doing to assist the fight of the health workers.

We have given support to the health workers in the Kings Health District, over £64 has been collected at LP meetings. We have invited speakers to the GMC, the branches and to the women's section from the unions involved.

At the June GMC, we decided to go along to the picket line at local hospitals on the last day of strike action. We also took the LP banner on the march from East Dulwich Hospital to Jubilee Gardens.

The march was joined by other union branches

from Peckham and Southwark and on the way we picked up pickets from other hospitals as well as members of the public.

At Jubilee Gardens the march was joined by workers from the Lewisham area and also the Kent miners who brought along their banner.

We have set ourselves the task of building on the considerable support that exists in the Peckham area for the health workers. We recognise that up to now this has tended to be passive, so we must in

alliance with the health workers and other trade unionists, turn it into a more active, campaigning support.

The Peckham CLP is organising a public rally on 21 July, the third of the three days of action planned by the health unions this month. The platform will include health workers, trade union speakers and LP speakers. We want to use the meeting to get other workers to take support action.

Peckham CLP, along with a number of other Labour Parties, is doing what the national Labour Party should be doing. Building solidarity action is the responsibility of the entire labour movement, and it is time the NEC gave a real lead.

Socialist Challenge FUND DRIVE '82

Derail Thatcher Express!

THE PRESS and media is going into top gear in their efforts to break the train drivers' strike. Every express that left a London terminus last week was given virtually a champagne send-off and boasted about on every single news broadcast.

The health workers will be given the same treatment during this week's solidarity action.

How necessary it is, then, to support the socialist press who, despite having no millionaire backers, no advertising from the monopolies, no distribution to newsagents keep the banner of workers' unity flying every week.

Last week we informed our readers that we were £4000 short of our quarterly fund drive target. We held open the appeal for one more week to try and make the total.

However despite an excellent response judged by our normal week's income — some £900 — we did not make our total. As a result of the £900 will be put towards next quarter's total in the normal way.

This is a serious situation. The £4000 represents the support needed for five issues of the paper — five vital issues in the coming showdown with the Tories. Please organise your summer fundraising events for Socialist Challenge now and let's try to make up last quarter's deficit by October.

Our thanks this week to:

R Davies	15 00
Burnley	37 00
M Cook	10 00
M B & RTD	30 00
Islington	40 00
Middleborough	15 00
Nottingham	18 00
Leicester	75 00
J Lomax	20 00
P Bells	10 00
E London Gale	50 00
Holland	3 00
Bolsover	24 25
Oxford	20 00
Maskelly	2 00
Tortorella	4 94
O W London	150 00
Exeter	27 00
Brent	100 00
Liverpool	40 00
Leeds	50 00
Brighton	22 50
Harry Wicks	5 00
Rotherham	22 00
Woodcock	10 00
Anon, Wakefield	100 00
TOTAL	£900 00

Help us to win

says Janet Maguire, a London healthworker

What is happening in your hospital?

The stores department in our hospital have been on selective strike action for the past three weeks. Last week the Theatre Sterile Supplies Unit were out and also the laundry. They have been picketing the gates so that only deliveries for emergency use can get in.

We're having a levy of £2.50 a week on all union members to pay strikers — everyone is paying up. None of the unions have paid strike pay to date and sometimes you can lose a lot of money even on a one day strike because of the way the bonus system is worked.

We're going to continue this selective action and we want to have a demonstration on the Wednesday afternoon of the three-day action. There is a joint union action committee and every decision is taken to a mass meeting so we've got full involvement. This means that the action has been effective and wards have been closed.

Everyone here is solidly behind the strike. They feel they've got nothing to lose. The West Indian workers are the strongest for the union. Whatever the outcome the unions will be strengthened. In our region of my union we're getting about forty-three new members a month and then there is the joint unions committee which will be stronger now on other issues as a result of the strike.

The problem has been the TUC Health services committee and the union leaderships. None of them have actually called for strike action on 19-21 July. They are simply 'urging intensive industrial action'. The pay claims was for 1 April and now, nearly four months later they're calling three days of action. A lot of people think it would have been better to call all-out action from the beginning. Apart from anything it is more money this way. Lots of local hospitals like ours are doing things but it's

despite, rather than because of the Health Services committee.

On the 19-21 July what can we do to support the health workers?

- If you haven't done so already, propose that your union takes one-day or half-day strike action in support of the healthworkers, in particular, if you belong to any of the following unions who have had discussions with the TUC health services committee and pledged their support; CSEU, EEPTU, GMWU, NALGO, NUPE, TGWU, ASTMS, COHSE.

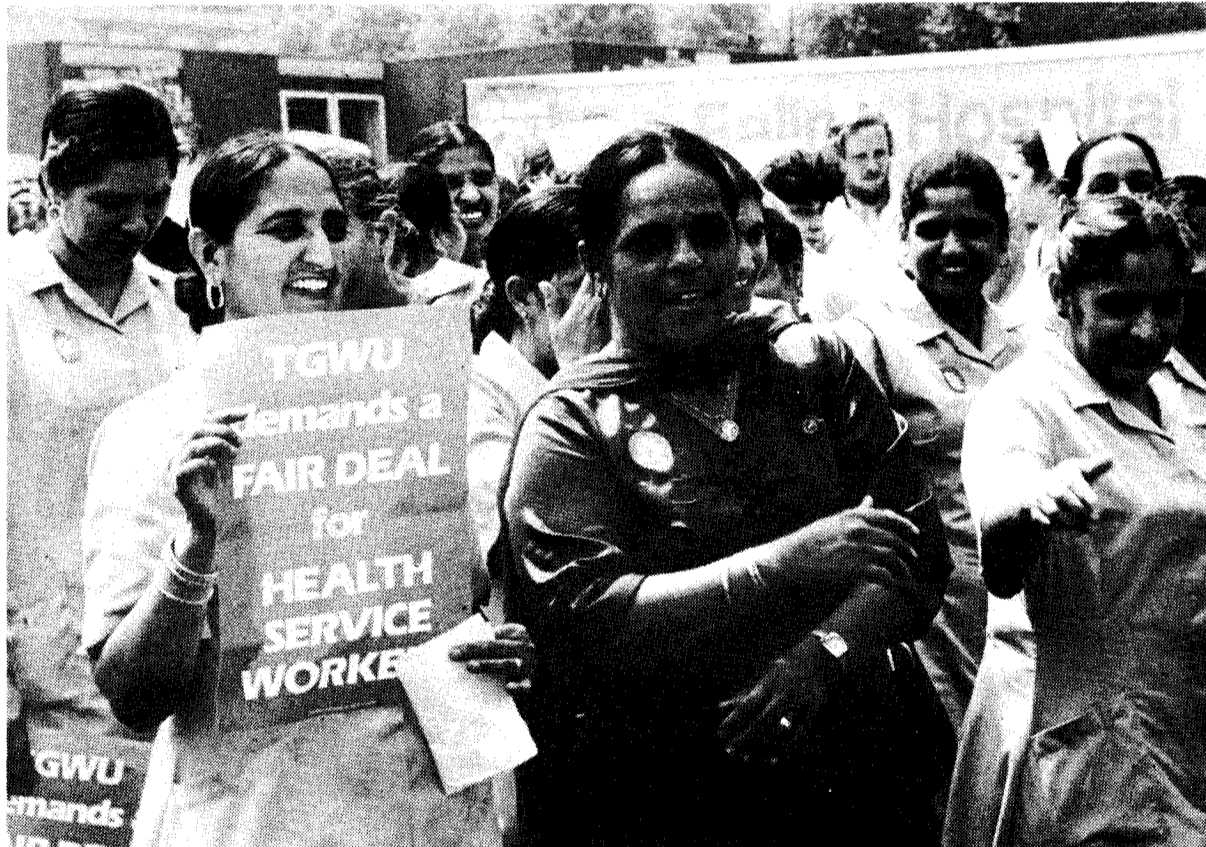
- Find out what demonstrations and rallies are taking place by contacting the local union committee and make sure that your union and Labour Party send a delegation.

- Organise collections in your workplace, through your Labour party etc. Don't forget, none of the workers have been paid strike pay.

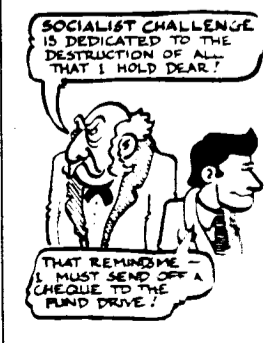
- Some healthworkers are already organising to go round workplaces to drum up support. Why not get your Labour Party or trades councils to organise this on one of the three days to take health workers round to all the workplaces in the area.

- The health worker and the railworkers have a lot in common. They are both in the forefront of fighting this Tory government.

- Make sure at the very minimum that your Labour Party goes down to the picket lines. The Labour Party nationally and locally should be coming out in full support for workers in struggle — and if its the possibility of an early election they're worried about, then all the more reason to support workers against the bosses and against the Tories. They claim to represent the workers — OK let them do it!



South Wales miners show the way



ASLEF STAND

By D Ellis

THE TRAIN drivers are standing firm. Pickets are being increased and the mood is more and more confident. The determination of the drivers has set an example for the whole labour movement. Every trade unionist has a clear choice to make — to back ASLEF and defend our unions, or to line up behind Thatcher's anti-labour policies. Last Saturday Michael Foot made his choice when he came down on the drivers' side.

The future of trade union organisation in this country is at stake. As a delegate at this year's miners union conference said last week, 'If ASLEF is defeated, we'll be next'. The labour movement is putting itself four-square behind the drivers.

Arthur Scargill called for a conference of the Triple Alliance unions and the miners' conference voted unanimously to support ASLEF. It also pledged uncompromising opposition to Tebbit's anti-union laws, which are already being used against the drivers. A defeat for ASLEF would open the door to a massive use of these laws against the labour movement.

The Labour leaders have pledged support as well. Thirty Labour MPs, including Tony Benn, were on the Kings Cross picket line last week. Benn followed this up with a visit to the picket line in his own constituency, and plans for visits further afield.

Labour Party resolutions are flowing into ASLEF's offices. Pressure is mounting from the

ranks of the labour movement and ASLEF is not bending under the massive scare campaign in the press. That's the background to Michael Foot's decision to make his stand at the Durham Miners' Gala.

Foot said, 'The Tories are planning to break the spirit of working people in this country. They want to smash the unions and create a servile work force'. We agree.

Now what's needed is a national demonstration called by the Labour Party national executive committee. This could unite all working people who see their future is also at stake in this battle.

Margaret Thatcher wants a victory at home to follow up her so-called victory in the Falklands. The Tory press are calling for blood in this war at home. We say to the labour movement leaders: 'Mobilise your troops in defence of our organisations'.

Len Murray has a clear responsibility. He's in the best position to call for full backing from the other



COHSE members on strike at Dudley Rd Hospital brought their banner down to Saltley as a sign of solidarity and ASLEF sent pickets to Dudley Rd Hospital in return.

rail unions, to endorse the appeal for a Triple Alliance conference, and to call for a united stand from every working person in this country.

The Tories have declared war on us all. ASLEF is in the front line. Michael Foot's support can help to forge a united

response to throw back these Tory attacks. A victory for ASLEF would pave the way for a Labour Government committed to solid defence of trade union organisation and to a massive programme of investment in the railways, based on social needs rather than capitalist profits.

Refuse workers refuse

REFUSE workers from the GMWU who load trains with London's refuse to be transported from Brentford and Ruislip to tips outside the city voted overwhelmingly to refuse to send rubbish on cowboy lorries.

Management have

been trying to intimidate them, and have threatened a lock out. Pressure needs to be put on the Labour GLC to take the heat off them and allow them to continue to refuse to break ASLEF's strike. If London's rubbish starts to accumulate, there should be quite a stink ...

ASLEF needs

ASLEF members have no strike pay, and because of Tebbit's legislation they are losing £13 a week off their social security. So the collection of money is a vital task for all trade unionists and Labour Party members in solidarity with them.

Collection sheets can be obtained from your local ASLEF branch, or from national headquarters 19



Scab trains

SCAB trains running on British Rail since the start of the dispute are all 'specials' and not part of the timetabled service. It is normal working practice in BR for workers to have the right to refuse trains which are not part of their diagrammed work or of the normal service. NUR workers can therefore refuse to co-operate with these scab trains. But the backing of the NEC is vital.

At Kings Cross depot, the ASLEF branch passed a resolution asking NUR guards to refuse to work scab trains, and notices have gone up in the depot

What railworkers told Socialist Challenge

Birmingham

Bob Smith spoke to Fred Orton-Jones ASLEF shop steward Birmingham

'THE British Rail Board with the assistance of Thatcher's government is attempting to smash ASLEF. But our membership is solid, determined and will continue to fight. With as much TUC assistance as possible we can gain a much needed victory for the working class of this country over the most reactionary Tory government since before the war and against Parker and Rose's lunatic policies for our vital nationalised industry.

If Thatcher calls an election in the next few months or weeks over the situation her policies have created, I'm sure the working class who are beginning to wake up will elect and solidly back a new Labour government if the witch-hunts are ended and a working class policy explained to them by the labour movement.

Pete, Birmingham ASLEF

THERE are only five scabs crossing at Saltley and ten at New Street. Despite the local media's tremendous effort on behalf of the rail board our picket is solid and the attitude of the blokes tremendous.

The rail board's threats have only stiffened our

resistance and determination to get a sensible settlement without accepting the flexible rosters that can be adjusted any time by management at their discretion and our disadvantage.

Another couple of weeks and Parker will be on his way. The settlement can be negotiated with a new, sane and sensible rail chairman that can end this nonsense finally.

Adrian, ASLEF driver's assistant:

I'D LIKE to explain why we're all against flexible rostering. At the moment, the work roster is a 12 week cycle, you do the same shift for a week. Even then one week's work can have a starting time in the afternoon and end up in the early morning. With this system, it's possible to swop a week's work with somebody else. You can do this at the moment because of the 8 hour day and the 40 hour week.

The new system British Rail proposes will mean 35 hours for one week and 45 the next. The cycle will be over 8 weeks and 312 hours — an average of 39 hours a week. It won't be possible to exchange turns of work because nobody will be working the same hours in a week. One bloke will be

losing hours, another gaining.

It's very unsociable to be a train driver now because you've got no night life. The new system would be even worse because where people can swop for their own convenience now, they can't do it with flexible rostering.

If your girlfriend or wife's working too, it might be weeks before you can go out with her. So it's not just about the 8 hour day. It's about having some kind of decent social life too!

North east solid

Dave Carter spoke to NOEL KIRTON, branch secretary of Thornaby-on-Tees ASLEF branch and representative in the North east.

I'VE just come from a packed branch meeting where the feeling was tremendous. The strike has been solid in the North east so far despite the media trying to undermine us with stories of how many trains are running in the South east.

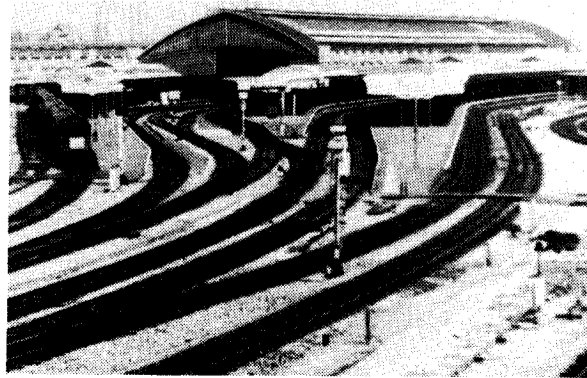
We've just passed a unanimous motion to support

fully the executive's strike call. There is concern about possible sackings but the response has been to step up the numbers of pickets at depots throughout the region.

This will mean that there will be even fewer trains running next week as we are making a big effort to appeal to NUR members not to cross picket lines from now on and our own members are practically 100 per cent solid already.

The Board has threatened us with the sack on one hand and on the other there were large notices when we went to collect our pay calling for volunteers to work Sunday overtime!

Ray Buckton has written to every secretary of Trades Councils and Constituency Labour Parties explaining our case so we are offering speakers locally to give reports and to ask for support.



Nothing moves on Western Region

Flying pickets at Aylesbury Depot

WE assembled at two o'clock in the morning behind Kings Cross station. We had tried to keep our destination to Aylesbury a closely guarded secret, but the Daily Mail had already reported the picket. Aylesbury is the only depot in the south where all the twenty drivers are scabbing.

The transport to Aylesbury was cramped, but everyone set off in high spirits. A group went off in search of any concealed entrances which the scabs could use. At this time of the morning the town was completely

dead except for the police there to greet us.

Later in the morning a group of drivers arrived from Cricklewood depot, increasing our numbers to about 30. Although we were not successful in stopping the scabs, plans were laid for a mass picket after the weekend.

During the morning we gave out leaflets explaining our case. A group of leaflets were given to some school youth to give out in their school. We explained that we were fighting for their future as well as ours. As the picket drew to a close, we were determined to return with sufficient numbers to close the depot down.

Mass picketing stops Altringham trains

AT FIVE o'clock Monday morning 40 pickets arrived at Altringham station from all over Manchester to make sure no drivers took out

a train. Local radio had been stressing that trains from Altringham would be running, along with trains from Bury.

After a successful picket, some union members left to go to Bury to repeat their victory. Eddie Coules, secretary of the Northwest District of ASLEF, was very happy with the morning's work.

At a mass meeting at the weekend of over 500 drivers, it was calculated that of 3,600 drivers — apart from Bury and Altringham — only nine drivers had reported for duty. The area stretches from Holyhead to Carlisle down to Crewe.

One thing is clear from this part of the country — British Rail's scare-mongering has failed to break the drivers' determination.

As Bob Barrow from Newton Heath depot put it, 'Out of the 500 drivers at our mass meeting, only four questioned the executive's stand. If anyone could be 110 per cent behind the strike, then the overwhelming majority of members in this area are'.

Bristol

Terry Stewart, Bristol District Labour Party spoke to ROY WATKINS, ASLEF a driver organising the picketing at Bristol's Bath Road Depot.

ING FIRM

your cash

Arkwright Road, London NW3 6AB).

Get your Labour Party and Trade Union to duplicate and distribute collection sheets for the Hardship Fund immediately.

Collecting money at meetings and door to door is a useful way of explaining the issues at stake to workers and their families.

'Picket from Kings Cross to Newcastle'

Following a mass meeting of drivers at Kings Cross depot, Toni Gorton spoke to ANTHONY DENT, chairperson of the ASLEF branch there.

THE MEDIA has been trying to put over that men are coming in to work right, left and centre which we know they're not. The BR Board have had to admit that the strike is hardening and men who felt that they were going out on a limb now realise that they are getting the full backing not only from their membership but from their EC as well.

Our picketing is legal. All we are doing is protecting our own men no matter where they are. After all we're all ASLEF, we all work on the railways which are a nationalised industry and nationwide. If our job can take us from Kings Cross to Newcastle then we can picket from Kings Cross to Newcastle.

We're asking the labour movement to give us your help! We've been told that the Transport and General Workers' Union supports us — this comes from their general secretary. Yet when our pickets go to places like Sealink buses from Victoria TGWU members who are driving these buses laugh at them and practically try to run over them.

A member at this meeting today said,

'you're lucky to see a lot of us up here without the tire marks'. We would have expected to see full support from all trade unions especially those affiliated to the TUC.

We're not sure if there are trade union members moving freight. We know that there are cowboys doing some, but if they won't stop you can't tell. We understand that things like the movement of household rubbish from the concentration depots around London is moved by lorry because the trains won't take it.

But who are these people who are driving these lorries? If they're trade unionists what the hell are they doing breaking the strike? If they're going to call themselves trade



MPs at Kings Cross

unionists then let them support us.

We see our strike as a political strike. This government is the paymaster of the railways board. The government can say it's not interfering but I have no doubt that the government is determined to crush the union.

ASLEF is more or less the fourth one in line because we are only about 24,000 strong, a small union and should be easy to pick off.

Unfortunately what this government does not

realise is that we still have the spirit of those members who formed this union over 100 years ago in Sheffield. I cannot see the men breaking.

Our members were absolutely delighted by Tony Benn and Labour MPs coming to our picket line on Wednesday. They only wish that a few more MPs would get up off their backside in the House of Commons instead of falling asleep during the debate and come out and show solidarity with the workers.

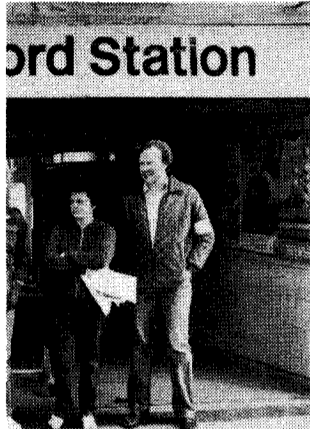


Photo: GM COOKSON

Picketing at Stratford

to this effect. But will they get the backing of the union if they are threatened with disciplinary action?

Acton and Ealing NUR passed the following resolution to try to clear up the confusion which NUR railworkers are faced with: 'This branch requests the NUR NEC to instruct the membership as far as possible not to co-operate with unscheduled scabbing shuttle services. We further request the NEC to instruct NUR officials to circulate collection sheets to the membership for the ASLEF hardship fund'.



Roy Watkins

Birmingham back-to-work move smashed

A PETITION for a return to work got wide publicity in the Birmingham area. In response the ASLEF branch at Saltley Depot called a mass meeting on Sunday 9 July and won overwhelming support to carry on the strike.

There was an 85 per cent turn out and 99 per cent voted to go on with the strike not just on the issue of flexible rostering but on the future of the union as a whole. All the 20 who signed the petition were there and nearly all voted for the strike.

OUR STRIKE has been 100 per cent solid. On the Western Region there are 3,296 members of ASLEF and not one of them crossed the picket line. Only a few trains have moved in the Bristol area and they've been moved by NUR members. One of them crossed the picket line and the others went through the 'rat holes' — the many side entrances throughout the depot.

The other NUR drivers at this depot, some 18 in all, have shown us great support. Yet even through their own strike last week a few crossed the line. Members of the Transport Salaried Staff Association are mainly management and as far as we know they've crossed over.

We've had subscriptions from NUPE members already and other unions. The Trades Council executive has invited an ASLEF member to a meeting as a sign of solidarity.

This government is trying to pick off union after union. The BR Board and the Tories are tarred with the same brush as far as I'm concerned.

Anything Socialist Challenge readers can do to support the strike will be welcome. They should send money, letters of support to local convenors. I'd also like to see the press print the truth about our strike.

Public meetings
Hackney North and Stoke Newington
Constituency Labour Party
DEFEND THE RAILWORKERS
Friday 16 July at 7.30, Stoke Newington Library, Edwards Lane London N16
Hackney North and Stoke Newington
Labour Party Young Socialists
Wednesday 21 June at 7.30, Centreprise Bookshop, 136 Kingsland High St, London E8

POEU meeting on Rail
Metropolitan North West Branch of the POEU will be having Ray Buckton as a speaker at their branch meeting on Wednesday 21 July at Meritage Hall, Church End, London NW2. Nearest tube Hendon. 6.15 pm.
Open to all POEU members

Joint rail health meeting big success
THREE south London Labour Parties held a successful meeting for health workers and raildrivers. 100 people, including drivers from Waterloo and Charing X depots and health workers from three local hospitals heard local MPs John Tilley and Stuart Holland, along with others from the labour movement.
Lambeth Central, Vauxhall and Norwood Constituency Labour Parties who sponsored the meeting also took a collection for the striking workers.

What it's all about

THIS is what BR would save by introducing 7 to 9 hour flexible rostering for footplate staff: ● 1982 £0.42m ● 1983 £1.7m ● 1984 £3.2m ● 1985 £3.8m And by provoking this strike by ASLEF they are losing around £6m a day!

Remember

- ASLEF's record on productivity is nothing to be ashamed of. Footplate staff have suffered heavier job losses than BR workers as a whole. Between 1950 and 1981 the number of railworkers was reduced by 66 per cent. But footplate staff have seen a 73 per cent reduction in their number.
- There are more chiefs, fewer Indians. For every ten men on the footplate in 1969, eight remain. For every ten managerial staff, there are now thirteen.
- Footplatemen are working harder for their money. Last year BR got three per cent more work from its train crews measured in loaded train miles worked.
- The cost of paying for train crews is falling as a proportion of total operating costs. It fell by one per cent last year.
- Administrative costs are still increasing at a faster rate than train crew costs. Last year train crew costs, measured in straight money terms, increased by 11 per cent — about the rate of inflation. But administrative costs rose by 14 per cent.
- Since 1950 there has been a 73 per cent reduction in footplate staff: a 250 per cent increase in the amount of traffic carried by each footplateman: but a £100 million fall in rail investment finance.

Taken from Locomotive the ASLEF journal

Triple Alliance call by Scargill

ARTHUR SCARGILL, president of the Miners Union, has called for a conference of the Triple Alliance. At no time has this been more necessary than now, when ASLEF is fighting for its very life.

The Triple Alliance — involving the steel, miners and railworkers unions — was re-formed in early 1981 from the Nationalised Industries Committee of the TUC. It was a response to the war Thatcher declared on the nationalised industries.

Today it's little more than a piece of paper in the hands of union leaders. But if it were transformed into a fighting force of rank and file workers it would be a powerful weapon to defend jobs and conditions.

Thatcher and her friends have certainly had to take notice of the Triple Alliance. In March last year, the miners took swift strike action to stop the proposed pit closures, backed up by the rail and steel workers. The closure plans quickly disappeared!

Full support for Scargill's call at our depots and at the pit head — demanding a date be set for a delegate-based conference — will really put the Alliance on a grass-root footing. That's the best way to get a strong, active and fighting body.

In the Labour Party

JUST THREE days after the beginning of the ASLEF strike, the Plashet branch of Newham North-west Constituency Labour Party invited a speaker from the Stratford branch of ASLEF to its meeting. A resolution containing the following points was passed unanimously.

- 1 To circulate all branches and CLPs in the Newham borough calling on them to invite an ASLEF speaker to their next meeting and take collection sheets
- 2 To produce several thousand leaflets explaining why the Labour Party supports ASLEF for distribution in Newham's main shopping precincts
- 3 To organise a fundraising social for the train drivers and health workers
- 4 To regularly support the picket line
- 5 To call on the majority Labour group on Newham Council to declare its public support to the train drivers
- 6 To instruct the CLP to approach ASLEF and West Ham Trades Council to organise a public solidarity meeting
- 7 To call on the regional London Labour Party and the National Executive Committee to call a national solidarity demonstration

A collection of £18 was taken.

Socialist Challenge Social for ASLEF

Wednesday, 21 July 7.30-10.30pm

The Orange Tree Pub, Stonebridge Park, Harlesden, NW10
(Dollis Hill Tube, then a 266 bus)

Entry £1, ASLEF members free, healthworkers 50p
Tickets available from Socialist Challenge

Trade Unions

Miners — ready to fight

By Gordon Smith

DELEGATES at the miners conference in Inverness last week spelt out a very clear message to the Tory government. Mine workers are ready to fight. Ready to fight pit closures, ready to fight for a decent wage for the job. Ready to fight Tebbit's attack on trade union rights.

Miners' leader Arthur Scargill set the theme on the first day when he said: 'If we do not save our pits from closure then all our other struggles become meaningless ... Without jobs our members are nothing — they have no power ... I hope therefore that conference will endorse my call to make op-

position to pit closure its central task.'

Some 12 pits have been closed and 18,000 jobs lost in the mining industry since the February '81 strike. Delegates not only voted overwhelmingly to oppose further closures, but supported a resolution from Kent demanding the replacement of those lost

jobs — backing the demand with industrial action if necessary.

Delegates made short work of the Tory lie that low wage increases are necessary to maintain jobs. Many pointed to the massacre of the pits which took place in the 60's. Over 500 pits were closed and 500,000 jobs were lost. At the same time wages fell to what Arthur Scargill called 'an insulting level'. Accordingly, conference backed a claim for a 30 per cent increase in the basic minimum wage.

In his opening address

Scargill pointed out the connection between jobs and wages in the industry and the wider political scene. 'We cannot, by ourselves, tackle the problem of unemployment — to solve that we need to get rid of this government which is using unemployment as an incomes policy and as a means of weakening the trade union movement.'

Conference called for 'militant resistance to the application of anti-trade union laws' and demanded that the TUC 'initiate a strategy of total opposi-

tion based on deeds not words'.

Delegates who also voted unanimously to give total support to ASLEF in their dispute and urged miners to show solidarity by joining the railworkers on the picket lines.

Motion

This first conference with Scargill in the chair saw fundamental organisational changes being set in motion which are designed to turn the union into a more democratic and effective fighting unit.

One immediate result is that the miners will be seen to mean business over the 'years' pay campaign. If no agreement in negotiations has been reached by early November an immediate overtime ban will be imposed and a special delegate conference convened to consider the next step.

The structure of the union is to be reorganised with all fulltime officials to stand for re-election every five years.

Smaller craft groups and areas are to be amalgamated reducing the numbers of seats on the

NEC. This means that larger areas such as Nottinghamshire and Yorkshire will have representation more in keeping with their much larger membership and remove the right wing's base.

This conference is seen by most NUM members as one of the most important in recent years. Policy has been decided which will provide a clear programme of action for the union leadership, and there is a confidence that resolutions carried will be acted on.

PATCO — lessons for ASLEF?

By Toni Gorton

ALMOST one year ago the photo which shocked the world appeared: US air controller leader Steven Wallaert being dragged off to jail in leg irons and handcuffs. It dramatically illustrated Reagan's offensive against the US trade unions and also what his best friends Margaret Thatcher and Norman Tebbit have in mind here.

The British weekly *The Economist* recommended that Reagan's firing of the 12,000 air controllers should become the model for other countries. PATCO was forced to admit defeat last week when it declared bankruptcy. Can we draw any lessons for the ASLEF strike?

The next US worker in chains could very likely be a railworker as Reagan has forced a 60-day postponement of a strike called by 40,000 locomotive engineers and is setting up the machinery to smash them as well.

A check list of Reagan's 'scorched earth' policy against PATCO included:

- denial of food stamps and unemployment compensation
- Federal Communications Commission efforts to black out news coverage deemed 'pro-PATCO'
- Federal Aviation Administration attempts to keep PATCO strikers jobless by giving unfavourable references to potential employers
- general harassment through trials in 33 federal courts, \$150m in fines, 75 convictions and 75 pending trials for participating in an illegal strike, wire taps, FBI surveillance and crude victimisations to force strikers back to work.

Thatcher, Tebbit, and Parker's scorched earth policy includes:

- deduction of £13 a week from social security benefit on the assumption of a non-existent £13 strike pay
- use of the Tory press, radio and TV to demoralise, confuse and intimidate the strikers, to give the bosses' side and not the workers'
- threat of sacking of all union members, renegotiate contracts and force them to join another union
- threat of closing down the rail network
- use of the 1980 Employment Act to stop support picketing from other unionists.

Despite the 12,000 air controllers winning the support of rank and file workers throughout the

USA, and air controllers overseas, the combination of the union-busting Reagan and a scabbing leadership of the US unions proved too much for PATCO.

The air controllers are highly skilled workers and expected that the air traffic system in the US couldn't operate without them. They thought like the coal miners, 'you can't dig coal with bayonets' but some 9,300 strikebreakers worked their jobs including at least 775 military controllers.

But the real culprit was the leadership of the US equivalent to the TUC — the AFL-CIO.

AFL-CIO

It decided against calling on its affiliates to support the PATCO strike and against a boycott. AFL-CIO president Kirkland denounced those in the labour movement demanding active union support calling them 'midnight-gin militants'.

The AFL-CIO meeting that voted not to support the air controllers did vote for increased military spending.

The bind of the American labour movement is that its union leadership is tied hand and mouth to two big capitalist parties. The Democratic Party went along with everything Reagan wanted. In fact the battle plans had been drawn up 20 months earlier by the Democrats.

This strike didn't have to go down the drain.



PATCO leader Steven Wallaert

Striking coal miners in 1978 tore up Jimmy Carter's Taft-Hartley orders to return to work and won their case through militant struggle.

The union leaderships from the gangster-led Teamsters' union to the 'progressive' machinists union are running before the Reagan offensive. Wage cuts, wage freezes,

'no-strike' pledges, are the call from these officials. They couldn't sell these to their own members and at the same time support the air controllers, so they scabbed on PATCO.

A new leadership and a Labour Party is overdue in the USA. Here we have to fight to draw the ranks of the labour movement top and bottom solidly behind ASLEF.

On the picket lines Who drove the trains in the General Strike?

THE strategy of the Baldwin government in preparing for a general strike was regional self-sufficiency organised by trusted people of military and civil experience to be backed up by civilian volunteers to staff the services vacated by strikers. Troops were to be used only in the final resort.

In September 1925 the Organisation for the Maintenance of Supplies was formed. It said: 'This Organisation of Citizens serving the interests of the general community, will place its entire resources at the disposal of the constitutional authorities.' The OMS was given strong support by the government.

The leadership of the British Fascists greeted the OMS and their organisation virtually disappeared

into it. On Monday 3 May at the onset of the strike the OMS handed over its organisation and membership of 100,000 to the government.

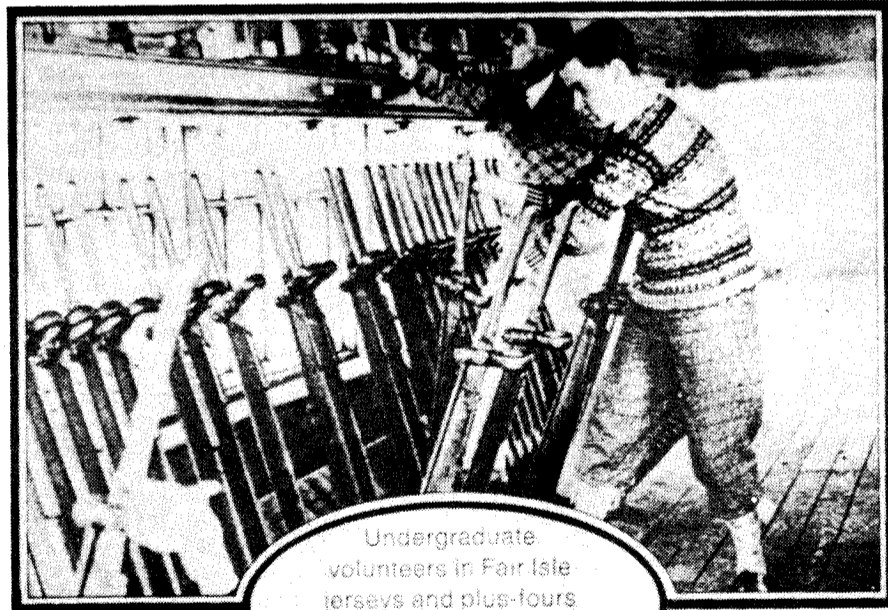
It had managed to train 144 bus drivers, 1,322 lorry drivers, 640 railway operatives, 91 tramway workers and assorted others. The government managed to recruit some more.

So those trains that moved at all did so with volunteer labour drawn

from the middle classes and upper class universities. The problems are shown by the accompanying article from the TUC strike bulletin of 11 May 1926.

The lack of ability to run anything beyond a shuttle service without the regular crews was highlighted by the strike bulletin *Westminster Worker* on 12 May 1926 which said: 'We understand that luncheon cars are to be put on trains running between Westminster and Blackfriars.'

Details taken from *The General Strike, Britain's Aborted Revolution* by Christopher Farman. Pb Panther £1.95. Available Other Bookshop, 328 Upper St, London N1 2XP.



Undergraduate volunteers in Fair Isle jerseys and plus-fours

FIVE RAILWAY CRASHES

Sequel to Blackleg and "Voluntary" Labour

FOUR DEAD

The attempt to work the intricate mechanism of the British railway system by "volunteer" and blackleg labour has already had a tragic sequel.

No fewer than five serious passenger train accidents occurred yesterday and this morning—two of them resulting in loss of life.

The worst occurred yesterday afternoon on the L.N.E.R. at St. Margaret's, Edinburgh.

While a number of wagons were being shifted from the up to the down main line a passenger train from Berwick, manned by a volunteer crew, crashed into them.

Three people were killed, 16 injured. About the same time the "express"

train from Edinburgh to King's Cross jumped the line between Annitsford and Cramlington. The engine and five coaches overturned and caught fire. No one was killed.

At Bishop's Stortford a goods train from Cambridge crashed into a passenger train standing in the station. The goods engine and two passenger coaches were derailed and the station partially wrecked. One body has been recovered from the wreckage.

This morning an electric train from Selhurst, running into Victoria Station, failed to stop in time and collided with a stationary coach.

At Hull on Monday night a "volunteer" ran his engine into some stationary wagons. He himself was severely injured.

These accidents—all within the space of 24 hours—are a grim commentary on the claim of the companies and the Government that something like a "normal" train service is being restored.

"Accidental death" was the verdict returned to-day at the inquest on C. A. Moon, a young engineer's draughtsman, living at Guildford. He volunteered to act as a passenger guard on an electric railway, stepped on a live rail, and was instantly killed.

MEXICO

50,000 at Trotskyists' rally

The results of Mexico's elections, now finalised, confirm the startling gains made by the PRT (Revolutionary Workers' Party, Mexican section of the Fourth International). With over a million votes the party has at least 12 deputies in the Mexican parliament. **TIM WRIGHT** and **HANIBAL YANEZ** report on the final rally.

50,000 MARCHED through Mexico City on 26 June in one of the most spectacular events of the PRT's campaign.

Busloads gathered at 4pm around Revolution monument, which commemorates the 1910-17 revolution. Red flags and banners waving, they marched the five kilometres to Tlatelolco Plaza where on 2 October 1968 hundreds of students were gunned down by the Mexican Army and secret police.

The marchers came from 30 of Mexico's 33 states: thousands of peasants in their cotton shirts or shawls and straw hats; workers from the huge plants run by imperialist corporations like Renault and General Motors; Indian artisans speaking halting Spanish and shouting their slogans in their native tongue; office employees, teachers, street vendors, shantytown dwellers, former political prisoners, relatives of the 'disappeared', women's liberation fighters and gay rights activists; and militants from movements of solidarity with El Salvador, Nicaragua and Palestine.

As they stepped off, Rosario arrived and the neat, orderly ranks dissolved as hundreds and then thousands rushed to greet her, shouting 'Rosario Ibarra, candidata proletaria'.

Rosario's candidacy has been the sensation of the presidential election campaign. She speaks directly to those propelled into struggle against the stifling domination of the PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party), since the revolution virtually the sole government party, ruling by patronage and terror in equal measures.



'4 July; Vote Rosario Ibarra, Candidate for Workers, Peasants and Popular Unity.' Giant Banner greets 50,000 marchers in Mexico City

The rally was front page news in every major newspaper. *El Universal* carried a lead story and banner reading 'The oppressed and dispossessed want a change: Rosario' over a huge picture of the demonstra-

tion. The people marched four lanes across, in a sea of red flags as far as the eye could see. In front, arms linked, were Rosario and her husband Jesus, with the central leaders of the

groups in the campaign. Next came the Committee of Relatives of the Disappeared, holding a 30 foot banner covered in pictures of the victims of repression. There followed a contingent of more than 300 candidates running for seats in the PRT slate; then a marching band from the northern state of Zacatecas, proudly playing 'Bandiera Rossa' and Mexican fanfares.

After scores of contingents of workers, peasants and students organised by the PRT came the other groups that had joined it to form an electoral alliance. But the overwhelming majority marched holding the hammer and sickle flags of the PRT. Huge banners announced the region, union or peasant federation of the contingents.

From the chair Margarito Montes, general secretary of the Independent Revolutionary Peasants' Coordinating Committee and a PRT leader, explained, 'This campaign has been around the big issues of Mexican politics; but it has also been a campaign against imperialism, in solidarity with all those fighting around the world for their liberation. We want to dedicate this rally to the Palestinian people, who are being massacred by an army put together by US imperialism.' He was interrupted by continual shouts of 'Death to Yankee imperialism!'

Chanting 'Obreros, campesinos, el pueblo al poder,' ('workers, peasants, the people to power') the march arrived in the late evening.

Greetings read out from Mel Mason of the American Socialist Workers' Party, also independent candidate for governor of California, denounced the US government's 'merciless offensive of hunger and war against the workers and farmers of the United States, Latin America and the world.' After his greetings were read the crowd burst into applause and chants of 'Se siente, se siente, la Cuarta esta presente'. (You can feel it, the Fourth International is present).

When it came to Rosario's speech no one had left, despite the late hour and intermittent rain. Throughout the rally the crowd had been chanting 'We want Rosario' and 'Rosario, Rosario, Rosario!' Now they went wild; all rose and remained standing throughout her speech. She began by

calling for a minute's silence for those killed on 2 October. Then, fist in the air, she shouted angrily 'Remember October the Second!' and fifty thousand took up the chant.

'We have found,' she said 'that the Mexican people are learning that it is not enough to fight for immediate demands, to shout that we want a plot of land, food, that we are hungry, that unemployment is high. That's not enough.

'The people have understood that only when they link their struggles through solidarity, that when the workers, the peasants, the shantytown dwellers, men and women, students, all together decide to advance hand in hand and organise, then the scattered economic struggles become a revolutionary struggle for radical change in this country.

'Companeras and companeros. I spoke with thousands of Mexicans, who although like me have no party, know that they are going to build one. Thousands of them! We can tell you that we felt the socialism that lies waiting to spring forth from the Mexican people, scorned by the PRI. So much the worse for them: because this people is going to make the socialist revolution in this country!

'Very soon we will have the kind of May Day we want — a jubilant May Day, a May Day in which the workers will march hand in hand with the peasants, the shantytown dwellers, the women, the students. They will raise their fists and sing and smile and laugh, for on the balcony of the National Palace will be the poor of this country, its real representatives. Venceremos!

The crowd burst into shouts of 'Rosario, Rosario!' which subsided only when the band struck up the first few bars of the 'Internationale' as thousands of fists were raised in the air and thousands of voices sang out the song of world workers' unity.

Angel Parra in concert

7pm 23 July
Camden centre, Bidborough
St. WC1
tickets £3 from Carila Resources centre.
01-359 2270.

Who are the Palestinians

The ferocity of Israel's genocidal war in Lebanon proves, yet again, that there can be neither peace nor justice in the Middle East until the Palestinians' national rights are recognised. **ROS CAPLAN** explains.

Palestinian Diaspora

Total Palestinian population (1975) 3 million: 95% still live in the Arab world and more than 50% in historical Palestine ie. under Israeli occupation.

Country	Nos in 1975	%
Israel	436,100	14.1
Gaza	390,300	12.6
West Bank	758,400	24.5
Lebanon	228,000	9.3
Jordan	644,200	20.8
Syria	183,000	5.9
Iraq	35,000	1.1
Egypt	39,000	1.3
Libya	10,000	0.3
Saudi Arabia	59,000	1.9
Kuwait	194,000	6.3
Gulf States	29,000	0.9

Who are the Palestinians?

They were the indigenous peoples of Palestine before 1948. The majority were Palestinian Arabs of the Muslim, Chris-

tian and Druze religions, nomadic Bedouins and there were a few small Jewish communities. The Palestinians were mainly small peasant farmers.

Was Palestine ever independent?

No. The people living in this area had been subject to successive occupations — the Ottoman (Turkish) Empire and then by the British who set up a mandate colony after the First World War. The next colonisers to arrive were the Zionists from Europe.

What is the State of Israel?

Zionist colonisation of Palestine with the help of British imperialism aimed to create an exclusive Jewish state in Palestine — at the expense of the indigenous population. Unlike the previous occupations it aimed to expel the Palestinian Arabs from their land.

Did they succeed?

To a large extent yes. The Palestinian Arabs rebelled against Zionist colonisation in the Arab Revolt of 1936-39, were defeated by the British and Zionists and in 1947/8 the Zionist armies drove out of Palestine 800,000 Arabs and declared the new State of Israel on three-quarters of historical Palestine. Only 170,000 Palestinians remained inside the borders of the new Zionist state.

What happened to the rest of Palestine?

The areas which the Zionists were unable to gain control of — the West Bank and Gaza Strip — were occupied by Jordan and Egypt. In 1967 Israel invaded these areas and has been occupying them for 15 years.

Where did the Palestinians go after 1948?

They fled to neighbouring Arab states and became exiled minorities. Some went to Europe and America. The core of the Palestinian *ghourba* (exile and alienation) was in the camps of Lebanon, Jordan and Syria. They were scattered and exposed to different political systems and influences throughout the Arab East. To the Arab regimes the refugees were a burden, a problem and a reminder of their own failure to create a viable state.

How have the Palestinians survived as a people with a national identity despite the diaspora?

Their determination to return to Palestine, their disillusion with the Arab regimes which supported the Palestinian 'cause' but did nothing to help them regain their country, and the repression of the Palestinians by the Arab regimes led to a new phase of Palestinian existence in the 60s —

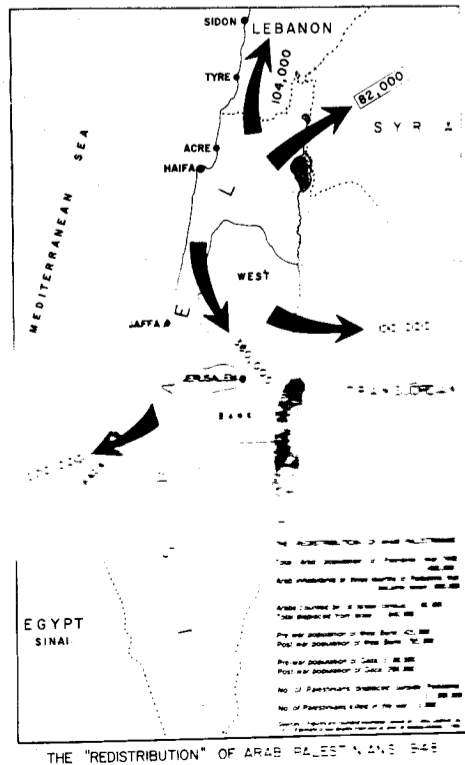
the rise of the various organisations making up the Palestinian Resistance Movement and their call for mass armed struggle to liberate Occupied Palestine.

The resistance used to be based in Jordan. In 1970 King Hussein launched a barbaric attack against the Palestinians with the help of Israel and the US. The ensuing massacre, known as Black September, left 9000 dead and tens of thousands were either imprisoned or escaped to Syria and Lebanon. The centre of the Resistance was forced to go to Lebanon.

The various organisations in the Palestine Resistance Movement developed a state within a state in Lebanon — they have built up Palestinian hospitals, schools, the General Unions of Workers, Women and Students with branches in the West Bank and Gaza, and a national newspaper, the *al-Naba*.

Why support the Palestinians?

For 34 years the Palestinians have lived in exile. Their struggle for national liberation, their right to return to Palestine is a just, anti-imperialist struggle. At this moment in Lebanon they are suffering their worst defeat in the Israeli genocide of the last month. Solidarity with their struggle is needed urgently.



WESTERN EUROPE VS

The increasing economic clashes between the West European governments and the United States have gained growing publicity in recent weeks. They were first spotlighted by the United States' decision to place new restrictions on the import of Common Market produced steel into the US. More important still was Reagan's ban on any foreign firm from using US technology in the construction of the huge Soviet Union to Western Europe natural gas pipeline. This unprecedented decision was denounced even by Thatcher, who has threatened openly to violate US law to allow British firms to finish the contract.

Behind the economic clashes is something more fundamental. This is the attitude of West European working class to NATO, the 'Atlantic Alliance', and all other aspects of the links of the European imperialist states to the United States. JOHN ROSS looks at the issues involved.

In order to understand the real significance of what is now taking place between Western Europe and the United States it is best to start with a very broad time scale. This allows the really important features to stand out clearly and the secondary ones, which can obscure the fundamental trends, to fall into their correct perspective.

We can take as a starting point the recent visit of Reagan to Europe. To those who have entered politics in the last fifteen years it might seem obvious that there should be demonstrations against the visit of a president of the United States. Only the tremendous size of the protests in the different countries would seem very striking. In reality however something much more fundamental is involved. The historical tradition in Europe is not of mass opposition to the leaders

of the United States but on the contrary of support for them.

When US president Woodrow Wilson came to Europe after the First World War he was greeted with some of the largest mass demonstrations of popular enthusiasm ever seen in history. They at times verged on hysteria. Throughout the 1920s it remained the typical language of the Social Democratic parties in Europe to contrast the supposedly 'democratic' and 'peace-loving' United States to the more 'sinister' and 'reactionary' German steel barons, Prussian army officers, British imperialists and so on.

At the end of the Second World War similar sentiments were widespread in many European countries. The United States was acclaimed as the country which had entered the war to win it for democracy.

Even as late as 1963 US president Kennedy enjoyed mass popular support in Europe. His 'Ich bin ein Berliner' ('I am a Berliner') speech of that year was hailed as symbolising the determination of the United States to defend 'freedom' against 'totalitarian communism' in Europe. His assassination in November that year was authentically experienced by millions of people as a great traumatic experience.

the United States was acclaimed as the country which had entered World War 2 to win it for democracy

It is when this historical perspective is seen that the real significance of the protests during Reagan's visit to Europe can be understood. One million people in the streets in the various European countries against the visit of a US president! That constitutes a major transformation from the previous tradition of attitudes to the United States in Europe. Obviously such a major shift must have profound forces underlying it. Grasping these is extremely important to understanding the dynamic of world politics which is and will develop during the 1980s.

The political changes

Politically there is no doubt that it was the Vietnam war that was the single most decisive event bringing about a change in the attitude of wide layers of the population in Western Europe to US imperialism. The United States ruling class portrayed itself as the great defender of 'democracy' and 'peace' against 'totalitarian communism'. But in Vietnam it was waging a war of unparalleled savagery which only too

obviously had nothing to do with either of these supposed goals.

From that time on widespread suspicion existed in Western Europe concerning the motives and policies of the United States administrations. Other events, such as the widespread publicity given to US involvement in the 1973 coup in Chile deepened the sentiment.

it was the Vietnam war that was the single most decisive event that changed attitudes in Western Europe

This is why the US role in El Salvador for example is widely regarded as a continuation of its Vietnam type policies. It is why tens of thousands of people demonstrated in many countries in Western Europe in Spring 1982 in solidarity with the struggles in Central America. The enormous demonstrations in Britain, West Germany, and other West European countries against the NATO decision to deploy a new generation of US nuclear weapons in Europe, and the protests during Reagan's visit, therefore did not come out of the blue. They were a development, on a vastly greater scale, of a whole period of increasing distrust and hostility towards the United States and opposition to its policies.

World Economy

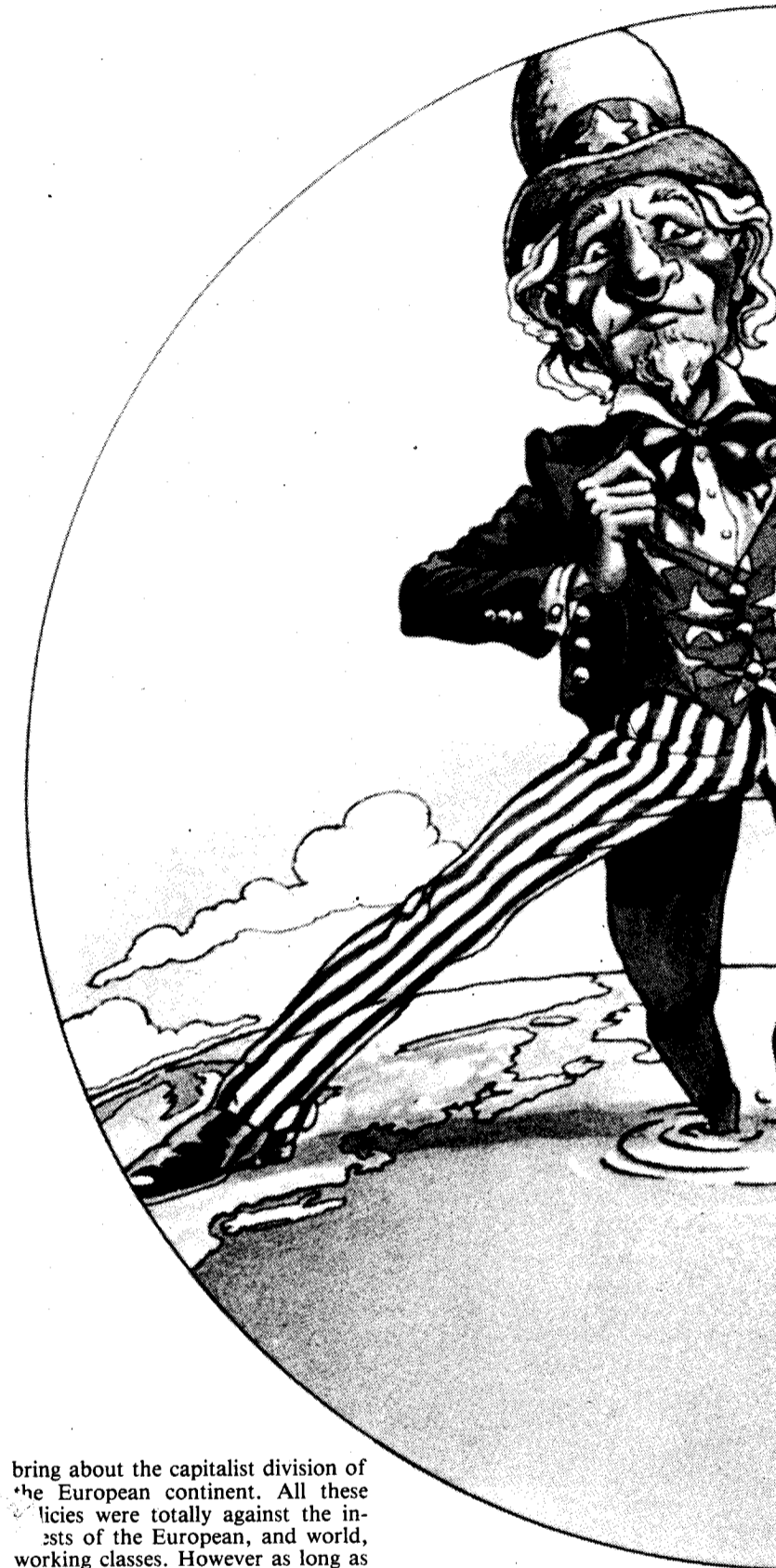
Underlying these political shifts however, and giving them much greater mass force, were even more profound changes on the economic level. The support historically enjoyed by the United States in Western Europe was not created by 'ideological' factors. The working class in Europe of course lost greatly from the existence of capitalism. Nevertheless within that framework the West European economies throughout most of the twentieth century benefitted from the strength of US imperialism.

The simple figures show the process. The United States refinanced the European economies after the chaos and destruction of the First World War. Two and a half billion dollars in the values of the 1920s, vastly greater today, went from the United States into Germany and Europe following 1923. Only this aid allowed a recovery of the European economies from the war time collapse — as was dramatically revealed in 1929 when the crash of the American economy brought ruin in its trail throughout Europe and the world.

European capitalism could not have been rebuilt without US subsidies

Exactly the same process of US aid, on a vastly greater scale, followed the Second World War. United States loans and grants to Western Europe from 1946-1958, starting with the Marshall Plan, were over 25 billion dollars. There were in addition enormous indirect benefits to European capitalism from the strength of the US economy. For example the driving down of world oil prices by the United States from the 1950s alone gave support probably as great as under the Marshall Plan. Once again European capitalism would not have been rebuilt without these US subsidies.

These policies were of course carried on by US imperialism entirely for its own reasons. The United States used its economic strength as one of its great levers to prevent the spread of 'communism', to isolate the Soviet Union, to launch the cold war, and to



bring about the capitalist division of the European continent. All these policies were totally against the interests of the European, and world, working classes. However as long as the United States was pumping in direct and indirect aid to the West European capitalist economies then these realities could be concealed from most of the population.

The West European ruling classes, who benefitted greatly from this process at that time, were naturally only too willing to go along. On this basis of US economic strength and aid the great 'Atlantic Alliance' — including NATO — was constructed, and working class support for it gained. This alliance was then used as a fundamental backbone of the world imperialist system, from which many of its most aggressive policies on an international scale were organised.

Vietnam

It is in this historical framework that the full significance of the Vietnam war in relations between the United States and Western Europe can be understood. It was not only a political but a fundamental economic turning point.

Under the strain of Vietnam the United States ruling class feared to create a still greater political opposition to the war by allowing its cost to

fall fully on the US working class. Instead the United States used control of the international monetary system to tax, in effect, the rest of the world to pay for its war effort. The mechanism was very simple. The dollar is the only currency accepted by every country as a means of payment in international trade. To finance a large part of the costs of the Vietnam war the US simply printed paper dollars and exchanged them for real goods produced by its allies.

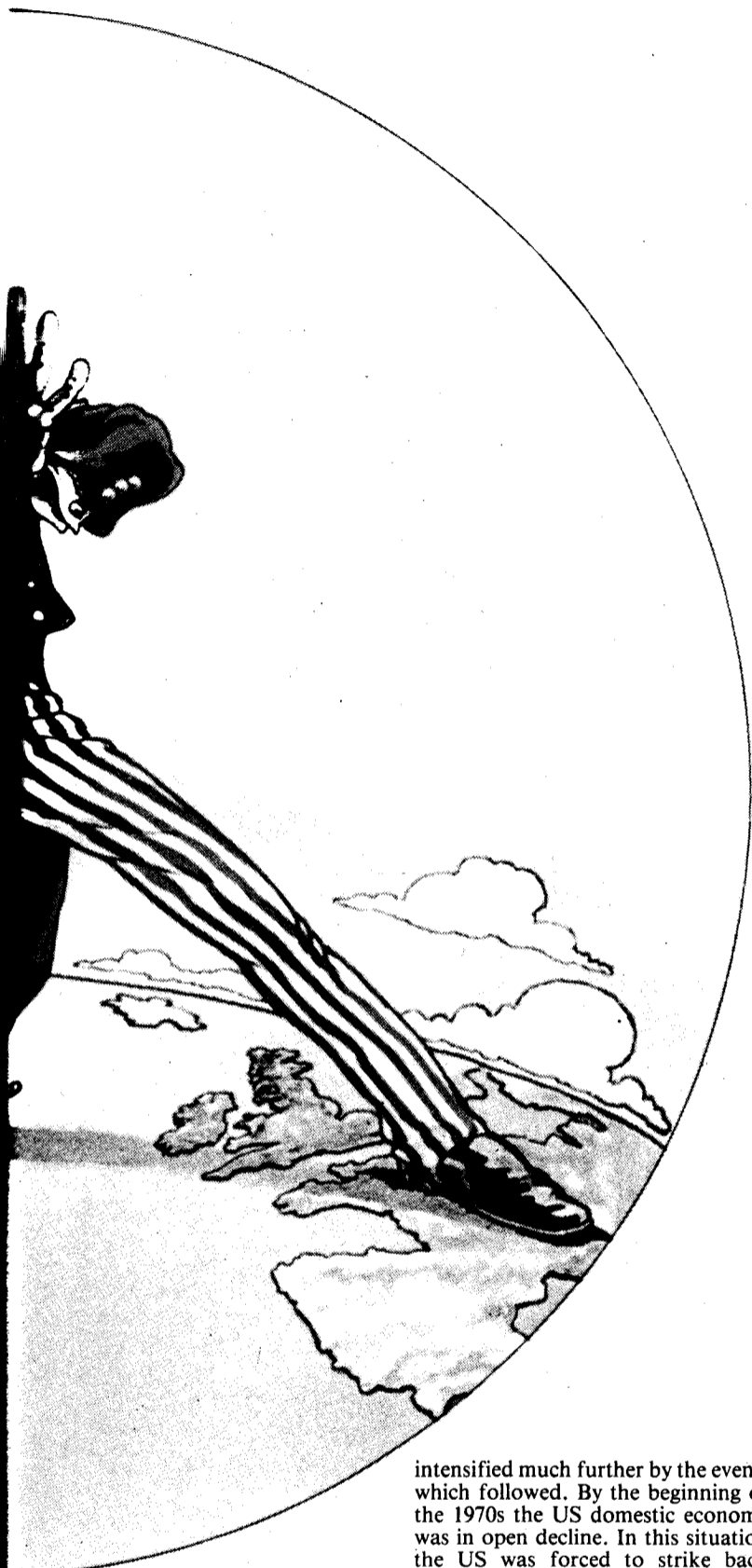
This mechanism is in effect an extremely efficient, and legal, form of robbery. It continues to be utilised by the United States until the present day. It was in particular used with great ruthlessness by the US against its West European 'partners' throughout the Vietnam war. The deepening of crisis in the West European economies which resulted helped feed the major rise of working class struggles in that continent from 1968-75.

It was this situation which also signalled the start of the rising series of conflicts between the West European and United States capitalist



Yalta — the end of World War 2 when America enjoyed popular support in Europe ...

THE UNITED STATES



Finally in the 1980s, under Reagan, a new twist of the screw was given. Tremendously high interest rates in the United States sucked international funds into the US economy and helped maintain even longer the deep economic recession and the crisis of various governments in Western Europe. The US then worsened the situation further by imposing import restrictions on steel from the EEC countries.

It is against this background that the significance of the new clash between the EEC and the United States over the huge Siberia to Western Europe natural gas pipeline can be seen. This will supply gas worth 4-5 billion dollars a year and will contribute in a significant fashion to the energy supplies of Western Europe. It will also give significant foreign funds to the Soviet Union, of which at least part will go to buy West European industrial goods. For the United States, however, if it can smash or significantly delay the project, it will strike a significant blow against its West European allies.

The anti-missiles movement

Once these underlying economic and political shifts are understood, the full significance of the present anti-missiles and anti-nuclear weapons movement in Europe becomes clear.

It has, as with the earlier anti-Vietnam war movement, a specific target of key importance for the working class. But as with the Vietnam movement it is also a link in a fundamental historical trend. *This is the beginning of the move into opposition to US imperialism of the West European working class.* The anti-Vietnam war movement was the first great wave of 'anti-Americanism' in Europe. The anti-missiles movement is the second.

the anti-missiles movement is the second great wave of 'anti-Americanism' in Europe

The underlying economic shifts, and the deepening crisis, are shown in the very different scope of the two movements. The anti-Vietnam war movement was essentially student based and at best actively touched a few other layers of youth. In the most important country of Western Europe, West Germany, the student 'revolt' was totally isolated from almost all other layers of the population. There was even a significant electoral revival of neo-fascist organisations accompanying it. The movement in that country disintegrated amid the blind alley of terrorism and isolation.

The movement against the missiles is on an incomparably larger scale. The demonstrations on Vietnam were numbered in tens of thousands. Demonstrations against the missiles, nuclear weapons, and NATO now assemble *hundreds* of thousands. During the autumn of 1981, a million or a million and a half people participated in demonstrations in Western Europe against nuclear weapons in Spain and against membership of NATO. A million again participated in the demonstrations against Reagan's visit to Europe in June 1982; including 250,000 in Britain and 500,000 in West Germany. The scale of these mobilisations is a real factor in world politics.

Furthermore the social composition of these actions, and their political integration with the workers movement, is incomparably deeper than the anti-Vietnam war movement. The very scale of the actions of course mean that very large numbers

of workers participate in them. In Britain both the TUC and Labour Party Conferences, for the first time ever, have been won to the demand for unilateral nuclear disarmament. Around 30-40 per cent of the W. German SPD has voted for positions rejecting the decision of its coalition government with the Liberals to accept the missiles. Far from being isolated from the population the various 'Green' and 'Alternative' slates in West Germany, seen by the population as to the left of the SPD, have been regularly gaining 6-8 per cent of the vote in state elections.

In short the second great wave of opposition to United States imperialism in Europe already has enormously greater weight than the anti-Vietnam war movement which was the first. The changing economic and political relations between the United States and Western Europe make it absolutely certain that there will be a third and a fourth wave with far deeper social weight and political impact than that against the missiles — and this is already the largest international movement on any issue since the Second World War.

It is this working class opposition, and not the inter-imperialist economic competition, which is finally the most decisive part of the relations between Western Europe and the United States. Indeed it is this working class struggle which in the final analysis underlies even the economic clashes. If the West European imperialists could easily recoup the economic losses to the United States by imposing austerity cuts on their own working classes then they would not have to engage in such risky, and politically destabilising, manoeuvres as having conflicts with the US ruling class.

It is because they cannot, because austerity attacks on the West European working classes destabilise the political situation in their own countries, that the West European imperialists are forced to intensify their conflicts with the United States.

The way forward

Finally however these new conflicts show a decisive part of the strategic line of march of the West European, and world, working classes. NATO, the 'Atlantic Alliance' and all the rest are not just any imperialist treaties. They are the central alliances of imperialism around which its world system has been organised since 1945. Any strains, clashes, or threats within these have a major effect in world politics.

For thirty years, precisely because of their centrality, these alliances ap-

peared unshakeable. Now for the first time they are beginning to come under some strain. Anti-NATO, and 'anti-US' feeling has become a significant factor in a number of West European countries. As we have shown the economic and political developments mean that this is only going to deepen in the years to come.

The West European imperialists are forced to engage in conflicts with the United States but they want to limit their scope. When for example Andreas Papandreu, in a significant development, won huge successes in the 1980 Greek elections on a platform which included withdrawal from NATO, he rapidly abandoned this in practice.

austerity attacks on the Western European working classes destabilise the political situation

Schmidt, the West German Chancellor and leader of the SPD, opposes strongly, in action, the US attempt to prevent the construction of the USSR-Western Europe gas pipeline. But he fights equally hard for NATO and for the nuclear missiles to be brought into Europe. The West European ruling classes want to confine the clashes with the United States to increased nationalism and to the working class accepting austerity policies to compete with US industry.

The dynamic of working class struggle however is quite different. It challenged the war in Vietnam. Now it is seriously challenging military plans against the Soviet Union in Europe. Its dynamic is to clash with the entire 'Atlantic Alliance' system created since the Second World War.

As yet many currents participating in that movement still have outlooks which are neutralist and pacifist. Only a small part as yet would agree with one of the banners in the West Berlin demonstration against Reagan — 'Better gas from the East than rockets from the West'. But, given the objective role of NATO and the alliance of Western Europe with the United States in world politics, that mass sentiment already plays a tremendous progressive role. It will deepen and clarify much further in the years to come.

The increasing clash of the West European working class with the entire system of alliances with the United States is going to be one of the greatest political developments of world politics in the 1980s. It is one revolutionary socialist must fight to develop in every way.

classes. The French government under de Gaulle began to fight back against the United States by exchanging the paper dollars for gold from the US central reserves. The other European states started to join in and in May 1971 10 per cent of US gold reserves were removed in this way in a single week. These economic conflicts, coupled to the massive political protests against the war inside the United States, were among the reasons why the US was forced to quit Vietnam.

After Vietnam

The Vietnam war therefore accompanied, and deepened, an historic change in the relation between the United States and Western Europe. The US had been historically a force aiding and stabilising the West European economies. Now its decline had made it one disrupting and dragging them down. It was the combination of the political and economic shifts which explains the tremendous scope of the changes which accompanied the Vietnam war.

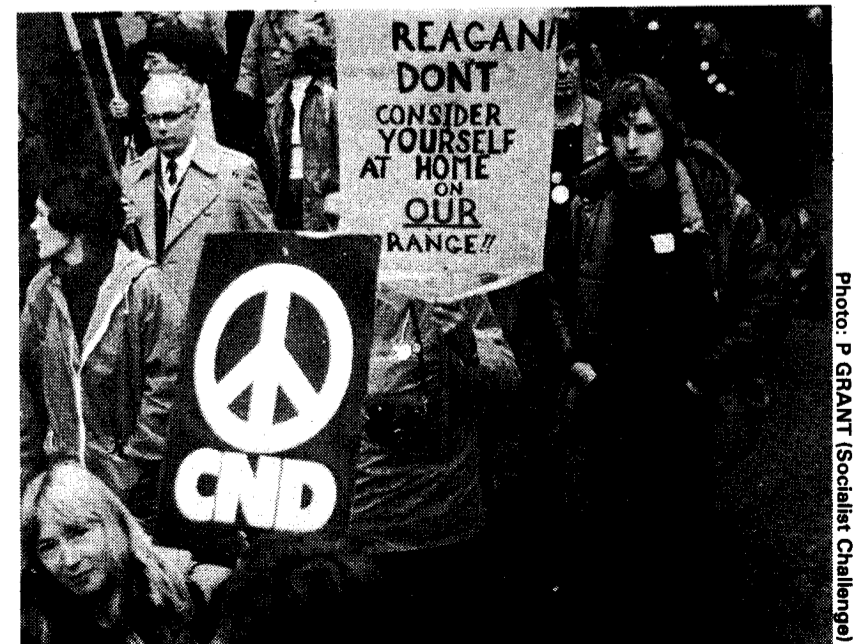
These economic trends were then

intensified much further by the events which followed. By the beginning of the 1970s the US domestic economy was in open decline. In this situation the US was forced to strike back against other economies with all the colossal resources still available to it.

The first major attack came in 1971. Nixon ended the system whereby other states could exchange dollars for gold, imposed import restrictions around the US economy and devalued the dollar to make US goods more competitive against their imperialist rivals.

the US was forced to strike back against other economies

The second wave of counter-offensive was the 1973 oil price increases. Contrary to press propaganda, this was not opposed by the United States and imposed on the world by 'the Arabs'. On the contrary the United States government sought to bring about the increases. They greatly aided the profits of the US dominated world oil companies and helped the US economy to open up new domestic sources of energy. They however also struck a tremendous blow against its 'allies' — Western Europe and Japan.



... now millions demonstrate on the streets of Western Europe against the United States

Photo: P. GRANT (Socialist Challenge)

Prior's Ireland plans go through

By Martin Collins

AFTER a marathon week of all-night sessions, Prior's Northern Ireland Bill goes upstairs to the House of Lords, looking set to lead to elections for an Assembly in the autumn. Beneath the 'get the wet' campaign aimed at Prior, the ruling class is split over the crucial issue.

They all agree that the Irish are the last people who should run Ireland, and that British interests are best served by keeping partition, but how?

The Americans want to rely more on the Southern government to do it, bringing Ireland more firmly under imperialist control. If the South could be brought into NATO and involved in the war drive, the closer political links made with Britain might create the chance to carry out big attacks on

Southern workers: a necessary move to protect British and US profits.

A majority of the British ruling class backs this option. The Anglo-Irish talks have already proved useful. Whilst the Irish government tries Gerry Tuite for the British, they are spending £1 million a day on border security.

But Tory back benches and Powellites look upon any talks with the Irish as a sell out. These 'empire men' want to

preserve 'all that is British'. They want to keep Britain's reactionary friends in Ulster for the day when parliament no longer serves the ruling class.

But unionism's 'old days' are gone. After the collapse of its industrial power came the smashing of Stormont, its fake parliament — destroyed by nationalists who demanded civil rights. It still has a sting though. In 1974 when the British tried to impose power sharing Sunningdale, the Ulster Workers' Council Strike showed that loyalists still had the power to veto what anyone else wanted even if they couldn't have it all their own way.

When Prior took over he said, 'I doubt if I can make a much bigger bloody mess of the thing than it's in right now, so I might as well have a go.' His devolution plan is packaged as something new, but really just cobbles together bits of old plans already failed. Call it Storingdale or Sunmont!

Prior's plan won't stop the IRA, and that's his main concern — which is why the Anglo-Irish talks still quietly continue. How many concessions he makes to the South and how many he makes to the hard line unionists is decided, not by the buffoonery in the House of Commons, but by the

political preparedness of the nationalists in Ireland to resist imperialism every step of the way. Since the H-block campaign, the pure military policies of the Provisionals have led to the dwindling of the mass movement so it has been possible for Prior to make big concessions to the Unionists.

One thing is certain. The troops and the prison camps remain. The Labour leaders in Britain have done nothing to follow party conference decisions, and tag along behind the Tories. We think the Irish should decide what government they want. The only policy for the British is to get out.



A suitable case for dumping.

Disarmament and imperialism

TORIES OUT, stop the war! Malvinas and El Salvador! These slogans on the massive 6 June CND march signalled a new stage in British politics. A small part of the labour movement was standing up to its own ruling class's war.

Real wars have always had a devastating effect on 'peace movements'. Will the new anti-missile movement scatter before the increasing threat of US intervention in Central America? What is the balance sheet of Thatcher's dry run in the South Atlantic?

A brief glance at past peace movements shows that such problems are not the property of a few sectarians. In the 1930s the Communist Parties began building 'anti-fascist popular fronts', many in the form of campaigns for world disarmament. Casualties of this turn still haunt CND's fringes, peddling grandiose schemes to invoke the goodwill of the world's leading butchers; but the first shots of the real war of 1939 dispersed most of them into their own ruling class's camp.

War

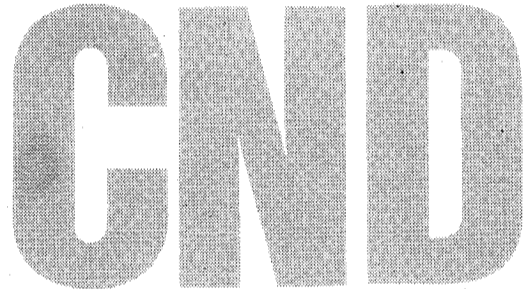
Twenty years later CND's first wave lost direction after the test ban treaty, when the Labour Party dropped unilateralism as the 1961 Cuban missile crisis receded.

CND has never won the ranks of the workers' movement.

By the mid-60s CND's most radicalised sectors were already looking at a small South East Asian country where a colossal military conflict with imperialism was shaping up — Vietnam. CND as a whole, however, could not cope.

Will today's missile movement also have its back broken by a 'real war'? As E P Thompson said just before 6 June: 'A peace movement that doesn't oppose a real war is useless.'

But profound differences separate today's anti-nuclear actions from the older 'peace movements'. They have a specific target, shared by



Last week BRIAN HERON looked at the evolution of the British anti-missiles movement, and the serious problems of orientation facing CND after a year's phenomenal successes. This week he discusses the connection between these campaigns and the growth of solidarity with the colonial revolutions.

all socialists and anti-imperialists: to stop the latest range of US missiles being stationed in Europe. This threatens the most powerful imperialist alliance ever — NATO. It is enormously popular in the European workers' movement. This places it in a different category from the wild and woolly 'world peace' proposals of the 1930s.

In Britain gigantic forces have come out onto the streets in fear and hatred of the imperialists' nuclear policy and in mistrust of its European and US leaders. Their breathtaking scale has denied overall control to the Stalinists and social democrats.

Real

Neither in Britain nor elsewhere in Western Europe have mass actions focussed on detente or arms talks. Instead they have striven to force governments to break from nuclear commitments.

In consequence the movement plays an enormous political role in 'real wars'. Fierce revolutionary struggle in Central America and the new upsurge in Latin America have combined with the huge anti-missile movement to make US rulers think twice about launching a decisive military

offensive in Central America.

It would therefore be the height of sectarian folly to counterpose solidarity with the colonial revolt to building a broad labour movement alliance against the missiles.

Best

There is a real connection between anti-imperialist struggle and anti-missile movements: their growth and success create the best conditions for the emergence of a labour movement current backing the PLO against Begin, and the FMLN against Reagan.

The 6 June demonstration against Reagan's visit, coinciding with Thatcher's Malvinas war, was the first serious test of this conclusion. The war undoubtedly ate into popular and labour movement support for the action. But the 250,000 *did* come out despite chauvinist hysteria. The demonstration was a backdrop for anti-war sentiment, and several platform speakers were forced to oppose Thatcher's adventure — albeit inconsistently. CND itself, through the Ad Hoc Committee demonstrations, provided a political focus for opposition to Thatcher's war.

This 'real war' did not destroy and disperse popular feeling and action against the missiles, which



Anti Imperialist sentiment — aided by CND.

therefore remains an enormous obstacle for the imperialists' drive to shatter the colonial revolution.

Soil

These facts show that movements and actions against the missiles create fertile soil for a consistent anti-imperialist wing of the labour movement. Its first shoots are now emerging: Youth CND whose conference disbanded to demonstrate against the Malvinas war; Labour's Women's Conference, which voted against NATO and the war in the South Atlantic; those in the health unions who demanded more money for the NHS rather than war with Argentina — all given a political focus by Benn and the CND Ad Hoc Committee.

Such solidarity will not be built by delivering ultimata to CND to change its programme. Our aim is not to divide support for CND against Cruise and Trident, but to give this radicalisation a mass action, labour movement orientation.

But as revolutionary socialists, we always point out the connections between imperialism's missile policy and its designs on the colonial revolution. We argue for action against these designs. We defend and build solidarity movements and actions — the El Salvador campaign, the Nicaragua campaign and so on. We fight for support for them amongst CND's ranks — in the process recognising that the anti-missile movement is a huge gain for all those fighting imperialism, throughout the world.

The T-shirt to be seen in this summer! Only £2.95 including p&p. Cheques payable to Cardinal Enterprises. Orders to: PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

Which hunt?

By Brian Heron

IF YOU are a Constituency Labour Party secretary you are about to receive a letter from the National Executive Committee.

Will it explain how to reverse the terrible electoral losses Labour have suffered because of the leadership's stand on the Malvinas war? Does it show how to reach out to the current wave of trade union battles — the most significant since the arrival of the Thatcher government? Not at all. It will tell you how to expel the *Militant* tendency.

A set of rules have been established to do that. We print them here. But as Harold Frayman writing in *Labour Weekly* puts it, 'While the register is seen as a way of bringing some party groups into line, it has become increasingly clear since the NEC agreed on it that *Militant* ... is not reckoned to stand a chance of being accepted. No possible changes within *Militant* would bring it within the constitution, it is said.'

Next to Frayman's article is the continuation of a front page piece announcing the establishment in parliament of a new pro-EEC group led by Hattersley and Healey. It is called 'Red Rose.' We are to get the thorns.

The target of the witch-hunt and 'Red Rose' are exactly the same — the Party's hard won policy gains and their guardians. The register is the first move in an offensive aimed directly at the mass movement.

The register has confused some in the party. It is illegitimate, argues the Labour Co-ordinating Committee, to organise 'a party within the party.' Perhaps after *Militant* the 'real left' will be allowed to proceed as before. Maybe Healey and Shore will then stop accusing us of disrupting the party's electoral prospects.

Top

This is about as likely as Thatcher nationalising the top two hundred and fifty monopolies.

The register aims to identify, isolate and boot out a section of the party which the leadership intends, shall carry the can for Labour's dramatic decline.

And if its terms were applied to the Shadow Cabinet — the real party

within the party, which wages unremitting war against Conference decisions and has no intention of applying them in office — then we might have some confidence in the LCC's line.

Point three, part A, requires that there be 'no secret organisations in the party'. Perhaps the NEC have in mind the Cabinet Committee under Callaghan which secretly decided to renew the Chevaline Programme. Point four in the same section requires 'all groups in the party' to be 'open and democratic'. We await the production of the minutes of Bishop Stortford, and the vote in the movement on the decisions reached there.

Point six demands that 'No groups inside the party should be permitted to operate their own internal discipline ...' Tony Benn was expelled from the front bench for applying that policy into the Shadow Cabinet.

IMF

It goes on 'or be associated with any international organisation not supported by the Labour Party ...' Does the IMF or the EEC come under this ban? If so we had better look again at the affiliations of Messrs Healey and Shore.

If this brief detour serves any purpose it is to blow up the view that the register is anything other than a right wing inspired assault on the left.

Nevertheless the left is in some disarray. Benn however, has given a clear lead. He stands opposed to the register, and argues that this latest right wing assault opens the door to coalitionism after the next election. He says the party should base itself on the vast upsurge of anger

Register of non-affiliated groups of Labour Party members

The general secretary of the Labour Party has written to constituency Labour parties and up a register of non-affiliated groups of Labour Party members. Full details of how to apply are given below.

At its meeting on 23 June, 1982, the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party endorsed the recommendations of the Militant Tendency Report and instructed the General Secretary to implement them.

The recommendations are as follows:

- That the National Executive Committee establish a Register of non-affiliated groups of members to be recognised and allowed to operate within the Party.
- All such groups must apply to and be accepted by the National Executive Committee for registration. The decision of the National Executive Committee on eligibility for registration shall be final.
- There must be no secret organisations in the Party.
- All groups organised in the Party must be open and democratic.
- The National Executive Committee should update the Register annually. The Register should include details of the aims, officers, employees, membership and accounts of groups and should be available for inspection by any Party member.
- No groups inside the Party should be permitted to operate their own internal discipline or be associated with any international organisation not supported by the Labour Party or the Socialist International.
- Any group found to be in breach of these rules should be given a period of not more than three months in which to put an end to such infringements.
- Individuals or groups found to be in breach of the Constitution and Rules of the Party thereafter should be liable to disciplinary action in accordance with the Constitution and Rules of the Party.
- If the National Executive Committee accepts the above recommendations, it is our opinion that the Militant Tendency as presently constituted would not be eligible to be included on the proposed Register in the light of our findings in paragraphs 2(i), (ii) and (iii) of this Report.

The register has now been established. All non-affiliated groups of Labour Party members are requested to apply for registration. A letter is being sent to all known non-affiliated groups of members but it is probable that the names and addresses of some existing non-affiliated groups are not known to the head office of the Labour Party. Such groups will not, therefore, receive a letter. This should not be interpreted as meaning that they are exempt from the National Executive Committee's decision on registration. They must apply for registration and supply the required information. There are no exemptions.

Applications for registration should be accompanied by answers to the following questions:

- What is the name of the group?
- Who are its officers?
- What are the aims of the group?
- What are the membership of the group?
- Does the group employ anyone and, if so, how many and who are they?
- Is membership of the group open to all Labour Party members? If not, is the group prepared to change to open membership?
- Are the group meetings open to all Labour Party members? If not, is the group prepared to change to open meetings?
- Does the group operate any kind of internal discipline?
- Is the group associated with any international organisation not supported by the Labour Party or the Socialist International?
- Is the group entirely financed by its own members? If not, what is the source of its funds and does it receive any financial assistance, direct or indirect, from persons who are not members of the Labour Party or from foreign sources?
- Does your group accept that its membership records and accounts will be made available for inspection?

When applying for registration non-affiliated groups should also submit a copy of their last annual report and accounts. They should confirm that in the pursuit of their aims they do not contravene the intention of Clause 11 (3) of the constitution, namely, that they are not a political organisation with its own programme. The National Executive Committee's decision will be implemented with understanding and respect for the rights of Labour Party members. No group need fear exclusion from the register without discussion and without having the opportunity to bring its arrangements into conformity with the Party's constitution. Applications for registration should be addressed to:

The General Secretary, The Labour Party,
150 Watworth Road, London SE17 1JT.

against the Tories, reflected in the Health dispute and the stand of ASLEF.

Benn's positions deserve every socialist's wholehearted support. But there is an additional step which must be taken. Those who oppose the register need to organise opposition from all corners of the party and its affiliated organisations.

We need a national conference of all those who are not prepared to implement the right wing's rule. We must prepare to combat expulsions and the dissolution of constituent-


cy parties. We must organise the power of the ranks in battle in the unions to defend the left in the party.

It is not a co-incidence that the right in the party feel free to act while ASLEF fights for its existence and the Tories turn 'the Falklands Factor' against the working class. It is our section of the party and our section of the trade union movement who are in the front line when it comes to fighting the Tories.

We need an alliance between them to throw back the witch-hunt.

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ARE YOU ON THE HIT LIST?

As the Register makes clear, even if you are not written to by the NEC you still have to apply for registration if you organise to defend your politics in the party. But we publish here the initial list of campaigns and organisations that are being contacted directly.

- Campaign for Labour Party Democracy
- Campaign for Labour Representation in Northern Ireland
- Campaign for Labour Victory
- Clause 4 Publications
- Independent Labour Publications
- Institute of Workers Control
- Labour Campaign for Gay Rights
- Labour Campaign for a Scottish Assembly
- Labour Committee for Europe
- Labour Committee on Ireland
- Labour Common Market Safeguards Committee
- Labour Co-ordinating Committee
- Labour Economic Finance and Taxation Association
- Labour First

- Labour Party Race Action Group
- Labour and Trades Union Press Service
- Manifesto Group
- Socialist Campaign for a Labour Victory
- Socialist Charter/Chartist Publications
- Socialist Environment and Resources Association
- The Tribune Group
- Socialist Action
- Labour Action for Peace
- Labour Middle East Council
- Socialist Teachers Association
- Labour Friends of Israel
- Association of Labour Groups
- Labour Abortion Rights Campaign
- Life Labour Group
- Labour Committee for Trans-Atlantic Understanding
- Labour Parliamentary Association
- Labour Re-Cycling Group
- League for Socialist Action
- Militant
- British Labour Group Brussels

The soldiers of the Left



Denis Healey at 1945 Labour Party conference

Tribune RALLY

STOP THE PURGE

Tuesday 20 July 7.30pm
Camden Town Hall, London NW1
Tony Benn Jo Richardson
Arthur Scargill Pat Wall

SDP - the membership delivers

By Brian Heron

IT FELL to David Steel to describe the winner of the SDP membership poll for leader as 'gut-sy'. Jenkins — who has the best pampered guts in the business — is now odds on favorite to lead the Alliance: the SDP's Volvo owners think their place in the sun is best guaranteed by a candidate who 'stopped talking about socialism years ago'.

But beneath the electoral results lies a more fundamental question of orientation for the SDP. Ruling class politics and the Tory Party in particular are in deep trouble. During the Malvinas war the Tories' popularity soared. At its height, they registered a twenty point lead over Labour and the Alliance were squeezed back to less than twenty per cent in the opinion polls.

However, this political victory is extremely unstable. Over the longer term, the support the Tories have built up through the war — embracing a significant section of the working class and voters under twenty-one — will break up around the unresolved collision of classes on living standards, mass unemployment and the destruction of the welfare state. The crisis of the Tory party and the unravelling of its bloc of popular support is a profound process which can only be reversed through a defeat of the organised strength of the working class.

Jenkins' victory reaffirms the basic role which the ruling class have

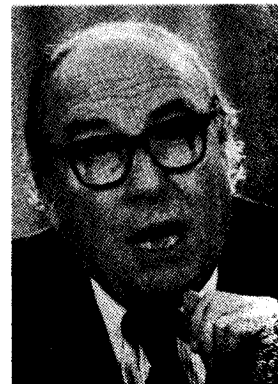
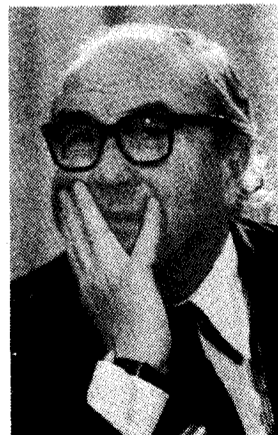
for the Alliance. Owen stood for a left of centre party, asserting its independence from the Liberals, whose aim was to replace Labour; Jenkins stands for soaking up the millions of disaffected Tory voters. His aim is to replace the Tories in the popular affections of the ruling class. As he says 'we did not come into existence to fight for a foothold on the fringes of British politics — we are going for the big breakthrough.'

He is unlikely to succeed. What the ruling class fear is that the unpopularity of the Tories will produce an unstable Labour government. They seek insurance against such an outcome, which will allow them to continue their onslaught on the working class. A coalition Tory—Alliance government would serve such a purpose.

The price of such a coalition would include Thatcher's head, but would have the additional virtue of opening up further divisions in the Labour Party as coalition pressure steadily mounts.

Some SDP members may hark back to the balmy days of Macmillan moderation, but they have just voted for a leader who will act to ensure the massive offensive against the workers' movement continues, albeit in new ways.

'Gutsy' Jenkins, father of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, is now in a position to play his allotted role for the ruling class. The ranks of the SDP have delivered the goods.



Wales Labour Coordinating Committee

WAYNE DAVID, secretary of the Wales Labour Coordinating Committee, criticises my account of the Wales Labour Party conference (SC, 2 July). He claims that I do not understand the relation between the Wales LCC and Wales Labour Party. He also claims that I underestimate the political organisation of the Wales LCC at conference.

It is true the LCC does not have its own delegates to conference or its own representatives on the Wales Regional Executive. But LCC members at these meetings would presumably wish to fight for socialist policies. As Wayne points out, individual LCC members fought hard against 'one person, one vote' and for greater democracy on the Wales Labour Party Executive.

But against this we have to balance the right's victories in support of the witch hunt, for wage controls under a Labour government, and the final much weaker resolution

that was passed on the Malvinas.

The main question we must ask is 'How do we build support for left wing policies against the right?' Through cautious negotiations or by politically organising against the right wing, using the full power of the left? Although the LCC organised a fringe meeting and produced a bulletin, it did not seek to organise its supporters at the conference on key issues. Two contrasting examples show this clearly.

The resolution committing the Wales Labour Party to supporting

unilateralism in the manifesto was passed due to the strength of feeling on this issue in Wales and not through any organised intervention. However, feeling against Tory cuts is also strong in Wales. But the Executive successfully railroaded through their opposition to the call for a special Wales anti-cuts conference.

Finally, on the question of the Executive. Leading LCC comrades in Wales have been removed for two years running. Without their presence the right can promote their activities on the witch-hunt, and continue to stifle the development of a mass campaigning party.

The Wales LCC can learn lessons from the left's setbacks. Following the example of the Scottish LCC, we must refuse to have anything to do with the NEC's proposed register. We must build mass support for socialist policies, to defeat the right. Because of the unions' key role, bolder steps should be taken to organise left support there. The Wales LCC trade union conference, planned for the autumn, will be crucial to this task.

Helen Slyomovics
 Cardiff North CLP

World Cup: hysteria hasn't caught on

GEOFF BELL and Davy Jones (SC, 2 July, on the World Cup) seem to have forgotten a basic rule for socialists — don't believe everything you read in the *Sun* or see on TV.

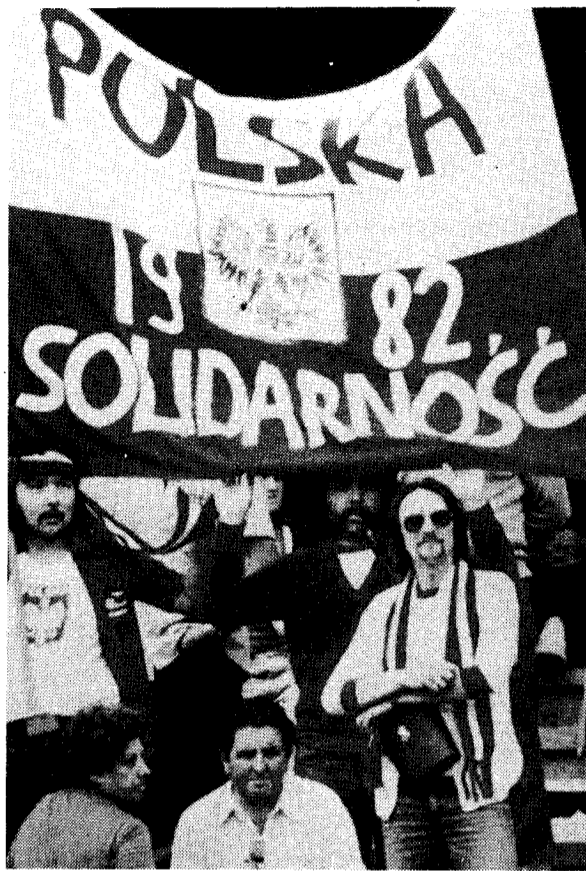
My experience at work is different from the hysterical picture they paint. The *Sun* may be trying for an orgy of national fervour, but so far they haven't stopped ordinary people recognising and enjoying good football whether played by Brazil, Argentina or whoever. There is widespread belief that teams like Honduras and Cameroon have been shabbily treated. Most people would rather see a team like Honduras go to the next round than one of the European teams that plays boring negative football.

Yes, most people would like to think that England will win the world cup, but being hopeful they expected Brazil to win.

Andy Miller
 Mansfield



British fans



Polish fans



What is Trotskyism?

IN THE first article of this series on Trotskyism, JOHN ROSS asked why the great revolutionaries of the past, such as Trotsky, Lenin, Rosa Luxemburg and Marx himself, devoted so much of their time to the study of theory.

This week he discusses how theory is used and developed.



Trotsky

IN THE last issue we concluded that ideas and theories reflect the forces which exist in the real material world. Theory therefore let us study and understand the real world.

But how do we know if a particular theory is right or wrong? To answer this we should go back to our starting point. Marxist theory aims to change the world. A Marxist theory, like any other, is therefore correct or wrong insofar as it analyses and predicts — or fails to do so — how the material social world really develops.

The Marxist economist Ernest Mandel explains this very well in his introduction to Marx's chief economic work, *Capital*. 'What Marx's *Capital*

explained ... was above all the ruthless and irresistible impulse to growth which characterises production for private profit and the predominant use of profit for capital accumulation.

'In fact, it would be very easy to 'prove' Marx's analysis to have been wrong if experience had shown, for example, that the more capitalist industry develops, the smaller and smaller the average factory becomes, the less it depends on new technology, the more its capital is supplied by the workers themselves, the more workers become owners of their factories, the less the part of wages taken for consumer goods becomes (and the greater becomes the part of wages used for buying the workers' own means of production).

'If, in addition, there had been decades without economic fluctuations and a full scale disappearance of trade unions and employers' associations (all flowing from the disappearance of contradictions between Capital and Labour, inasmuch as workers increasingly become the controllers of their own means and conditions of production), then one could indeed say that *Capital* was so much rubbish and had dismally failed to predict what would happen in the

real capitalist world a century after its publication.

It is sufficient to compare the real history of the period since 1867 on the one hand with what Marx predicted it would be, and on the other hand with any such alternative 'laws of motion', to understand how remarkable indeed was Marx's theoretical achievement and how strongly it stands up against the experimental test of history.'

The idea that theory aims to study 'laws of motion' is particularly important. Marx himself took up this point when he wrote the preface to the Second Edition of his work. Here he took up the critics of *Capital*. Most, he concluded, had lamentably failed even to understand what he was trying to do. However the Russian critic Sieber so much pleased Marx with his understanding that he quoted long excerpts including the following:

'The one thing which is important for Marx is to find the law of the phenomena with whose investigation he is concerned: and it is not only the laws which govern these phenomena ... within a given historical period that is important to him. Of still greater importance to him is the law of their variation, of their development ... The scientific value of such an enquiry lies in the illumination of the special laws that regulate the origin, existence, development and death of a given social organism.' (our emphasis)

Marx comments: 'Here the reviewer pictures what he takes to be my own actual method in a striking and, as far as concerns my own application of it, generous way. But what else is he depicting but the dialectical method?'

The 'dialectical method' is precisely that which Marx took as his own — although its earlier development came also in the great German philosopher Hegel.

This allows us to tie together Marxism's practical nature — its goal of helping us to change the world, which we studied last week — and the fact that every Marxist category or idea reflects a material reality. The aim of every Marxist analysis is to lay bare the law of motion — that is, the real development — of what is being studied, in order that we may foresee, predict, change, and therefore act to influence the process of change.

Take the example of the state, which we looked at last week. The Marxist analysis of the state is a view about its dynamic, from which one vital conclusion is that in a decisive clash between the working class and the ruling class, the capitalist state will act with all its violence to defend the capitalist class. This allows us to make judgements as to how we should act to deal with the capitalist state during such a decisive confrontation. In Chile, revolutionary socialists such as Hugo Blanco warned that the only way to frustrate a coup was for workers themselves to take power.

In summary, theory, developed from the study of the real material world and tested by its ability to predict change, becomes a force through which we ourselves can enter into the process of change, and effect its development.

But precisely because it is concerned with change and development, Marxism is also immediately a theory and view of history — indeed it began as such. This is what we shall look at next.

WRITE TO US!

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Postal points

Don't make money from violence

IMAGES of violence I find repulsive. I think injuring people is never funny and has no connection with building socialism.

I am not against political violence, but making a fundraising cartoon of it is sick.

I write more in sadness than in anger as I often agree with your political line.

M. Raymond
 North London



Incitement to violence?

Dead end nationalism

How depressing to find your article (26 June) advocating that the Argentinian working class keep 'their just claim to the territory and resources of the Malvinas' at the forefront of their consciousness.

Surely, our aim should be to break the Argentinian working class from the dead end nationalism (and fake anti-imperialism) of both the military and the Peronists.

Dick Berigan
 Birmingham

Disbanded Constituencies

SC HAS correctly said that CLPs should refuse to expel members even if the National Executive threatens to disband them. Hundreds of CLPs will agree.

But there is still an organisational question. Should these disbanded CLPs declare themselves to be a new party?

I think that even mass expulsions would not make it possible to build a new mass party to the left of the Labour Party in the short term.

Rather these CLPs should demand the right of people in the area to join the Party, and demand the re-establishment

of a Constituency Labour Party without bans and prescriptions.

This attitude towards the official Labour Party would only be temporary, but it would further expose the Labour leadership and establish the basis for a new party in the longer term.

Chris Morris
 Hackney

Discuss entrism publicly

SC HAS been concerned with reporting and influencing developments on the Labour Party left, reflecting the activity of the paper's supporters. No public discussion has taken place on the consequences of this move.

Within a few months expulsions of Militant 'fulltimers' will begin. This will polarise the 'hard' left into those who will in practise defend Militant's rights and those who will just talk about it. Given SC's correct instincts it will be in the former group.

But whatever the outcome, life inside the Labour Party will not be the same again — and it is best to start preparing for that now.

Mike Holbrook
 Howden le Wear

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Trade Unions

Laurence Scott: Duffy's nightmare

By Pete Clifford

THEY thought that they had buried the struggle of the Laurence Scott workers, when suddenly the uneventful proceedings of the national conference of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions (CSEU) erupted, as the union leaders argued about what really happened at Laurence Scott. With the long and bitter struggle over, the bureaucracy was anxious to lay the blame for their sell-outs at other doors.

The AUEW leader, Terry Duffy, had a convenient scapegoat in the form of an anonymous Mr X, who he claims misled the workers, whereas John Tocher, Manchester CSEU secretary blamed Duffy quite rightly, accusing him of being more militant with the workers, than he was with the employers.

At last year's conference Scotts was a big issue: the 650 workers of the Manchester engineering firm were then occupying their factory against closure. It was a fight to save jobs that took place against the background of the miners' successful resistance to threatened pit closures, and the victory of the Gardners' workers, also in Manchester, who had fought back against compulsory redundancies. Scotts had lifted the banner on behalf of all those who wanted to fight for their jobs.

The struggle of the workers came up against every obstacle that the employers and the union bureaucracy could devise. Scott's boss, Arthur Snipe, by paying out redundancy money, had hoped to divide the workers. The strikers asked should they cash their redundancy cheques or not? Back came the reply from the union who said their legal advisors had

confirmed cashing the cheques would not prejudice their fight. At the same time they should carry on fighting for their jobs.

Nobody questioned this course, until the strikers' determination, particularly their use of the flying picket at his parent company in Doncaster, dragged Snipe to the negotiating table. Duffy who had been taken aback by the determination of the strikers, suddenly saw a way out. Ignoring the workforce, he made his own agreement with Snipe.

Snipe offered a guaranteed three months' work, with a guaranteed two-day week. Before the occupation they had been offered a guaranteed three months' work, with a five-day week before the final closure. Not surprisingly the workers tossed out Snipe's offer, and rejected the AUEW directive to return to work.

The AUEW circulated its branches saying that Snipe had insisted on a return of the redundancy money and that further progress would be made on saving jobs once this was done. The bureaucracy claimed that the workers had turned the redundancy pay into a matter of principle. The workers retorted by pointing out, 'The crucial issue at stake was not com-

pulsory redundancies and linked to that protecting the union organisation'. (November '81 issue of the strike bulletin). They also pointed out: 'The redundancy pay issue was of no great consequence, this was later proved when Snipe made a further offer which conceded this.'

In an attempt to brainwash the CSEU delegates, and wipe out the betrayals of the bureaucracy Duffy 'discovered' the mysterious Mr X who had told the strikers to cash their money. John Tocher angrily replied: 'You pulled the rug away ... You should never reach agreement — you should put forward a formula and listen to what the lads and lasses have to say ...'

But Duffy and the bureaucracy do not operate like that. Scotts had been a nightmare for the union leaders. Even when the strike was made unofficial the workers had displayed determination, initiative and ingenuity, that had confounded both the employers and the right-wing union leaders.

Strike delegations toured the major plants across the country, a strike bulletin was distributed, speakers from the strike committee shared platforms with Benn and Scargill. Almost half of the AUEW branches protested to the union executive about their conduct of the strike. The workers showed it was possible to take on the employers and fight back against the betrayals of the union leaders. The Laurence Scott workers showed organisations like the CP-dominated Broad Left how to fight the



Laurence Scott militants fought both bosses and bureaucracy

bureaucracy, which continually drew back from giving a lead in the union against the bureaucrats' handling of the dispute.

The strike was finally broken last February. Over 500 police mounted a strike-breaking operation and escorted scabs into the factory to take away the machinery. As Denis Barry, the works convenor, said this final blow was only made possible by the assistance of Duffy and the other union leaders.

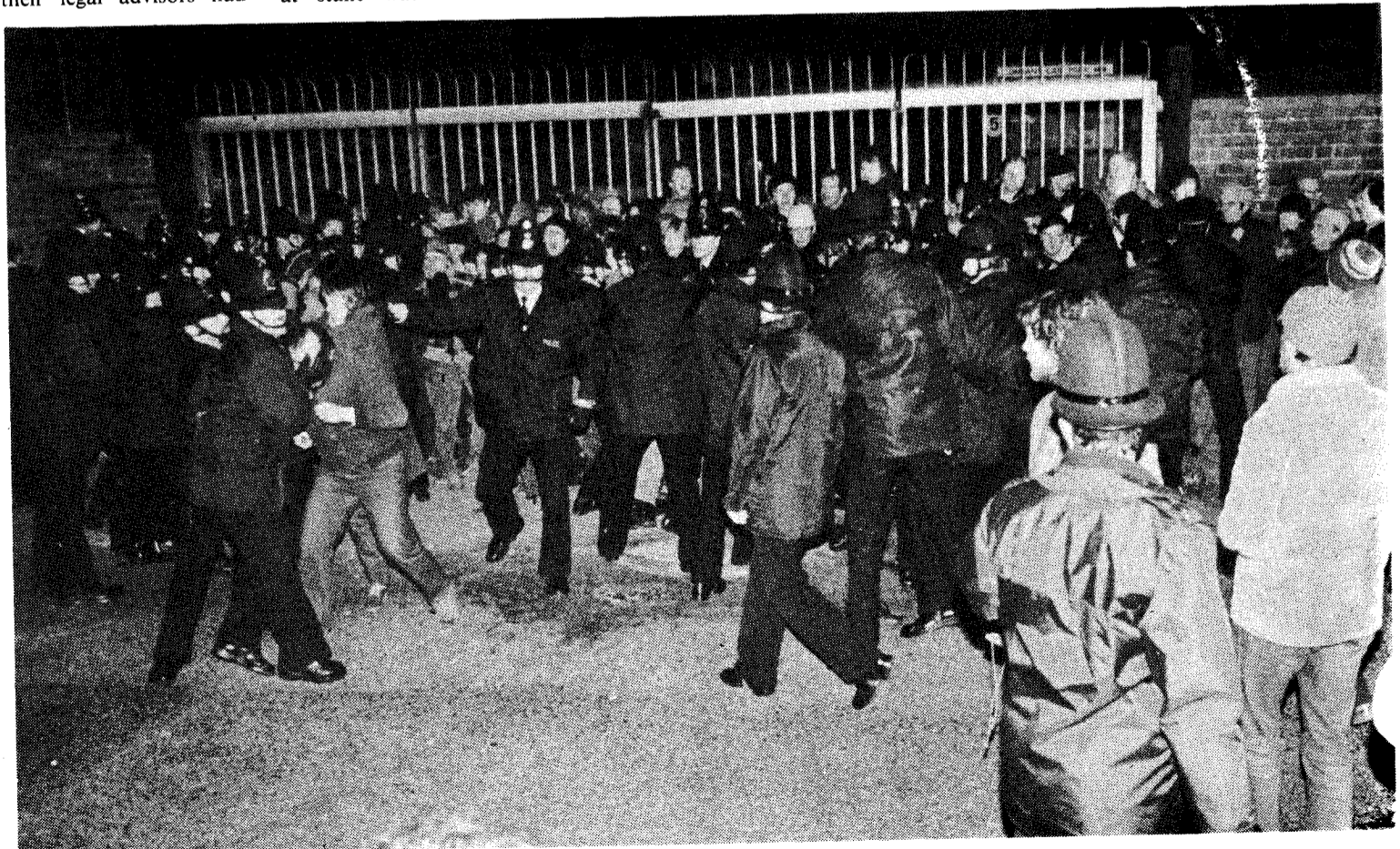
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Unfortunately others did not want to learn the lesson of Scotts. Writing in *Marxism Today*, John McLroy, claimed the workers were 'fatally weakened by the lack of support from other workers' and the 'strike

leaders were inexperienced in every day compromise...' According to McLroy and the Communist Party, it all boiled down to the strike leaders not being active in the Broad Left.

This is just a cop out. The CP explains its scandalous lack of support in the fight against the right wing, by blaming it all on the workers. This means they can learn nothing from disputes like Scotts, Lee Jeans and Gardners which have generally been led by workers outside the influence of the CP.

Whatever Duffy may claim, or the CP may write the lessons of Scott will stay with many militants and many more workers will use the lessons of Scotts in their fight against the Duffys of this world. Scotts showed that the workers need a leadership which rejects alliances with the employers and which is consistently anti-bureaucratic and thoroughly democratic.



Police break picket lines

Wild Lilies: Poisonous Weeds

WILD LILIES POISONOUS WEEDS — Dissident Voices from China edited by Gregor Benton — (Pluto Press £4.95)
Reviewed by Charlie van Gelderen

THE capitalist media usually, and for its own reasons, keep us well informed about the dissident movement in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. We do not get the same reaction about the dissident movement in China. There is a very good reason for this. Soviet dissidents are mainly drawn from intellectuals, many of them highly placed. China's democratic movement, by contrast, is made up overwhelmingly of state-employed manual workers and technicians.

It is only natural that in China, as in Poland, after years of bureaucratic oppression under the usurped banner of Marxism, that many people become disillusioned with the social order itself and seek solutions along different paths, ranging from Christ, Dada, Montequieu, Toto and the young Marx to Trotsky.

Mao's Cultural Revolution, which was ostensibly launched to fight the growth of bureaucracy and inequalities, was ruthlessly crushed as soon as it began to genuinely threaten that bureaucracy of which Mao, the Great Helmsman, was the pinnacle. Nevertheless, it gave the masses a feeling of their own power which was not completely eliminated when the movement was suppressed.

Fight

Similarly, when Deng Xiaoping began his fight back for control of the bureaucracy, he encouraged the ferment around the Democratic Wall. When that movement got out of hand and raised questions about the whole system of Party rule in China, he took steps to curtail it. In February 1980, the 'Four Great Freedoms' — including freedom to put up wall posters — were excised from the constitution and subsequently it was forbidden to sell un-

official journals in public.

Driven underground, the movement, despite harassments and arrests, persisted and began to win support among disaffected factory workers. The Deng-led bureaucracy responded by increased repression.

Theme

Among the Marxist critics of the bureaucracy, one theme is paramount: proletarian democracy cannot be guaranteed by any supreme leader. The sincerity or goodwill of that leader and his rapport with the masses — both Mao and Deng could set millions of people into motion — is not the issue. As Yi Ming, one of the contributors to this collection, put it: 'Only democracy and a socialist legal system can bring the Four Modernisations to China and ensure a brilliant future.'

The Hungarian Revolution of 1956 and Tito's break with Moscow inspired dissident currents in the Hundred Flowers campaign. The rise and growth of Solidarnosc in Poland aroused great enthusiasm among the Chinese workers.

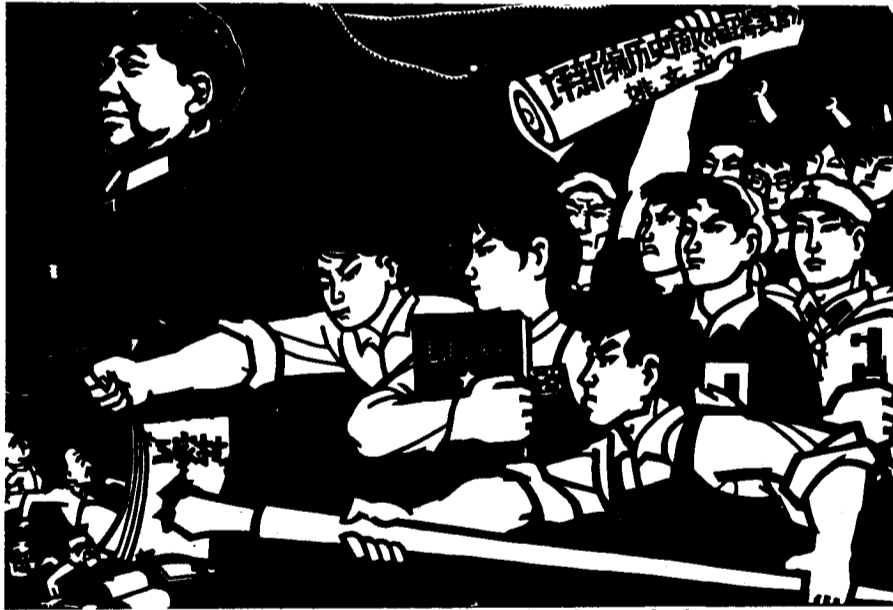
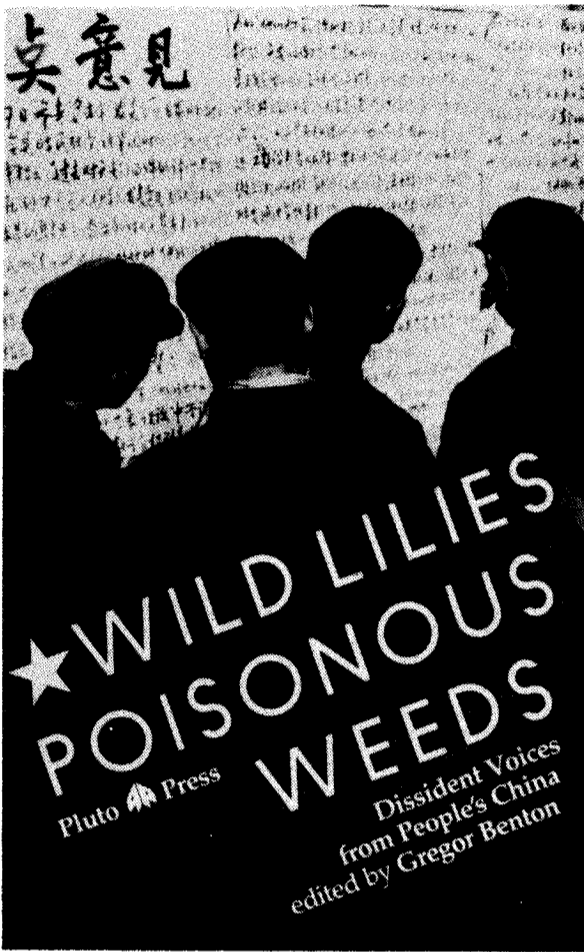
The journal *Lilun Qi* (Theoretical Banner) hailed it in an editorial under the heading: 'The death knell tolls for the bureaucratic class: China and the Polish Crisis'. It went on to say that in

Poland 'workers now realise that officials' wages are thirty times their own minimum wage. They see special cars deliver luxuries to the mansions of the bigwigs...

'In China even though the economy is about to collapse, it has become common practice for bureaucrats to build themselves private villas ... is this socialism? ... Shall we replace it (the bureaucracy's rule) with capitalist private ownership or Catholicism? Absolutely not!...

'The only right way is to build a system of proletarian democracy (which) organically links true public ownership with true democracy, so that each complements and guarantees the other on the path to true socialism.'

This book is essential reading to understand what is happening in China today and because of the lessons to be drawn for the Chinese struggles for all the existing workers states.



The cultural revolution was brutally crushed when it genuinely threatened the bureaucracy

Women workers in Sri Lanka

RAMINI PERARA is a member of the Revolutionary Marxist Group which supports the Fourth International in Sri Lanka. She spoke to JUDITH ARKWRIGHT about the situation facing women in the Free Trade Zone.

The Free Trade Zone (FTZ) is an area that functions separately from the rest of the Sri Lankan economy. Everything produced in the region is exported. Tax free concessions have been granted for exports to allow raw materials and machinery to be brought into the country. The main investors in the region are American, Western European, Japanese and Korean as well as some local investment.

The FTZ was established in 1978 when the United National Party came to power. It has a labour force of 19,500 workers of which almost 85 per cent

are women. Most of the women come from rural areas.

From their youth, they have been conditioned to bend to authority, whether it is their families, schools or their husbands. Buddhism also plays a strong part in the lives of Sri Lankan women. They are taught that they are born as women because they sinned in their previous life.

Wages are extremely low in the rural areas, so women are regarded as a cheap source of labour when they come to the FTZ. They are paid 50p a day, which after two years increases to the princely sum of 56p a day.

But there is a remarkable degree of militancy displayed on the part of the workers, particularly when they realise that everything they produce is for export. Disputes, however, are contained locally by management and government and do not receive widespread publicity.

In February of this year, the Sri Lankan government refused to ratify Convention '82 of the International Labour Organisation, which prohibits night work for women. From February 1983 management will be able to employ women on the night shift. For women this is a further set back to the already appalling conditions in which they find themselves.

Forced to move into

the urban areas, it is the women who have to look after the children and do the housework. They will be unable to sleep in the daytime. They will also face increased sexual harassment and rape.

Any worker organised in a trade union in the FTZ would immediately lose their job. So the Women's Liberation Movement of Sri Lanka tries to organise and work with women in the FTZ. They have initiated campaigns against night work, for equal pay for equal work, for the protection of women when they leave the factories and so on.

Both the government and the body responsible for the region, the Greater Colombo Economic Commission, oppose these campaigns organised by

women. Women's jobs are threatened if they participate in such campaigns.

Nevertheless through the Women's Liberation Movement organising in centres and visiting women in their homes there have been some successes.

The campaign against night work has distributed some 20,000 leaflets. There was a huge poster campaign which began on International Women's Day and continued for one month. Most of the trade unions, with one exception, have remained silent on the issue of nightwork for women.

But despite the uphill tasks facing them the constant threats from government newspapers as well as more subtle types of harassment, the campaign continues.

July/August 1982 Volume 7 No 4 75p

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United action to defend London Transport

By Martin Eady and Oliver New

IF THE union leaders in transport are not sure what to do, no such confusion exists on the employers' side of London Transport. They see their first priority as the smashing of the train drivers and once they have dealt with ASLEF, then they will be ready to take on the tube and bus workers.

That is why they have delayed the introduction of the new reduced schedules and the different days set for the buses and underground sides. This

makes it vital for activists on LT to give maximum solidarity to ASLEF in their battle with British Rail.

At the same time we must launch a campaign in the membership and labour movement for the defence of London Transport. Saturday's 10 July demonstration called by the transport unions, and the South east Region TUC was part of this campaign. However, the union bureaucracy will have to do much more than just calling demonstrations. Only 1,000 people attended. This shows most trans-

port workers do not yet understand why they should take action.

The recent underground strikes were mainly successful because of union loyalty and hard work by activists. The postponement of the cuts won by the last action gives time to prepare for the next round.

Unfortunately, most NUR and ASLEF branches are not using this time. Often they are more concerned with debating the thorny issue of what action to take against proven scabs. Branches

should re-affirm their refusal to operate reduced services and get the membership to realise what is at stake.

In round two of the fight we will have to bring London to a halt. This means the buses and tubes must stop together. For the first time, LT unions are co-operating together on a 'Trade Union Defence Committee' — unfortunately this has so far been little more than a talking shop. It should immediately re-call the joint shop stewards conference to plan united action.

Just like British Rail, the dispute over London Transport is political. We need the political resources of the Labour Party and the GLC behind this fight. But the GLC has remained silent. It is putting all its hopes in a possible future subsidy from the Tory Government. Even if a subsidy was paid, it would not be without strings, which means redundancies and reduced services. Militants in London Labour parties should rally around defence of services over the next few weeks.

Deptford cover-ups continue

By Jeff King

'COVER-UP!' That's the only way to describe the Appeal Court judges' verdict on the Deptford massacre. Despite the fact that the South London coroner, Dr Arthur Davies had admitted making 'mistakes' and his statement early in the inquest that he favoured police theories that the fire was a result of an alleged scuffle between guests at the party, the Appeal Court Judges still upheld the coroner's court 'open' verdict.

Dr Davies had summed up the evidence to the jury without using any notes. He must have had an excellent memory — or was his mind already made up?

He included material never given in sworn evidence — which is legally a bit suspect — but it probably helped the jury to reach their 'open' verdict. According to the families, he also omitted many crucial points of evidence; but then who wants to bother with awkward facts

when their mind is made up?

These little anomalies did nothing to disturb the equanimity of the Appeal judges, as Lord Chief Justice Lane said: 'No reasonable jury could have come to a conclusion other than an open verdict. He failed to add the obvious comment, "especially with directions like they got from the coroner."

The Lord Chief Justice who knows his priorities did not think a new inquest



Pall bearers at funeral of murdered Deptford 13

was desirable on 'economic, social or humanitarian grounds'. Funny how these judges always put the money bit before the humanity.

John La Rose asked the question the learned

judges had dodged: 'Did a ghost kill 13 children at 439 New Cross Road?' He concluded: 'We have had a very bad inquest and now a very bad decision.'

He announced that the

New Cross Massacre Action Committee is to go ahead with plans to establish an independent internationally-based tribunal to inquire into the fire's cause and the reactions of the authorities.

Pay fight in North west

By Pete Clifford

ENGINEERING workers at Massey Ferguson Central Parts operation factory in Manchester have been out on strike for two weeks.

Their battle is the latest saga in a series of clashes between the unions and this multinational company. In the last year the Coventry factory of Massey's was twice successfully occupied against redundancy.

The issue at the Manchester factory is however about pay, and underlying this is a vital test of strength for the unions. It comes against a background of a series of pay strikes in the North west by engineers, notably at GEC and Parkinson Cowan, and the Tory government's determination to impose a two per cent wage ceiling for next year.

Senior steward Dave Leonard told me: 'We're out for a substantial rise. The company has given us a final offer of £2.75 plus £115 lump sum bonus for a thirteen week period, which would involve twelve-hour shifts and Saturday/Sunday working and is only payable if company targets are reached.



Pickets at Massey Ferguson

'Last year we got a meagre rise too and as usual they dangled the carrot of extra overtime. The company claim that they are in a serious financial position yet they have been making heavy investments in recent years at our factory. This time the lads and lasses said "enough". By a five to one majority, the mass meeting on 2 July voted to strike. We've mounted a

24-hour picket which has prevented the removal of £14m worth of orders. We're in for a stand here, we're not taking it'.

The stewards recognise that behind the low pay offer is an attempt to undermine union organisation. Although this is the first pay strike since the factory was established 23 years ago, the record of the workforce in organising

the support from others is rivalled by few. Only a month ago 150 workers walked off their jobs to attend a factory gate meeting with striking nurses.

Engineering union steward Steve Taylor speaking to a health workers march in Manchester said: 'The issue for us is the same as for the health workers and the

train drivers. It's about the future of our union.

'That's why we'll be on the hospital picket lines on 19 July and that's why we're calling for solidarity with Massey's solidarity with the health workers and solidarity with ASLEF'.

Support and donations can be sent to G McDonald, 10 Highdales Rd, Baguley, Wivenshawe, Manchester.

Left wingers under attack in tax officer's union

By IRSF members

IT'S not only the Labour Party leadership which is organising a witch-hunt. The executive committee of the Inland Revenue Staff Federation has threatened to suspend from membership the steering committee of the newly formed Broad Left unless they disband in 21 days.

The executive was shaken by the advances made by the left at the IRSF Conference, where they won a series of votes against the Executive Committee, including a total overtime ban and a commitment to a flat-rate pay claim.

Nearly 200 members attended the Broad Left's inaugural meeting at the conference which agreed to campaign within the Federation on a socialist programme.

The suspension threat is a gamble by the Federation leadership which hopes to stamp out the Broad Left before it gains too much ground. The ploy is likely to backfire, however, as the six IRSF

members threatened with suspension are all well respected activists, including one of the union's three Vice-Presidents, Des Bailey.

Many branches have already protested, and even if the six are suspended, the strength of the Broad Left will ensure that others will come forward to take their places and to fight for their reinstatement.

The Executive Committee have accused the six of wanting to split the IRSF, but the membership are likely to realise who the real splitters are — those EC members who have voted to proceed to suspend their union colleagues.

Defend Pino Khan

IF YOU are Asian and attacked by white racists, please do not ring the police complaining. After all our police force is too busy, doing things like beating up blacks, 'fitting up' people so their arrest rates are up to par, and taking the odd bribe to cover up for some big bank job to deal with such 'trivialities'.

Unfortunately, Pino Khan, an Asian living in Sparkhill, Birmingham did not know the rules of the game. So on 20 March this year when he was playing cards with his brother and cousin and their house was attacked by white racists he rang the police.

Naturally our 'busy' police had not got the time to go and do anything. Pino and his friends could not wait any longer, so they defended themselves and drove off their attackers.

But that did cause the police to move. Acting on a complaint from a friend of the racists they turned up and arrested Pino and his relatives, who were tossed into the cells for the night.

Pino now faces serious criminal charges of 'wounding with intent to cause grievous and actual bodily harm' and the racists who instigated the attack stay free. Again the hooligan elements of racism have

been helped by the blue-uniformed hooligans of the state to intimidate and frame Asian and black people.

If a campaign is not organised and the labour and the anti-racist movements do not join forces against these frame-ups the violence will increase. It will be a violence that reaches out against blacks, Asians and every opponent of the employing class. This is why we urge our readers, particularly those in the midlands to support Pino Khan.

Further details from the Pino Khan Defence Committee, Box 12, 134 Alcester Road, Birmingham B13 8EE, 021-771 3567.

250 strike over pay

AT A mass meeting Friday 9 July engineering workers at Hawker Siddeley Power Transformers Ltd in Walthamstow, East London agreed by an overwhelming majority to continue their four week strike for a 15 per cent pay claim.

They had been offered four per cent which they rejected and started a work to rule. Management responded by suspending two electrical union members and the whole factory walked out in protest. The offer was then increased to six per cent but the workforce stood firm.

Although this factory has no history of industrial action and despite many of the workers not belonging to any union they are united and the feeling about the justice of

their case is strong.

Socialist Challenge spoke to Mervyn Wright, an engineering union shop steward who said that management took advantage of the workers refusal to take action in the past. But now the tables are turned and the entire plant is solid in its refusal to accept a reduction in living standards.

There has been no movement from management who are now feeling the pinch as they had expected some workers to continue production. Not one has crossed the picket line.

Give your support by inviting the strike committee to visit your place of work, take official collection sheets, get a speaker to your trade union or Labour Party branch. Contact the strike office on 01-527 9834.

Socialist Challenge Pay the healthworkers

By Bob Pennington

THE TORIES say that they cannot find the money to pay the health workers 12 per cent. They claim that the £700 million needed is 'more than the country can afford ...' So the workers in the NHS must struggle along on near starvation wages — if they are forced to take the Tories' offer it will mean in real terms their wages have been cut by 15 per cent.

So according to the Tories the health workers can go to hell and the NHS can continue down the slippery slope of decline and demoralisation. There are few, if any, more important jobs than those that mean alleviating pain and suffering and saving human life. Any sane and civilised country would recognise that, and would treat its health workers and its health service accordingly. But Tory Britain is not sane, humane, or civilised. It

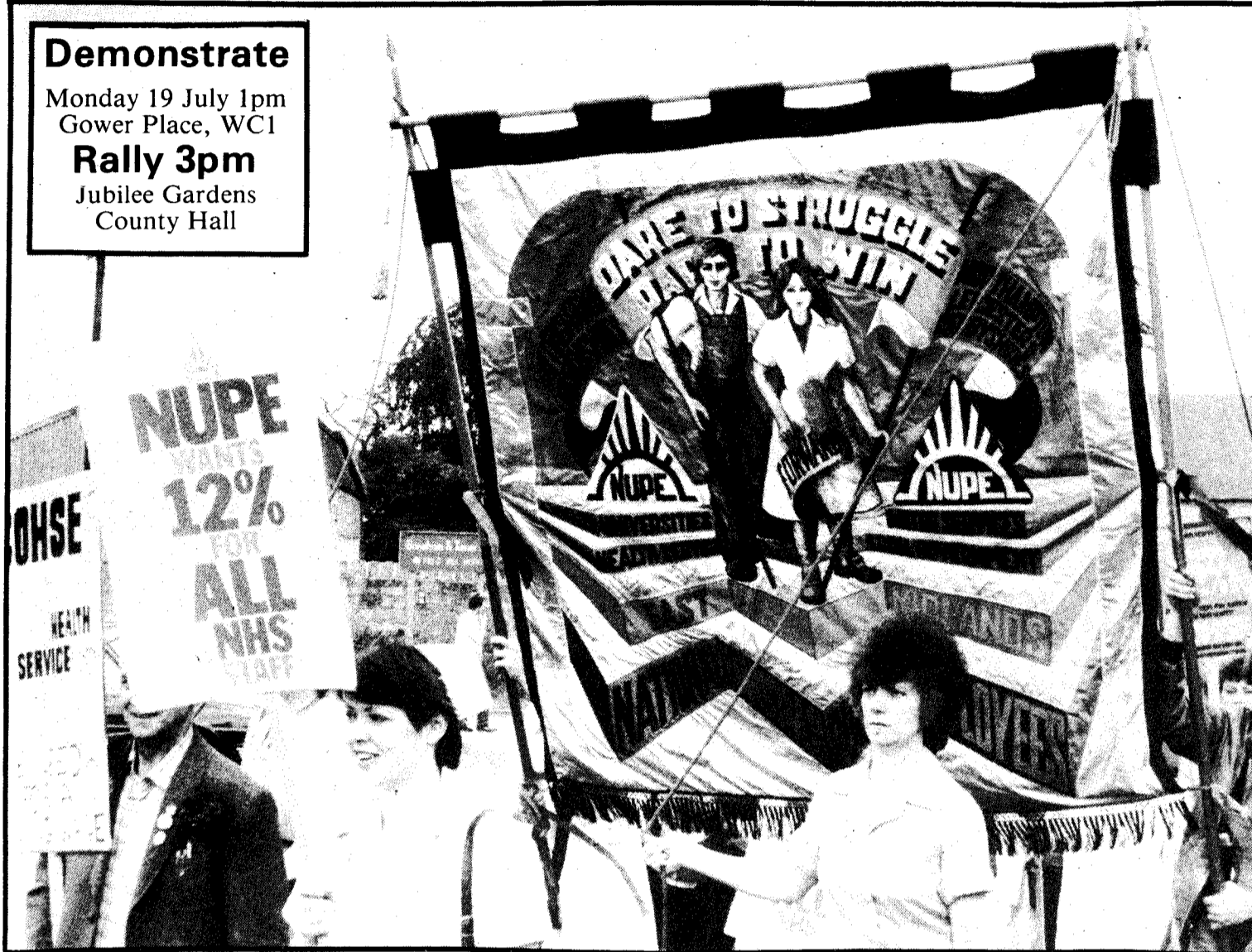
is a country run for bankers and speculators whose government has deliberately run down the health service so that the drug companies and private medicine can enlarge their profits. If the Tory government gets away with its insulting offer, more workers will leave the NHS, services will decline still further and the health of every working person will be placed in jeopardy.

The working class cannot afford to stand by and see the health workers get clobbered. What is at stake is not just the wages of the nurses, porters, cleaners and technicians, but the whole future of a health service which should provide free medical care for all.

The entire labour movement has to rally to the support of the 12 per cent claim. Such support will be the best defence for the health of the whole of the working class.

Demonstrate

Monday 19 July 1pm
Gower Place, WC1
Rally 3pm
Jubilee Gardens
County Hall



All out 19-21 July!

National demonstration Saturday 31 July

Assemble Hyde Park, Speakers Corner 12.30pm.
March to Trafalgar Sq for rally at 2.30.

Further information from Palestine Solidarity Liaison Committee c/o THHS, Oxford House, Derbyshire St, London E2.

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DEFEND THE PLO!

THE Israeli Army is on the brink of an attempt to physically destroy the PLO.

US manufactured cluster bombs have been added to the nightly artillery barrage. Electricity, water, food and medical supplies have been cut off from the smashed streets of West Beirut.

And still the resistance continues.

This resistance has put a spoke in the wheel of Reagan's proposed military solution. Opposition is building in the US against his plans to embroil the imperialists directly in the region. Senator Percy of the US Foreign Relations Committee, opposing Reagan's proposal to send US marines described the Lebanon as Israel's 'Vietnam'.

Meanwhile Syria is reported to have refused entry to the PLO fighters, ordered by the imperialists to leave Beirut. The Baathists, along with Egypt's Mubarak and the rest of the reactionary gangs which rule the capitals of the Mid-East, stand naked before the Palestinian people at the moment of their most extreme peril since 1948.

These regimes are not

and will never be the allies of the struggle for a Palestinian homeland, whatever demagogy they are forced to make from time to time.

But the PLO's resistance strikes a chord elsewhere. They have stopped the Israeli Army, giving rise to a peace movement 100,000 strong in Israel itself. As long as the siege of West Beirut continues then the whole system of imperialist alliances set up round Camp David is threatened.

Throughout the rest of the world support for Zionism within the workers movement is shaken. And demonstrations in solidarity with the PLO have featured in many European capitals. The Lebanon war has exposed the real and fundamental features and class forces at work in the Middle East.

For the imperialists no guarantee of stability is worth the paper it is written on. They are attempting to put their own military forces on the ground. For the Palestinians, reliance on the Arab ruling class is an impossible option. For the world workers' movement the issues are stark and clear:

**US Hands off the Middle East!
Solidarity with the PLO!**

