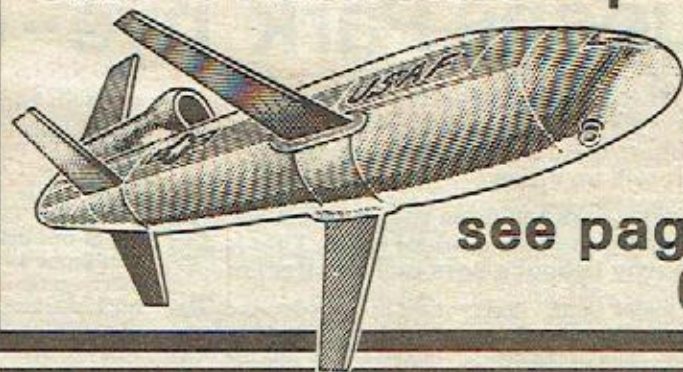


Socialist Challenge

Inside

MX missile madness
CND conference report



see pages
6-7

USSR threatens to launch on warning of attack

Cruise missiles bring war closer

CRUISE MISSILES make nuclear war much more likely. That's the only conclusion that can be drawn from the latest Soviet response to the plan to install Cruise and Pershing missiles in Europe.

According to the Soviet paper *Novosti*, the Soviet Union intends to change its procedures for launching a nuclear counter-strike to a 'launch on warning' procedure.

The Cruise missiles take such a short time to reach the Soviet Union, says *Novosti*, that the Soviet Union would be forced to retaliate at the first sign of a nuclear attack. This would make accidental nuclear war much more likely.

There would be no time for confirmation that a full-scale attack was underway. No time to determine whether one missile had been launched accidentally — Cruise

missiles would take only a few minutes to reach the Soviet Union.

The *Novosti* statement only confirms what anti-nuclear campaigners have known for a long time — that the siting of Cruise and Pershing makes Europe a much more dangerous place; the holocaust is brought that much closer.

NATO strategists say that the West needs Cruise to counter the Soviet SS-20 missiles, already deployed.

This is nonsense. The US navy already has, in addition to all Western land-based nuclear weapons, 400 Poseidon submarine-launched missiles in European waters. The 'balance of terror' is already in favour of the West.

Meanwhile US defense secretary Caspar Weinberger is coming to Europe this week to seek backing for the US's insane 'MX' missile system.

He does so amid persistent rumours that the installation date for Cruise missiles in Britain will be brought forward in an attempt to defuse the anti-missile movement. The construction work for the Cruise base at Greenham Common is already well ahead of schedule.

Thatcher and the Tories are now trying a

systematic red baiting campaign against CND. This week's Tory press has been full of stories of Soviet reporters at the CND conference, the number of visits of CND leader Bruce Kent has made to the Soviet Union and similar stupidities.

Thatcher accused Michael Foot last week of being 'more interested in defending the Soviet Union than Britain'.

But the Tories are fighting a losing battle. The anti-missile lobby is already a clear majority of the British people. 1983 will be the year when the anti-nuclear movement makes its biggest impact yet.

CND conference report, see pages 6-7.



Queens Park bye-election

By Tom Martin

TWO THINGS are certain about the Glasgow Queens Park bye-election this Thursday 2 December: Labour will win by a mile but the turnout will be down.

Queens Park includes the old Gorbals area and housing remains a major issue. That is one reason why Labour's vote will be affected.

A major row has erupted over council plans to sell the empty Hutchingsontown 'E' scheme to private developers. The Labour candidate Helen McElhone wants it demolished and rebuilt. But it doesn't do much for party credibility when it's a Labour council she is opposing.

There is also some cynicism about her selection

as Labour candidate after the death of the sitting MP who was her husband Frank. Although she worked closely with him, her political inexperience is obvious, making her an easy tool for the party managers.

Thus the campaign is in many ways a model for the way in which the Labour leadership would like to see a general elec-

tion run. Tony Benn is invited to maintain a left image but his meeting is right at the start of her campaign with little or no publicity. On the key issues of nuclear weapons McElhone's public meetings have been for the multilateralist and unilateralist sections of the party to unite around what they agree on.

An interesting sidelight on local working class opinion, however, is the slashing attack she delivered at every meeting on the 'needless' Falklands war. This is always well received by her audience, although invited platform speakers are usually less

enthusiastic. McElhone has also come out with a strong anti-abortion position. While Queens Park is a predominantly Catholic constituency the signs are that both she and SNP candidate Peter Mallan (another hard-line anti-abortionist) have misread the feelings of even many Catholic women who support the right to choose.

But despite this, the opposition to McElhone is hardly serious. The SNP are very well organised but their candidate is better known as a singer than a politician. Their image is one of Tartanry and bagpipes rather than real

solutions to the problems for working people.

The 'Scottish independence will solve everything' line reached a logical if bizarre conclusion when Mallan refused to declare himself a unilateralist, saying he just wanted nuclear weapons outside of Scotland.

No doubt the fall-out will stop at the border!

Alliance candidate Graham Watson is standing mainly to keep the SDP/Liberal flag flying although hoping for some middle class support in the south of the constituency. Tory Jackson Carlaw has in fact set up his headquarters there and seems

to be trying to out-Thatcher Thatcher.

Communist Party candidate John Kay is heading for his sixth lost deposit since 1969. Although he can point his finger at Labour's record, his approach is essentially the same, massive expansion of the economy with import controls and an increase in private investment. All without fundamentally challenging the power of the bosses.

A feature of the bye-election has been the CND campaign to commit the candidates to oppose nuclear weapons. A leaflet calling for 'no Trident, no Cruise, no US bases —

jobs not bombs' is being distributed to every household in the constituency from a temporary local headquarters.

Meetings with showings of the War Game have been held in local communities and a march organised through the constituency (with support from the Labour and Communist Parties) and a forum for the candidates was to take place on Tuesday.

But the overall atmosphere is still low-key. Queens Park itself is due to disappear as a constituency at the next General Election. Few are likely to notice the difference.

WITCH-HUNT

Your head on a plate — served by Jim Mortimer

By Alan Freeman

LABOUR'S leadership has dropped all pretence of implementing the register. Jim Mortimer's report, the bulk of which was accepted by the NEC's 24 November meeting, recommends against taking action on any groups which have refused to register, because it might lead to 'damaging strife' during a General Election.

The NEC has therefore switched the direction of its attack on *Militant* by proposing a 'notice of motion' that *Militant* will be declared an organisation ineligible for affiliation to the Labour Party, making all associated with it liable to expulsion.

The same NEC meeting also decided to take over the Labour Party Young Socialists' budget. In 1964 this move was made one month before the LPYS was closed down. Thus, although the NEC has been forced by pressure from the rank-and-file to retreat on some issues, such as Peter Tatchell's candidature, the

road is now open for a wide-ranging witch-hunt.

This becomes clear from the discussion at the NEC about the basis on which 'membership' of *Militant* is to be defined. The decision to declare *Militant* an organisation means that anyone who sells, buys, gives money to or writes for the *Militant*, is liable for expulsion. Mortimer made no attempt to duck this issue, but proposed to define membership as 'significantly contributing to the *Militant's* activities.'

This means that everyone associated with *Militant* will be liable to an extensive (and never-ending) inquisition concerning how many papers they sell, what meetings they attend, what policies they promote — the list is limited only by the ingenuity of the right wing's Torquemadas. It also creates a precedent. If support for a paper is proof of membership of a group, why stop with *Militant*?

Already, *Tribune* journalist Nigel Williamson faces expulsion threats

provoked by a letter to his constituency from John Spellers' party for the crime of having criticised Spellers in an article! On this criterion no member of the Labour Party is safe.

As Martin Flannery explained on *Weekend World*, 'the feature of every witch-hunt is that the witch-hunters always deny there is a witch-hunt on.' The resolution passed by the Labour Party conference, which Jim Mortimer promoted, said the party would 'affirm its determination to uphold Clause II of the constitution ... not in any attempt to provoke witch-hunts but in a genuine reaffirmation of our principles.'

How can Jim Mortimer and the old *Tribune* left now uphold this claim? They have created the machinery by which — unless we maintain and extend the pressure which won Bermondsey the right to reselect Peter Tatchell — it can purge who it likes, when it likes, and where it likes.



London demonstration against the invasion of the Lebanon

NEC ignores labour policy on middle east

By Chris Khamis

FOLLOWING the passing of pro-Palestinian motions at the annual Labour Party conference, the National Executive Committee issued a press statement reaffirming its policy on the Middle East. The conference motions supported the right of Palestinians to self-determination and recognised the PLO as their legitimate representative, committed the party to the setting up of a democratic, secular state of Palestine and demanded the immediate withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanon with an international enquiry into their war crimes.

The NEC contradicts this, putting an equal sign between the Palestinians and Israelis by demanding that they both withdraw from the Lebanon. Where, we may ask, are the Palestinians supposed to go having been refugees since 1948? And does the NEC realise that one reason the Sabre and Shatilla massacres were possible was that the Palestinian guerrillas had withdrawn?

The NEC also recognises the right of Israel in its present form to exist, ignoring the racist nature of the Israeli state and its suppression of the rights of Palestinians living

within its borders. This new development emphasises the importance of building the Labour Committee on Palestine which was set on a firm footing at its new steering committee meeting Saturday 27 November.

The LCP is open to anyone that wants to defend and ensure the implementation of Labour Party policy. It is issuing a press statement condemning the NEC's action and is writing to Constituency Labour Parties to ask them to pass resolutions doing the same.

The steering committee also decided to organise meetings at trade union

conferences, to launch a labour movement fund drive for the Palestinian Red Crescent, to organise a delegation of councillors and trade unionists to visit areas occupied by Israel, and to produce films and exhibitions to use at labour movement meetings. It reaffirmed its commitment to building branches of the campaign.

The NEC statement shows the difficulties in building labour movement solidarity with the Palestinians. It involves a fight not only against the labour right but also against some well known left-wingers. For instance, MP Frank Allaun recently withdrew his sponsorship of a pro-Palestinian meeting in Manchester saying he agreed with the NEC position.

In this light it is a great shame that Socialist Organiser supporters and some other activists decided to pull out of the LCP and set up an alternative committee. We believe that they could easily work within the LCP which has a clear anti-Zionist platform.

Although the founding conference of the LCP was dominated by one political tendency, this is definitely not the case with the new steering committee which has now passed a procedure for clarifying the membership of the campaign.

Socialist Organiser's present course will only damage the chances of building any labour movement solidarity and will play into the hands of both Zionists and the right-wing witch-hunters in the Labour Party. The LCP has invited the alternative committee to fuse with it and send two representatives with full speaking rights to its steering committee. We appeal to supporters of the alternative committee to accept the invitation to join with us in the urgent task of building labour movement solidarity with the Palestinians.

For information contact the LCP c/o PO Box 50, London N1 2XP until further notice.



Judith Hart, left John Golding, right

Photo John Harris

Photo GM Cookson

LONDON WIDE CONFERENCE

Bermondsey, Hornsey under attack

Witch-hunt news

NEARLY a hundred Labour Party activists turned up to Labour Against the Witch-hunt's lobby of the NEC, with banners from around ten CLPs. LAW sent a letter to the NEC demanding it:

- recognise Bermondsey Labour Party's right to choose a candidate free from interference
- take no further measures against Militant
- withdraw the threat to disband Hornsey Labour Party by 31 December if it does not deny Tariq Ali membership

● repudiate John Golding's call to extend the NEC's purge to the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy.

LAW's first National Council, which meets on Sunday 12 December at 11 am in County Hall, will discuss the next steps in the campaign.

Has your CLP affiliated and decided its delegate yet?

● A CONFERENCE of trade unionists which will examine the use of the block vote and see how it can encourage the use of more work-place Labour Party branches has been called by the inter-union Broad Left.

The Broad Left organising committee brings together left activists in a diverse number of unions. It intends to produce a regular newsletter and this can be very useful in building unity among the left inside the unions and the Labour Party.

A document on the development of the Broad Left in the Post Office Engineering Union by a POEU leading militant has already been published. The document provides really useful information for those establishing similar groupings in other unions.

The Conference will be held at London's County Hall on 19 February and our readers are urged to give their support. The BLOC can be contacted at 108 Princess Boulevard, Bebington, Wirral, Merseyside. Copies of the Holt document from Labour Coordinating Committee, 9 Ppland Street, London, W1.

● LABOUR Against the Witch-hunt has produced a two-sided newsletter containing information on its activities, a report from the National Executive Committee by Audrey Wise, and a model resolution on Hornsey Labour Party. Order now from LAW, 11 Wilderton Road, London N16

● HORNSEY Labour Party still faces the threat of disbandment by 31 December, although the NEC has agreed to meet the Party to discuss Tariq Ali's membership of the Labour Party — the reason for the disbandment threat.

The NEC has never once given reason for ordering Hornsey to boot Tariq out. Tariq has written a long letter to the NEC explaining that he accepts the programme, constitution and aims of the Labour Party and there is no constitutional justification for the NEC's action.

Hornsey, with 1,200 members, is one of the largest in the country and among the most active. This is a crucial test of the right wing's determination to impose its will on the constituencies — and it's clear they understand this.

During discussion on the NEC, Russel Tuck remarked 'The issue is not Tariq; it is whether or not Hornsey will obey the NEC.'

Hornsey have appealed for resolutions to be rushed to them and to the NEC.

Saturday 11 December will see a vital rally in Walworth Town Hall, opposite Labour Party headquarters, called by Bermondsey, Dulwich and Peckham Labour Parties. It is the only central London event this December where the left can respond to the NEC's threat to disband Hornsey Labour Party at the end of this year, and its attempts to prevent Peter Tatchell becoming Bermondsey's MP. Denis Healey is now trying to hold the Bermondsey bye-election in December, leaving no time at all to organise a campaign. If this is done, the whole labour movement will have to mobilise to demand Peter is endorsed as candidate and to fight for his victory in the election.

Socialist Challenge spoke to KATHLEEN CONNELL of Dulwich CLP, who is part of the steering committee organising the rally.

How did the rally come about?

A motion was put to Dulwich calling for a Southwark-wide conference on the witch-hunt. Branches and unions have passed lots of motions against it but we felt people weren't very clear about what to do next.

This was then supported by the other Southwark Parties, but we decided to turn it into a rally because we were unanimous in opposing the witch-hunt.

We wanted to put the case: that we weren't fighting the witch-hunt just to save a few individuals but to defend the

Labour Party's socialist policies, to say who the Labour Party belongs to; to oppose all expulsions; and to defend the Young Socialists who are very much in the firing line.

But we also had a very practical task: to assess how much practical support we could get from our local affiliates, the trade unions, and so on.

Tatchell's candidacy, and the threat to Hornsey have come to the fore since then.

Yes. We felt it was vital that Peter be selected, and

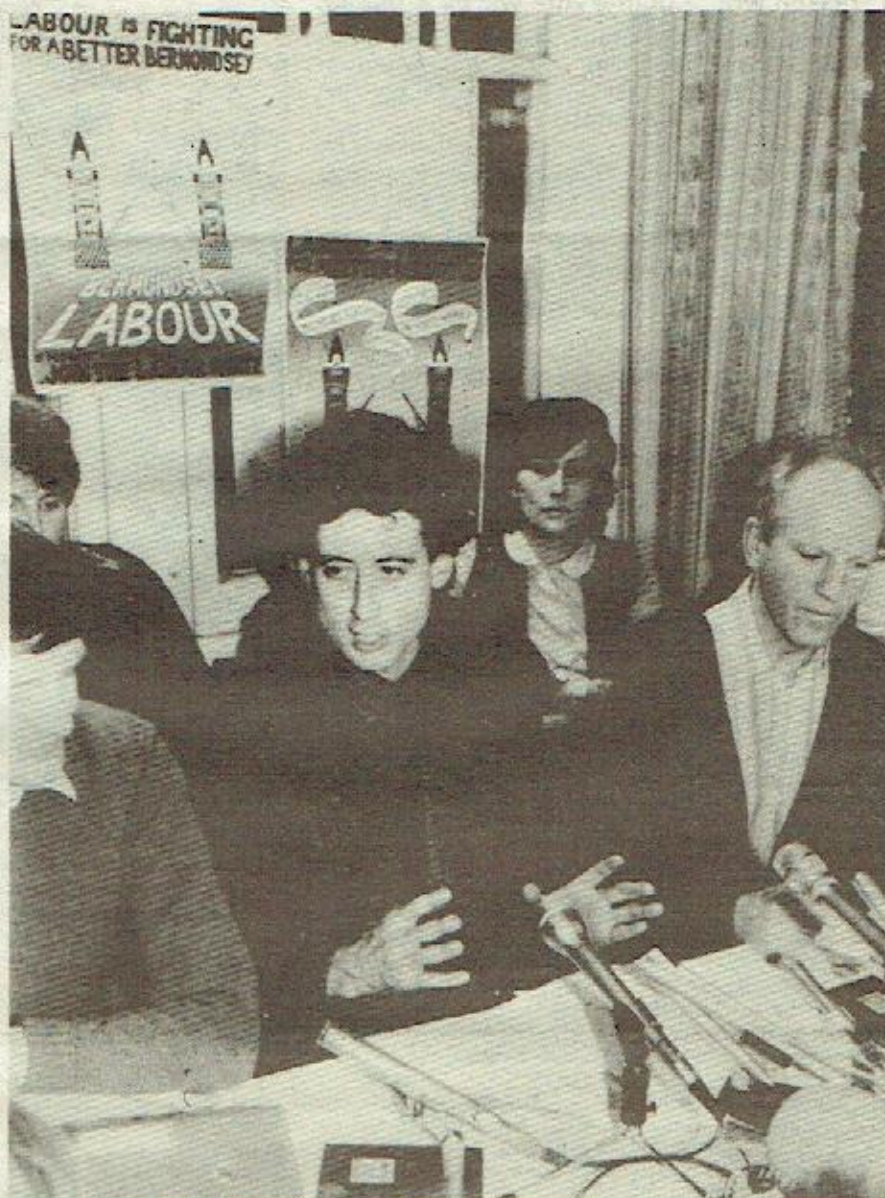
elected, to show that the right wing couldn't succeed if the rank and file stood firm, and that the policies and candidates being witch-hunted could win the General Election.

Hornsey will be a test case for disbandment once expulsions start. So we thought the rally should be more of a London-wide event as a focus for activity on these two issues as well as the broader ones. We invited a speaker from Hornsey, and our steering committee is now going to discuss action proposals to put in front of the rally.

What sort of support do you expect?

We're looking for a lot but we don't know yet if we'll get what we need. You see, the NEC seems to want to put 'problems' like Bermondsey and Hornsey out of the way before the rank and file have time to organise.

We haven't the time for a leisurely slow build-up to the next Labour Party conference: we've got to respond now, before it's too late. So I would urge everyone, whatever they've got planned for the 11th, to put it off and think hard about coming along to Walworth Town Hall; a lot depends on it.



Peter Tatchell at Bermondsey LP press conference

Will NEC close Manchester?

By John Chapman, secretary, Manchester Withington CLP.

LAST FRIDAY Roger Done, secretary of Manchester District Labour Party, was instructed by the national agent to take no further action on the shortlisting or selection of candidates for the 1983 municipal election.

The reasons given were: that several Labour group members face disciplinary action; the way the panel was chosen for the 1983 election; an alleged failure to invite nominators from the affiliated organisations.

What provoked this panic measure? In September 1981 the district

party executive decided to interview all nominees to the panel of the prospective candidates and obtain a firm commitment to the party manifesto.

26 sitting councillors were unable to do so and were deselected. The right orchestrated a press campaign aimed at the 'small minority of Marxist infiltrators who had taken the district party'. Labour group leader Norman Morris, called for an NEC enquiry.

The NEC restored the whip to 17 rebel councillors who had had it withdrawn for voting against implementing cuts, but the district party was instructed to restore to the panel of prospective candidates the deselected councillors, including four

defectors to the SDP.

The deselected councillors, many of whom were elected last May, then held a secret caucus, carved up committee chairs amongst themselves and elected Clifford Tomlinson — currently being investigated by Central Constituency for his off the cuff remarks about ethnic minorities — Lord Mayor.

Party policy was to take no part in electing the Lord Mayor.

Without interference from the NEC, Manchester would have had a Labour council firmly committed to implementing party policy. And this is the key issue. Five sitting councillors had their nominations to the 1983 panel rejected by the district party — Duncan Healey, Tom Farrell,

Derek Shaw, Pat Conquest and Phil Risby — because they would give a commitment to the policies on which they had fought the election.

At the last council meeting on 3 November, many of the Labour group broke the whip to vote against cuts in the direct works department. Six deputy chairpersons who back party policy in the council chamber will now be sacked and up to 29 councillors maybe expelled from the Labour group.

Confrontation was inevitable. Clearly, the last NEC intervention had failed. A group of tired hacks have been rescued from the political dustbin and imposed on a party that had overwhelmingly rejected them and their Tammany-Hall style of leadership.

The Hughes enquiry will be a disaster. If, as Hughes instructs, we take no further action on shortlisting and selection and await an NEC enquiry, the timetable will be seriously disrupted. Many wards will have to fight a four week campaign.

With jubilant media coverage of Labour's 'moderates' fighting off the ultra left, one wonders if Mr Hughes has considered the seriousness of his proposals and whether the current NEC really want to win the elections if it means sharing power with the left.

Militant still steering their own Committee

AROUND 2,000 people in all attended rallies of the Militant-dominated Labour Steering Committee Against the Witch-hunt in Bradford, Brighton, Cardiff, Glasgow, Liverpool and Newcastle last weekend. The Bristol rally is still to come on 11 December.

Militant, who dominated and controlled the meetings, have responded to pressure from activists annoyed with their determination to create a movement accountable to them and them only.

LAW speakers were invited to most of the rallies and a majority of the London platforms were involved in LAW; a motion was accepted by the platform of the London rally to declare support for parties, such as Hornsey, threatened with disaffiliation.

In some rallies fresh nominations were accepted from the floor for regional steering committees. But Militant supporters retain a majority everywhere, and no democratic structure was set up to make the new committees accountable to those who support them.

In Birmingham Peter Taffe denounced Labour Against the Witch-hunt as 'splitting and sectarian' and 'Johnny come latelies who had been in the labour movement for five minutes, jumping on the bandwagon' — an insult to the 100 con-



Militant editor, Peter Taffe.

stituency parties who formed LAW and probably a surprise to LAW sponsor Les Huckfield MP, who shared a platform with Peter.

This attitude explains the applause for a speech by Dave Carter in Newcastle. Militant has to make a choice, he said. Either they set up an open and accountable campaign which could easily unite with all other such bodies; or it should have a campaign of its own, in which case it has to cooperate with the democratic labour movement campaign which does exist, was set up on 30 October, and has approached the Militant's own committee for co-operation, unity, and an exchange of delegates — only to be rebuffed by Militant 'in the name of unity'.

This sectarianism has damaged Militant's ability to include independent activists in its own defence; and this weekend showed in small rallies, with few independents, serving as little more than recruitment sessions.

RALLY DEFEND SOCIALIST POLICIES OPPOSE EXPULSIONS

WALWORTH TOWN HALL
WALWORTH ROAD (ELEPHANT AND CASTLE TUBE)
SATURDAY 11th DECEMBER, 2pm-5pm

Speakers

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| Reg Race MP | Peter Tatchell |
| Vice-Chair: Labour Against the Witch-hunt | |
| Richard Balfe MEP | Teresa Wrack |
| | National Committee of YS |
| Jeremy Corbyn | E.E.T.P.U. Broad Left |
| Chair, Hornsey Labour Party | Speaker from |

Bill Sirs in Wonderland

By Celia Pugh

STEEL UNION leader Bill Sirs is faced with big problems — at least 20,000 redundancies by next year and major plant closures. The enormity of Bill Sirs leadership responsibility reduced him to tears in 1980. This year he has escaped into wonderland!

Last week's 'Steel Appeal' rally in London drew 500 representatives from steel communities to protest at the latest Steel Corporation cuts. It was difficult to work out who the nad hatter was at this particular tea party. There were certainly enough candidates. One thing was certain, just like Alice who was denied a seat at the table, this gathering had little space for the collective might of the trade unions.

Speakers ranged from Tory MP's, mayors and vicars to the boss of a private steel firm.

There was much praying to God, led by a speech from the Reverend Potter from Scotland 'We need time for consultation, I hope to God that wise council will prevail'. Mr Cnages, Managing Director of Manchester Steels was thanked for his positive contribution and introduced himself as 'a capitalist and there aren't really many of us in the hall today'.

Tory MP Teddy Taylor explained how he: 'resigned from the Conservative government because of the EEC we are now suffering from, being part of the European regime.' Make sure' he boomed we are not taken for a ride by the continentals'.

Much pumping of hands and slapping of backs issued from Bill Sirs throughout the bizarre afternoon.

Labour movement figures did get a small slot in the proceedings. Geoffrey Drain from NALGO

was introduced proudly as 'the only trade union speaker here today' and opened his remarks with 'You may ask what I am doing here?'. Many of us asked the same question after his no action speech.

Labour leader Michael Foot did nothing to rescue the proceedings, adding to the general John Bull tone with a stirring plea; 'We want to build steel as the sinews of a great Britain — a great Britain we are determined to make'.

Turn

Then it was Bill's turn. The mayors, vicars and capitalists in the hall loved it. They clapped for all they were worth. He explained how the one day strike last month had: 'Put the plight of steelworkers into peak hour TV viewing and onto the agenda of the cabinet office'.

Defensively he outlined that this was 'a protest strike, which may or may not have met with your approval'. He assured them that: 'We will fight in a responsible way with the power of public opinion — the greatest power in the land'.

The *Steel Appeal* set itself four 'objectives' to rally this power of public opinion. Sirs spelt them out. First, that the government should take the decision about plant closures away from steel boss, McGregor.

Second, that declarations should be extracted from the Scottish and Welsh Office.



Bill Sirs crying after his famous Cardiff speech in January 1980. He broke down after addressing a mass rally on the day a quarter of a million Welsh workers went on strike against steel cuts. Sirs promised general strike action and claimed the event was 'one of the most emotional experiences of my life'. Yes, Bill Sirs, hold your head in shame for all those broken promises!

Third, support should be won from members of the Conservative Party and forth ... wait for it ... the business community should be mobilised!

On all four, success was recorded. Even the press had responded. 'We have had strong editorial support from the Daily Express, Daily Star, Observer, Daily Mirror and qualified support from the Daily Telegraph'.

Big Deal. I'm sure steel workers in Ravenscraig and other threatened plants sleep confident in their beds knowing that Bill Sirs' new found

friends can save their jobs!

The labour movement has learned from long and bitter experience that these broad front, 'popular' protests are hopeless in defending workers from the butchery of capitalists like Knagg and Tory ministers like Teddy Taylor. These jamborees are no substitute for national industrial action, even if the vicars and managing directors don't like it.

The afternoon gave another insight into Sirs wonderland. He explained why the main demands of the Steel Appeal centered

on import controls. 'If we could reduce imports by half, the fear of major closures would not be there'. This is just fantasy.

Throughout Europe, steel producers are junking unused steelmaking capacity because the madness of capitalist economics has slashed steel demand. True, steel users like hospitals, schools, railways and other social amenities are in desperate demand. But these don't make profits — so tough. Profit making concerns like cars are in slump, so steel production is slimmed down.

On 25 November, the EEC Commission confirmed that even more swingeing rationalisations are demanded to reduce steel making capacity in Europe by 30-35 million tonnes, the equivalent of major surgery in 20 large steel plants.

Despite the protestations of Tory industry minister, Patrick Jenkin, Britain will have to take its share, or face financial sanctions. Total or partial closure of one or more of the five main integrated steel plants in Britain is inevitable if a fight doesn't come — this shedding of capacity and plant has gone on for years.

In the last three years alone UK steel production has fallen by over ten million tonnes. In this time, imports have increased by at most a fifth of this amount — between 0.6 and 2 million tonnes.* So imports can hardly be held as the major reason for job cutting cutbacks in steel production.

Focus

Bill Sirs' focus on import controls and search for little Englander friends in the likes of Teddy Taylor, takes steelworkers up a cul de sac.

The task facing the steel union leaders is to mobilise the power of the real world rather than the wonderland of 'public opinion'. In the real world it is the organised trade union movement and the language of industrial action that count.

Smaller plants like Clydebridge in Scotland considered this sort of action when the steward proposed occupation to stop closure by Christmas. The majority of the 560 workers were not prepared

to gamble their redundancy money against the hope that the national union leaders would throw their weight behind the struggle.

The lesson is clear, plants cannot fight alone and the national leadership should pull its finger out.

Some action was proposed from the rally. A picket was set up at the Immigration port in Humber-side to block ten thousand tonnes of imported steel from Japan and South Africa.

Trouble

Even here the ISTC leader of the ten pickets, Joe Pickles, explained, 'The purpose of the picket is not to cause trouble ... The exercise is aimed at bringing to the notice of the public the situation that exists on steel imports'.

Rank and file steelworkers from Scunthorpe are prepared to picket the port. Transport union dockers and ASLEF drivers have promised active backing. They see their task as more than protest action.

This will to take firm industrial action is a welcome contrast to Bill Sirs' pathetic parading of Tory dignitaries. But it should be channeled into actions against closures and redundancies and not the dead end of an import control lobby.

ISTC members should flood the union offices with resolutions from branches and complaints to the union newspaper, *The Banner*, demanding a change of course.

*Correction. An error in transcribing last week's article (pg SC271) transferred this increase of 0.6 tonnes to a percentage increase of 0.6 percent.

BREL Horwich Strangling the railways to death

By Jude Woodward

HORWICH LOCO WORKS fought off a threat by British Rail management to close the works down, but now they again find that their future is in doubt.

BR has failed to get the scale of voluntary redundancies it required, so compulsaries are now more than likely. The Horwich Action Committee is determined to resist this threat. But the problems go even deeper than this.

Dennis Green, who convenes the Action Committee, explained the situation:

'They don't guarantee us regular work. Despite the fact that Horwich works has some of the most advanced machinery available it is all under-utilised.

'Each order that we do is extra work that some other loco works couldn't do. We don't have our own region to cover, or our own jobs. We all feel that the future of the works is in doubt, despite what BR are prepared to say.

'They don't seem to have made up their minds what to do. In the last 10 months we've had three different production managers. The one we

have now is only a temporary manager, which doesn't inspire confidence.

'We are not arguing that we should be given work while other loco works go to the wall. That would be divisive, although there are some plants that take that approach. Our demands are for increased investment in rail as a whole, and we call for the other measures that are necessary to make this possible.'

Threats

Horwich Loco works action committee have brought out a new issue of their campaign broadsheet in response to the renewed threats from BR management. The broadsheet points in particular to the



Horwich workers successfully demonstrating against the first attempts at closure

massive underinvestment in rail in Britain compared to any similar country.

In a situation where

every other major country is increasing investment in rail, building more trains, carriages and track, Bri-

tain is going in the opposite direction. While world investment in rail went up by about 22 per

cent in 1980, mainly from America and Western Europe, in Britain investment went down!

The following table reveals the picture:

RAILWAY INVESTMENT IN 1980 (outside the USA)	
West Germany	£1,219m
South Africa	786m
France	740m
Nigeria	534m
Italy	476m
Belgium	389m
India	370m
Spain	355m
Britain	316m

FT 30 June 80

The starvation of funds from BR is leading to collapse in the amount of freight carried by rail. The effect has been dramatic. In 1953, 42 per cent of freight went by rail, today it is nearer 10 per cent! This also reflects a big drop in the overall tonnage of freight carried by rail. This is the reverse of the overall trend even in Europe alone.

While the British government plans to privatise and run down rail, the West German

government plans to treble its volume of rail freight by 1985. While in France £317m was spent on maintenance and new track alone — more than Britain's entire expenditure on rail.

Report

The Horwich Action Committee have also obtained copies of a report produced by Thatcher's Think Tank — the Centre for Policy Studies — which seriously looks at substantial further run down of rail and turning disused track over to roads.

If Thatcher can't sell off rail quickly enough then this is a good alternative for private industry. Road haulage companies have already increased their profits with the reduced rail facilities. That serves the interests of the vehicle manufacturers as well.

And that would deal with the problems of the rail unions as well — after all roads don't go on strike!

The great coal board massacre

By Celia Pugh

THE SECRET SCRIPT for the latest Coal Board production was leaked to the miners union in early November. For months the NCB have denied that a massacre of jobs is part of the plot. But at the meeting with the NUM on 23 November, Coal Board boss Norman Siddal admitted that another 60 pits are being considered for closure in the next eight years, with up to 30 more to follow. 70,000 jobs could be slaughtered before the decade is out.

The latest copy of the NUM newspaper prints sections of the 'Confidential' document prepared by the Board in March 1982 for the Monopolies Commission. A table headed 'This deals with a very sensitive area and is not for publication' reveals 75 pits to be closed within the next eight years on alleged grounds of coal exhaustion.

These include 16 of the 59 Yorkshire pits; 15 of the 55 Midland pits (Nottingham, Derbyshire); five of the 14 Scottish pits and over half of the South Wales Coal field, with 17 of the 33 pits to go.

15 of these pits have already been closed.

In addition to these 75, at least 20 pits are marked out for closure to cut costs. All in all this amounts to a one third cut in workforce and half the British coal field being shut down.

This confirms the claim of miner's president Arthur Scargill that the NCB have had a hit list for months and that the Tory government intends to smash the miner's union by decimating the coal industry. Through rationalisation and new technology the number of pits will be cut back and each made more produc-

tive. Meanwhile nuclear power will replace coal fired power stations.

This month the Department of Energy gave its evidence to the inquiry into the Sizewell nuclear power station. In its evidence the government revealed its intention to increase nuclear power by between 500 and 800 per cent before the end of the century. At present power stations burn three quarters of Britain's coal and the Government wants to cut this by a third as rapidly as possible.

The 81,000 miners who voted earlier this month for action to save jobs have been vindicated. They now have firm evidence of the Coal Board's intentions to throw miner's jobs onto the scrap heap and gives firm arguments to why people in coal mining communities should prepare for a fight.

The 60 pits specified as 'short-life' on grounds of exhaustion have plenty of life if investment is forthcoming to open new seams and open up vast untapped resources. On a picket during last week's talks with the Coal Board,

Tom Bowden, lodge secretary of the threatened Britannia pit in South Wales explained,

'The pit has plenty of resources left. We have just opened another face and need developments now to work on the next. We will resist this closure to the end and will sit-in if necessary'.

This defiant mood is now spreading throughout the British coal fields. The Scottish miners had already decided at a delegate conference on 16 November that the Scottish 69 per cent vote for action in the recent national ballot gives them a mandate to resist.

All the signs are that the National Union of Miners is preparing to rewrite the plot prepared by the Coal Board and its Tory masters.

Ready to fight for jobs

By Barry Wilkins

THE 60 PITS which the National Coal Board last week openly stated it wanted to close within the next eight years include nine in South Wales. But the real threat to the South Wales coalfield is much greater still.

Of the 75 pits which the NCB defines as 'short life' a massive 17 are in South Wales. This is just over half the entire coalfield. In view of the 59 per cent vote for industrial action from South Wales miners in the recent

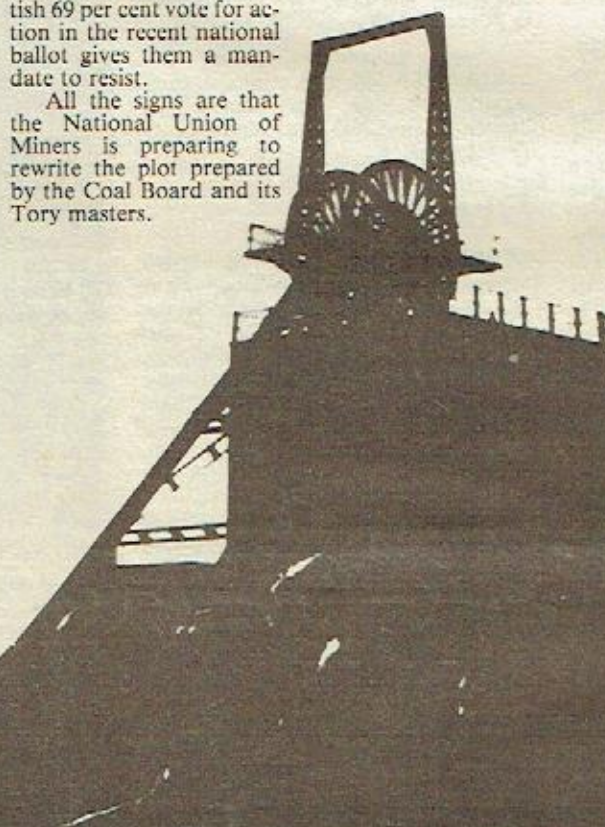
ballot this is building up to a potentially explosive confrontation.

Emlyn Williams, president of the South Wales miners pointed that there are workable reserves at all these pits and that the NCB is deliberately denying investment and recruitment. 'Half the coalfield will be closed down unless capital and recruitment are forthcoming', said Emlyn. 'We will carry out a campaign among our members and take on the board as we did in 1981 if they attempt to close down our mines.'

South Wales executive members Dai Davies works at Penrhwiweiber, one of the threatened pits. He told Socialist Challenge that the South Wales leadership has reaffirmed its opposition to all pit closures except on grounds of exhaustion and will call an area conference to discuss the fight against these latest threats from the coalboard. 'We will resist any closures in South Wales. I am confident that when the first mine is hit we will all be out.'

Dai explained that last

year only £37m had been invested in the South Wales coalfield compared with £1000m in Yorkshire including £120m at just one pit. Dai commented 'This is rapid strangulation not slow strangulation anymore. But in South Wales there are massive reserves and seams of coal which have never been tapped. We have got to fight for the jobs and investment needed to save our industry not just in South Wales but also the other coalfields under attack like Durham, Northumberland and Scotland and Kent. This will have to be a national fight.'



Roundoaks — Labour's fighting chance

By Valerie Coultas

MICHAEL FOOT came to the West Midlands last week. Not only did he visit the Raindi picket line in Smethwick but speaking at West Bromwich he made a pledge that Labour would defend the Roundoaks steel works in Brierly Hill now threatened with closure and the loss of 1,300 jobs at Christmas.

Michael Foot, MP for Ebbw Vale, is not notorious for his defence of steel plants. So why all the fuss about Roundoaks — particularly when resistance to job loss in this area has been sabotaged by local officials notably with the Ansells strike two years ago?

The answer lies of course in the forthcoming General Election. This is the new factor that has brought Michael Foot clamouring to the defence of the 'Jewel of the Industrial Crown of the West Midlands': Roundoaks Steel works.

Promising that the Labour Party would modernise and re-equip industry through a revitalised and expanded NEB, provide work for the construction industry in rebuilding the decaying fabric of the inner cities Foot hopes to swing voters in the West Midlands back

to Labour. As the recent by-election and the narrow victory for right-winger John Spellar shows he's going to have an uphill battle although the local Tory Council with its swingeing attack on social services in the city is giving him a head start.

We cannot put any confidence in Michael Foot to actually fight. But his interest opens the way for the left in the trade unions and the Labour Party to take the fight against redundancies into the heart of the Labour Party and force this issue into the centre of the debate.

Saving Roundoaks is vital. Not just for Roundoaks workers themselves but for everyone in Brierly Hill. Can it be done?

The odds, it must be admitted, are heavily stacked against it. The Labour movement in the West Midlands has not

had a surfeit of victories over the last few years.

Battles have been bitter and the local right-wing bureaucracy both in the Labour Party and the unions are more firmly ensconced than they were three years ago. But the last six months has experienced an increasing anger among the ranks of the trade unions in this area.

Black workers at S&K and now workers at Supreme Quilting and Raindi Textiles in Smethwick have begun to take a stand against sweated labour and received widespread support despite bad advice from local T&G officials to refrain from engaging in militant picketing.

Opposition to the vicious privatisation schemes of the Tories continues among school cleaners, caretakers and dinner ladies. This looks like leading to strike action in the new year despite the NALGO staff accepting efficiency scrutineers at a mass meeting two weeks ago.

And in the DHSS dispute the ranks voted by

581 to 25 with only six abstentions to reject the advice of the CPSA executive and accept management's offer of a tiny increase in manning levels. A region wide strike has been called and a national one day strike is also in the offing.

Bill Sirs will be coming to address steel workers at Dudley Town Hall on Wednesday 30 November. His theme will of course centre on protecting the industry through focussing on blocking foreign imports coming into Britain such as the one now in dock at Immingham.

The only way trade unionists have protected their jobs under this Tory government is when they have done what the young women at Lee Jeans did — dug in their heels, occupied their factory and refused to budge until jobs were guaranteed. Being prepared to launch such an all-out fight — not scratching favours from John Blackburn, local Tory politician — is the only way jobs will be saved. Union officials should make that clear.



Michael Foot speaking to the PS Raindi and Supreme quilting workers now in the fifth week of their strike. Foot said: 'We wish you success with your struggle for the rights that you have every right to in this country. We want to see the success of this fight and we wish you the best of luck.' Some of the workers are earning £30 below the minimum £57.05 for the industry. Their firm supplies such stores as Littlewoods, C & A's, Marks and Spencers, Lord Anthony's and Millets Army Surplus

Frank Gorton, trade union liaison officer for Hackney North Labour Party adds: 'We've put out appeal sheets for support to Raindi Textiles in English and Turkish for the local garment workers in this area.'

Arrangements have been made for the appeal to be circulated to all London Labour Parties and other labour movement organisations. Collections have already been taken at our Labour Party GMC.

For further information please contact Brother Higgs, Transport and General Workers Union 9/17 Victoria St., West Bromwich, West Midlands.

'A million on the streets'

CND C

'Make '83 the year to stop the missiles'

By Brian Heron

'THIS IS the year that Cruise and Trident are coming to Britain. It is the year of a general election. It is a year that a majority of the population oppose Cruise and Trident. And it is a year when the TUC and Labour Party have decided upon action. How do we bring all these elements together to ensure that '83 is the year of CND?'

Fred Kingdom from Reading CND put this question to the '82 CND conference, moving resolution 14 on CND's labour movement orientation. It was really a struggle to get the answer right.

CND conferences are cloudy, bureaucratic, mismanaged affairs — full of well-meaning workshops and points of order. This shapelessness reflects both the leadership of the campaign and its activist base. Figures released during the conference showed that half the membership of 50,000 are in the 'professional' employment category and 20 per cent are students. Half the membership come from London and the South East.

But the potential power of the movement was shown in the statistics released from a sample of the 6 June demonstration. In a demonstration of 250,000 called at the height of the Malvinas war, 88 per cent disagreed with government policy at the time.

Debate

Although half were professional workers, 20 per cent were manual workers and for 30 per cent this was their first national demonstration.

Significantly, in the light of the absence of any youth debate at the national conference, none of the statistics released gave a breakdown of age differences among CND supporters.

The conference was overshadowed by the events at Greenham Common. The heroism of the Greenham Common protestors captured the imagination of most delegates and ensured that the resolution on non-violent direct action got the biggest vote of the weekend.

While Saturday was taken up with constitutional debate and a myriad of workshops, the plenary session struggles with the relationship that Non-Violent Direct Action should have with the overall tasks of the movement in '83. By the end of Sunday delegates had some clearer ideas.

The argument started in the 'ballot for survival date' — the proposal that CND should concentrate on a nation-wide signature gathering campaign against the missiles. Ann Donnelly from YCND national committee argued that events like the YCND youth festival in May would build on the 'tremendous labour movement support' won for the North West 'Jobs not Bombs' march.

Push

Dick Withecombe from Manchester CND put his finger on the issue in a more dramatic way: '1983', he said, 'must be the year when we stop Cruise. That is the issue. A 'ballot for survival' will not stop them. We need real and massive political action. We must use the positions adopted by the labour movement to put a million on the streets at the end of the year. That is the way we can back up the heroism of those at the peace camps.' This point received loud applause.

The NVDA action was presented by the mover as 'the most important resolution at this conference'. And with peace camp leaders' Jean Hutchinson's and Lynn Jones' powerful speeches the resolution was ensured a massive majority.

But there was serious confusion here. Lynn Jones argued that NVDA included action to 'bring down the government'. But speakers from AUEW-TASS and Glasgow pointed out that direct action alone could not physically stop the missiles. Such action had to be put in the context of mass labour movement initiative.

In one of the best speeches of the whole debate Jenny Pridcaux from Sheffield CND explained that the labour movement was our most powerful ally — and in the end our only one. 'We have to use the breakthrough that we have achieved

there to make our protest effective.'

Conference then moved on to resolution 11, which began to look at the relationship between NVDA and mass labour movement action in a more detailed way. Leading off for a crucial amendment which supported the TUC-Labour Party day of action in August as a crucial support to non-violent direct action, Chris Pitts pointed out that 1983 could not be 'business as usual' — that a bitter struggle was needed as was shown by the healthworkers dispute.

As a busworker, he pointed out that to get the 50 or 60 busworkers who supported CND in Sheffield into action, the TUC-Labour Party day of action had to be a vital focus for the movement.

Kathy Potter from Oldham backed him up. 'To bring all our resources together,' she said, 'We need a joint LP-TUC-CND demo this autumn.'

Tory supporters against the missiles (TACT) and others argued against this view. They said it was 'partisan' — CND must maintain its 'independence'.

Divide

But the amendment was carried after two fine speeches from Tony Southall (one time secretary of the Committee of 100) and Stuart Madewell from Tower Hamlets CND. Tony pointed to historical experience: 'We were sitting in Trafalgar Square while the right wing were busy reversing unilateralism in the Labour Party — the biggest political gain that CND had registered'.

Stuart argued that the majority of the people had to be brought into action against the missiles, and that was where the potential of the labour movement lay.

The debate on NATO saw a peculiarly lack-lustre performance by EP Thompson which expressed concern about the lack of reference in resolutions under debate to the Warsaw Pact, and claimed that our position on NATO 'could marginalise us'. In one of the high points of the conference Stuart Madewell denounced Thompson's search for 'a new consensus against the missiles'.

This, he argued, involved forces



CND conference voted overwhelmingly for non-violent direct action.

who supported Britain's nuclear arsenal, but used the cover of multilateralism to break up the momentum of the movement. The contradiction between Labour's support for both unilateralism and NATO was an achilles heel which would be used by the right wing to roll back the gains of the labour movement on this question.

Our job was to close the gap. In one of the closest votes of conference, CND's campaigning position — 'Britain out of NATO, NATO out of Bri-

tain' — was maintained.

In the final debate an amendment from Battersea, moved by Linda Hoy, calling for national strike action, was defeated. In moving the resolution, Linda pointed to the crucial role that the labour movement had played in the campaign to defeat the Corrie anti-abortion bill. But support for the August TUC-Labour Party demonstration was carried by a large majority.

Despite the defeat of the amend-

MX: Weapon for mass murder

By Bob Pennington

WHEN THE PENTAGON and Reagan's aides were discussing what to rename the new MX missile, the President suggested giving it the name 'peacemaker'.

This was rejected when the top brass said it sounded too much like the device used to prevent cardiac arrest. Mind you, when you read what the MX can do, and how it is going to be used, you are quite likely to have a cardiac arrest, particularly if you are a citizen of Wyoming!

The MX which will be employed in Dense Pack is 70 feet long and weighs 192,000 lbs. Each one carries 10 independently targetable warheads, all with the power to obliterate between 20 and 30 cities of the size of Hiroshima.

But as the Pentagon reasons there is no point in having all that firepower if the other side can destroy it before it gets off the ground. So the plan goes as follows: 100 missiles will be placed in a 14-mile strip of Wyoming, each missile separated by 1800 feet from five neighbours.

The US military strategists say that the Russians would then have to aim one of its own Inter Continental Ballistic Missiles at each of the individual silos. When

the first Russian ICBMs land they will then send up such a cataclysm of blast waves, electro magnetic forces and radio active debris that any other Soviet missiles travelling in their wake would be burned up, damaged or blown off course.

Then after a 'suitable' time lag the MXs would rise gracefully through the mushroom cloud and zoom their way to the Soviet Union. Of course if you are living in Wyoming just then its tough luck, because sure as hell you will be killed off by what is in that mushroom cloud, if you have not been despatched by the first landings of the Russian ICBMs.

Those Soviet ICBMs that were following the first wave will, as the Pentagon reasons almost certainly be burned up, damaged or blown off course. That means that they will leave a trail of death and destruction across all the mid-west, and very likely all over the rest of the USA.

This military reasoning starts from the premise that maybe a lot of US citizens are going to die a painful death, but at least it will be a patriotic one because their sacrifice will enable the US missiles to get to Moscow.



However, there is a flaw to all this.

Kosta Tsipis is a physicist who heads the programme in science and technology for international security at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He points out that if the Russians send in only 60 of the 300 SS18 ICBMs they have got, each one has a war head equivalent to 20 million tons of TNT and it only needs 20 to get through to knock out not one, but all six of the silos.

So then the MX missiles will not get off the ground but Wyoming will still be laid to waste which is hardly conducive to raising the patriotic spirit of the people who live there.

Maybe the US government is a bit stingy of welfare benefits and not too keen to spend money on federal housing. But it is not prepared to cut corners when it gets in the business of death and destruction. It will cost around 26

billion dollars for the MX project but if you can kill off the population of some 20 or 30 cities the size of Hiroshima, with just one war head, then I guess the military reckon they are getting value for money.

The murderous lunacy that is being prepared on Capital Hill should send shivers down the spine of any sane person. This is calculated preparation for a conflict that could cause a holocaust on a world scale. As one Wyoming family told the *Sunday Times* 'Its like a drug fix. Our whole dependency on nuclear weapons means we need bigger and better fixes all the time.'

The MX project is not simply an excess. It is portent of even more horrifying things to come unless the ruling classes of the imperialist countries have the right to manufacture and use these weapons taken away from them.

By the way the Pentagon threw out the name 'peacemaker' they changed it to 'peacekeeper' which for a weapon that is designed to kill and maim millions of people, shows that the American ruling class are not only murderous thugs, but that they are also psychopathic ones.

STEPS TO STOP THE MISSILES

AS THE prospect of the installation of Cruise missiles gets ever closer, the partisans of non-violent direct action are getting stronger within the anti-missiles movement. This response is understandable. But it would be a mistake for the movement to become panicked by the shortening time scale.

Although our first target must be to prevent the deployment of the missiles, nonetheless we must stick to a strategy which can be successful, even if it means settling for sending back the missiles once they are already deployed. Here we outline an activists guide to stopping the missiles.

1. A Labour government can stop the missiles

Sending back Cruise requires a governmental decision. Experience teaches us that the Tories, no matter how unpopular, will stick to their slavish policy of following Reagan: as Michael Foot says, in defence matters when Reagan says something, then Thatcher replies 'ditto'.

This means that even if there are huge mass actions against the missiles in '83, there is still a strong possibility that they will actually be deployed — always assuming that the Tories are still in office.

The most important political victory won by CND has been the commitment of the Labour Party conference to no Cruise and for unilateral nuclear disarmament. Although the two-thirds majority for unilateralism at the Labour Party conference does not guarantee inclusion in the manifesto, Foot has repeatedly stated his commitment to closing down American bases and sending back Cruise missiles.

Overwhelming the most important decision for unilateralists is the election of a Labour government. The conditions for pressing forward the fight for unilateral disarmament would be immeasurably improved by a Labour government, with so many commitments having been made.

2. A mass movement

Like the overwhelming majority of the anti-missiles movement, however, Socialist Challenge would oppose giving a blank cheque to the Labour leaders. In the past, conference decisions have been flouted on a multitude of important issues — and we can be sure that Labour's right wing will fight tooth and nail against closing down American bases.

Even Denis Healey and company however are against Trident: they will try to use the cancellation of Trident as a sop to the movement. Our task in the event of the election of a Labour government would be to demand that the movement is carried further, up to and including unilateral nuclear disarmament and withdrawal from NATO.

Therefore a continuing mass movement, before during and after the election of a Labour government is an absolute necessity. Equally, there is no guarantee that we shall have a Labour government at all. But a mass movement is the best guarantee for pressuring whatever government comes to power.

3. Political strikes against the missiles

Over six million trade unionists are affiliated to CND. Many major unions are in favour of unilateral disarmament and more are against the missiles. The unions are in a strong position to strike a blow against the missiles.

As the date for the installation of Cruise comes closer, it will become the central issue in British politics. Already a clear majority of the population are against their installation. Nearly 80 per cent of Labour voters are against the missiles.

The time has come therefore for the unions to begin to use their muscle to stop the missiles. But CND must give a lead: there is no way in which the union leaders will initiate such action without having their arms twisted.

4. Step up and internationalise the campaign

Mass action remains the key to winning wider public support. Two key events in 1983 provide an opportunity for huge mobilisations. First, YCND has called an International Youth Congress, originally scheduled for Easter but now to take place in May. Second, the Labour Party conference called for an international day of action against the missiles for 8 August.

Both these dates provide us with focuses for building big actions. But 1983 has to be the year of the anti-missiles movement. This means that mass demonstrations of the type held in preceding years must take place again.

5. Permanent pickets of the Defence Ministry and the missiles bases throughout '83

There is no doubt that the peace camps of the women at Greenham Common has done much to publicise the campaign. Given the emergency character of the campaign, it needs to be permanently kept before the public eye. The defence ministry and the missiles bases should be permanently picketed throughout the year.

6. No tactics of despair: deeper into the Labour movement!

The imminence of the arrival of the missiles will push many into arguing for the most outlandish of direct action tactics. But these tactics will not stop the missiles, even if they dramatise the campaign. Only the campaign's mass character can assure political victories.

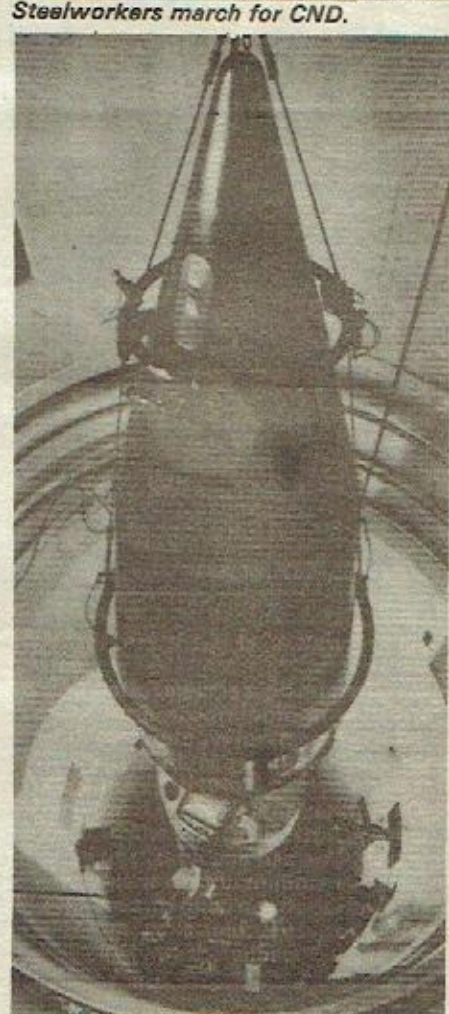
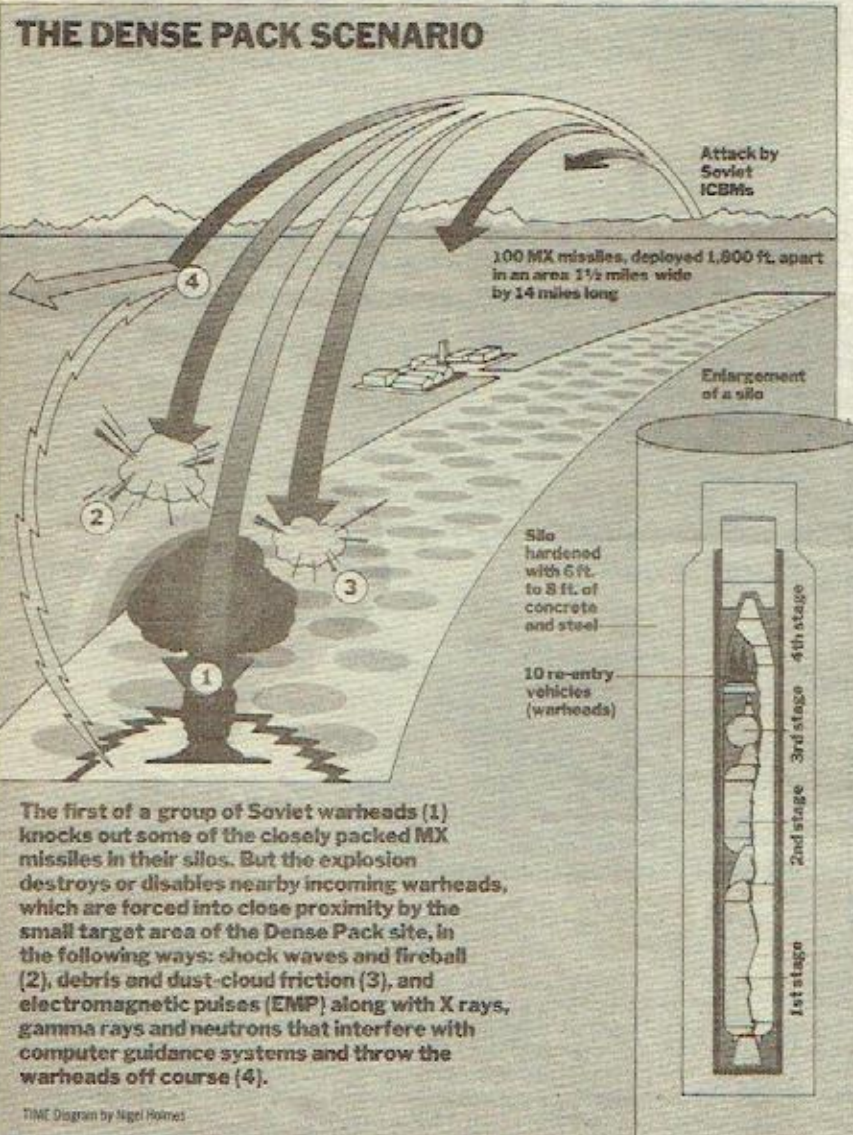
The key strategic ally of CND is the labour movement. Numerically, it provides overwhelmingly the majority of CND's affiliates. The campaign has to be taken deeper into the unions.

That means not being satisfied with conference resolutions and affiliations to CND, but taking the campaign into the workplaces, with a perspective of political action. If the labour movement is collectively determined to stop the missiles nothing can stop it.



ment calling for national strike action, the conference was largely a victory for those who saw the labour movement as the crucial ally of CND. The conference expressed a refreshing sense of urgency in the fight against the missiles.

Now CND is in a good position to take a really mass campaign forward. As Dick Withecombe said: 'The really crucial event will be the joint CND-TUC-Labour Party day of action. We need to bring a million people on the streets next August.'



Newbury against the missiles — a few miles from the cruise base.

Where you can buy Socialist Challenge

Scotland

ABERDEEN: SC available at Boomtown books, King St. For more info ring Bill 896 284.
EDINBURGH: SC sold Thur 4.15-5.15pm Bus Station, St. Andrews Square and bottom of Waverly steps 4.30-5.30; Sat 11.30-2pm East End, Princes St. Also available from 1st May Books, or Better Books, Forrest Rd. More info on local activity from SC c/o Box 6, 1st May Bookshop, Candlemaker Row.
GLASGOW: SC sales every Thur/Fri 4.30-5.30pm at Central Station. Also available at Barretts, Byres Rd; Clyde Books, High St; Glasgow Bookshop Collective, Crosswell Lane; Hope Street Book Centre.
HAMILTON: SC sale every Sat 1-5pm outside Safeway, shopping centre. For more info contact John Ford, 53 Elliot Crescent, Hamilton or Paul Youngson, 18 Forrest Crescent, Hamilton.

Wales

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

England

BATH: SC on sale at 1985 Books, London Road, and Saturdays 2pm-3pm outside the Roman Baths. Phone 20298 for more details.
BIRKENHEAD: SC on sale at Labour Club, Cleveland St, Thur nights; in precinct outside Littlewoods, Sat 11-12.
BIRMINGHAM: SC on sale at The Ramp, Fri 4.30-5.40, Sat 10-4. For more info phone 643-5904.
BOLSOVER: Cross Keys, every Fri 8-9pm, Bluebell 9-10.
BRADFORD: SC at Fourth Idea Bookshop, 14 Southgate.
BRISTOL: SC on sale 11-1, 'Hole in Ground', Haymarket. More info Box 2, c/o Fullmarks, 110 Cheltenham Rd, Montpellier, Bristol 6.
BURNLEY: SC on sale every Sat morning 11.30-1pm St James St.
COVENTRY: SC available from Wedge Bookshop.
HEMEL HEMPSTEAD: SC sales in Time Square, Sat 10.30-1.30pm.
HUDDERSFIELD: SC sold Sat 11am-1pm. The Piazza. SC also available at Peaceworks.
LEEDS: Sat 11-1 at Lands Lane Pedestrian Precinct and 10.30-12.00 at Headingley Arndale Centre. Corner Bookshop, Woodhouse Lane.
LIVERPOOL/BIRKENHEAD: SC sold in Birkenhead Precinct, outside Littlewoods, Sat 11-12am and Liverpool, Church St, outside Top Shop, Sat 12-1pm.
MANCHESTER: SC sold 11-1pm Sat at OLDHAM outside the Yorkshire Bank, High St; at BURY in the shopping precinct and at Metro Books; at BOLTON in the town centre; and in MANCHESTER at Gorton and Droylesden markets 11am-12.30 Sats and at Grassroots and Percivals Bookshop. Tel: 061-236 4905 for further info.
MANSFIELD: Fri 3-4pm, Stockwell Gate, Sat 10.30-12 Westgate, Four Seasons Shopping Centre Sat 10.30-12.
NEWCASTLE: SC on sale every Sat 11-1pm outside Fenwick's. Also available at Days of Hope bookshop, Westgate Rd. Every Friday outside Newcastle University between 1-2 and outside Newcastle Polytechnic between 12-1 every Monday.
NOTTINGHAM: SC sold every Sat 12-1 pm Slab Square. For info phone 863916.
OLDHAM: SC sold every Saturday outside Yorkshire Bank, High Street. For more information about local activities. Tel. 061-682 5151.

OXFORD: SC sold Fri 12-2pm outside Kings Arms and every Sat 10.30-12.30pm in Cornmarket.
SHEFFIELD: SC on sale Thursday, Pond St, 4.30-6pm; Saturday, Fargate 10.30-12.30pm.
SOUTHAMPTON: SC on sale Sat 10am-12 noon at Above Bar Post Office (Shopping Precinct).
STAFFORD: SC on Sale Market Sq Sat lunch-time.
STOCKPORT: SC sold every Saturday, 1pm, Mersey Way. Can be delivered weekly: phone 483 8909 (evening), 236 4905 (day).

London

BRENT: SC sold Willeiden Junction Thur 4.30pm.
EALING: SC sold Thur, Ealing Broadway tube, 5-6pm.
ENFIELD: SC at Nelsons Newsagents, London Rd, Enfield Town.
HACKNEY: SC on sale on estates throughout Hackney, at public meetings, and local factories. Contact us c/o PO Box 36, 136 Kingsland High St, London E8 2NF or phone Megan or John at 359 8288.
HILLINGDON: SC sold Fri, 4.30-5.30 at Uxbridge tube station; Sat 11.30-12.30 in shopping precinct, Uxbridge.
HOUNSLOW: SC sold outside Hounslow East tube, every Wed 5.15-6.15pm.
ISLINGTON: Every Fri, 8.15-9am at Holloway Road tube and Highbury tube.
KILBURN: SC sales every Sat, 10am in Kilburn Square, and Thursday 8.30am at Queens Park tube.
LAMBETH: SC sold Thur and Fri evenings and Thur mornings outside Bristol tube.
NEWHAM: SC sold Sat 11am to noon, Queen's Rd Mkt, Upton Park.
PADDINGTON: SC sold at Portobello Rd market Sat at noon.
WEMBLEY: SC sales Fri 6.45am at North Wembley BR Station.

Bookshops

BANGOR: Rainbows, Holyhead Road, Upper Bangor, Gwynedd.
BRADFORD: Fourth Idea Bookshop, 14 Sandgate.
BRIGHTON: The Public House, Little Preston St.
BRISTOL: Fullmarks, 110 Cheltenham Rd, Bristol 6.
BIRMINGHAM: Other Bookshop, 137 Digbeth, Birmingham.
DURHAM: Durham City Co-op Bookshop, 85a New Elvet.
ILFORD: South Essex Bookshop, 335 Ley Street.
MILTON KEYNES: Oakleaf Books, 109 Church Street, Wolverton.
OXFORD: BOA Books, 34 Cowley Rd.
LEICESTER: Blackthorn Books, 70 High St, Leicester, and V Karria, 52A London Rd, Leicester.
LIVERPOOL: News from Nowhere, 100 Whitechapel, Liverpool L1.
LONDON: Central Books, 37 Grays Inn Rd; Collets, Charing Cross Rd; WC2; Paperback Books, Brixton and Charlotte St; Kilburn Bookshop, Kilburn High Road, NW6; The Bookplace, Peckham High St, SE15; Books Plus, Lewisham; Balham Food Co-op; Housmans, 5 Caledonian Rd, N1; Compendium, Camden Town NW1; Owl, Kentish Town; New Beacon, Seven Sisters Rd, N4; The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper St, N1; Bookmarks, Seven Sisters Rd, N4; Centerprise, 126 Kingsland High St, E8; Dillons, QMC; Page One, E15; The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper St, N1; Reading Matters, Wood Green next to Sainsbury's; Village Books, Streatham; Tetric Books, Clapham; Paperback Centre, Brixton; Oval tube kiosk; Shakti Books, 46 High St, Southall.
PORT TALBOT: McConville's Newsagent, Station Road.
NOTTINGHAM: Mushroom Books, Heathcote St, Hockley.
SOUTHAMPTON: October Books, Onslow Road.
SUNDERLAND: The Ceolfrith Art Gallery Bookshop, Grange Terrace.
YORK: Community Books, Wain-gate.

Whats left

RATES for What's Left: 5p per word or 64 per col inch. Deadline: noon Sat prior to publication. Payment in advance. Phone 01-269 8180.
'Z' a film by Costa Gavras, director of *MISSING*, Ruskin Hall, 16 Church Rd, Acton W3. Saturday 11th December at 4pm (£1) and 7.30pm (£1.50). OAPs and UB40s half price. Information: 993-5631/992-4887.
SPARE BOOKS! Any books you don't want taking up valuable space on your bookshelves? Send them to the Other Bookshop, 328 Upper St, London N1 2XP.
BADGES MADE: Glasgow SC supporters have a badge-making machine, will make badges quickly and cheaply for your campaign/union/Labour Party — and all the money goes back into the struggle for socialism! Write for details/quotes to: SC (Glasgow), PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.
POSTERS: Cheap, good and fast. Order from The Other Printshop, 061-236 4905.

NEW BADGE! 20p each

Orders over 10 post free
 Orders over 20 — 15p each
 Orders over 50 — 12p each
 Cheques payable to:
 Labour History Group
 Send to:
 Southwark SC Badge,
 PO Box 50, London N1.



Ireland

Haughey out, but workers gain nothing

By Brian Grogan

IN THE THIRD Southern Irish election in 18 months, the pendulum swung back to the other 'Green' Tory party, Fine Gael. On a reduced poll, the election registered a two per cent swing away from the Fianna Fail governing party. While still remaining the largest party in the Dail (parliament), it does not command an overall majority. However, the predicted Fine Gael-Labour Party coalition will do nothing to solve the deepening political crisis in Ireland.

The election campaign was marked by a complete absence of real choice between the policies of the two major parties. Both parties campaigned for Thatcher-style attacks on the working class and small farmers.

At the last minute, Charles Haughey, leader of Fianna Fail and outgoing prime minister, tried to steal a few votes back from Fine Gael by playing the 'national card'. He accused Dr Garret Fitzgerald of planning greater collaboration with Britain. But the reality was that Haughey had studiously avoided Britain's oppressive role in the North throughout the campaign. Indeed, he had presided over a government which had extended full cooperation with British imperialism. He covered this with a few nasty comments directed at Maggie Thatcher.

Not that his charges against Fitzgerald were inaccurate — nor that Britain hadn't intervened in the elections to secure a Fianna Fail defeat. In the precarious position British policy is in in the North, even Haughey demagoguery can be dangerous. Hence Tory pleasure at the electoral result. Yet any licking of lips would be premature.

Healthy

On paper, a Fine Gael-Labour Party coalition would have a fairly healthy majority. But, if such a government is formed, it will be riven with contradictions. Labour gained seats in this election because it campaigned for some mild palliatives — like job creation schemes and proposed health and education

Hats off to Gerry Adams

Dear Gerry

WHAT a tremendous run around you gave to Fred Emery of *Panorama* in a programme designed to witch-hunt you and Sinn Fein as a 'gang of murdering terrorists'. You were able to take every charge levelled against the Provisional IRA and show that the real problem lay with British imperialism's oppression of Ireland.

As you were able to reply to Emery's cynical charge that you were leading young men and women into jail — that you jailed nobody, nor was it you that gerry-mandered, created unemployment and bad housing, or had an army occupying another country, working hand in glove with a sectarian police force and marauding Loyalist gangs.

It was hilarious to see the embarrassed Jim Prior try to explain how 'terrorists and murderers' managed to get 60,000 votes and win five seats in his very own 'Assembly'. To Emery's question why you were allowed to participate in elections, he revealed his own stupidity by replying that your participation showed a move away from armed resistance. Tell that to Sinn Fein and theis (conference)!

Loyalist leader Harold McClusker was much more clear-sighted — and revealing. He pointed to your continuing intrans-

sigence. So, he foolishly announced: Britain should learn from other countries (presumably South Africa and El Salvador) who 'knew how to handle matters' when the ballot produced the 'wrong' result.

Two things especially got up the programmers' noses. Your utilisation of your election to the assembly — not to take your seat — but to agitate for the housing and other rights of working people in your constituency. And the hunger strike campaign which exemplified your growing ability to combine mass campaigning, demonstrations and elections as a way of boosting the confidence and fighting ability of the nationalist community.

You're also clearly worrying that worm Gerry Fitt — who did his best to finger you by claiming that you wanted to shoot him! Undoubtedly, your growing facility of applying the



Dick Spring, leader of the Irish Labour Party.

cuts to be on a more limited scale. Already, Southern Ireland's largest union, the Irish Transport and General Workers Union has come out against a coalition with Fine Gael.

The Labour Party delegate conference called for 11 December will have to get big promises from Fine Gael if the coalition idea is to be won. But such promises cannot be fulfilled in today's economic reality with a foreign debt of over £1bn and a balance of payments deficit for this year of a similar amount. We wouldn't be surprised if another election is called before 1983 is out.

* Bernadette MacAliskey who stood against Charles Haughey on a socialist platform gained 1,023 first preference votes. This was a decline from the 2,085 which she gained in the February election. The Workers Party (previously associated with the Official wing of the Republican movement) went down from three to two seats.



First the bad news. This cartoon was prominently displayed in the London Standard. It shows the continuing racism of the British ruling class. Now the good news. On the publication of this filth, the Labour controlled Greater London Council decided to withdraw all advertising — worth £100,000 a year.



Gerry Adams

united front tactic through your call for a conference of all nationalist organisations to discuss how to destroy Prior's assembly is clearly helping expose him and other cowards and vacillators in the Social Democratic and Labour Party as well as consolidating the unity of the nationalist population.

I was most impressed by your clarity on the matter of the Loyalists. Your explanation that Loyalism relied totally on the prop of the British state gave the lie to the *Panorama* claim that your recent ard theis decision to dump the 'federal Ireland' strategy in favour of a perspective for a 'decentralised

socialist 'state' was somehow anti-Protestant. As you explained: with the removal of Britain from Ireland it was 'inconceivable that Protestant workers would take up arms' against the new united socialist Ireland.

Just one point, though. I thought you could have rounded the point off by explaining that any political organisation appealing to the sectional concerns of the Irish working class would have to do this in a situation where the new Irish state would be creating jobs, expanding social services, housing and so on — that this would very quickly undermine the appeal of any party harking after the old ascendancy.

We imagine British imperialism will think twice before inviting you on to their TV channels again. But they have shown a remarkable facility for ignoring the lessons of Irish history. So we look forward to seeing you again.

Brian Grogan

Generals lose the vote, but win the count

Little change in Brazil elections

By Jim Baron

AS EXPECTED, the Brazilian military regime has taken a battering at the polls. With the final results still to come in, the government party, the PDS, looks like having only 12 million votes, against 18 million for the other parties. Most of these have gone to the main bourgeois opposition party, the PMDB, with the New Workers Party (PT) faring slightly worse than expected.

This apparent defeat for the government is despite manipulation of the election process by the state machinery and the media, and probably fraud in many areas. As expected the regime will keep control of 12 out of 22 state governments, of Congress, and of the electoral college due to choose President (General) Figueiredo's successor in 1984.

This is because of electoral weighting against the industrial cities, where ten times as many votes are needed to elect one federal deputy as in the backward rural areas where votes are easily bought by powerful landowners and their friends.

The PT's argument that in themselves the elections would change nothing seems well confirmed.

The biggest gainer, the PMDB, should have nine state governorships, including the industrial centres of Sao Paulo and Minas Gerais. This party is the inheritor of the old MDB, the one and only 'official opposition party' created by the military when it dissolved all previous parties after seizing power in the 1964 coup.

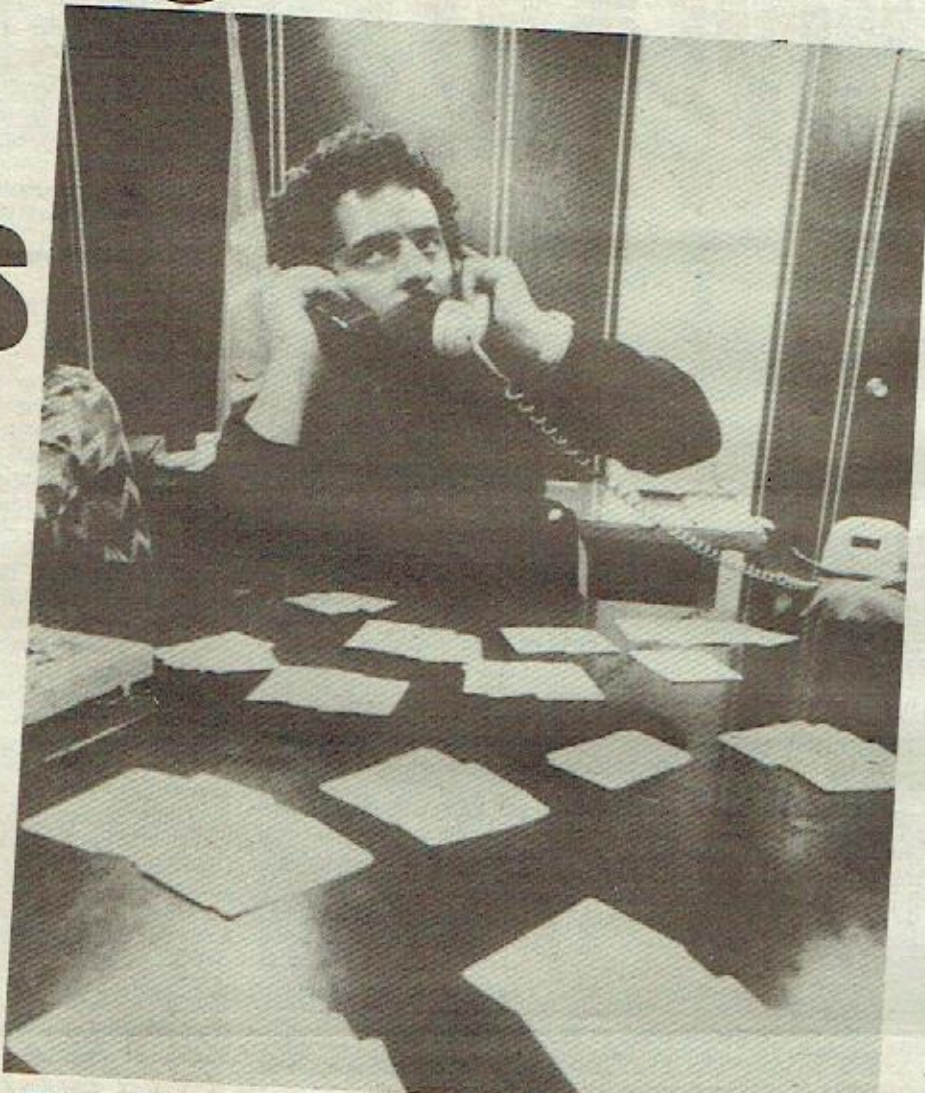
It is led by a hotch-potch of liberal and not-so liberal businessmen and financiers who, faced with the collapse of the Brazilian economic 'miracle', want a bit more say in how 'their' cake is baked and sliced.

However, like the MDB before it, which in the mid-seventies became a focus for anti-dictatorship votes, the PMDB has been able to pick up a very large share of the popular vote, claiming that this would be the only 'useful vote' against the regime.

Lula

The PT's own vote has been less than they hoped for, but is in no way disastrous as the bourgeois press is making out. Lula looks like having 10 per cent, or some 1.3 million votes, in the election for governor of Sao Paulo — as against an expected 12-15 per cent. In the other main industrial areas, the vote has been lower, around 2-3 per cent, but only 1-2 per cent below what was expected.

The PT will probably end up with about 15 seats in the National Assembly, which may actually be a



PT leader Lula

more manageable number than the thirty odd hoped for in some over-euphoric moments.

Just before the elections an editorial in the revolutionary marxist paper, *Em Tempo*, pointed out the enormous step forward which the very existence of the PT represented for the independent organisation and class consciousness of the Brazilian working class. It concluded that 'the PT's vote will give a rough idea of the number of people who have already reached this level of awareness'. What the elections seem to make clear is that such class

awareness is still confined to a minority of working people, particularly concentrated in the big industrial centres like Sao Paulo and a few areas of military struggle in the countryside.

The most unexpected phenomenon in these elections has been the victory of Leonel Brizola as governor of Rio de Janeiro, the country's second industrial city.

Brizola and his tiny social democratic PDT party remained very much out in the cold until just a couple of months ago. The Rio electorate was

disgusted by the totally unprincipled block on offer from the PMDB, with well-known communist personalities supporting a candidate for governor who is a recognised gangster, totally compromised with the military regime.

Almost overnight, they swung to the only apparently viable alternative to the left, Brizola (the PT has always been weak in Rio).

Brizola is pushing to form a new Socialist Party with the left of the PMDB and with the PT. This project will be helped by the likely formation of a Liberal Party by the right-

Vote for Slate Three, the Rest's the Bourgeoisie!

THIS was the main slogan at the Workers Party's final pre-election rally in Sao Paulo, one week before polling day. 100,000 or more local PT supporters gathered outside one of the city's football stadiums and heard the party president, Lula, himself a former tool-maker, explain why the PT refused to support the bourgeois opposition front, the PMDB, and the importance of strengthening the PT as an independent party of the working class. Here are a couple of extracts from his speech:

'The PDS and the PMDB are flour out of the same bag. They won't change things for the Brazilian working class. You could see this absolutely clearly travelling around in this campaign. In the countryside you'd find in one place a big ranchowner who was candidate for the PDS, and then another big ranchowner who was candidate for the PMDB.'

And when you look closely at these two parties you'll find people who yesterday were in ARENA (the old government party and predecessor of the PDS) and who today are in the PMDB, and others who yesterday were in the MDB (the forerunner of the PMDB) and who today are in the PDS — these politicians change parties like they change their underpants.

'Today we hear a lot of talk about this "democratic front", as if it were some big historical novelty for this country. I'd just like to remind the press who are here, as well as all the comrades in this square, that this story of a democratic front is the same one that made the communists in 1945 believe in Getulio Vargas (the populist dictator who dominated Brazilian politics in the mid century) ... It was this same policy of a democratic front which in 1957 made the Bolivian people hand power over to American imperialism, after their successful revolution of 1952.'

And this same figure who today is going back to Bolivia as a national hero, Siles Suazo, is the very same one who sold out the Bolivian people to American imperialism in 1957. That's why we shouldn't believe in this story of a front, because the only kind of front that makes any sense to us is one which has the working class at its head, leading it. Anything else is just more dirty tricks behind the working class's back.'

wing leaders of the PMDB. It is true that some in the PT may be attracted by this idea.

But class independence is so central to the PT's political identity that it seems very unlikely that any major section of the party will buy this one. Asked about this just before the elections, Lula said, 'Look, the proposals of Brizola and the PT are completely different. The socialism Brizola preaches only exists inside his head. I mean you can't make socialism in a capitalist society, and Brizola has never suggested changing capitalism.'

The real struggle after the elections lies elsewhere. Faced with a financial and economic

crisis of massive proportions (certainly as grave as Mexico's) the government will be forced to increase its dependence on the IMF and impose yet more savage austerity measures, with dire effects on already squeezed working class wages and jobs.

It is on the capacity for industrial resistance, and the success of developing an independent trade union congress (CUT), that the future of the PT now largely depends. It is on developing and coordinating its so-far inadequate intervention in this area that the PT will have to concentrate if it is to succeed in extending the class consciousness and combativity of Brazilian workers.

NICARAGUA: INVASION FEARED

By Andy de la Tour

THERE are widespread fears in Nicaragua of an imminent invasion. Events have been coming to a head in recent weeks to give fuel to speculation that there may be a major military offensive before Christmas by the counter-revolutionary Somocista ex-National Guard-smen trained and armed by the Honduran army under the direct control of Washington.

The scope of the USA's complicity in the counter-revolutionary build-up was shown to the world in a Newsweek article, 'America's Secret War', published on 2 November. The article documented what Nicaragua itself has been saying for a long time — that the several thousand strong counter-revolutionary army that engages Nicaragua in a permanent war of attrition along the Honduran border is directly organised by the USA.

US Ambassador to Honduras, John Negroponte, is, in effect, the military commander of the Somocistas although Honduran army personnel act as intermediaries. Since December 1981 Reagan has authorised the CIA to contact dissident Nicaraguans in exile, mostly ex-soldiers of the defeated Nicaraguan dictator, Somoza, and to conduct political and military operations.

These operations have now reached the stage where a fully equipped and



Nicaraguan militia in training

trained counter-revolutionary army is primed for an invasion. In the words of one Somocista — 'We have a lot of old scores to settle with the Sandinistas; there'll be a trail of blood from the border to Managua'.

The Nicaraguan people have some scores to settle too. They have not forgotten the monstrous crimes

of the dictatorship and the terror perpetrated by the National Guard before 19 July 1979. The people are fully mobilised through the Sandinista Popular Militia to fight alongside the full-time Sandinista People's Army.

The greatest danger, though, to the Nicaraguan people is not from the Somocistas. It comes from the very real threat that an

invasion would give Washington the pretext to send in the marines on the grounds of 'peace-keeping'.

This is the US Administration's plan and the fact that a large contingent of US marines have been recently sent to Lebanon without any widespread protest inside the United States has no doubt boosted Reagan's confidence.

Reagan is also scheduled to visit Costa Rica, Nicaragua's southern 'neighbour', in early December to further promote the counter-revolutionary 'Forum for Peace and Democracy'.

Set up in October this 'Forum' was launched by the US to isolate Nicaragua and the revolutionary forces fighting in El Salvador under the leadership of the FMLN-FDR. Countries invited to the inaugural meeting included El Salvador, Honduras, Jamaica and the Dominican Republic, all reliable clients of the White House.

The 'Forum' was Reagan's answer to an initiative taken earlier by Venezuela and Mexico, two countries friendly to the Nicaraguan revolution, who jointly offered to act as intermediaries in the Nicaraguan-Honduran conflict.

Reagan's visit to Costa Rica was also intended to

coincide with a major joint US-Honduran military exercise within a stone's throw of the Nicaraguan border. In the furor following the Newsweek article the manoeuvres have been postponed but in Managua this did not automatically mean that an imminent invasion was any less likely.

Since the military build-up by the US in the region, started during the Carter presidency, any part of the region is within very close range of US armed forces.

The Nicaraguan solidarity movement throughout Europe is organising co-ordinated action to take place in each country on 4 December to publicise the threat to the Nicaraguan people. In London on that day there will be a picket at Downing Street at noon to pass on to Thatcher a Christmas message — 'No to US intervention in Nicaragua; For a peaceful Christmas in Central America'.

PHOTO: Carlos Augusto Guarita (PHOTON)

By Phil Hearse

AS WE SAW in the last article, the German SPD through a combination of theoretical errors and the growth within the party and the trade unions of a massive bureaucracy became increasingly prey to reformist and social patriotic pressures. This evolution of the SPD was sealed by its reaction to the outbreak of the First World War in August 1914.

The SPD's 92 parliamentary delegates voted unanimously for war credits in support of the war. In a closed session of the SPD's Hasse and 12 others had opposed voting for the war credits, but decided to stand by party discipline — Hasse even read out the SPD's declaration in support of the war credits. The international workers movement was stunned by the SPD's betrayal. Lenin refused to believe the news and told Zinoviev that the copy of the SPD's paper *Vorwärts* which contained the news was a forgery. Trotsky, more personally acquainted with the leaders of German Social Democracy was also shocked — but less so than Lenin:

'I did not expect the official leaders of the International, in case of war, to prove themselves capable of serious revolutionary initiative. At the same time I would not even admit the idea that the social democracy would simply cower on its belly before a nationalist militarism ... the vote of 4 August has remained one of the tragic experiences of my life.' (1)

The decision of the SPD leadership to vote for the war credits was in defiance of every decision of the Socialist (Second) International. In 1907 the International adopted an anti-war manifesto under pressure from Lenin, Martov and Luxemburg:

'If war threatens to break out, it is the duty of the working class and of its parliamentary representatives in the countries involved supported by the consolidating activity of the International Bureau to exert every effort to prevent the outbreak of war ... Should war break out nevertheless it is their duty to intervene in favour of its speedy termination and to do all in their power to utilise the economic and political crisis caused by the war to rouse the people's and thereby to hasten the abolition of capitalist class rule.' (2)

This was later filled out in the anti-war manifesto adopted in 1912. On reading the manifesto, Lenin declared: 'They have given us a large promissory note: let us see how well they will meet it'. In less than two years Lenin got his answer.

Social democratic leaders are capable of immensely militant, left-sounding phrases on the eve of a crisis. But war and revolution inevitably test out the reformist leaders. German social democracy demonstrated, through this first great betrayal of the international socialist movement, that it was loyal, in the last instance, to its own bourgeoisie and not the international working class.

Lenin had failed to clearly see the character of the Kautsky-Bebel 'centre' in the party; even Trotsky did not understand its reformist degeneration thoroughly. Only Rosa Luxemburg and the SPD's left wing had after 1905 begun to grasp the gap between the 'orthodox' revolutionary speechifying and the SPD's reformist practice.

The social democracy tried to explain its actions through an old, old argument often used by the bureaucratic misleaders: that they had no choice but to go along with the 'backwardness' of the workers. Dittman explained:

'The Party could not act otherwise. It would arouse a storm of indignation among the men at the front and people back at home if the SPD did it (ie vote against war credits). The socialist organisation would be swept away by popular resentment.'

Right up until 4 August 1914 the German government had taken the SPD's formal anti-war position seriously. It had thus prepared a long list of party and trade union leaders who were to be imprisoned in the event of war breaking out. But within days of the declaration of war these same leaders were granted immunity

Marxism and Social Democracy

2. The great betrayals



Karl Liebknecht speaks to workers in Berlin



Workers demonstration, 9 November 1918.

from military service on the grounds that they were urgently needed at home to boost war production and maintain social peace.

The extent to which the social democratic bureaucracy became engaged in 'patriotic' rabble rousing can be seen from the following quote from *Courier*, the paper of the *Transport Workers Union*:

'The villainous plans of the dishonourable, bloody and faithless Tsar and his allies, the cunning Japs, the perfidious Britons, the boastful French, the lying Belgians, the thankless Boers, the swaggering Canadians, and the enslaved, kidnapped Indians, Zouaves, Niggers and the remaining scum of the earth, have broken against the strong wall set up by the implacable heroism of the German and Austrian troops.' (1)

Such were the depths to which the social democratic bureaucracy had sunk. As the war dragged on, and disillusionment set in among the

workers — over-worked and poorly fed. When in May 1916 Karl Liebknecht was imprisoned for his anti-war activities, 60,000 Berlin factory workers went on strike.

The majority of the Berlin executive of the SPD supported the strike, and they were promptly expelled from the party. This helped to create the nucleus for the formation of the Independent Social Democratic Party (USPD) in early 1917, in opposition to the pro-war policies of the SPD leadership. The SPD was a classically 'centrist' organisation, wavering between reformist and revolutionary positions. It won the allegiance of a large minority of the full-time apparatus, and included political leaders as diverse as Liebknecht and Luxemburg on the left, Kautsky and Bernstein on the right (their old differences forgotten) and a strong centre around Hasse, Dittman and Barth.

Six months after the split the

USPD claimed 120,000 members against 150,000 of the official SPD. Above all the USPD had a big majority in 'Red' Berlin. But the SPD leaders too were forced into a series of 'left' manoeuvres in order to try to head off the restlessness of the workers. In January 1918 SPD leader Ebert came out in support of the anti-war strike, called by the workers to protest at the terms of the Brest Litovsk treaty, which imposed punitive conditions against revolutionary Russia in return for peace.

Once again the perfidious role of the labour bureaucracy was seen in action. The SPD bureaucracy maintained its role by mediating between the classes. In the last instance loyal to the bourgeois order, to maintain their own position the bureaucrats were forced to move to the left with the masses — but always with the aim of preventing the mass movement from adopting revolutionary positions, which would have destroyed their own position.

On 3 October the newly installed Chancellor, Prince Max of Baden, initiated moves for a negotiated peace with the allies. *Vorwärts*, the SPD paper immediately changed its patriotic tune: 'Enough of death; not one more man must fall'. The next day negotiations began for the inclusion of the SPD in the government. For the bourgeoisie, this was infinitely preferable to revolution.

In order that this manoeuvre could be successfully carried out however the social democrats insisted that the Kaiser would have to abdicate. As Ebert told Prince Max on 7 November, unless the abdication of the Kaiser were made known to the workers that very evening 'the whole lot will desert to the independent' (the USPD).

At the beginning of November, in a final attempt to create a better relationship of forces for armistice negotiations, the German fleet was ordered to sea. The sailors in Kiel, knowing the war to be lost, mutinied. A mass meeting of 20,000 elected a sailors' council. Workers and sailors' councils sprung up all along the coast. On 5 November a demonstration of 40,000 in Hamburg voted for a 'republic of workers councils' — and took power in the town. The German revolution had begun.

In the next few days workers councils were established throughout Germany. On 9 November the Kaiser's abdication was announced. SPD leader Ebert was proclaimed Imperial Chancellor. But this only heightened the workers' expectations. Thousands of workers in Berlin took to the streets believing that at last the socialist republic was at hand.

Learning that Liebknecht was about to proclaim the republic at a mass meeting outside the royal palace, Scheidemann, one of the two or three top SPD leaders declared to a mass meeting outside the Reichstag: 'The workers have won all along the line — long live the republic!'

On 12 November the SPD declared: 'The government created by the revolution, the policy of which is purely socialist, is setting itself the task of implementing a socialist programme.' But such talk was 'pure' demagogic manoeuvre, aimed at preventing the workers going over to the USPD.

On the evening of the declaration of the republic Ebert made a secret phone call to the German high command in the form of General Groner. They made an agreement: the army would remain loyal to the government provided that Ebert cooperated in crushing 'anarchy' and 'Bolshevism'. While proclaiming the socialist republic in public, in private they were plotting the murder of thousands of workers and their revolutionary leaders.

The government formed out of these revolutionary events at the beginning of November consisted of three members each from the USPD and the SPD. Liebknecht refused to join the government because he would not be 'prisoner of a non-revolutionary majority'. This was obviously a characterisation not only of Ebert and Scheidemann, but at least of some of the leaders of his own party, the centrist USPD.

The bourgeoisie had secured an important victory through the

treachery of the SPD leaders — an agreement to crush the revolutionaries. They secured another important agreement with the trade unions on 15 November, the 'Working Alliance agreement', which granted the workers important concessions but recognised implicitly the right of the bosses to keep ownership of the factories.

The joint SPD-USPD government called itself the 'Council of Peoples Commissars' — and this a government under the leadership of Ebert and Scheidemann! The decisive thing now was whether this government would base itself on the mushrooming workers councils or whether it would force the movement back into parliamentary channels. Naturally Ebert and Scheidemann were opposed root and branch to a government based on the councils — which in effect would have meant the destruction of the bourgeois state and the creation of a workers state.

Now the SPD leaders carried out the most daring and destructive of counter-revolutionary manoeuvres. Everywhere the SPD had gone into the workers councils, and in many places were in the leadership. Many workers clearly did not grasp the political differences between the SPD and the USPD. The SPD now fought for the creation of a constituent assembly — in effect a parliament. They argued the necessity to combine parliamentary power with the existence of workers councils — knowing full well that once a parliament was in place, and the bourgeois army still intact, the councils would wither and die.

The crucial turning point was the First Congress of the Workers and Soldiers Councils held in Berlin on 30 December 1918. 448 delegates were present — 289 from the SPD (60 per cent), 90 from the USPD (20 per cent) other groups 25 (5 per cent). Only ten of the USPD belonged to the revolutionary Spartakist faction. The Spartakist leaders were not elected as delegates and the congress refused to admit them.

The choice facing the congress was clear. Two resolutions summed it up. The first called for elections to a constituent assembly on 19 January 1919. The second for all power to the workers councils. Ebert, in his opening address, carefully confused the issue by calling for the new socialist state to be based on a 'firm foundation' to 'achieve its socialist goals'. The SPD delegation voted solidly for the convening of a constituent assembly.

But the USPD delegation was characteristically confused. The voting — 400 for convening a constituent assembly, with 50 against; 98 for all power to the workers councils, 344 against — showed that 48 delegates, most from the USPD, had voted for both resolutions!

A revolutionary opportunity, which if grasped would have changed the face of European and world politics, was thrown away by the social democratic traitors.

Ernest Daumig, a leader of the USPD and later a leader of the Communist Party summed it up in his address to the conference:-

'When the history of these revolutionary weeks is written, people will smile and say: "Were they so blind as not to see that they were putting ropes round their own necks?" For anyone who thinks clearly must perceive that the jubilant approval of the National Assembly is equivalent to a death sentence of the system of which they are now a part, the council system.' (3)

The tragedy of the situation was that the Spartakists were in such a small minority. Although of course there were thousands of revolutionaries in the USPD, the majority of the leadership was weak and vacillating. But Luxemburg and Liebknecht had only a few thousand organised supporters.

In a revolutionary situation no amount of revolutionary acumen makes up for lack of numbers. The ten Spartakists at the December conference were swamped by the solid phalanx of Ebert's supporters.

In four years the reformist leaders had gone from being super-patriots to 'people's commissars'. But always with the intention of strangling the revolution.

Women's Rights

Ruth First — 'integrity and courage'

N N'DABERI reviews the Penguin publication 117 DAYS which tells the story of RUTH FIRST, a brave South African Freedom fighter.

When they released Ruth First from detention after 117 days she was 'convinced that it was not the end, that they would come again'.

They did come again. But this time it was not with an order for her arrest. Instead it was with a package bomb which blew her apart.

They arrested her without trial, or charges,

just using the notorious '90-day' law. Then they decided to kill her, so the regime again without trial or charges sentenced her to death and duly carried out its bloody sentence.

Penguin has done a

useful service by bringing out a new edition of this little book in which Ruth describes her experiences in South Africa's jails.

The cover of the book tells us why she was incarcerated and why she died so suddenly and hideously. It shows Ruth addressing a meeting. Behind her is a banner which says 'Freedom from Apartheid.'

That was Ruth First's

life — the struggle to rid South Africa of its tyrannous and violent white ruling class. She fought for a South Africa, where all people, black and white, could live together in peace and harmony. This led her to join the Communist Party and the African National Congress.

Although she remained for the rest of her life a loyal member of the South African Communist Par-

ty, probably one of the most Stalinist of Stalinist parties outside Albania, she was a person of integrity and courage. When the USSR switched its positions on Eritrea's right to self determination, she stayed with the Leninist principle of self determination.

She questioned the Stalinist theory of the revolution in stages and saw that the national democratic revolution in

South Africa would merge into the socialist revolution.

The courage with which she fought for her political convictions sustained her during her time in jail. This side of her personality comes out in the book. The unending interrogations; the dreadful numbing effect of isolation; the never-ending fear that someone has broken and 'leaked' putting everyone else in danger.

All that she overcame by an indomitable will to survive. Because survival meant carrying on the struggle for liberation and socialism.

Her courage stands out like a beacon in contrast to her torturers and tormentors who had to resort to the cowardly weapon of a parcel bomb to destroy her. They killed Ruth First but they will never kill the noble ideas that she gave her life for.

'The "SUS" laws are for black men. The prostitution laws are for black women.'

Prostitutes protest police harassment

By Judith Arkwright

LAST WEEK 15 prostitutes in the Kings Cross area of London occupied the Holy Cross Church in protest against police harassment and protection of pimps. A member of the English Collective of Prostitutes which is involved in the occupation — a traditional method of seeking sanctuary from harassment — explained how it all started...

'We run a legal service for prostitutes in the area. They have been coming to us since April.

'A series of incidents led to the occupation. Women who were trying to get independent from their pimps were going to the police and the police would do nothing. A

woman might say that her pimp has threatened to break her legs and the police would say that they couldn't do anything until he had. Then last week one woman's boyfriend was done for pimping.

'Another prostitute had her kid taken away by social services and finally a

woman in the area was raped and then was called a prostitute by police.

'The real problem and reason for the occupation is that the police just will not do anything about the pimps. They say all the pimps are black. But what about all the white hoteliers who are charging women £85 for them and their child. They're pimps as well!'

'This is industrial action — the pimps and the police are the bosses here.'

'The demands of the women are;

• That the police and the women's committees of the GLC, Camden, Islington and Hackney organise a meeting between the prostitutes and Commander Chambers, head of the 'E' Division responsible for Argyle Square.

• That a meeting is held with MPs who want to know the truth about the illegality and racism of the police from prostitute women themselves.

• That a worker is seconded from the local authorities to monitor police in Argyle Square for the next month. This is to

protect women working there from possible retaliation for the action that the prostitutes have taken.

• Guarantees of immediate protection, welfare and housing for women to get off the game.

In response to these demands Camden Council have agreed to appoint two officers to help find immediate solutions to provide housing and welfare for women trying to leave prostitution.

Other demands relating to control of the police are still under

negotiation. But the women point out that the first step has to be to monitor police activity and their links with the pimps.

The ECP spokeswoman pointed out: 'The "sus" laws are for black men and the prostitution laws are for black women.' These are the only two offences which rely solely on police evidence for conviction.'

'Mrs Thatcher is putting these women on the streets. We call the women who come from the north on the away-days "Thatcher's girls".'

L, a young black woman who is 20 years old and on the game said:

'Well, I support these ladies because the police and the pimps are our main enemy.'

'I'll give you an example. I came here to see how the ladies here were getting on. A police car stopped and picked me up for soliciting on the way. They keep nicking us like this and we keep having to pay the fines.'

'The police are in with the pimps. I got my bag nicked last week. I couldn't go to the police because the men that snatched it will hear about me from the police.'

'When you give up your pimp and become in-

dependent, you get arrested about once a week or a fortnight. When I had a pimp I didn't get arrested so much.'

'The pimps are like the police, they keep a check on you. I tried to run away to Birmingham once, but after two months my pimp caught up with me.'

'The other day we saw some pimps in the area talking to the police, shaking hands.'

'I got on to the game because of what happened to me when I was 10. I got raped and I decided to get my own back. But once you are on the game you can't get off it. My mum comes down to the Cross to try and get me. I'd like to get back to a warm house, but I can't get away from it now. I've been at the Cross for 3-4 years.'

'The last time I was arrested the policeman asked me why I supported the occupation as he said it couldn't win.'

'But I think that we can win because there is a lot of people behind us. I hope that we do win and we do stop the police and the pimps.'

Messages of support to: English Collective of Prostitutes, Women's Centre, 71 Tonbridge Street, Kings Cross, London WC1. Tel 01-837 7509.

Angela Davis — No answers for women

THE Women's Press has just published a new book by Angela Davis. 'Women, Race and Class' was reviewed in the American newspaper The Militant by Laura Moorehead which we reprint here in a shortened version.

I saw this book in a local bookstore and I immediately bought it. I bought it because it is written by Angela Davis.

In 1969 and 1970, as a professor at the University of California in Los Angeles, Davis was twice fired for her membership in the Communist Party.

In 1970, she was put on the FBI's 'Ten Most Wanted' list accused of murder and kidnapping in connection with an attack on a courtroom by a man she had worked with in defence of political prisoners. When Davis was finally caught, she was thrown in prison for sixteen months.

Millions of people around the world, particularly young blacks, identified with her plight and her defence of black prisoners. They participated in the international protest campaign that secured her acquittal.

It is both her own personal struggle and the impact of her defence campaign on the black movement that bring authority

to the name Angela Davis, and require a look at her political writings.

As history, much of *Women, Race and Class* is rewarding reading, particularly the chapters 'Black women and the Club Movement,' and 'Women Suffrage at the Turn of the Century: The Rising Influence of Racism.' Both of these are solid contributions to the history of black women as activists in the anti-lynching movement, and shed light on the impact of the development of the United States as an imperialist power on the campaign to win the vote for women.

But *Women, Race and Class* is seriously flawed. It never delivers on the promise of the title.

The main weakness is a political one. Nowhere does Davis lay out a road forward for women today. She simply concentrates on excoriating segments of the leadership of the past and present American feminist movement for their racist ideas.

She never explains that the key to this racism is these misleaders' reliance on the ruling class to give women some equality, instead of allying with the working class and the black and Latino communities to fight against the government, which is the main enemy of all the oppressed and exploited.

It's this fundamental political error that leads to ignoring or downplaying the struggle for the interests of the most oppressed women, because these present the biggest challenge to the capitalists who own the government.

By constantly counterposing the fight for women's rights to the struggle for black rights and the struggles of working women, Davis implies that blacks, women, and working people have some conflicting interests.

For example, in the chapter titled 'Rape, Racism and the Myth of the Black Rapist,' she talks about author Susan Brownmiller's reactionary and racist views. Then Davis suggests that Brownmiller is really 'defending the particular cause of white women, regardless of its implications.'

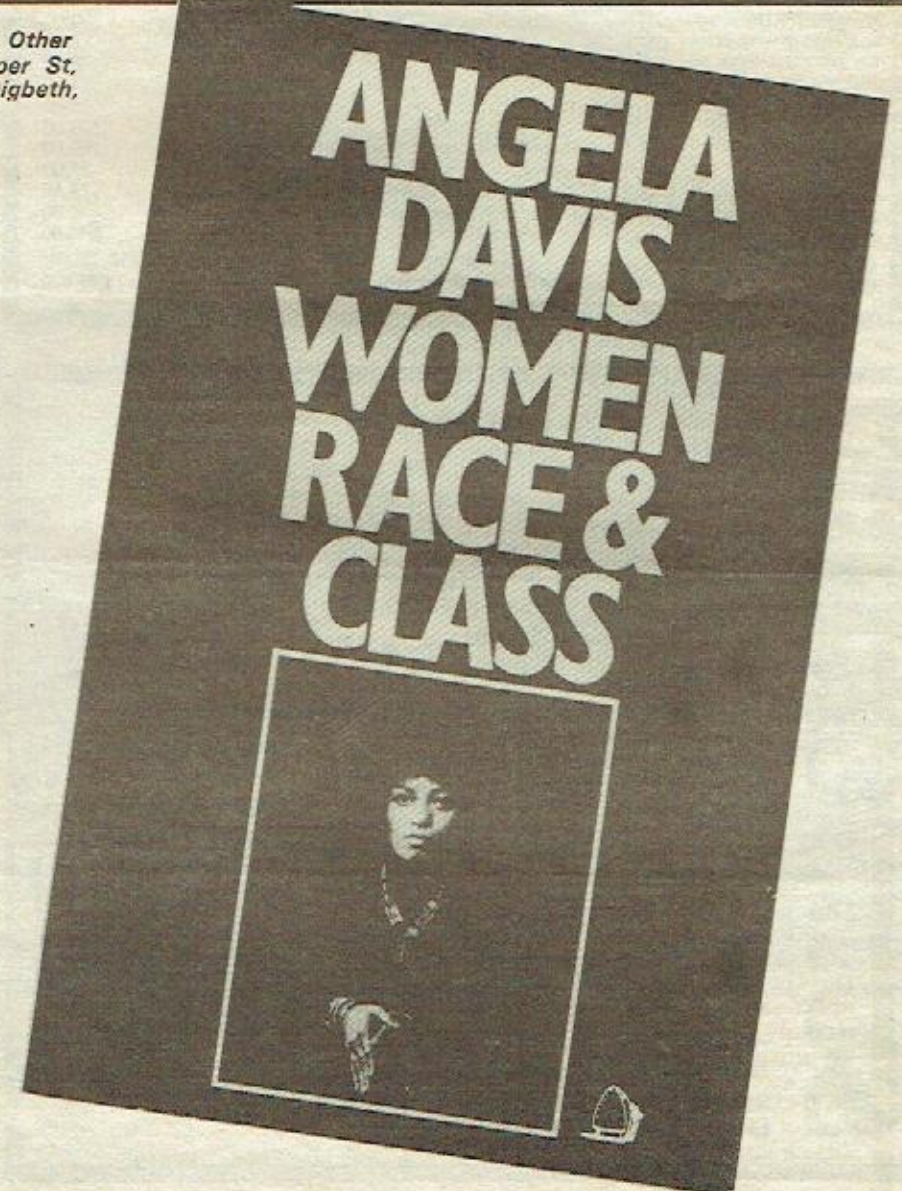
available from The Other Bookshops, 328 Upper St, London N1 and 14 Digbeth, Birmingham at £4.95.

This is a typical quote. And it's politically fatal and dead wrong. The interests of women, including the overwhelming majority of white women, are inseparable from the interests of blacks and Latinos, and from the struggle of the entire working class to be free of capitalist exploitation and oppression. Racists like Brownmiller who masquerade as feminists hinder the cause of women's equality.

To say that there are some special 'white women's interests' is to imply that the struggle for women's equality can be advanced at the expense of Blacks and working people.

Sex, race, and class are three separate questions, but for black women they are the triple signposts of our oppression — and Davis's book leaves us nowhere to go to liberate ourselves from this triple stranglehold.

There have been significant developments affecting the black movement in the last few years that begin to deal seriously with this question. It would have been good if Davis's book had discussed them.



Socialist Challenge

One day DHSS strike called

By Bob Hopkins

A ONE DAY national strike of social security personnel has been called for next Friday. It has been caused because the staff are fed up with over-work and under-staffing at a time when the workload, due to the increase in unemployment, is going through the roof.

The dispute started at the Erdington dole office in Birmingham 10 weeks ago. A young woman staff member burst into tears because of pressure of work. One more office has been called out each week in Birmingham until the stoppage has been made total.

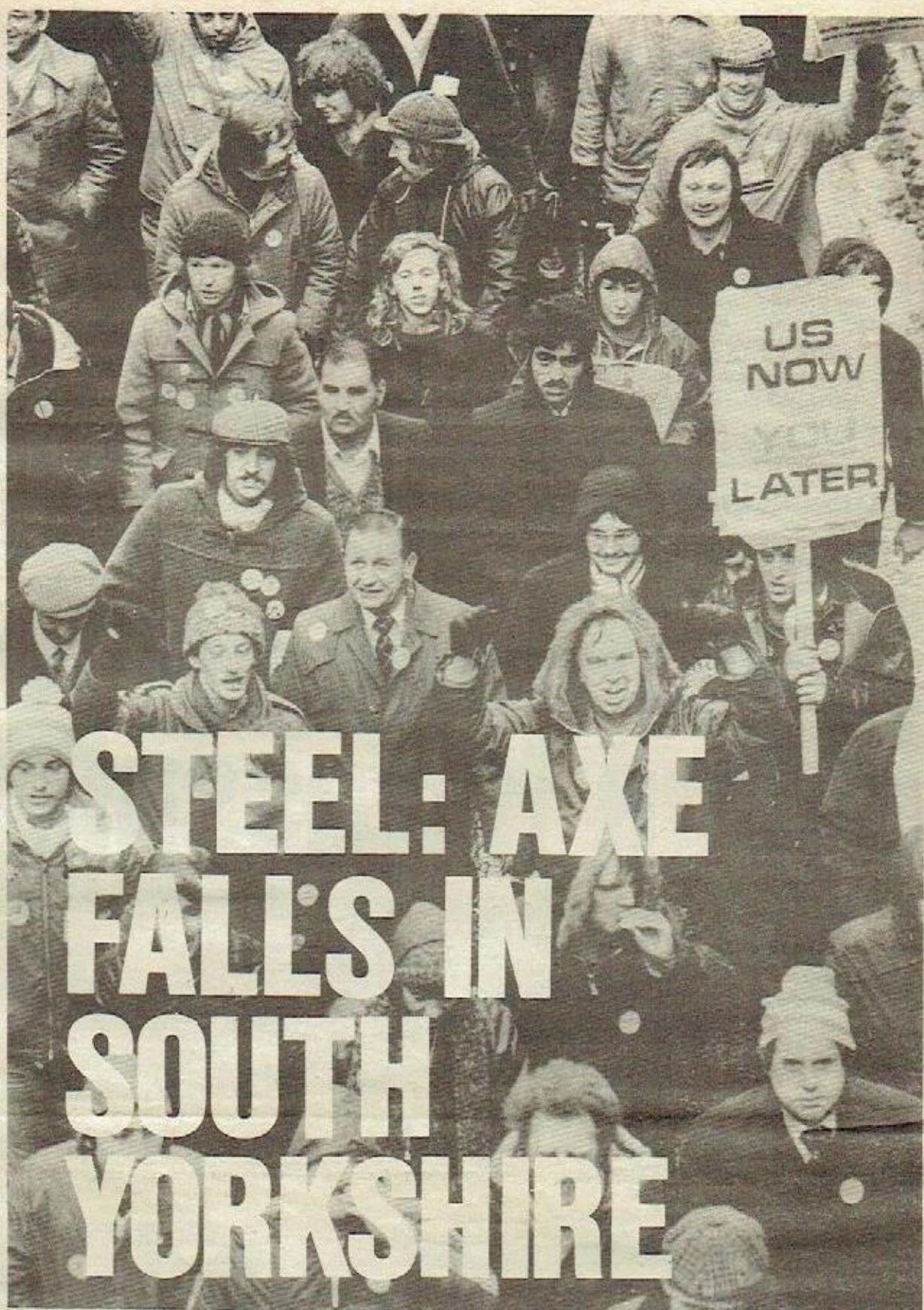
The management of the area, no doubt under government pressure, offered extra staff on a temporary basis only — and in return have demanded concessions on working conditions.

Despite the drawn out nature of this dispute the dole staff has refused to knuckle under. At a mass meeting last week they threw out a revised offer by a massive majority.

For this strike to be won serious lessons have to be learned from the health workers dispute. First, the dispute must not be dragged out indefinitely — against intransigent employers you must escalate and escalate quickly. They must be hit hard from the word 'go'. The feeling is there among the members, and if the one-day strike brings no response from management an all-out strike must be called straight away.

It's time the left leaders of the CPSA — and in particular president Kevin Roddy, a supporter of *Militant* — got their fingers out.

Secondly the positive feature of the health dispute was the appeal to other sections of the labour movement. The dole unions should reach out to other sections of the labour movement. Most important, the leadership of the trade unions concerned — the CPSA and the SCPS — must make clear that the kind of dithering which the health unions' leaderships have shown will not be tolerated.



STEEL: AXE FALLS IN SOUTH YORKSHIRE

By Brian Grogan

BRITISH STEEL is to sack 1,709 workers at its special steel plants in South Yorkshire. These will come on top of the cuts already planned to be completed by March next year. In Rotherham mill this means a further 323 in addition to the 794 just announced.

The response of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, the largest union in the industry, has been pathetic. 'This further loss of jobs', said a spokesperson, 'is a tragedy, but we are relieved that at least there is not another works closure'. But the present announcement brings to more than 3,500 the redundancies announced in the past two weeks alone. How can anyone be 'relieved' at that?

The unions at a local

level are, however, meeting to work out a plan of resistance. In Rotherham mill, the unions are refusing to meet management till after their joint committee convenes on Friday.

Mick Woods, works convenor of the boiler-makers explained to Socialist Challenge. 'We stand by a meeting of South Yorkshire crafts of six months ago. Then we decided unanimously to do everything necessary to

save jobs and living standards. And this could mean strike. Our bottom line is no compulsory redundancies. We have already had all the voluntary redundancies there were. Now everyone wants a job. We expect a fight.'

The strategy of the ISTC leadership is worthless. According to them, 'These redundancies reinforce our case for a special buying agency to handle all imported steel'. As if this was the problem.

There has been a drastic contraction of the engineering industry over the past two and a half years as a direct result of Thatcherite policies. No solution in the interests of

workers within these policies is possible — least of all with the ridiculous suggestion of a 'special buying agency'.

The central task of the union leadership is to show how militant resistance to these closures can be continued into a fight for a government which plans for the expansion of the economy and breaks decisively with the profit motivated system on which the Tories rest. Without that a jobs massacre on a truly mammoth scale will be pushed through, including the closure of two large plants.

• More steel coverage on pages 4 and 5.

FUND DRIVE '82

A letter from a pensioner

IN RESPONSE to Laurence Scott's strike committee £250 donation to Socialist Challenge last week, we received a £5 donation from one of our readers who is a pensioner.

Here in part is what Rose wrote to us with her donation:

Thank you Laurence Scott! You are helping the paper who struggles for the one that is sick, invalid, old, young and out of work! You struggle for those who suffer, and that is why your paper is my paper! I have nothing to add except to send you all, everyone of you, to send Socialist Challenge all the love that I have in my heart for them!

We hope everyone of our readers takes this to heart and at least matches Rose's contribution. Remember

Christmas is coming and this means lean times for Socialist Challenge.

Our thanks to these contributors:

Glasgow	£25.00
Cardiff	48.50
Wardle	6.00
Birmingham	200.00
Pietrasik	3.00
Dunn	8.00
Coulson	4.00
Ferris	5.00
S.E. London	200.00
Manchester	160.00
Huddersfield	25.00
Standing Orders	178.50
Lambeth pensioner	5.00
Total	868.00
Total so far	£10,236.91
Required by Dec 31	£16,000



SUBSCRIBE!

SPECIAL OFFER

For readers who take out a year's inland subscription we are offering a free copy of Alan Freeman's new book **THE BENN HERESY**. The book normally costs £3.50

Alternatively we are offering Henri Weber's book **NICARAGUA — THE SANDINIST REVOLUTION** (Usual price £2.95).

Subscription Rates:
Inland: 12 months £14.00/6 months £7.00
10 issues £2.00
Overseas: 12 months only
Surface & Europe £17.00/Air mail £24.00
(Please delete as appropriate)

Name.....
Address.....

Special Offer
Please send me.....

For multi-reader institutions double the above rates
Send to Socialist Challenge, P.O. Box 50,
London N1 2XQ



BAD TASTE

GORMAC

