

# Socialist Organiser

**NEW LOOK  
JUNE 12th**

The next issue of Socialist Organiser, out on 12 June, will have a new look — with new features and, we hope, a brighter and more readable style. Make sure of your copy!

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# Labour: throw out US bases

TONY BENN and ERIC HEFFER, in a document presented to Labour's National Executive Committee, argue for scrapping all US military bases

This article argues the case for a policy to be adopted by Labour's NEC, for presentation at the 1986 Annual Conference, recommending that the Labour Government — which we expect to win power at the next election — should close all United States bases in Britain, and not just those which are used for the storage and use of nuclear weapons.

The existing policy of closing US nuclear bases, which has been accepted by successive conferences over many years, was included in our 1983 election manifesto and the party is still solemnly committed to it.

However, since then, there have been a number of important changes in circumstances which require us to strengthen that commitment, and this paper lists them and concludes that the closure of all US bases is now necessary.

This memorandum does not raise the question of Britain's membership of NATO, even though the authors of this paper did invite the NEC, last year, to re-examine our membership, in preparation for a British withdrawal and still adhere to that view.

But the question of US bases in Britain can be separated from the NATO question, as was established in 1966 when France secured the removal of all American forces from her own territory, while remaining a member of the Atlantic Alliance.

We therefore confine ourselves to the question of the bases.

*How the American bases came to Britain.*

It was after the war that the Labour Prime Minister Mr Attlee agreed that some US aircraft should come to Britain on 'training missions'. From

then on the US presence has grown substantially, and became permanent, until, today, there are about 130 American bases, or installations of one sort or another, and about 30,000 US service personnel stationed all over this country.

The agreement under which they operate here has never been published and it is not even clear whether any formal treaty, governing their use, exists at all.

The most likely estimate of the true position is that there is an informal understanding, under which successive Prime Ministers have agreed with successive Presidents, that US forces will not be used without a measure of consultation, though exactly what that would mean, or how it would be conducted has never been clear.

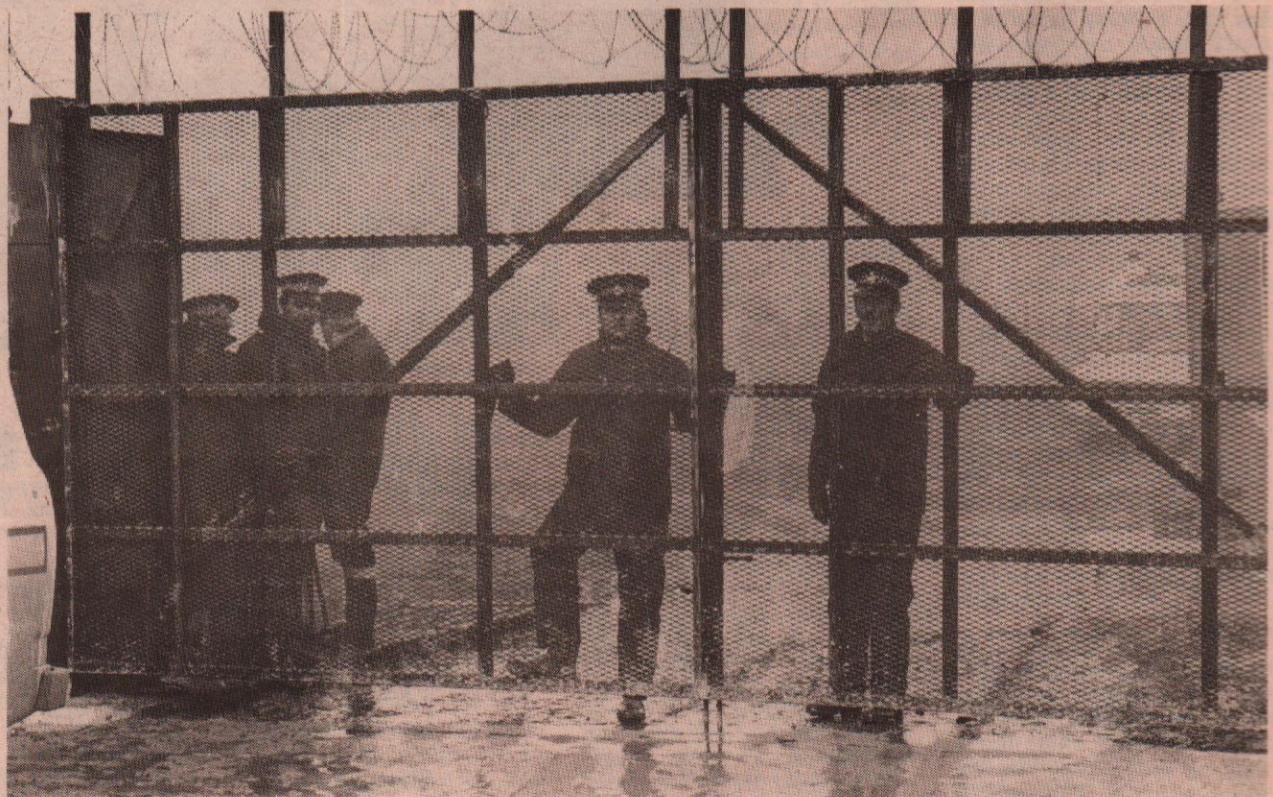
## Powers

Recently it has become known that the British government has prepared plans that would transfer great powers to the US military over whole areas of our own country, in the event of war.

*Consultation does not mean a British veto.*

A great deal has been made of the consultation procedure, under which the US government would, supposedly, consult the British government before any use was made of these bases.

However, given the oath of office which every American President takes, and which confers upon him duties as Commander-in-Chief of all US Forces worldwide, it is clear that the US Constitution would not permit him to subordinate his military powers and responsibilities, as President, to the wishes of any foreign power, however



Police outside Upper Heyford. Photo: Andrew Moore

friendly.

Moreover legislation recently introduced into the Congress, by the Republicans, would actually absolve the President from his present constitutional requirement to consult Congress before taking action against so-called terrorist attacks, and no British Prime Minister could expect to be put in a more advantageous position than the US legislature itself.

Thus it would appear that the theory of a British veto is an illusion that conceals the true position — namely that the United States has the right, as well as the power to use its bases in Britain as it wishes, either for NATO purposes or in pursuit of its own world-wide

interests.

*Lessons from the Libyan bombing.*

In short this country is seen in Washington as an unsinkable aircraft carrier on our side of the Atlantic, a thought that cannot be very re-assuring to British people who are at risk whenever it is used for that purpose.

The US decision to bomb Libya, by using American F111 aircraft from British airfields, has brought this danger home most vividly, and has posed the central questions in their sharpest form:

Was there really any consultation in advance or just a notification of intent?

What would have happened if the British government had refused its

consent?

What guarantee could there ever be that any US planes sent off, in this way, were not armed with nuclear weapons?

Was Parliament, or the public, ever told the full truth?

*The American Empire and its policies.*

Despite the oft-repeated argument that the United States is solely concerned to protect freedom, human rights and democracy world-wide, and that Britain's special relationship with her, as an ally, rests upon that assumption the facts indicate a very different

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# Stop throwing out socialists!

# Labour: throw out US bases

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picture. For, in truth, the United States has built up a vast World Empire, far more powerful even than the old British Empire, and has 3000 bases scattered across the globe, which are there to defend US economic and political interests including her investments, raw material supplies, especially oil, and the markets for her goods.

In defence of those interests America has fought a long war in Vietnam, attacked Cuba, occupied Grenada, destabilised Chile and organised terrorist attacks against Nicaragua.

She has also propped up, and armed, some of the most corrupt and dictatorial regimes from Papa Doc in Haiti to Marcos in the Philippines, Pinochet in Chile, the Shah of Iran and a whole host of military regimes in Portugal, Spain, Greece and Turkey.

Given these indisputable facts it cannot be right, or safe, for Britain to continue to allow the United States to use military bases in our country to pursue those policies.

## The change in British attitudes.

All these developments have been noticed by a large number of British people who would not regard themselves as being in any way anti-American, who remember the US help during the last war, and who admire the courage of those Americans who have fought so hard in their own country, against the Vietnam war, for civil rights and peace, and against the aggressive policies of the Reagan administration in Central America.

Moreover, in recent months, the Soviet peace proposals, made by Mr Gorbachov, have come across with a new urgency and sincerity, in marked contrast to the steady cold war propaganda emerging from the White House.

In addition the launching of the criminally wasteful Star Wars project, when millions die each year in the Third World for lack of the simple technologies and amenities which that money could be used to buy, have alerted the British people to the urgent need for new initiatives by our own govern-

ment.

## The consequences of the Chernobyl Disaster.

There is another reason why opinion in Britain is shifting rapidly away from the present subservience to Washington, and it has come into focus since the tragic disaster of Chernobyl.

For, if an accident at a civil nuclear power station, a thousand miles away in the Ukraine, can lead to a drift of radioactivity to Britain, what would be the consequence — for us — of an atomic attack on the USSR by the USA or NATO.

It must now be clear that even if no nuclear attack is ever made against this country itself — Britain and Europe would suffer terrible losses as a result of any nuclear weapons launched by NATO on to Warsaw Pact countries, while the USA could rely on the Atlantic Ocean to protect its own people from contamination.

## Towards a new Foreign Policy for Labour

All these developments together point towards the adoption by the

Labour Party of a non-aligned foreign policy: working for detente and co-operation between the super-powers; a massive reduction of Britain's own high defence expenditure; and a re-direction of the money, thus released, to meet the urgent needs of working people here and world-wide and to restore full employment in Britain.

## The need to face some harsh realities.

We are often told to face the harsh realities — however unpleasant that may be — and the harsh reality that the Labour Party has got to face now, is that its long-established advocacy of the American alliance, and the existence of US bases in Britain, no longer meets the needs or aspirations of the people of this country.

A clear policy commitment to close all US bases in Britain as soon as a Labour government returns to power, if honestly presented and strongly pressed, inside and outside our movement, in the months between now and this year's conference, would undoubtedly

receive very widespread support from far beyond the ranks of the party and its traditional voters.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

We therefore recommend that this memorandum be discussed by the NEC, amended and agreed and circulated, now, to all constituencies and affiliated organisations, in advance of Conference, and that the NEC publishes it as a statement for Conference itself.

To give Conference an opportunity to decide the matter on a card vote, we also recommend that the NEC now agrees a resolution, along the lines set out below, with the intention of moving it from the platform:

## Draft resolution for the 1986 conference.

"That this conference calls upon the next Labour Government, on assuming office, to take immediate steps to close all US bases in Britain — whether nuclear or non-nuclear — and to secure a complete withdrawal of all US forces and equipment, from Britain, within two years."

Labour Women's Conference

# Resisting the right

By Helen McHale

THE DISTANCE and inconvenience did not seem to deter many of the 586 delegates at the 61st annual conference of Labour Women, on the Isle of Bute on 17-18 May.

Not only was there a large number of delegates, but also a strong presence of trade union women, who were often vocal in opposition to some of the main resolutions.

One of the most disappointing features of the conference was the small number of black women present.

The conference was undoubtedly low-key. There were few heated debates. The fringe meetings were unobtrusive, and even the shadow elections for the women's places on the Labour NEC passed almost into oblivion.

Despite all this there was a strong presence of women who were resisting the drift to the right in the Labour Party and the expulsions, and who put their activity and faith into the grass roots and the self-activity of the working class.

The debate on racism was brought forward on the agenda and included the debate on black sections. Last year conference had come out in support of black sections, but quite narrowly. This time the vote in support was increased to about two-to-one.

In the Northern Ireland debate, many delegates left the hall before it even began, fearing the sensitivity of the issue. The debate was not only the best of the conference but also much better than a wrangle between Militant/Workers' Unity and Sinn Féin ra-ra which took place at last year's conference.

Anyone with any doubts about Militant's position on Ireland only had to look at the resolution they put forward: if you say 'workers' unity' often enough then it will come true.

The resolution that was passed called for troops out and opposition to the Anglo-Irish deal, though in itself it did not address many of the genuine problems of Ireland, including the Protestant workers.

The debate on South Africa was marred by anti-



Shaking on a socialist-free future. Photo: John Harris.

Militant rants and sometimes hysteria. One resolution which called for direct links between South African and British workers was defeated, but two other resolutions were passed which did not actually mention direct links — one implicitly opposed them and one implicitly supported them.

Resolutions opposing expulsions and the inquiry into Liverpool District Labour Party, supporting lesbian and gay rights, and on low pay, the Fowler Review, the NHS, child care and care in the community, were also passed.

A resolution on the UDM called for the UDM not to be recognised by the Labour Party and individual UDM members not to be allowed individual Labour Party membership. It was opposed by the National Labour Women's Committee. Although this opposition did not stop the resolution being passed, it is indicative of a tendency in the leadership to sell out the NUM if only the rank and file would allow them the opportunity.

## Elect

The demand for women's conference to elect its own five representatives on the Labour NEC met vocal opposition from the unions. At the heart of the disagreement was the lack of a block vote for unions at women's conference. But a resolution from NUPE calling for women's conference to have 'more say' over the five places would not have solved either the problem of the block vote or the lack of power of the women's organisation.

As the women's conference grows in importance, status and influence, so will the role of the unions grow, and they will assert what they see to be their rights. This problem is a multidimensional one, because it is the union block vote that has defeated women's demands time and time again at Labour Party conference.

Therefore, something must be done to resolve the issue of the block vote at women's conference and also women need to organise within their unions to take up women's issues and win the arguments over the demands of Labour women's conference.

## Shadow

The conference resolution calling for shadow elections and the right to elect our own representatives was passed.

The shadow elections proved to be something of a non-event, and there seemed to be political reasons behind this.

The only organising done for the elections was by WAC [the Women's Action Committee], who put out a slate of five people. This slate caused much contention with the inclusion of Frances Morrell.

Voting was inconspicuous, and the results were not even announced from the platform. There was no formal campaign round the issue, then it had failed.

Part of the reason for the low profile may have been the discontent in the unions, but it may also be a matter of unwillingness to come into major conflict with the Labour Party bureaucracy.

The National Women's Officer refused to have anything to do with the elections (not in the constitution of the Labour Party...), and it was seen that the Labour Party would be very unhappy about shadow elections as this would be another area of conflict with the rank and file at a time when Labour are preparing a 'nice' image for the coming general election.

If the Women's Committee and the WAC leadership do not openly take up the issue, then rank and file women will continue to be vocal about it.

Overall, women's conference continued its tradition of being more radical than Labour Party conference, and while it may still not be perfect, it is a very open and democratic conference — not that this is of much use until women's conference is given some power and seen as being an important event in the political agenda.

## SWAPO

International issues are always very high on the women's conference agenda, and invited speakers (apart from Labour Party general secretary Larry Whitty) included one from the Association of Salvadorean Women and a woman from SWAPO. The conference also agreed to organise a demonstration against apartheid in November, and to support a campaign called by the National Abortion Campaign to mark the 20th anniversary of the 1967 Abortion Act.

Women must start organising now to make sure that the strip searches demonstration is a success.

# A vicious case of harassment

By Jenny Singleton

On Wednesday 14 May Manchester University's General Meeting was packed. Most of the students who attended had come to hear a woman ex-student tell of a terrifying case of sexual harassment.

She told the general meeting how she had been sexually harassed and sexually assaulted by one of her tutors. The tutor concerned told her if she didn't like it, she could walk out the door, but if she didn't attend any of his tutorials she wouldn't pass her exams.

As a result of this she made a formal written complaint of sexual harassment to the University. A whole series of 'discussions', 'meetings' and letter exchanging took place both within her department and between her and the Vice-Chancellor over a period of two years. At one point she had to wait eight months for the Vice-Chancellor to reply to one of her letters.

Even though the tutor in this case actually admitted sexually harassing her, the 'punishment' he received was a letter threatening dismissal if any more sexual harassment complaints were received.

For two years she lived in fear of this tutor, under pressure to 'drop' the allegation. She had to continue to attend courses in a department where this man still taught and most probably sexually harassed other women students.

After two years and phenomenal pressure she had had enough. She left university.

The woman concerned had three central points she wanted to make. That sexual harassment is unwanted, un-

asked for, persistent attention a man gives a woman. That sexual harassment is to be found in all spheres of society, at every level and goes on all the time. That isolated women who feel able to speak out against sexual harassment are put under extreme pressure and will find no justice.

She called for new structures to be set up in the University that would enable more women to come forward with cases of sexual harassment. And that the tutor concerned should no longer be able to teach.

## Campaign

A campaign is being mounted in Manchester to do both. At this time of year with exams coming up the prospects of a large, active campaign are limited. But if we don't succeed this term then we will continue next term until this tutor goes.

No tutor in any university should get away with sexually harassing and sexually assaulting a woman. They should be kicked out immediately. New structures are needed so that women who are being sexually harassed will feel able to speak out. That means sympathetic women tutors who will take up these cases with the University and guarantee that the identity of the student concerned will remain totally confidential. Confidentiality is vital. Male tutors have enormous power over female students.

To put your whole education in jeopardy and yourself under massive pressure for the sake of a 'warning' letter to the tutor who has sexually harassed you is a prospect that few women will face and a risk that few women will take. This must be changed.

## Fight the witchhunt

Conference Against the Witch-hunt

Collective Meeting, North Constituency Labour Party

Saturday 21 June

2 delegates from each CLP or affiliated organisation, credentials £3 from 96A Stoke Newington High St., London N16.

# STOP THE WITCH HUNT!

The Labour Party NEC's expulsion of Tony Mulhearn, Ian Lowes and Tony Aitman is a disgrace. Their 'crime' is their alleged membership of Militant. Ian Lowes, secretary of Liverpool Joint Shop Stewards' Committee, was even found not guilty of 'bringing the party into disrepute' — and then expelled anyway.

Political factions in the Labour Party *should* be allowed to organise for their ideas. The Labour Party is supposed to pride itself on its 'broadness'. And it should be a party that incorporated all strands of working class and socialist opinion. To have genuine and democratic debate within the labour movement, currents of socialist thought need to be able to organise themselves. And any group of like-minded people who are serious about their own ideas will want to organise, the more effectively to convince others.

The outlawing of organised political groups does not encourage democracy or

freedom, as those who advocate it claim. In the first place it is not evenly applied. Left wing groups are the victims of the purges, not right wing ones. The history of the Labour Party is full of examples of organised right wing groups, often funded by the ruling class.

And in any case, anyone who believes that the Kinnockites are not an organised faction is living in a very sheltered world. Of course Kinnock's supporters organise themselves, just like any serious right wing in any General Management Committee.

### 'Aims'

And the upholding of the 'aims and objectives' of the Labour Party are by no means their preoccupation. Indeed a big part of what the Kinnockites organise to do is to conspire against the implementation of Labour Party

policy.

A group like Militant, which seriously believe that Clause 4 Part 4 should be implemented and that this would be socialism, have at least as much right to organise and produce a weekly newspaper as their detractors who would rather Clause 4 had never been written.

A ban that drives left wingers 'underground' only encourages secrecy and dishonesty. And it is secrecy and behind-the-scenes manoeuvring that the right wing love best.

The 'democratic socialists' who believe that democracy means the expulsion of long-standing Party members and trade union militants are always in fact the dirtiest, most secretive factionalists in local Parties.

Militant's 'crime' is not that they are organised. That is the constitutional pretext. Their 'crime' is that they are committed to the abolition of capitalism and to what they think are the interests of the working class.

Socialist Organiser has very many disagreements with Militant. Their leadership in Liverpool proved to be inept. And their policies on many questions are in fact very right wing, whatever the rhetoric that 'socialism is the only answer'. Their denunciation of the revolt of the six county Catholics and their passive support for Stalinist genocide in Afghanistan are only two examples.

But Neil Kinnock is not motivated by support for the Northern Ireland Catholic revolt. The current blood-letting is party of the Party leadership's strategy to drag the Party to the right.

Mulhearn, Lowes and Aitman should be reinstated, along with the members of Militant's Editorial Board expelled in 1982 and all other socialists expelled since.

Kinnock and co. should be fighting the Tories instead of their own Party's members. Stop the witch-hunt!

## Paul Whetton's diary

Paul Whetton is a member of Bevercotes NUM, Notts.

WE WENT to court a fortnight ago. Of the original 14 complainants who took the NUM to court, 12 have withdrawn. The two who were left and insisted on going ahead were Colin Clark, who now works for NCB Enterprises, and John Liptrott, who is an executive officer of the UDM.

Neither of these two have got anything to do with the NUM and its funds. And yet they are still determining what the NUM can do.

The judge put it off for a week. Last week we went back into court and it still seems as though, no matter how many times we apologise, the courts are not going to let the NUM get its money back easily. It is possible we will get our money back in a month's time.

In the meantime, the original three trustees are still being sued by the Receiver for approximately £1½ million each. That's Arthur Scargill, Peter Heathfield, and Mick McGahey.

Everybody's sick and tired of all this court wrangling. It's just another attack by the State and the employers, trying to break the spirit of the men.

My industrial tribunal — on my sacking — will be on 9-10 June. Mick McGinty, the vice-president of the area NUM, is going to the tribunal too, over action short of dismissal.

He was threatened, and I was sacked, for recruiting to the NUM. We were recruiting at quite a steady rate, but at Bevercotes colliery since my dismissal they haven't recruited a single member. In that respect the Coal Board has achieved its aim.

The men are frightened. In other pits recruitment is still going ahead. It is slow, but it is happening.

The overall picture in the industry is that many of our lads are absolutely demoralised. Everything that the national president of the NUM has said has been seen to be true. Although we got magnificent support from branches

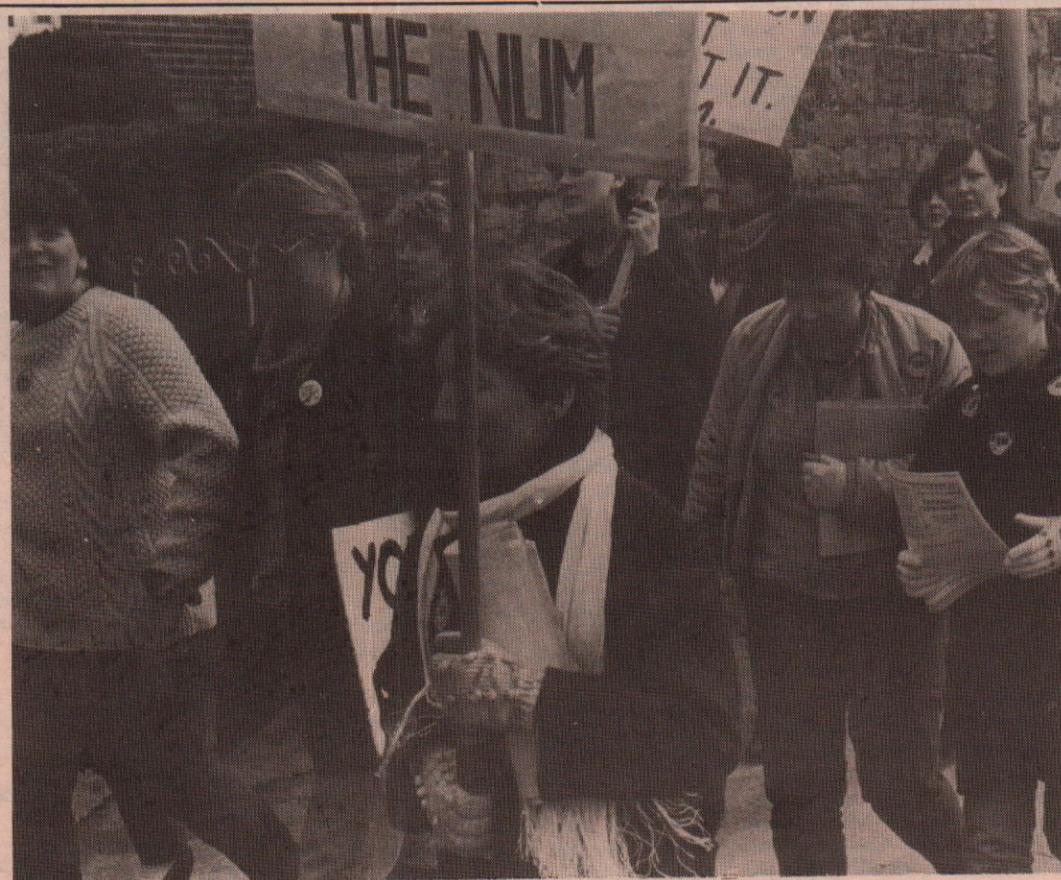


Photo: John Harris

## The rule of fear

and individuals, the rest of the trade union movement — the big guns — didn't really come to our aid. As a result many of the same attacks are being perpetrated against other trade unions.

So a lot of men are saying 'Sod it, I'll take the money and run'. It's regrettable after the great stand that they made in the fight for jobs, but it has to be understood that many of the men are really demoralised. All the court wrangling, on top of everything else, aggravates that.

### Position

However, a lot of lads are not in a position to take the money and run. We have to stay and fight. And that fight will go on.

We shall be sending delegates from Notts to the forthcoming NUM conference. There is one resolution from Scotland which talks about taking all members back into the NUM, and we've put an amendment from Bevercotes which says 'provided that they are acceptable in terms of Rule 30'.

In no circumstances are we prepared to see Lynk and Prendergast taken back. We're

prepared to take back the vast bulk of the UDM membership, but not people who have collaborated with the employers in attempting to smash the NUM.

There is no way that we are going to see history repeated from when they took back Spencer and made him the leader of the Notts miners in 1936.

This last week we've seen three Labour Party members expelled for supposedly being members of Militant. There is a running cancerous sore on the face of society called Toryism — or Conservatism, or capitalism — and yet people are bending over backwards to push the Labour Party into major surgery for a little pimple on the backside. They've got to get their priorities right. There's a real enemy to be fought out there.

Kinnock really believes that he is going to be in No. 10 in two years' time. And certainly we need a Labour government. But what the Labour leaders are thinking about is the prospect of being in power and having all these radical Labour activists telling them how to run the country. They want to be able to sit in No.10 and carry

on the way it has been done in the past — i.e. to nurse capitalism back to health so that the first team can come back and take over again.

### Purge

I think they are trying to purge the Labour Party of the radical elements before they take office.

A lot of people are going along with the witch-hunt, and much of it is based on the idea that we've got to go along with Kinnock in order to get the Labour Party into No.10. But they're only making a rod for their own backs.

I have disagreed with Militant on many occasions, but I recognise that Militant has got a role to play within the labour movement. What the Labour leaders are doing is trying to appeal to the middle classes and say they're getting rid of the nasty bogeymen in the Labour Party.

### Resist

I think the expulsions have got to be resisted at all costs. If they get away with it, it will be exactly the same as what is happening in the pits with the miners who are being sacked — people will be frightened to lift their heads up.

## A NEW ORDER

IT SEEMS every protest in Tower Hamlets ends up with police violence these days. So it was at last week's first Council since the Liberals came into office. Having announced himself as a fair and impartial chair, the leading Liberal in charge of council found the Labour protesters from the floor of the chamber too much, and called in the police.

The gallery was packed to overflowing with local tenants and council workers. Straight from Wapping, 30 or so officers came in and proceeded to lay into them. Nothing peaceful either — arm twisting, pushing and shoving. Two Councillors needed medical treatment.

### Mood

Afterwards, the mood of the council changed. Labour made a concerted effort to prevent standing orders being adopted — these set up neighbourhood devolved powers without proper debate, consultation, costing or discussion with the unions — and we were unsuccessful. It would pave the way for privatisation through a more tightly controlled Liberal-dominated centralised system. A rush job within the first week of the Alliance-dominated Council!

The Labour group used delaying tactics all evening, but after the people in the gallery were ejected, we were faced with a carve up — they called for a vote to be put, and only one amendment out of a possible 22 reached debate stage. That was only because their legal advisers said it would be illegal to proceed without any discussion! Behind closed doors, the Liberal's real method of operation is as ruthless as that of the right wing

Labour leaders who have ruled Tower Hamlets for so long.

The final division was chaotic and the result will now be challenged legally. We must alert all groups and tenants to oppose the new neighbourhood committees, and at the same time expose the real nature of Tory/Liberalism that has been returned to power in Tower Hamlets.

One Liberal candidate was too young, and there will have to be a by-election. The majority is cut to one in Council.

In sharp conflict with their strength in the Council Chambers was police indifference to a vicious racist attack the evening before, when a Bengali man and his two sons were attacked. The man has ended up with a broken leg and extensive injuries. One son was savagely cut across the top of his head. The gang stood around till the police arrived — but the police promptly arrested the two sons, holding them overnight for defending themselves!

Two white youths were finally arrested the next day. The same Bengali family have suffered other violence — the mother took a private prosecution against two white youths and, with the aid of CAPA, secured a conviction. Then her son was cut with a Stanley knife down his entire back outside Stepney Green school.

Model motions, for Labour Party conference (on the economy), and for immediate use in CLPs and trade unions (on the witch-hunt), have been drafted by the Socialist Organiser editorial board.

We have no space to print them in the paper, but they can be got by sending a SAE to Socialist Organiser, PO Box 823, London SE15 4NA.

## Get organised

Become a supporter of the Socialist Organiser Alliance — groups are established in most large towns. We ask £5 a month minimum (£1 unwaged) contribution from supporters.

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# Our debt to Connolly

By Sean Matgamna

AS STAN Crooke rightly says (SO 270) James Connolly belonged to 'the pre-Lenin generation of Marxism'. This meant that he lived before the great renaissance of revolutionary Marxism inspired by the Russian Revolution of 1917 and organised and spread by the new Communist International.

The work of Lenin's and Trotsky's Comintern included clarification of the conception of the revolutionary working-class party and a series of sharp and partly new developments of the Marxist theory of the national question and its relation to working-class socialism.

Connolly lived and died in the period before this renaissance. His theorising and battling were part of the international socialist ferment that preceded and produced it. And his activity was confined almost entirely to politically backward or peripheral labour movements, in Britain, Ireland, and the USA.

It is easy enough to find fault with him after his cause was defeated. But I think we also owe a debt of loyalty to people like Connolly — we must at least place and understand them in their own historical context.

The last word we have of what Connolly thought he was doing in 1916 is what he said to another socialist as he left Liberty Hall on Easter Monday, the day of the Rising: "We are going out to be slaughtered. The odds against us are a thousand to one, but in the event of victory hold on to your rifles, as those with whom we are fighting may stop before our goal is reached".

## Sunk

These were not the words of someone who had abandoned socialism for nationalism, or sunk his socialism in the nationalist cause. They reflect the spirit of Marx's March 1850 Address of the Central Committee of the Communist League about the role of socialists in bourgeois and national-democratic revolutions — summed up in the idea that socialists and bourgeois democratic revolutionaries should strike together though they march separately.

The same ideas were to be repeated in one of the key documents of revolutionary socialism in the 20th century — the Communist International's 1920 Theses on the National and Colonial Question.

To be sure, the great and immensely tragic weakness of Connolly was that he did not build a revolutionary movement able to lead and shape the nationalist upsurge that followed 1916. Had the post-1916 Irish national movement been shaped by Connolly's class politics, then it might very well have appealed to the Protestant workers of Northern Ireland on a working-class basis, across the sectarian/municipal divide. It might have linked up, for example, with the Northern Ireland working-class militancy that exploded in the great 1919 Belfast engineering strike...

As well as the virtue of his irreconcilable revolutionary working-class commitment and determination, Connolly did also have many of the faults of his generation of Marxist socialists — and he had some, like his Catholicism, which were peculiar to himself. But, even if he sometimes wrongly expressed himself as a nationalist, Connolly's concern with the Irish national question was not, in my opinion, one of his faults.

He was right to base himself



Irish Citizen Army outside Liberty Hall, Dublin

on the just struggle of the great majority of the Irish people against their national oppression. In doing so he made a step forward from the political common stock of his generation of Marxists — who generally had little interest in the revolts of oppressed nations — and placed himself entirely in the tradition of Marx and Engels after the 1860s.

I think Connolly's understanding of the character and depth of the 'Catholic'/'Protestant' division in Ireland was inadequate. On the other hand, no-one has ever written with more biting class hatred of Catholic-Nationalist bigotry than did Connolly in his writings against the Ancient Order of Hibernians and the old Home Rule party.

And, of course, we only see the Protestant/Catholic question as it is today, after 70 years of bourgeois nationalist and bourgeois Unionist domination of Ireland, during which the divisions have been entrenched deeper by the existence of two sectarian Irish states.

In 1914 Connolly himself said that he would prefer continued Irish-British Union to this form of partitioned Home Rule.

It was not inevitable that Ireland would develop as it has done in the 70 years since Connolly's death. Other courses of development — those Connolly set out to fight for in 1916 — may have been possible.

The problem with some of Stan Crooke's criticisms of James Connolly is that he seems almost to see it as an aberration for Connolly to be concerned with the national question at all. I too think James Connolly made concessions to nationalism, but he was surely right to try to root Irish revolutionary working-class socialism in the traditions of plebeian revolutionary nationalism in Ireland. He was right to try to compete with the bourgeois and petty bourgeois nationalists for the leadership of the Irish nationalist mass movement.

That he was, so to speak, politically gobbled up by the bourgeois nationalists after 1916 and

made into one of their plaster-of-Paris saints, proves only that he lost, not that he was wrong to make the attempt.

The early Communist International gave much thought to this problem, and even its immensely clear ideas, based on far wider experience and discussion than Connolly ever had access to, could not prevent the Chinese Communist Party making errors similar to Connolly's, and of catastrophic proportions, in the 1920s.

It is not fair or historically appropriate to seize on the use made by nationalist populists now and for decades past of formulations of Connolly's such as: "The cause of labour is the cause of Ireland. The cause of Ireland is the cause of labour".

Connolly did not use such slogans in their populist meaning: for him they asserted the claim of the young Irish working class to lead the rural poor. It was entirely consistent with international socialism for the Irish working class to champion and take the lead in the just democratic demand of the Irish masses for national independence.

## Pandered

If the demand was just — and it surely was — then there was nothing necessarily chauvinist or narrowly nationalist in the Irish labour movement fighting for it.

That some of Connolly's agitational articles in 1915-16 pandered to mere nationalism — and they did — does not invalidate that, nor invalidate Connolly, who should be taken as a whole.

It was the Stalinists who gave the poisonous, and presently dominant, nationalist/populist interpretation to slogans such as 'The cause of Ireland...', with their 'two-stage revolution' arguments that 'full' national independence was the 'first stage' of the Irish revolution, which had to be completed before there could be any talk of socialism. It was Stalinism that infected the later generation of Republicans — not

Connolly.

There is an implicit — and sometimes explicit — assumption in some of the criticisms of Connolly now being produced, that he should have chosen to struggle for the unity of the Irish working class by choosing Unionism and socialism within the old UK, having no truck with Irish separatism. But that would have meant that Connolly turned his back on the democratic demands fought for by the big majority of the Irish people for many, many decades (at least), and tried to get the Irish labour movement to do the same.

No Irish labour movement could have been built with such politics. Only sterile Unionist sects could have been built in most of Ireland with such politics. On that road there was no possible solution to the Unionist/Nationalist division — only the self-isolation of the socialists and the strengthening of the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois nationalists. And thus the division would have been deepened, not avoided, had the Irish socialists chosen unionism instead of separation.

It is true of course that, had Irish socialists like James Connolly proposed to the Irish Unionist minority reconciliation between the two communities by way of some form of internal autonomy for the Irish minority, then there might have been a chance that socialists standing in the nationalist tradition could have won over a section of the Northern Protestant working class.

But Connolly's failure to do this does not diminish the justice of the national concerns he fought and died for.

The tragic evolution of Ireland since Connolly does not invalidate Connolly's concern for Irish national liberation — it underlines the tragedy that it was realised (partly) under the leadership of the Catholic nationalist bourgeoisie and not under the leadership of a labour movement armed with Connolly's ideas and attempting to unify the Irish working people.



## Paris in spring

PARIS IN the spring! A group of Socialist Organiser supporters enjoyed three days in Paris at the annual Lutte Ouvriere (Workers Fight) fete held on 17-19 May. We took along SO papers, magazines and pamphlets for our stall at the fete, where we talked to some of the 25,000 people who came through the gates over the three days.



The fete is an annual event, and one of the more painless ways to immerse oneself in politics. Of the 280 stalls at the fete, about 70 were taken by political groups — the remaining 210 were food, drink and entertainment stalls.

The fete arrangements are a tribute to LO's organisational capacity. Camping facilities were available for groups from other countries or towns, delicious food was available almost round the clock, signposting, maps and information stalls meant you couldn't get lost, childcare was free, with games and activities arranged for older children.

Also included in the entrance fee were films, music and theatre. Discussions, forums and debates between different political groups were also time-tabled and were generally well-attended.

Scientific expositions on such

topics as AIDS, the history of mathematics, and the evolution of species were also mounted in large tents.

All this for around £4.50 for the three days! Even if you can't speak French, it's an outing well worth a visit.

On the fete programme, LO wrote that, in the political climate where the French Communist and Socialist Parties were openly rejecting ideas they had sworn to uphold, the fete was an occasion to show that communist and socialist ideas still exist in the heart of the working class. The participation of groups from many different countries was part of the world LO wants to build — a world without the national frontiers which only serve to divide working people.

## A Tory fascist?

RALPH Harrison first became known in East London around 1984 when his group "Fairplay" started to gain publicity for its campaign for "fair play for whites".

Its main claim was that whites were being discriminated against by local councils in housing, education and employment.

Fairplay and Ralph Harrison were involved in a number of issues — for example, when a Tenants Association in Stepney was threatened with legal action by the Commission for Racial Equality for circulating a petition demanding that no more Asians be moved onto the estate. Harrison was present at a meeting of tenants supporting the petition, despite him not living on the estate, and not even being a council tenant.

### Proof

They also tried to argue that measures taken by councils, such as the GLC and IEA to take account of the needs of ethnic minority groups in the area were proof of anti-white bias.

There was, for a while, a campaign of rumour-mongering at school gates about all children being forced to learn Bengali (the language of the main ethnic minority in the area). It was, of course, an outright lie, but it seems to have gained a place in people's imaginations in the area, and recently surfaced on

a National Front leaflet for the council elections.

Much of the resentment that Fairplay was trying to tap is the justifiable anger of white tenants at the poor housing being provided by local councils. It underlines the point that anti-racist measures taken by councils are a largely cosmetic measure — while they bottle out on the central fight for more resources from central Government to provide the services people need — can lead to a racist reaction from disgruntled whites.

### Expelled

Harrison himself recently stood as a Tory candidate for Tower Hamlets council and the IEA. Fairplay was abandoned after some unfavourable publicity about its activities. The local Tory Association found publicity about Harrison's activities embarrassing and expelled him.

He promptly joined the Tories in the next constituency and it was from them that he was nominated for the council.

He is a member of the ultra-right wing Tory Monday Club, and is, it seems, not unknown to some of the leaders of the British fascist movement. It was no great surprise to local activists that he should have been spotted leaving a British National Party election meeting with the fascists behind a police cordon, or that he was distributing old Fairplay leaflets with his election address.

# "We shall sleep here"

This article is reprinted from SASPU Focus no. 7 (a left-inclined South African student paper).

Workers have a new weapon against the bosses: 'Siyalala la', which means 'we shall sleep here'.

The 'siyalala la', or sleep-ins, have already been used in many factories, as well as on a mine. And they work.

"We must see the sit-ins on two levels", says Sipho Kubeka of the Paper, Wood and Allied Workers' Union (PWAU).

"It makes workers feel the power of ownership and control of the factories. It also puts management on the defensive and gives more bargaining power to the workers."

Normally in a strike workers walk out of the factory, and leave management in control of the area.

But, as Kubeka says, "Management can then lock the gates, dismiss workers and bring in scabs — or rehire the workers it wants back."

"But when workers sit in, the workers are in control of the factory. The bosses have to beg the workers to leave".

Management gets really worried. They have to hang around to see that nothing happens to their factory or their machines.

During one sit-in, workers often saw senior managers pacing around, 'looking nervous'.

In all the sit-in strikes, workers have told management that if the police are sent in, they can't guarantee the safety of machines. This has protected most workers from police action.

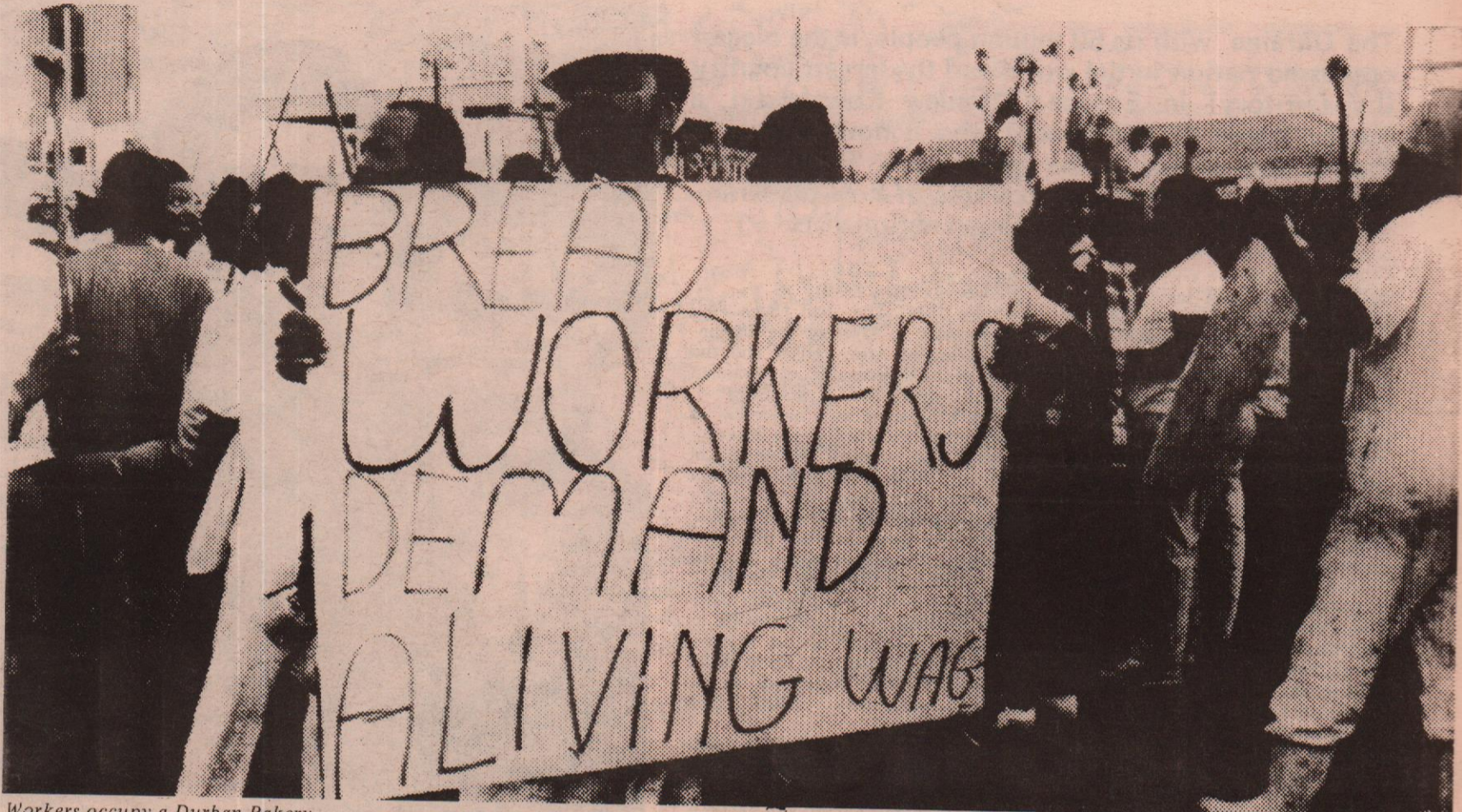
Other advantages of sit-ins are:

- They help prevent dismissals;
- they slow down production — or even stop it completely;
- while workers are in the factory, no scab labour can be hired;
- workers can't be locked out;
- the pressure is kept on management 24 hours a day;
- they build unity between workers.

Workers have used sit-in strikes to demand union recognition, higher wages, to stop dismissals and retrenchments, for the right to plant-level bargaining and for May Day to be a paid holiday.

The first sit-in strike was at Kelloggs in Springs. It was sparked by the dismissal of a worker.

A shop steward described what happened. "We got all management and foremen out of the factory, first thing in the morning. Then we locked the



Workers occupy a Durban Bakery.

gates with our own locks.

"Then we started the machines and kept them going while negotiations started. Management was scared of what we might do to the machines. So they switched off the electricity and the machines stopped."

"But the pressure on management was still strong. They realised if they brought in the police the workers would do anything to keep them out."

"At 2 in the morning — after only 17 hours — management gave in to the demands completely. The dismissed worker was reinstated."

Sweet Foot and Allied Workers' Union (SFAWU) president, Chris Dlamini, works at Kelloggs. He said, "The significance of the strike was that it showed workers can take over the factories and keep production going."

The 'siyalala la' at Kelloggs was such a success that other workers started using the tactic. It grew from a good idea into a movement.

90 Pwawu workers began a two and a half week sit-in at Printpak Gravure in Industria after a fellow worker was dismissed.

"We decided not to go to work, but

also not to leave the factory", said shop stewards' committee chairperson, Joseph Nene. "We told management we would stay in the factory until the problem had been solved."

The workers occupied the factory for two days. When they returned after the weekend, they found themselves locked out. "We got one of our members to drive up to the gate with a car and hoot", Nene said.

## Sit-in

"When the gate was opened the workers rushed in and opened the gates properly so that we could all go back in again."

Workers made it clear they would sit-in until the dismissed worker was reinstated. Management was forced to re-open negotiations.

Another sit-in was at GB Engineering and Pan African Shopfitters, on the East Rand. Workers there belong to Pwawu and the Metal and Allied Workers' Union (Mawu).

250 workers went on strike when management refused to discuss retrenchment plans.

Workers switched off machines, kicked out white and coloured workers who had carried on working, and occupied the factory.

But after two weeks, the police were called in. They injured many workers when they used dogs and teargas to get the workers out.

More than a hundred workers were arrested. All but one were released after paying heavy bail. The remaining worker is being held under the Internal Security Act. He is accused of trying to set fire to the factory with a petrol bomb.

Workers say this charge is nonsense: they say the worker was arrested holding a can of water to use against teargas.

A Pwawu spokesperson described the police action as "a direct attack on the 'siyalala la' movement".

"Employers and the government see sit-ins as a major threat," he said, "and are taking steps to develop counter strategies."

Police action isn't the only problem facing workers who sit-in. They also have basic problems like organising food for themselves. During long sit-ins, management may try to force workers out of the factory by starving them into submission.

"We thought there would be a problem with food during the Printpak sit-in", said Pwawu's Kubeka. Management called the police and tried to stop the Printpak workers from leaving or entering the factory.

"We went to management and demanded to get more food in and out." Workers warned they would fight back if their demand was not met — and could not guarantee the safety of the machinery.

With workers controlling the factory and the machinery, management was forced to re-open negotiations.

When SFAWU workers occupied three bakeries in Durban last year to back their demand for a living wage, management closed the canteens. Workers' families brought food to the bakeries' gates.

In return, the workers allowed bread to be distributed to charity organisations.

Workers inside the factory during a sit-in depend on people outside for food and support. This gives the rest of the community a chance to get involved and forge strong ties of unity with

workers.

During the recent Haggie Rand and Asea sit-ins, wives and supporters set up support committees and brought food to the workers in the factory yards.

Sit-ins often have a wider impact too. Workers from surrounding factories collected food and money for the Haggie Rand strikes. And during the Durban bakery sit-ins, Clover Dairies workers brought milk, yoghurt and mahewu to the bakeries.

When 250 Chemical Workers' Industrial Union (CWIU) members occupied their factory for two days in January, workers from more than 30 factories in the area came to work early to greet the singing placard-waving workers at Cheeseborough Ponds.

And during the Printpak sit-in, management was faced with threats of solidarity action by workers in factories which handle Printpak products.

Sit-in strikes are not limited to factories either. At Blyvooruitzicht mine, 8,000 miners went on strike, and 3,000 were involved in an underground sit-in following a dispute over production bonuses.

The sleep-in lasted four days, with workers refusing to attend a meeting with management at the surface. They say a shaft steward was arrested last year at a similar meeting.

"We decided it was safest underground", a shaft steward said. "If we sit in our hostels, it isn't safe. Security is called in and we get teargassed and shot".

The workers eventually called off their sleep-in because of fears for workers on the surface. At the same time, management decided to prevent other workers going underground.

Mine security and the SADF was called in — and by the time they had broken up the workers, ten people were dead and over 100 injured.

Sleep-ins are just as effective for the unemployed. This was proved by a group of workers at the Springs UIF office recently.

After waiting in a queue all day, they were told to go home and 'come back next week'. They replied — 'We're not leaving and we'll sleep here until we're paid'.

Their demands were soon met: the officials drove to Johannesburg immediately to get more money and the workers were paid out.

## SA fascists

# The widening cracks

THE CRACKS in racist white South Africa are starting to run very deep. Members of the far-right Afrikaner Resistance Movement (AWB) broke up a meeting of the ruling National Party, due to be addressed by Foreign Minister, Pik Botha. For the first time ever, the white racists then had police tear gas turned on them for their pains.

The far right are angry at the 'reform' programme of P.W. Botha's government, who are anxious to placate the black

people. In reality, Botha's reforms don't go very far — certainly not far enough to threaten white power; and they are carefully designed not to threaten white power. In reality also, Botha's pragmatism — 'adapt or die' — is an NP slogan — is probably more rational from the racists' point of view.

The AWB reject all reforms, and argue for a white *only* Afrikaner state — that is, for a racism more thoroughgoing than even that which currently exists.

They are for certain a neo-fascist movement, even down to their insignia, which is modelled on the Nazi swastika.

The recent clashes highlight the dilemma that faces the apartheid state. Botha's reforms only alienate white racist opinion.

The cracks are there for all to see — and they are widening. And they are there because the black people of South Africa can smell victory. Panic amongst the white racists is leading to ever greater divisions amongst them.

# 'Deny your father'

The Ukraine, with its 50 million people, is the biggest oppressed nation in the world and the largest country (by territory) in Europe. Zbigniew Kowalewski, a former leader of Solidarnosc who is now in exile in France and author of the recent book 'Rendez-nous nos usines', describes one example of how the Kremlin has tried to suppress Ukrainian nationalists.

IN THE summer of last year, the Soviet publication *Visti z Ukrainy* ('News from Ukraine') carried a sensational report. The son of Roman Shukhevych, who was better known under the pseudonym of 'Taras Chuprynka', has finally disavowed his father.

What the Soviet periodical failed to report was that Yuriy Shukhevych, who is 52 years old, spent almost all his youth and adulthood, a total of 30 years, in prison because of his stubborn refusal to denounce his father.

In any event, the message was clear — Great Russian imperialism had won a new victory over its mortal enemy, Ukrainian nationalism. Four months before, the top post in the totalitarian Kremlin bureaucracy was assumed by Mikhail Gorbachev, described from the outset as a 'radical reformer' by the press of the 'Free World'.

*Visti z Ukrainy* is published in Kiev exclusively for export. It is directed to the Ukrainian communities in the capitalist countries and known as one of the 'news' organs directly in the service of the KGB.

In its July 1985 edition, Oleksander Savchuk proclaimed triumphantly: "I have on my desk a letter written by Yuriy Shukhevych addressed to the editors. In reading it, you sense the tragedy of a man who long followed a road leading into a precipice.

"He was held back, people tried to convince him, people warned him. And then finally, this man looked at his past, reflected on what he had experienced, and became frightened. He felt grief and pain that he had long followed a wrong path".

After this came the following excerpts from this letter:

"I, Yuriy Shukhevych-Berezyn's'ki, son of Roman Shukhevych, who was the leader of the bourgeois nationalist underground in Ukraine, announce my definite break with Ukrainian nationalism and condemn any kind of nationalist activity regardless of where and by whom it is conducted...

"I often think of my father. Now I clearly see that he, as one of the leaders of the Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists, carries responsibility for the bloodshed suffered in those years by thousands of innocent people. His death and the death of many others like him were, in essence, in vain...

"Nationalist terror has totally collapsed in the face of the moral and political unity of the Ukrainian people, who are wholeheartedly devoted to the ideas of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union...

"My break with nationalism has been brought on by a profound evolution of my world view and my convictions, which has its beginnings a long time ago under the influence of Soviet reality and in connection with the failure of nationalist doctrines and the attempts to put them into practice, as well as under the influence of the overall hostility of the Soviet Ukrainian people to the ideas of nationalism" (1).

A confession reminiscent of the Moscow Trials in the 1930s.

Who was Yuriy Shukhevych's father?

General 'Taras Chuprynka' died on April 5, 1945, in a battle with the NKVD troops. Near the city of Lvov, they had found the hideout of this most wanted man in the USSR. (The NKVD was the successor of the GPU and the

predecessor of the KGB).

Since 1943, he had been the Commander in Chief of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) and the chair of the Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN).

The UPA arose as a movement of armed resistance to German imperialism in the western territories of Ukraine, which up until 1939 belonged to the Polish state. At the start it had 40,000 fighters in its ranks.

Once the Soviet army had driven out the Nazi occupation troops and the territories were annexed by the USSR, the Ukrainian national liberation movement continued its guerilla war for an independent Ukraine against 'Moscovite Red imperialism' and its 'parasitic class of Stalinist magnates', as the UPA commanders called their enemies.

Its programme provided for establishing a system of political democracy and a genuine socialisation of the means of production through the participation of the workers in directing the production processes and in managing the economy.

In the last basic document that 'Taras Chuprynka' took part in drawing up, entitled 'Statements by the OUN Leadership in the Ukrainian Lands on Some Political, Programmatic and Ideological Questions', it says:

"We call for genuinely free elections, freedom for political and social organisations, freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly, of religion and opinion, for independent courts and for respect for human rights.

"We hold that a sound democratic order would assure the conditions for a rounded development of the creative powers of the people and the individual, promote the acquisition by the people of a high political culture, prevent the formation of cliques and antipopular classes...

"We call for building a classless society, by which we mean a society without exploiters and exploited, composed of free workers and farmers and a working intelligentsia. Experience teaches us that exploiting classes can arise both on the basis of private property and on the basis of the collectivisation of the instruments and means of production, if the latter is not accompanied by political democracy and power is not exercised by the people but rather by a totalitarian party.

"For this reason, we are against the restoration of capitalism in Ukraine and for the complete destruction of the system of Bolshevik exploitation" (2). (Ukrainian nationalists did not realise the major differences between Bolshevism and Stalinism).

Major Petro Poltava, one of the closest comrades in arms of 'Taras Chuprynka', explained:

"We are convinced that our ideology is the one most suitable for an oppressed people fighting for genuine national and social liberation in this decisive age of national liberation revolutions and social revolutions, of emancipation of the peoples under the yoke of world imperialism and the liberation of the workers from the chains of capitalist exploitation and oppression" (3).

It was only in 1953 that the troops and secret services of the KGB finally destroyed the UPA's guerilla bases and the OUN's underground networks.



USSR oppositionists

Human beings can be exterminated. Exterminating ideas is a hundred times harder.

Yuriy Shukhevych was arrested in 1948. He was 14 years old. He had not participated in any political activity. He hardly knew his father. But he was his father's son.

A secret tribunal of the Ministry of State Security sentenced this boy to ten years in prison!

In 1956, a wind of 'de-Stalinisation' was blowing, encouraged by the 'radical reformer' Nikita Khrushchev (who in the late 1930s had been a bloody ruler and russifier of Ukraine). The tribunal in the city of Vladimir ordered the release of the young Shukhevych, on the grounds that he was a minor when sentenced.

## Gangster

But the general prosecutor of Ukraine, a Stalinist gangster called Roman Rudenki, protested and ordered his rearrest before he was actually released. "The Prosecutor's Office justified his protest by accusing me of trying to make contact with the OUN centres abroad (without presenting any evidence) and by the fact that my father led the OUN underground (which I cannot deny)" (4).

In August 1958, when the prison doors were opening before him, he was rearrested again before he could walk out.

"The decision was justified by absolutely false reports that I had conducted anti-Soviet propaganda among my fellow prisoners in the Vladimir prison. The accusation was based on statements of two common-law prisoners who were agents of the KGB...

"The charge was made against me (this was one of the main points in the indictment) that I had attempted to find out about the circumstances of my father's death" (5).

He was sentenced again, to ten years in prison.

A few weeks after the sentence was handed down, he was called to

the office of the KGB officer Klymentiy Hals'kyi. "In the conversation, he acknowledged in an off-hand way that I had been sentenced on the basis of false accusations and that the sentence was totally unjustified, but (and here I quote his words) 'anyone who holds the sort of opinions and convictions you do cannot be allowed to go free'.

"Hals'kyi told me that I had to prove my loyalty by agreeing to appear at a press conference, write an article or a pamphlet, or go on the radio to condemn the OUN, my father, *as a so on*" (6).

Hals'kyi was not just any cop but one of the KGB's main experts in the fight against Ukrainian nationalism. He had taken part in the hunt for Roman Shukhevych and his comrades since 1944. He gained notoriety by his repressive actions against the peasants who aided the guerilla forces and by taking part personally in the torture of prisoners.

Under the pseudonym of 'Klym Dmytryk' he joined the *Visti z Ukrainy* staff as a specialist in the history of the UPA and the OUN. This is a small world, it seems.

In 1963, Yuriy Shukhevych was transferred from the concentration camp in Mordovia to the KGB prison in Kiev. The 'workers' at this sinister institution took him from time to time to the theatre, to museums and historical places, as well as to factories.

Shukhevych quickly understood what lay behind such favours. "My suppositions were confirmed in June 1964. The KGB functionaries Colonel Merkatanenko and Lt Captain Merkatenko demanded that I write a text denouncing nationalist ideas that could be published in the Soviet press. I asked if I could limit myself to giving a pledge to abstain in the future from any form of anti-Soviet activity.

"They told me that this was not enough, because a statement signed by me had to include a condemnation of nationalism in general and the activity of the OUN in particular, facts that

would discredit the Ukrainian nationalists and a condemnation of my father's activities" (8).

Once again, he said 'no'.

He served his second ten-year sentence to the end. He was freed in August 1968 but forbidden to return to his homeland, Ukraine, for five years.

Far from Ukraine, in March 1972, he was arrested on the charge of 'anti-Soviet propaganda and agitation'. He was sentenced to ten years in a 'special regime camp', as well as to five years of internal exile.

In 1979, from prison, he joined the Ukrainian Helsinki Watch Group. Four members of this group died in the concentration camps in 1984 and 1985.

In the prisons, Shukhevych wages an indefatigable political struggle. Some examples of this are the initiatives in which he took part in the Chistopol prison from July 23 to August 1, 1980.

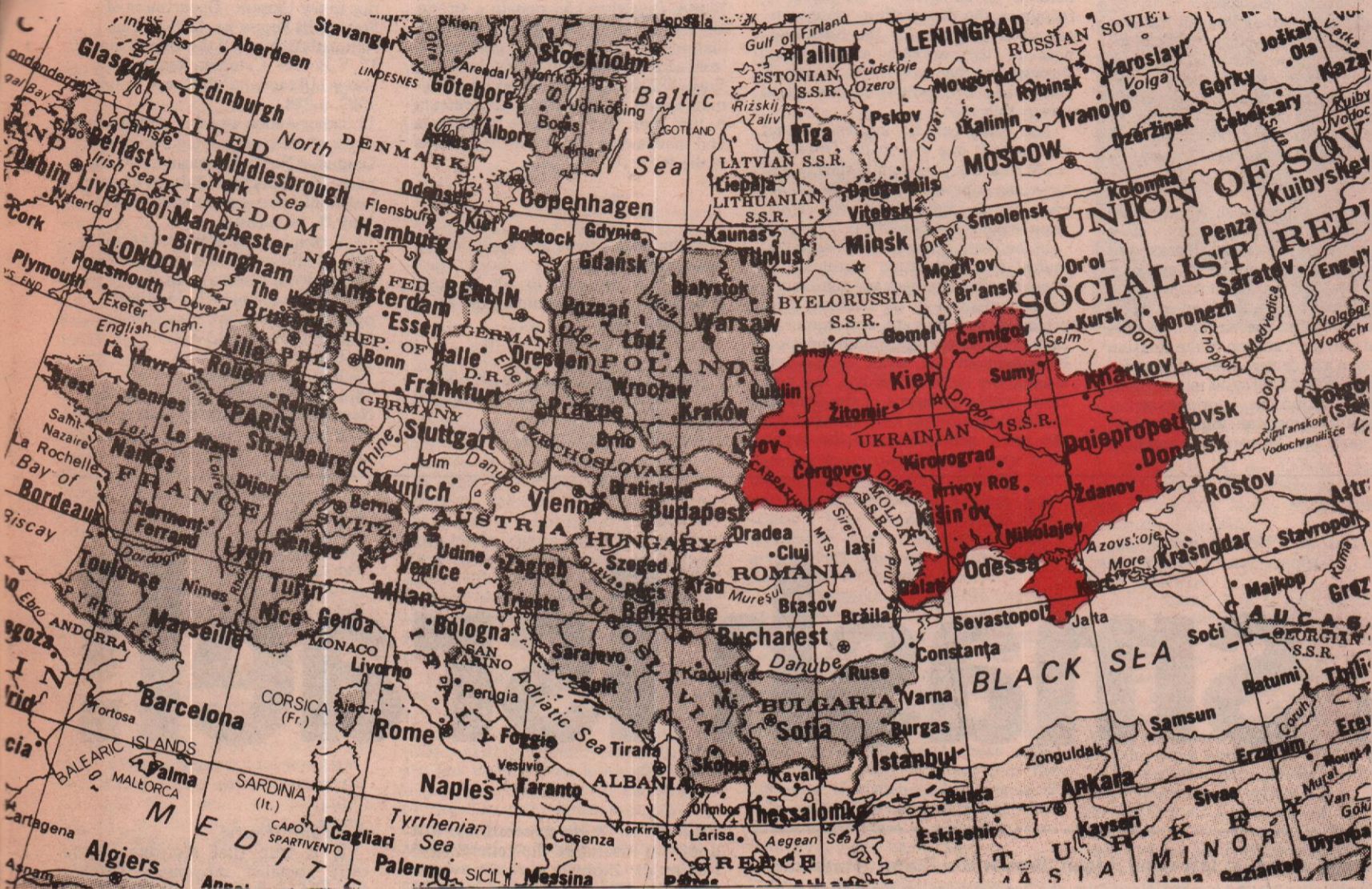
In that week, together with some other political prisoners, he organised protests against the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and against the annexation of the Baltic states, other protests against national discrimination in the prison (in particular the interception of letters written by relatives in non-Russian languages), he tried to send an appeal to the teams participating in the Olympic Games in Moscow to show solidarity with the oppressed nations of the USSR, and, finally, he made a statement demanding that the USSR respect the commitments it made in the Helsinki accords (9).

Shukhevych suffered from increasingly serious eye problems. A cataract developed in one of his eyes and the retinas in both became detached.

At the beginning of 1982, shortly before he left the Gulag Archipelago for internal exile, he was operated on. It was too late. First he lost the sight in one eye, and then in the other as well. He was left totally blind. But as before he remained unbowed.

Thirty-six years after he was first jailed, the KGB members of the *Visti z Ukrainy* editorial board claim that

# and you go free'



The Ukraine (in red) is the largest country in Europe and the largest oppressed nation in the world

Yuriy Shukhevych has yielded. If this really had happened, it would in no way diminish the incredible example of human resistance that he has given. But everything indicates that his recantation is another falsification by the KGB — an institution which has specialised in such things, changing its name various times in its history without changing its essence.

To back up its revelation, the Soviet periodical published a photocopy of excerpts from the letter it claimed to have received from Shukhevych. Under Gorbachov, the bureaucrats remain as incompetent as they were in the days of his teacher, Stalin. They did not know that in the West there was a copy of a real letter from Shukhevych, written in his own hand in April 1984, when he was already blind, to the chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of Ukraine.

The two specimens of handwriting were submitted for analysis to Katharina Stulmann-Kortin, an expert in graphology and the psychology of handwriting in Munich. Her conclusion was the following:

"The graphic nature of both handwritings is essentially different. Taking into account, in particular, the sharp difference in the shape of many letters, one can conclude with a probability close to 100% that the authors of the two handwritings are not identical" (10).

Visti z Ukrayny's revelation has not been published by the press that circulates in the USSR. Both Shukhevych and his relatives living in the USSR report that they have not the slightest idea of what is contained in the article by Savchuk. Shukhevych is still serving his internal exile (in a home for invalids), while it would be expected that he would be released after recanting.

On two occasions, in July 1984 and in January 1985, the US president, Ronald Reagan, declared his solidarity with Yuriy Shukhevych, describing him as a Ukrainian patriot and a symbol of the fight for freedom.

Reagan and his predecessors have of course been well known as ardent defenders of human rights and freedom, but only as regards 'Communist' regimes, not in the areas dominated by US imperialism. They have supported even the bloodiest dictatorships, whenever the dictator has been 'their son of a bitch', in an expression made famous by one of Reagan's predecessors. They have supported such dictators up to the last minutes, up till they threatened to provoke popular revolutions, as in the case of Somoza in Nicaragua and more recently Duvalier in Haiti and Marcos in the Philippines.

They have expressed 'sympathy' for Polish Solidarnosc while at the same time supporting the Turkish military dictatorship which, like the Jaruzelski regime, has suppressed trade-union freedoms, as well as other elementary rights.

They have claimed to be 'friends' of the Ukrainian revolutionary nationalists, while at the same time being implacable enemies of revolutionary nationalists on their own territory, such as Pedro Albizu Campos, a fighter for Puerto Rican independence, or Malcolm X, a radical leader of the Black liberation movement.

If the rulers in the White House express concern today about the fate of Yuriy Shukhevych, it will be worth asking what their attitude was to the armed struggle of the Ukrainian liberation movement led by Roman Shukhevych.

The US government was well informed about the existence and situation of this movement in the postwar years. It had in its possession many reports by the American intelligence services, some of which have been declassified and can be studied today in the US National Archives.

In one of them, dated March 1948, the following is said, for example:

"The real significance of the Ukrainian nationalist bands lies... in the fact that they have already been able to operate for more than two years against the established governments

of both Poland and the USSR. This could have happened only with the support of at least a part of the local population.

These bands have had no normal sources of supply and have depended on what they could seize from their adversaries and what was obtained from civilian sympathisers. Their continued survival suggests that the local population furnished them at least with food despite near-famine conditions in 1946 and it is evident that only people who strongly hate the Soviet way of life would have supported what many of them undoubtedly realise is a lost cause" (11).

### Popular

The popular support for the liberation movement was so great that in 1947 the Polish army, in a large-scale operation called Action Vistula, displaced the entire Ukrainian peasantry from Poland's eastern territories in order to exterminate the UPA guerilla forces.

Nonetheless, the US government did not lift a finger to keep this cause from being lost.

In an attempt to break the isolation of the Ukrainian liberation movement from the outside world and get help from abroad, various units of the UPA came out of Poland through Czechoslovakia to the West. Once their mission of 'armed propaganda' was accomplished, they were to try to return to Ukraine.

A former UPA commander who participated in one of these break-outs to the West made the following commentary:

"Do you think they (the Americans) had no intelligence on the scope of our struggle? But they were not interested in the fate of our people. They did not send a single bullet to the UPA.

"Suddenly, in 1949 and 1950, they declared their readiness to help us. They offered planes and pilots to take our insurgences back to the country,

dropping them in the Stryi and Ternopil regions. On that occasion, they did not hesitate to overfly the borders, nor did Moscow raise a protest against these flights.

"So, our well-known veteran commander Hromenko and many others went back, and immediately fell victim to ambushes... In collaboration... with Soviet agents such as (Kim) Philby, the Americans helped Moscow destroy our revolutionary movement. Dozens of our fighters boarded these planes to go to their graves" (12).

In the framework of its sharp rivalry with the CIA, the British Intelligence Service organised similar flights, with the same result — the NKVD troops were waiting at the drop points.

These air operations were in progress when (in the spring of 1951) a Ukrainian Marxist living in exile in the United States, Vsevolod Holubnychy, informed his comrades of the Ukrainian revolutionary left in West Europe:

"The State Department's policy... is openly anti-Ukrainian. I have quite precise information on the attitudes in this regard.

"They see the UPA as a bluff that will lead to nothing. They recognise that the UPA exists, but they think that it has no perspectives, that it is very weak, that it does not have the support of the people, and in general that its activities are of a semi-bandit character".

These opinions that the US government came out with contradict, as we have already seen, the confidential information it got from its intelligence services.

"On the other hand", Holubnychy continued, "they are afraid of the Ukrainian underground. They are treating Poltava's letter to the Voice of America as ultrasecret material and therefore not publishing it anywhere. (But we will 'help' them a bit, because in a coming issue of *Labor Action* [13] more significant excerpts from this letter will be published). The ultra-secrecy they are keeping is owing to

the anticapitalist statements it contains" (14).

In the letter referred to, Commander Poltava, one of the most authoritative spokespersons of the Ukrainian liberation movement, criticised the content of the Voice of America broadcasts directed at listeners in the USSR.

"The Soviet masses hate the Bolshevik 'socialism'. But that does not mean that the Soviet peoples are longing for capitalism which was destroyed on the territory of the present USSR back in 1917-1920. They are in their absolute majority clearly against the restoration of capitalism. This is the result of the revolution of 1917-1920...

"We, the participants in the liberation struggle in Ukraine, who are inside the Soviet Union and have connections with the broad masses, know only too well that they have no admiration for capitalism — neither the old European kind nor the modern American kind" (15).

In another document, in analysing the possibility of the outbreak of the Third World War, Poltava pointed out that the United States and Britain, together with the entire Western bloc, would act in such a war as enemies of the liberation of the peoples and the workers.

### Imperialism

As regards the USSR, they would try to restore private property and rebuild a 'White' Great Russian imperialism. "The Ukrainian people, and, we hope, also the other oppressed non-Russian peoples of the USSR, will in this situation see such a war as a new war by world imperialism, during which the national and social aspirations of the Soviet peoples can be achieved only if they are won by these peoples themselves, relying on their own strength" (16).

It is clear that the rulers in the White House had no political interest in aiding the UPA. They knew that the interests that they represented were incompatible with the interests expressed by the Ukrainian liberation movement.

But something more determined the attitude of the US government. An independent Ukraine that would carry out the political programme of the UPA was as terrifying a perspective for the White House as it was for the Kremlin.

This was all the more so because the Ukraine, which is the biggest country in Europe in area and one of the largest in population, would inevitably play a great role in the life of the continent, and could destabilise all the 'geopolitical moulds' and the spheres of domination established in the Yalta accords.

It was one thing to open up the fronts of the 'Cold War'. It was something else again to permit a 'historyless' but powerful people to take advantage of this, to take its destiny in its own hands and, by exercising an attraction on the masses of other countries, begin to dictate its own rules.

Poltava wrote, and this was well known in 1950 in US ruling circles:

"To achieve our objectives, we have taken the road that involves unleashing a people's revolution for national and social revolution, both in Ukraine and among all the other peoples of the USSR. We call on all the oppressed Soviet peoples and on the toiling masses of all nationalities in the USSR to unite with us in the fight to overthrow the Bolshevik regime".

At the same time, Poltava defined the international dimensions of the Ukrainian national revolution as follows: We are fighting "for full realisation of the idea of building free national states of all the peoples of the world by overthrowing every kind of imperialism" and "for the victory of the idea of building a classless society among all peoples" (17).

## 'DENY YOUR FATHER AND YOU GO FREE'

from centre pages

The 'Cold War' was combined with a Holy Alliance, at least tacitly. The Kremlin mercilessly exterminated the Ukrainian liberation movement and offered 'irrefutable proofs' to the world of its 'fascist character'. The White House from time to time sang the praises of the Ukrainian freedom fighters, but refused any material aid, while the Voice of America and other stations broadcasting to the Soviet bloc maintained a total silence about their programme.

One American socialist observed at the time: "Responsible and intelligent capitalist policy, in today's world, finds it dangerous to play with the fire of revolution behind the Iron Curtain" (18).

Today, Reagan has protested against the fate reserved for a Ukrainian who is being pressed to deny his father. But the US president is continuing to maintain silence about the programme that the father of this Ukrainian and the movement he led fought for.

This suits perfectly the Kremlin rulers who have striven for decades to erase from the people's memory the programme of the UPA, which call-

ed on the masses to fight to the death to overthrow the power of the Stalinist magnates and against restoration of the power of the capitalists. And the Kremlin has done this with such perseverance that it cannot even be known if Yuriy Shukhevych at any time in his life ever had the opportunity to get to know this programme.

We should not be surprised if some day Reagan, or his successor, declares in front of the TV cameras to the entire 'Free World' that he swears by the ideas for which Yuriy Shukhevych's father fell. He can afford that luxury. Only a few people still know what these ideas were.

I read recently that Reagan has declared himself a supporter of Solidarnosc's programme. How could he say that he is a supporter of a programme that calls for building a Self-Governed Republic based on social ownership of the means of production and on workers' self-management?

### Chicanos

Why not? If American workers and unionists do not know much more about it than American Blacks and Chicanos know about the programme of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army?

We should realise the kind of world we are living in. The Kremlin satraps lay claim to the tradition of the Russian revolution and declare their support for the Third World liberation movements. The man who led the victorious revolution against American imperialism in Cuba goes to Moscow to proclaim

there that "you can't shut out the sun with a finger".

The sun in question is the USSR, which other revolutionists, the Ukrainians, excoriated as a giant prison house of nations.

### Polish

Some leaders of the Polish revolution, crushed by the totalitarian bureaucracy, have sent the chiefs of US imperialism, which exploits the workers and oppresses the peoples of a good part of the planet, expressions of gratitude for the latter's intransigent defence of democracy. We have to recognise the devastating consequences all of that has for the consciousness of the workers and peoples throughout the world, in whatever camp they live, whatever immediate enemy they face.

You could get the impression that we have set one foot in the Orwellian world in which 'freedom is slavery and ignorance is power'. But we should not give way to impressions. We should assume our responsibilities.

In the West, the activists of socialist, radical and alternative currents that oppose both capitalism and bureaucratic despotism — or as some of them prefer to say, private and corporate capitalism on the one hand and state capitalism on the other — have to assume the tasks of building real solidarity with the victims of the Stalinist totalitarian regimes. Only such fighters can really solidarise with the super-

human resistance of a man such as Yuriy Shukhevych, throwing into the faces of his Stalinist torturers and his imperialist 'defenders' at the same time the political ideas of Roman Shukhevych and his comrades who fell 35 years ago.

It is only those who are fighting for a democratic and international socialism, who aspire to build a self-managed and classless society, who can win such solidarity from growing sections of the workers' movement, the peace movement and other social movements in the West, as well as from the national liberation movements in the Third World. Only they can sustain a strong ideological struggle against currents that are using Reagan and company's 'solidarity' with individuals such as Yuriy Shukhevych or with social movements such as Solidarnosc as pretexts to turn their back on these individuals and movements and wash their hands of the crimes of Stalinism.

### The East

In the East, forces are beginning to arise ready to take on a similar task where they are and to act in unity with those who are assuming the same task in the West.

1. Visti z Ukrayiny (Kiev) no.28, 1985.
2. Ukrayins'ki Samostiinyk (Munich) no.45, 1950.
3. Vpered (Munich) no.4 (13), 1950.

4. I.Koszeliwec (ed.), Ukraina 1956-1968, Instytut Literacki, Paris 1969, p.207.
5. Ibid, p.207.
6. Ibid, p.209.
7. The Ukrainian Herald issue 6: Dissent in Ukraine, An Underground Journal from Soviet Ukraine, Smolensk Publishers, Baltimore-Paris-Toronto 1977, pp.165-168.
8. Koszeliwec, op.cit., p.206.
9. Herald of Repression in Ukraine no.12, 1980.
10. USSR News Brief — Human Rights (Munich) no.15/16, 1985.
11. Nature and Extent of Disaffection in the Ukraine, Department of State, OIR Report no.4228-R, The National Archives of the United States.
12. Y.Borets'-Chumak, Reid bez zbroji, Ukrainian Publishers, London 1982, p.213.
13. Labor Action was the weekly newspaper of the Independent Socialist League, a North American left-wing party. Excerpts from Poltava's letter mentioned above were published in its May 21, 1951, issue.
14. V.Holubnychy, Zvit ch.2 (April 16, 1951), in his archives deposited at the University of Alberta, Canada.
15. P.Poltava, Zbirnyk pidpilnykh pysan', Ukrayins'kyi Samostiinyk, Munich 1959, pp.213-214.
16. Ibid, p.236.
17. Ibid, pp.128, 130.
18. H.Draper, 'Washington and the New Russian Revolution', Labor Action June 11, 1951.

# Yes, smash Israel!

Not long ago Socialist Organiser initiated discussion about the attitude to be taken by socialists towards the Palestinian and Hebrew national questions. The seriousness with which that discussion was undertaken contrasts sharply with the curious methods of John O'Mahony's polemic of recent weeks.

O'Mahony's central thesis is made clear in "Anti-semitism and the left, part 2" (SO no. 266). He writes: "Zionism — which though the precise meaning of the word is no longer clear must include most Jews — has entered the consciousness of large parts of the left as another word for the worst form of imperialism and racism. Our attitude to it should be little different from our attitude to fascism. The prevalent programme on the left for dealing with it is to 'destroy Zionism', that is, destroy Israel."

It is curious that O'Mahony thinks that Zionism "no longer" has any clear meaning, though he seems to think that the term "anti-semitism" has so clear a meaning that it doesn't merit the slightest attention.

Let us say straight away that we do not think that there is any truth in what O'Mahony asserts. That does not mean that there are no mistaken attitudes towards Zionism, towards racism, imperialism, Arab nationalism and the ways of dealing with these currents in and out of the labour movement. But to reduce all this to "anti-semitism" is a ridiculous perversion of the truth.

First of all the problem: it is true that on the left there is a widespread tendency to mask the shortcomings, failures, even crimes of those forces engaged in a struggle with an imperialist power or the agent of an imperialist power.

Obviously this leads some leftists to oversimplify such struggles and see them in moral terms: as if the forces of unalloyed good were combatting the forces of unmitigated evil. No doubt this is as true of the Palestine-Israel conflict as of scores of others.

But while O'Mahony — who has often written on this general

**Does the common left-wing slogan 'Smash the Zionist state' unwittingly imply anti-semitism? In recent articles in Socialist Organiser John O'Mahony has argued that it does: while supporting the Palestinians against oppression, we must recognise the right of the Israeli Jews to a nation-state. Here the Labour Movement Campaign for Palestine criticises O'Mahony's argument, and he replies.**

problem — claims that the attitude taken by the left towards this conflict is "unique", the truth of it is that the attitude taken by the left on the Palestine-Israel conflict in general and on the question of the destruction of the state of Israel in particular is completely in line with its attitude on other cases of conflicts between settler states or the states deriving from colonial settlement and the national movements of the indigenous population directed against these states. We need only mention in this connection South Africa and Ireland to prove our point. Of course the left may be wrong on these questions, it may have been wrong on Algeria — though we don't think so — but it is not making a special or "unique" case of Israel!

Thus we see no reason to attribute the left's errors — if errors they are — on the question of Israel to some "unique" cause — like anti-semitism. O'Mahony's claim that the left tries to make its programme on the Hebrew national question seem not unique "by identifying Israel with South Africa" is absurd: it is the identification of Israel as a society based on recent settler colonialism that is the essential feature it shares with South Africa.

O'Mahony's point, however, illustrates that he is just as guilty of dealing with moral rather than scientific judgements as those he inveighs against. He says "Whatever similarity in political military-techniques (!) there may be between South Africa and Israel they are radically different societies. Israel was given its character by the Zionists' resolute refusal to exploit Arab labour and their drive instead to replace it (!). Whatever one thinks of the left Zionist colonial-

ists' 'Jewish labour only' policy, it was the opposite (!) of the mass exploitation on which the modern South Africa was built." Really, this is amazing!

Is the colonisation and the denial by a relative minority of settlers of the national rights of the indigenous majority simply a matter of "political-military techniques"? Isn't Israel's character based not so much on the replacement of Arab labour by Jewish labour, but the driving out of their homes of hundreds of thousands of people, the denial of their right to return and the imposition on the area to which they had undisputed rights of an alien rule? Is the effect — rather than the technique — of Zionist colonisation really "the opposite" of that in South Africa?

### South Africa

It isn't simply the same, that's true: indeed right now South Africa seems to be attempting something like an Israeli solution while Israel seems to be developing certain traits reminiscent of South Africa. But let's be clear: the point isn't that Israel is just like South Africa, but that despite their differences they share essential colonial-settler traits. O'Mahony might take issue with this: he might believe that Israel can't be classed as a colonial-settler state. But then this is the nub of the issue and not this obnoxious silliness about anti-semitism.

It is possible — indeed likely — that identification of Israel with South Africa (with whom of course it has a special relationship) and identification of Zionism as a racist ideology leads some leftists to thinking that they can do away with concrete analysis and rest any

strategy on these generalities. But does this invalidate the generalities? Not at all! Zionism is racist even if many of those diplomats insisting on this in the UN daily defend racism: Zionism is racist even if the way socialists should deal with Zionism is markedly different from the way they should deal with traditional British racism.

Is it true that for "large parts of the left" Zionism is "another word for the worst form of imperialism and racism"? Firstly, it is obvious that for the avowedly reformist left, Zionism is a form of socialism. For which avowedly revolutionary organisations then is it "the worst form of imperialism and racism"? For the Healyites? But O'Mahony has written in the past that the Healyites aren't even part of the labour movement let alone the left. For Militant? Hardly. For the USFI? We don't think so and a single quote revealing its shortcomings on Iran can hardly be said to prove the case.

In any case, doesn't the USFI support the right of Israeli Jews to self-determination? That hardly makes it a candidate for the charge of anti-semitism.

The SWP, perhaps? Despite some very irresponsible positions taken by SWP students, an organisation that founded the Anti-Nazi League, launching it with a call signed by scores of celebrities who no doubt support Zionism, can hardly be accused of adopting an attitude towards Zionism "little different from our attitude to fascism". Which "large sections" does that leave bloodied by O'Mahony's sharp-edged polemic?

Surely the point is simply that those who think that the world is divided into two moral camps and whose most sophisticated analytical tool is the allegation of guilt by association — as O'Mahony does himself time and again — end up with wrong political positions.

The trouble is that O'Mahony adds to the confusion — which is not in fact as great as he points out, which is why the only texts he can analyse in detail are Gerry Healy's nonsense — by his disgraceful claim that to oppose Zionism is

to be anti-semitic.

It is true that sections of the early socialist movement (especially the anarchists) saw something progressive in anti-semitism and others, including Marx, were too inclined to identify Jews with the rise of capitalism. True too that Stalinism made use of anti-semitism, particularly in its attacks on Trotsky and that the German Communist Party made concessions to anti-semitism in order to try to relate to the nationalist "voelkische" right both in the 20s and in the 30s. Ruth Fischer, shortly before she became Party leader, called on her audience to "crush the Jew-capitalists, string them up from the lamp-posts, trample them underfoot". This is not unimportant, but we must be wary of the conclusions we can draw from it.

Whatever its ideological shortcomings from time to time the left — which is today infinitely more sensitive to issues of racism than in the past — has an unparalleled record of fighting fascism and racism, including anti-semitism. We ask: whose heroism in the Battle of Cable Street helped to stop the Mosleyites? Who supported the Anti Nazi League? Who are the activists in scores of anti-fascist and anti-racist committees up and down the country that, among other things, monitor and combat anti-semitism? What is O'Mahony's answer? The right, the middle of the road liberals and social-democrats?

Let's be serious: even if O'Mahony's description of the traditions of the left were accurate — and it most certainly isn't! — does it make any sense to call these fighters against anti-semitism "anti-semites"? When one considers the ver large number of Jews among these fighters — most of them anti-Zionist Jews — O'Mahony's insulting designation becomes even more lurid.

But O'Mahony's mud slinging is not only insulting: it implies a re-writing of history. For if the left can be called anti-semitic for sometimes in its pre-World War 2 past

Continued p.9



endorsing or echoing anti-semitic ideas, in however small measure, cannot in Zionism itself be called anti-semitic with even greater justice? Here we have a movement which has no real history of fighting anti-semitism, though it has a long history of doing deals with anti-semites. Here we have an outlook held by community leaders who spend their time pouring abuse on anti-fascists (retailing claims similar to those now being rehearsed by O'Mahony) when they organise to combat anti-semitism. Here we have an ideology which has at its core the idea that fighting anti-semitism is useless because anti-semitism is essentially justified.

Indeed, while it is true that pro-British Labour leaders — to their shame — supported the 1905 Aliens Act (something which had more to do with their reformism and nationalism than with anti-semitism), what O'Mahony fails to mention is that Balfour and the anti-semites of the British Brothers League who lobbied for the Act were given unequivocal support by the Zionists organised in the English Zionist Federation in the 1900 and 1906 general elections. David Hope-Kydd, who described the Jewish immigrants as the "scum of the European nations" was supported by the Zionists in the White-chapel constituency. Similarly the French anti-semites and later Mussolini and even certain Nazis before 1941 actually praised Zionism and saw it as an ideological movement similar to their own.

We don't cite this to prove that Zionism is simply the same as anti-semitism — though both drink in part from the same poisoned pools — rather to show that O'Mahony's account is not only absurd in its conclusions but partisan to the point of mendacity.

Anti-Zionist socialists are in the habit of explaining both in the face of slurs from Zionists and as part of their struggle against anti-semitism, that anti-Zionism and anti-semitism are not the same. We patiently explain, for instance, that Zionism was for half its history a minority trend among Jews, indeed one seen by millions of Jews as a treasonous current, always willing to do the bidding of anti-semites. We point out — and O'Mahony makes the point too — that certain ultra-orthodox Jews are vigorous opponents of Zionism and that orthodox Jews of all trends were opposed to Zionism up to 1948.

But O'Mahony knows better. To want to see the destruction of the state of Israel — not the only but certainly a widely-held aim of anti-Zionists — is, he says, "implicitly anti-semitic". Sometimes he seems to be resting his argument on the fact that today the vast majority of Jews support the existence of the state of Israel — which is like claiming that support for Algerian independence was a product of a racist view of the French and sometimes on the spurious claim (dealt with above) that the left's programme for Israel is "unique" when all along it is of a piece with other attitudes towards colonial settler states.

It is not surprising that O'Mahony's slurs, illogic and fact-twisting influence his analysis of the slogan of the "secular, democratic state". For someone supposedly interested in the living political struggle, one would have thought that he might mention that this slogan was adopted by the PLO as the result of a struggle against those elements who wanted simply to throw the Jews into the sea.

The fact that some elements who would be happy to return to the old position currently claim to support the "secular, democratic state" slogan has nothing to do with the matter. The fact that one of the world's most conservative powers calls it the "Soviet" Union doesn't invalidate the significance of the soviet idea for revolutionaries.

### Conquest

Central to O'Mahony's argument is his estimate of the Arab or pro-Arab forces: "The road to the secular democratic state lies inescapably through war and full-scale conquest of the Jews — after which the victorious armies (of Iraq, Syria, Iran?) will gallantly establish and protect the democratic rights of the Jews as individuals (rights their own citizens do not have now) in a Palestinian Arab state." Truly a remarkable statement. Has it not occurred to O'Mahony that one of the most important aspects of the "secular, democratic state" slogan is the criticism it implies of the lack of democratic rights prevailing in the Arab states, in Iran, etc? And since when do revolutionary socialists give up their strategic conceptions simply because the balance of forces for their fulfilment is not present?

One might as well ask what on earth the propagation of the idea of a socialist Britain could possibly mean when the vast majority of those calling themselves socialists are led by one Neil Kinnock. Even if you don't agree with the slogan of the "secular, democratic state", comrade, you should see that it is an attempt to create a democratic, non-confessional society in contradistinction to all others in the region (including Israel).

As far as the supposed "utopianism" of the "secular, democratic state" slogan is concerned, we insist that it is no more utopian than the slogan of a socialist united Ireland. Nor, more to the point, is it more "utopian" than O'Mahony's own solution: two states in the area currently held by Israel with the right of secession for Arab areas inside the pre-1967 boundaries. What "ism" should one ascribe to O'Mahony's inability to see any possible progressive developments within the Arab camp (that would realise the slogan of the "secular, democratic state"), while holding firmly to a solution which implies a fundamental transgression of Israeli Jewish consciousness? If O'Mahony stood in the Zionist tradition, we would just say it was typical left Zionist arrogance.

\* This article has been very slightly abbreviated for reasons of space.

# Israel isn't S. Africa

OH WHAT a monstrous deal of splutter and bumpf to so small a part of solid matter! So many angry words, and so few of the key points I made on anti-semitism taken up!

No, I did not 'reduce' what the writers describe as 'mistaken attitudes towards Zionism...' to 'anti-semitism' — i.e. say these things arose as an expression of the traditional anti-semitisms. I said that the attitude to Israel dominant in most of the far left is not only a 'state' but the Israeli Jewish nation, and that on that level 'anti-Zionism' is inevitably anti-semitic — firstly and primarily towards the Israeli Jews, and secondly, by derivation, towards the big majority of Jews throughout the world who solidarise with Israel. This may include attempts to treat Zionist Jews (as distinct from other, non-Jewish, Zionists) as if they are fascists — for example banning their student associations, as was done recently at Sunderland Poly.

The writers insist that "the attitude taken by the left on the Palestine-Israel conflict... is completely in line with its attitude on other cases of conflicts between settler states or states deriving from colonial settlement and the national movements of the indigenous population directed against those states". As other examples they mention South Africa, Northern Ireland, and pre-independence Algeria, which had a large white population.

The comrades 'scientifically' satisfy themselves that all these, especially Israel and South Africa, are similar 'settler states', and then read off mechanically a common political programme: smash the settler state.

But — isn't it obvious? — even if the 'settler state' tag fits Northern Ireland, South Africa, and Israel, these societies are so vastly different that the tag alone is inadequately concrete to base any political conclusions on. What differentiates them is more important than the common name-tag.

It is preposterous to equate Northern Ireland's Protestant community with the South African whites. One is a replication of British society — though with some peculiarities — the other is a vastly privileged white caste ruling over a much larger black population who are super-exploited, disenfranchised, repressed helots.

And in Israel there is not a ruling Jewish caste exploiting Arab helots, there is a comprehensive Jewish society organised in a Jewish nation state. This is not the same sort of society as South Africa's or colonial Algeria's!

'Smash the settler state' in South Africa or colonial Algeria means: abolish the monopoly of power and the caste privileges of the white minority; let the majority rule.

### Overrun

But what does 'smash the settler state' mean for Israel? It is a state which is extremely democratic for its Jewish majority. Its army is pretty close to being a citizen army. For an external force to 'smash the state' is not a matter of destroying a repressive apparatus, or defeating it in war, but of overrunning Israel and forcible destroying the Jewish nation. It could only be done by slaughter, expropriation and terror — and, pretty much for certain, the driving out of large parts of the population.

Do the crimes of the Israeli occupying forces in the West Bank and elsewhere make this poetic justice? If so, say so! The comparison with South Africa and with Algeria — where the settlers were mostly driven out — implies that programme, but I'm not sure that the writers understand that that is what they are saying.

People who play around the edge of a question, juggling with abstract labels, often do so because they need to avoid the real issues. In politics, comrades, the truth is always concrete.

The comrades' attempt to prove that it is not true that large parts of the left think of 'Zionism' as another word for the worst form of imperialism and racism' is junior debating society stuff.

Sure, I've written that the Healyites are not part of the labour movement — but the Healyite text which I analysed



appeared on the same page as an endorsement from Ken Livingstone of the Healyites against their 'Zionist' persecution, and Livingstone did not repudiate the editorial when specifically invited to do so. Labour Herald, the Healyite Labour Party paper, was for a long time highly respectable on sections of the left.

Of course the SWP is anti-racist and opposed to anti-semitism. I never said otherwise.

Most telling of all is the case of the USFI. Yes, the USFI believes in self-determination for the Jews of Palestine. But what do their people in Britain say and do about it? They are silent about it. It is common to find members of theirs utterly unaware that their organisation has held this position for many years.

Do the comrades seriously want to deny that the most common attitude on the hard (and much even of the soft) left now is intense hostility to Israel, support for the Palestinians, and support for the 'secular, democratic state'? That, even though it often lacks coherence and consistency, the left attitude often goes far beyond the criticisms of Israel which SO shares, and in fact supports the replacement of any Jewish state with something else?

It is true that Israeli apologists attempt to morally blackjack critics of Israel into silence with cries of 'anti-semitism'. Criticism of Israel or of Zionism is equated with anti-semitism. This of course is contemptible.

There is, however, a level at which 'anti-Zionism' is indeed anti-semitic — the level at which 'anti-Zionism' becomes support for the destruction of the existing Jewish nation in Palestine.

Quite the most revealing thing in the comrades' article is their account of anti-semitism and the labour movement. They know something about the subject. Therefore I don't believe they really think it all came to an end with the Second World War.

They know, for example, about the tide of thinly disguised anti-semitism in the USSR and Eastern Europe — and the Western CPs — after 1948. The reason the learned comrades prefer much more remote examples, of course, is that this, the most sustained and murderous anti-semitic campaign in any body claiming to be part of the labour movement, was conducted under the banner of 'anti-Zionism'.

Most of the stuff on why and how the left could not be anti-semitic is bumpf, answering charges I never made, and missing the point that I did make: that the widespread left-wing commitment to the destruction of the Jewish state is inescapably anti-semitic, however sincere the same left is in its condemnation of Nazism, Christian anti-semitism, etc. etc.

The writers trip themselves up, too. How could left-wing movements have been anti-semitic when they contained Jewish militants, they ask. They themselves give us at least part of the answer. Earlier they mention the German communist leader Ruth Fischer denouncing 'Jew-capitalists'. Yes. But, comrades, unless my memory is playing tricks, Ruth Fischer — who was an honest communist who lived to learn from her mistakes — was

a Jew!

The argument about Zionism and Nazism is irrelevant. I am not concerned to defend Zionism's record, and nothing I say about Israel now depends on doing that.

It is also obscene. For what is the point of going on about the realpolitik of Zionism would-be real-politicians who made the best deals they could with various anti-semites, from Turkish dignitaries at the beginning to Nazis 50 years later?

The point for some 'anti-Zionists', like Tony Greenstein, a prominent member of the LMCP, is to try to smear the Zionists with some of the responsibility for the crimes of the Nazis — for the holocaust of six million Jews.

### Double-edged

Wrongheaded, shortsighted, stupid, criminal as were many of the activities of the Zionist leaders who thought they could find some common ground with anti-semites because both agreed on the separating-out of the Jews, it is obscene to attribute to them a part of the responsibility for the holocaust.

It is a childish attempt to escape from the powerful retrospective logic the holocaust imparts to the Zionist case by saying to the Zionist: you caused or helped cause Hitler — you collaborated!

And it is double-edged and very dangerous for pro-Palestinians to attempt to condemn the people of Israel now because of the deals which some of their grandfathers and fathers made or attempted to make with the all-powerful monster which destroyed so many helpless millions of them. For the leaders of the Palestinians collaborated with the Nazis too. Their chief political leader, the Mufti of Jerusalem, actively worked for the Nazi cause from Berlin. There is no good reason to doubt that had the Nazis got to Palestine — and they almost decided to try in 1940-1 — then Palestine would have become a slaughterhouse for the Jews and the Mufti's Palestinian Arab followers would have been actively on the side of the Nazis, just as the Zionist Haganah collaborated with the British to brutally put down the Syrian-Palestine Arab revolt in 1936 — but with the difference that the Nazis would have killed every last Jew in Palestine.

### Nationalist

Of course this ancient Palestinian collaboration with the Nazis can have no effect on our attitude to the oppressed Palestinians today. But neither can all the historical footnotes about the Zionists in the 1930s have any effect on our attitude to the rights of the Palestinian Jews. Our attitudes must come from the rights and wrongs of the conflict, and from the possible solutions.

Time and again the comrades' argument comes down to moral exasperation. And the lesson is that if you stop at moral protest, then you only distance yourself from 'Zionism' but remain on the same nationalist plane. You do not rise to the level of working-class, internationalist politics.

## SOCIALIST ORGANISER SUMMER SCHOOL 1986

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Speakers invited on the following themes:

**SOUTH AFRICA:** Socialism and nationalism; the making of the African working class; the trade union movement; women in South Africa; international solidarity.

**WOMEN'S LIBERATION:** Labour councils and women; the way forward for Labour women's sections; reproduction under capitalism and socialism; women in the Third World.

**IRELAND:** speaker invited from Sinn Fein; debates on the political heritage of James Connolly, the Protestant working class and the national question, etc.

Creche available. For further details write to SO, PO Box 823, London SE15 4NA.

# Trotsky's daughter

Bryan Edmunds reviews 'Zina', now on general release.

The main body of this film — which is superbly photographed, interchanging from monochrome to colour — centres on the relationship between Zina, undergoing psychoanalysis with a doctor, a Professor Konselt, in Berlin and flashbacks to Prinkipo with her father, Trotsky and her stepmother, Natalia.

## Fascism

Fascism is a growing menace on the streets and the daughter of such a great (and Jewish) man as Trotsky would be a prime target for them.

However, the danger does not stop there for her. The Communist Parties, already heavily Stalinised, and taking their ideological orders from the Kremlin, see the small group of left oppositionists, Trotskyists, as a group to be attacked and destroyed.

## Dividing

Instead of acting to unite workers — communists, socialists, anarchists, Trotskyists, in a united front to fight their common enemy, the Nazis, (as urgently advocated by Trotsky) the Communist Party ends up attacking and dividing its potential class allies.

Zina is in isolation. True she has a small band of Trotskyists to turn to in Berlin, including Lyova, Trotsky's son and her half-brother, facing dangers and besides they have momentarily escapes and releases in the form of personal relationships, something not open

to her. But these comrades are also Zina seems to be all alone caught between an exterior world gone mad and her thoughts of the past, thoughts of her father, the great revolutionary leader and his 'rejection' of her when she was a child (he left her and her mother in exile in Siberia in 1903 to escape from Russia).

In this situation of powerlessness to influence the forces of class conflict growing around her, in favour of the working class, she resolves her dilemma and escapes from a sick world by taking poison in 1933.

## Justice

It is difficult to do this film justice in a few words. There are many aspects that I have not touched upon, the symbolism in the film, for instances, the references to Antigone in Zina's mind, Trotsky's speeches on Churchill, Fascism, history,

socialist realism, etc. I do have just two small criticisms. The main doubt in my mind about the correctness of the film is the ending. Did the Professor really hand over tapes to a Russian soldier and did she really keep the tapes intact for the future after being told that they concerned the daughter of Trotsky.

## Weak

Secondly there is a short scene where Zina witnesses a Communist worker being attacked by Nazis — they seemed very weak to me!

Finally, in the credits tribute is paid to the Isaac Deutscher trilogy on Trotsky's life, The Prophet Armed, The Prophet Unarmed and The Prophet Outcast. If this film has made any impact on those who do not know much about the background to the film, these would be well worth reading. Zina is an impressive film.

## CPSA conference

Alistair Graham made certain that his last CPSA conference as general secretary would be remembered by using his "Introduction of the Annual Report" on the morning of 14 May to launch a vitriolic attack on the Militant Tendency, who have a sizeable presence in the union.

Calling for a coalition between the right and the soft left to act together against Militant, Graham threatened to produce a report for the Labour Party on Militant's activities within CPSA — including naming individual supporters in order to set them up for expulsion.

In the national elections, the right wing retained control of the CPSA's Executive Committee, with Marion Chambers capturing the post of president by a margin of 3,000 votes. The Broad Left candidate, Kevin Roddy, came second.

The Broad Left succeeded in taking one of the two Vice-President posts: the other going to the veteran "Trot-basher" Kate Losinska. However, only three other NEC seats went to the Broad Left, with another three going to Broad Left 84. Although the Broad Left now have total control over the Section Executive in DHSS (the union's largest section), its influence in other sectors is not as strong.

One of the major decisions taken by Conference was to pass a rule change allowing CPSA to set up a political fund: members will be balloted on the issue at a later date. Both the right wing and Broad Left 84 rejected the idea of tying this ballot directly to the principle of Labour Party affiliation, though a motion was carried instructing the NEC to follow up a positive vote on the political fund "by campaigning for the union's reaffiliation to the Labour Party".

Another disappointment occurred with the efforts made by the Socialist Caucus (a hard left grouping that includes SO supporters) to extend union democracy. We submitted motions calling for the union's senior full-time

officers to be elected annually, rather than once every 5 years as at present. However, neither Militant, Broad Left '84 nor the right wing will presently support this demand, and so the motions fell heavily.

Despite the passage of some worthy motions in support of the printworkers, against the Tory "Public Order Bill" and against the Union of Democratic Mineworkers, the 1986 CPSA conference was largely one in which we had to fight to stand still.

## SCPS meet

Change is on the way in the Society of Civil and Public Servants (SCPS) — the second largest civil service union behind the CPSA, and the union which covers the executive and manager grades in the civil service.

For years the 'left' operated in SCPS behind closed doors, keeping the rank and file well away from decision making and keeping quiet on most issues so as not to upset their traditionally moderate membership.

However in 1984 an open, democratic, campaigning Broad Left was formed, intent on opening up the SCPS. The Broad Left campaigned for individual workplace ballot for the executive and for election addresses so the members could see where candidates stood, and for the election of full time officials.

The old secret 'left' run by the CP opposed the proposals on the grounds that it would hand the union over to the right wing.

At the SCPS Conference (12-16 May) the Broad Left successfully argued that individual balloting should also apply to the president and vice-presidents. Election addresses are also going to be introduced for the first time. Unfortunately full timers will still be appointed rather than elected.

But one thing is now clear. If the 'left' in SCPS want to retain their positions in the hierarchy they are going to have to start campaigning and not ducking the issues. The open Broad Left will campaign on hard, socialist policies in the elections in the Autumn.

# More on Chernobyl

In our four-page special on the Chernobyl disaster last issue\*, we tried to answer three questions in particular: What happened? What effect would there be on people? Could it happen again elsewhere (e.g. in Britain)?

In addition, radioactivity, nuclear power and the effects of radiation were explained. The political repercussions were also examined.

Since then, some more gaps in the story have been blocked.

## WHY DID IT HAPPEN?

It was known that the accident started with a surge in power from 7% to 50% of normal at 0123 on Saturday 26 April (Soviet European Time). The sudden overheating gave rise to all the other effects (hydrogen explosion, graphite fire, cloud of fall-out, etc).

But what caused the initial power surge? It now seems to have been the result of an operator altering the position of the control rods which keep the chain reaction under control.

And why did the operator move the rods? It seems to have been either "experimental research work" or our old friend "human error". Both have been referred to by Russian officials.

## Experts

UK nuclear experts were quick to say that our procedures would prevent a Chernobyl-type accident. However, there can be no doubt that "experimental research work" is carried out here. Furthermore, our reactors are also run by humans, who may err on occasion.

At Three Mile Island, a small mechanical failure nearly gave rise to a meltdown due to the refusal of operators to believe their own instruments.

## WESTERN REACTORS AS UNSAFE AS CHERNOBYL?

After all the assertions that the RMBK-1000 would not have been licensed in the West, experts have admitted that the RMBK at Chernobyl actually matched up to West-



Science

sources. This is not enough radiation to cause immediate illness, but they will suffer much higher cancer and deformed offspring.

The 100,000 people of the town of Chernobyl (15 km away) should have received less radiation still but, owing to the delay in evacuating them, will have been exposed more than necessary.

Russian authorities are therefore preparing to monitor over 100,000 people for the rest of their lives, as some health effects can take decades to show.

## HOW WELL WERE WE PROTECTED?

Our government's response should make us extremely worried in case a similar accident occurs here.

At the conference of the Institute of Professional Civil Servants, government scientists revealed that the government had taken ten days to release figures showing severe contamination in parts of Scotland. The exact areas were not revealed!

## Precautions

The Scottish Office said that no special precautions were necessary. However, a universities-funded research centre advised people not to drink milk for two weeks.

Farmers also found it difficult to get advice and IPCS delegates stressed the need for a coherent system of radiation monitoring.

This was underlined in last week's New Scientist which revealed that British vegetables were passed safe for human consumption on the basis of less than fifty samples nationwide. Incredibly, in Scotland, worst affected by fall-out, no vegetables were sampled.

In Cumbria, just one cabbage and one cauliflower were tested, though grass samples showed several times the level of radioactivity at which cattle should be withdrawn from pasture.

This level is set by the government-run National Radiological Protection Board and yet no-one seemed

to have the job of warning farmers. The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food denied that it was its responsibility.

## Failure

The government's failure to warn against drinking milk may result in 150 extra thyroid cancers, according to John Urquhart, a statistician at Newcastle University. His analysis of the 1957 Windscale fire revealed the forgotten role of radioactive polonium in the fall-out. His estimate is about five times that of the NRPB, but it should be remembered that it was the NRPB that "forgot" about the polonium from Windscale.

TORY STRATEGY FOR RADIATION PROTECTION Like other "luxuries", such as the NHS and science research, the NRPB has been starved of cash. Its extra work monitoring the Chernobyl fall-out has to be paid for out of its existing cash allocation and its expected deficit of £½ million this year will have to be made up by staff cuts or by taking on commercial work.

The government has also decided to close Letcombe Laboratory, near Cambridge. Its job was to monitor fall-out in rural areas!

Another body investigating the effects of radiation pollution is the Institute of Terrestrial Ecology. While Sellafield scientists get £1 million a day, the ITE gets only £50,000 a year.

## LABOUR NUCLEAR POWER POLICY

Kinnock and Cunningham are coming under increasing pressure to follow Labour Party policy. The firefighters, cine technicians and communications workers unions have all adopted anti-nuclear power policy and the Wales Labour Party conference voted to phase out nuclear power by a two-thirds majority, despite plea by Kinnock.

\*Chernobyl Special still available: Send s.a.e. and an extra 12p stamp to PO Box 823 London SE15 4NA.

## Wool Dispute

The dispute in the wool industry is over wages and working conditions. The 1986 wage negotiations broke down when the contemptuous employers refused to budge from an offer of 5¼%.

The wage claim submitted to them by the TGWU national negotiating committee was for a £12 a week rise with two days extra holiday plus better bereavement leave and free chest x-rays for all workers.

The wool employers have made £600 million profit during the 1985/6 period on the basis of poor wages and poor working conditions in the industry.

The basic minimum wage is £71.70 a week and most of the workers are working substantial overtime to earn a living wage. The TGWU is campaigning for £100 a week as a living wage for all workers.

The negotiating committee turned down the employers' offer and decided to ballot the ten thousand workers for

industrial action. The ballot returned a two-to-one majority in favour of industrial action.

The action started on May 19 with a ban on overtime and a one-day strike on May 21.

This is the first time in 56 years that the employers have been challenged.

The action will have a rapid effect on the 40,000 employed in woollens with an ever widening secondary level of action in carpets and dye-houses, etc.

The bulk of the action will be in Yorkshire but Scotland, Lancashire and the West of England will all play their part.

What has changed in textiles after this sleep of 56 years?

As an organising force the TGWU, especially since the merger with the Dyers and Bleachers, have been playing a vanguard role within the industry.

That leadership role has changed and continues to change the perception of trade unionism in the textile industry.

Possibly an even more important factor has been the prospect of absolute decline

# DEFEND RAIL JOBS!

By Stan Crooke

This Saturday (31 May) the Scottish TUC and the Labour Party Scottish Council have called a demonstration and rally in Glasgow in protest at the latest round of job losses threatening workers in the West of Scotland.

820 jobs are to be axed by British Shipbuilders, as part of its "survival plan" which involves slashing 3,475 jobs nationally. The Ferguson-Ailsa yard in Troon (Ayrshire) is to be shut completely at a cost of 325 jobs, and a further 495 jobs are to go at Govan Shipbuilders in Glasgow, over one in five of the workforce.

The Ferguson-Ailsa yard is due to close by November. The losses at the Govan yard are to be completed by March of next year, with the first 120 to be gone by early October. There are threats of further job losses as well, depending on the state of order books.

And at the British Rail Engineering Ltd (BREL) works in Springburn in Glasgow the workforce is to be cut from its present 1,300 to 150/200 by 1989, as part of BREL's own "survival plan", involving the abolition of 8,000 jobs nationally over the next three years.

Springburn once employed 10,000 railway engineering workers. The latest round of major job losses began in March 1984, aimed at reducing the workforce to 400 by March of 1987. Workers at the works fear that complete closure would be inevitable if BREL succeeds in carrying through the latest wave of job-destruction.

Also for closure in Glasgow as a result of the latest British Rail proposals are its depots in Hyndland, Polmadie and Cowlands.

As an initial response to the latest attack on jobs, workers at Govan and Ferguson-Ailsa supported the



NUR/ASLEF demonstration against workshop closures, August 1984. Photo: John Harris.

national 24 hour strike in merchant shipbuilding yards last Wednesday, 21 May. And the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions (CSEU) executive committee meeting of 5 June will be asked to give the go-ahead for a ballot on possible strike action against the threat of job losses on the railways.

But all the talk of further strike action is very much token window-dressing as far as Scottish union leaders are concerned. Instead, they are intent upon once again pursuing the consistently unsuccessful path of sub-political Scottish populism.

Speaking before the May 21 strike in the shipyards,

Jim McFall, chair of the unions joint negotiating committee in shipbuilding, declared that "any action we take will be to draw attention to the plight of the industry — not to damage it." After the strike he said that it was unlikely to be followed by any further industrial action.

In place of more and broader strike action, the Scottish TUC has adopted the usual self-defeating formula: the token five-minute demonstration on a Saturday morning from Blythswood Square to George Square; the appeal for a meeting with the Tories' Scottish Secretary of State; and the holding of an all-Scottish convention with delegates from all (i.e. inclu-

ding Tories and Alliance) political parties and concerned organisations (i.e. including Chambers of Commerce and employers' organisations).

This was the failed strategy pursued against the closure of Gartcosh steelworks, job losses at Ravenscraig steelworks, earlier job losses at Springburn and in the shipyards, cuts in social secur-

ity expenditure, etc., etc.

It failed in the past, and it will fail again. Labour movement activists will need to build a campaign based on class politics and direct action — rank and file control of the campaign; link up with the fightbacks in the different industrials; campaign for occupation of railway works and shipyards, and for work-sharing with no loss of pay.

## Win the ballot

GRAHAM TILL, chair of the NUR side of the Works Committee Derby Loco, spoke to Socialist Organiser.

We've had 17,000 redundancies in the last five years and at the same time lost three main works.

Dodds, the assistant general secretary of the NUR, has revealed BREL [British Rail Engineering Limited] plans in the past, and what he has said has proved to be true.

The BREL policy is to announce redundancies a bit at a time to avoid industrial action. The line of our National Executive Committee is not to accept this.

The NUR AGM last June decided not to transfer work and to pursue a policy with the CSEU [Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions] of opposing closures. The CSEU has 50% of main works members.

So NUR and CSEU have had a policy for the last seven months of a ballot for action. But last year the noises from the branches were of not much support for action.

Last Tuesday it was finally decided to go ahead.

Some of us attended the

press conference after a lobby of the Rail Shopmen's National Council. Both Knapp [general secretary of the NUR] and Ferry [of the CSEU] called for action. They said they were balloting for up to and including strike action.

Now it is up to the activists to get a positive result, as this might be the last chance we will get.

Part of our problem is that Bill Jordan (member of the NEC of the AUEW [one of the main unions in the CSEU]) and people like him have been in the local press pouring cold water on the idea of strike action and predicting a no vote.

We need to hold mass meetings to explain the issues and to get local propaganda out.

The Shopmen's Conference is to be reconvened for 2 June to consider the implications of the redundancies and the strategy to fight them.

The current policy of refusing transfer of work from threatened workshops, decided last February, is now being implemented, though we have always been having trouble with the CSEU in Derby.

of the industry. The loss of over 300,000 textile jobs since 1979 has honed the minds of those fighting for the industry's survival.

The campaigning for the yes vote in this year's industrial action call reached an intense level of organisation, and working class understanding of the industry has been lifted.

## Militant conference

WITH POSTAL workers facing a new series of attacks by management, last week's UCW (Union of Communication Workers) Conference proved much more militant than the union leadership could have hoped for.

In the closing part of the Conference alone, EC recommendations were overturned by votes to oppose all nuclear bases and power plants in Britain, to support the expulsion of the EEUPTU from the TUC, and to support calls for a miners' amnesty, and reimbursement of the NUM's funds. Last year, the UCW leadership had voted solidly with Willis and Kinnock on the miners' resolution.

Billy Hayes, from Liverpool Amalgamated branch, and newly elected on to this year's LP delegation, described the general mood: "There was a

unanimous feeling at the conference to take the Post Office on."

Certainly, UCFW general secretary Alan Tuffin felt sufficiently pressured to promise a ballot and threaten industrial action on this year's pay claim, unless the Post Office improves its 4½% offer and refusal to cut the present 43 hour working week. And on the present Leeds dispute, the EC accepted an amendment for a ballot for one day national, regional and local action, after their own emergency resolution had just called for financial support.

The UCW leadership is getting squeezed. Having capitulated to management's drive on new technology, changing work practices, casualisation and victimising militants, they now find themselves contemptuously dismissed on pay and the new work study programme (RRP) unilaterally introduced by management in Leeds. And when they called for support for industrial action in a recent ballot in Leeds and got a clear majority, management proceeded to introduce up to 700 casuals to break the existing overtime ban at Leeds and the EC has stood helplessly by.

Last year, Tuffin said the Post Office couldn't be beaten, so surrender was the order of the day. The mood at this year's Conference is that it can now be beaten, but Tuffin clearly has no intention of organising the necessary action. Indeed, the EC's main proposal is support of the

Leeds action was a branch levy, a month after the action had started!

Leeds is the pilot case, to be followed soon by a further 10 trial offices, and then spread throughout the country. As in Leeds, management will try to break any resistance and impose the work study results through the wholesale introduction of non-union casuals. This radical attack can only be defeated by stepping up the action now, including all-out action at Leeds and by implementing the Conference decision to ballot on one-day solidarity action.

But more will be needed to defeat the Post Office. Side-by-side with a campaign in the branches to explain the issues and the need for action, should go the call for a national strike linking together rejection of management-imposed work study schemes, together with a decent pay rise and a shorter working week.

## The other Wapping

A very important industrial dispute is taking place in the Highway, London E1.

No — this is not Fortress Wapping — but another struggle for trade union rights taking place less than half a

mile from the News International plant. It has major implications for the rebuilding of London.

The construction of £300,000 luxury private flats on the Free Trade Wharf site on the Highway, E1, began after the Minister of the Environment had overruled the findings of a public inquiry that had supported the strong local objections against the development.

Tarmac Limited was the firm chosen to develop this major site. The contract is worth £35,000,000. Tarmac is operating what is known as a Management Fee Contract. Under this system Tarmac take on a handful of white collar workers, but employ no direct labour at all. The whole of the actual building work is being handed out to subcontracting firms which are not bound by the National Working Rule Agreements between employers and unions that cover pay, hours of work, conditions, and health and safety arrangements throughout the construction industry.

At this stage demolition is taking place and the site is being cleared. The major construction work, which will involve up to 200 workers, begins in a few weeks time.

Union pickets at the gate from UCATT and TGWU report that unregulated fly-by-night firms are now mov-

ing in to pick up the work. Two of the three subcontract firms already on the site are Erith Construction and the Bolton firm Renefore. Both now employ only non-union labour. Their workers are supposed to be self-employed, to take out their own private insurance, and to make their own arrangements over sick pay. Some are said to be claiming the dole. They run away to hide when cameras are produced. The men change their clothes and eat their food in an old van parked on the Highway which they enter and leave by climbing over the site fence. Normal health and safety arrangements over scaffolding and other work are being blatantly disregarded on the site.

The site has been picketed since January protesting at the lump and demanding proper trade union organisation and working conditions on the site. Pickets have been assaulted by scabs on the site and run over by mechanical diggers. One of them required hospital treatment after being beaten up.

Victory at the Tarmac site could mean a major blow to growing casualisation in the building industry, and a step forward in establishing basic conditions of health and safety in the reconstruction of Dockland.

Tower Hamlets Trades Union Council appeals to

trade unionists:

1) To invite a speaker to your branch to put the case for the workers on strike.

2) To demand that the London Docklands Development Corporation conducts a full investigation into the situation at the Tarmac site, and the operation of Management Fee Contracts and limits construction contracts in Dockland to bona fide direct labour firms operating strictly to the law.

3) To send urgent needed financial assistance to Joe Howard, Tarmac Campaign Dispute, 137 Tooley Street, London SE12HZ.

4) There is a mass picket every Tuesday morning from 7.30am to 8.30am — bring your banners to the Free Trade Wharf.

## Witch-hunt in NUPE

By Jim Pirie, Cardiff NUPE no. 2 branch, in a personal capacity.

AT THE recent NUPE conference, the leadership used the witch-hunt against Militant to force through a policy of practically every major issue which would substitute waiting for the largesse of future Labour government for a serious fight in the here and now.

Militant resolutions on privatisation were heavily defeated, and the green light was given to cooperate with Tory legislation on strike ballots (even to the extent of taking government money once the TUC as a whole succumbs).

Rodney Bickerstaff's main concerns seem to be preserve his own and the union's clean record on defying government legislation on in so far as it was a useful bargaining counter to the rest of the TUC, and not as a key element in the fighting capacity of his membership.

In the witch-hunt debate itself, the leadership substituted an unprecedented level of slander and abuse for political argument. Deputy general secretary Tom Sawyer one point compared the Militant Tendency with the right and obtained a large majority for continuing to support the Kinnock Party.

However, the traditional left in the NUPE leaders may find that they have created a monster which is their control. So vicious is the rightist hysteria stirred over Militant that a lot of other debates were poisoned as a result.

The debate on child and social workers (many of whom are NUPE members) was more reminiscent of a Police Federation conference than a policy-making body of NUPE.

The genuine left at conference was small in numbers but still managed to register a certain impact on the quality of its argument and its determination to stand against the stream.

The main weak link, though, was the Militant delegates themselves. They have learned that it is not enough to speak against witch-hunt and then remain silent on the other matters.

Building an alternative leadership in NUPE will involve taking a rather hard route than they seem prepared to take. They have abandoned the fantasy of self-proclaimed Broad support.

# Socialist Organiser

## Picket Wapping

Wednesday  
night or  
Saturday night  
8.30pm  
Tower Hill  
tube.

Called by NGA, SOGAT, NUJ, AUEW

# REJECT DEAN'S DIRTY DEAL

Rupert Murdoch's "final" offer to the strikers at News International must be thrown out.

It contains no concessions whatsoever on the central questions that sparked the strike: *jobs and union recognition*.

The proposed deal — which came out of secret negotiations in a hotel near Heathrow over the bank holiday weekend involving SOGAT's Brenda Dean, the NGA's Tony Dubbins, the EETPU's Eric Hammond and TUC general secretary Norman Willis — offers print-workers nothing that is worth the price of their jobs.

It includes:  
\*Redundancy pay — this has been increased from a total of £15 million to £50 million.

\*A promise, for what it's worth, not to exclude any sacked worker from the chance of 'future' employment with News International.

\*A guarantee that all scabs' jobs in Wapping will be safe.

\*Union recognition at Wapping and Kenning Park to be reviewed 'with an open mind' by Murdoch after a year.

\*Use of the Gray's Inn Road printing plant by the print unions as they wish.

Brenda Dean has not argued for or against accepting the offer but has stressed that it is Murdoch's *final* offer. Willis has said "there is no more on offer".

Clearly Dean wants to get the dispute over as quickly as possible so as to limit any criticism at SOGAT's conference next month. She hopes that the deal will be accepted, without having recommended acceptance herself.

But the deal should be fir-



The militant minority of strikers must organise to stop a sell-out. Photo Stefano Cagnoni, IFL.

mly rejected. It does not guarantee union recognition — and Murdoch's mind in a year's time is likely to be as open as a locked safe.

A 'labour movement paper' in Gray's Inn Road might seem a tempting offer, not only to labour and trade union leaders, but to rank-and-file workers, sick of the

bosses' lie-machine. Even if such a paper were on offer on extremely favourable terms, it would not and should not be seen as an alternative to winning the dispute.

### No fool

But Murdoch is no fool. The paper on offer would be good for him, not for the labour movement. Forced to compete, with old technology and a depleted workforce, any 'labour movement' paper would have to impose harsh work practices that would be copied enthusiastically across the print industry.

The 'Scottish Daily News' — begun as a workers' co-op in 1974 after the collapse of the 'Scottish Daily Express' — is a sombre warning. Operating with only a quarter of the previous workforce, the 'News' failed as a co-op, and was gradually annexed by Robert Maxwell, who shut it down.

If the deal is accepted, it will show that Murdoch and the print bosses are strong, and that SOGAT is weak. It will mean the surrender of SOGAT to the current assault on union strength.

Militants need to organise quickly to ensure the deal's rejection. There should be emergency chapel meetings. The London District Council must call new mass meetings of strikers.

Action must be taken to escalate the dispute. Daily Telegraph workers must be brought into the dispute by taking strike action now. News International and Daily Telegraph workers should demand solidarity action across Fleet Street.

The print workers have suffered from 18 months of 'new realism' — keeping the lid on the dispute, aiming to win over 'public opinion' by *doing* as little as possible. If the dispute is to be won, 'new realism' needs to be kicked in the head.

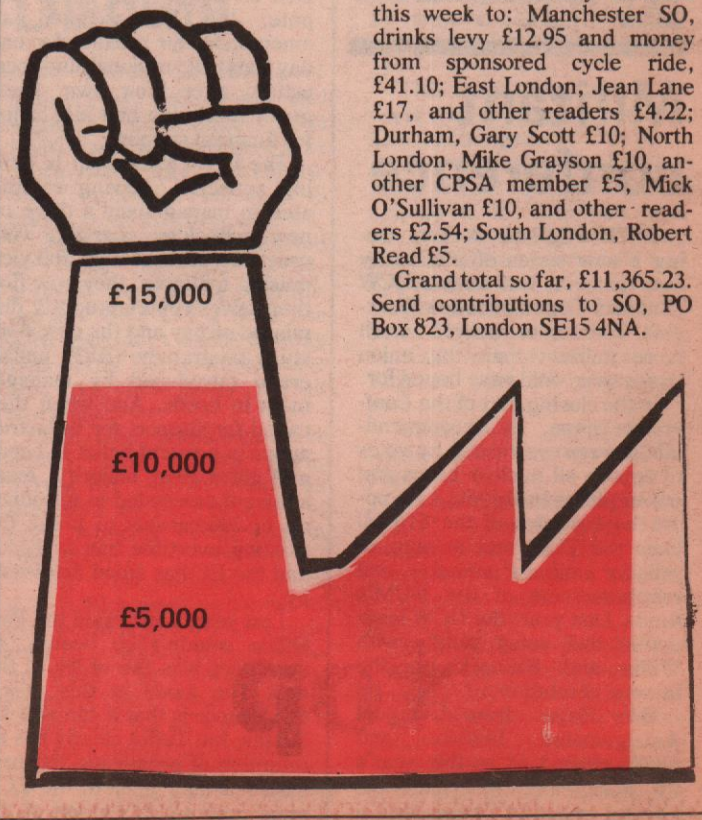
## Keep the money coming

Les Hearn completed his 10km (6¼ mile) sponsored run for SO on 18 May in seven minutes under the hour, and will now be looking for the money from those who sponsored him at so much per minute under the

hour. He is also collecting sponsor money for his 60 mile cycle ride on 3 May. And Keyvan Lajavardi-Khosh is looking for sponsor money for the half-marathon he ran on 25 May (in one hour 53 minutes).

Thanks for money received this week to: Manchester SO, drinks levy £12.95 and money from sponsored cycle ride, £41.10; East London, Jean Lane £17, and other readers £4.22; Durham, Gary Scott £10; North London, Mike Grayson £10, another CPSA member £5, Mick O'Sullivan £10, and other readers £2.54; South London, Robert Read £5.

Grand total so far, £11,365.23. Send contributions to SO, PO Box 823, London SE15 4NA.



### END LOW PAY: FIGHT PRIVATISATION

North West Region Labour Women  
Demonstration and Rally

Saturday May 31, Manchester  
Assemble: Oxford Road (nr Mancunian Way) at  
11.30 a.m.

Rally: Crown Square

Speakers: Joan Lestor, Audrey Wise, WAPC,  
Silentnight

Creche available. Exhibition: 80 years of  
Labour Women's Organisation