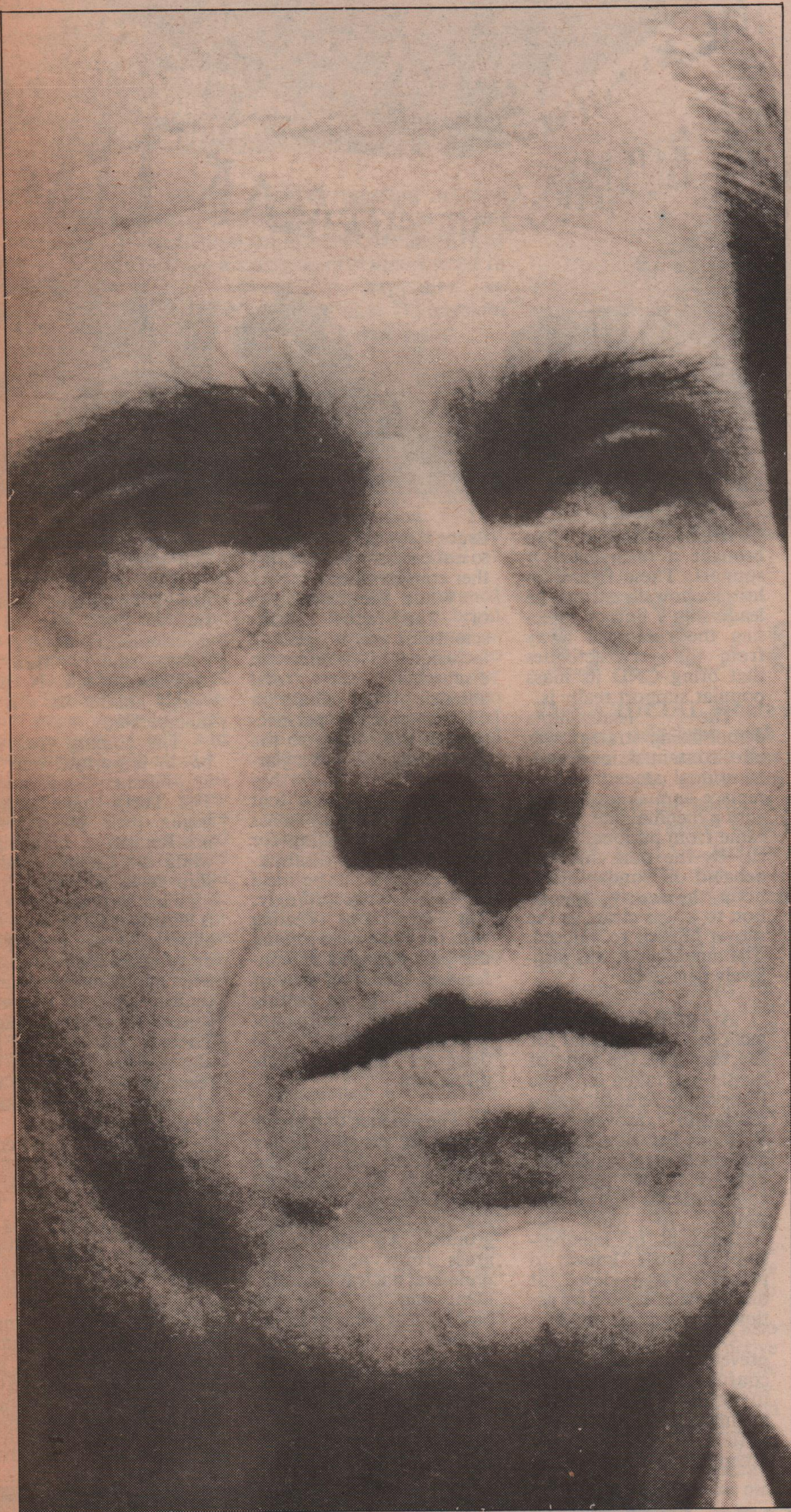


# A Socialist ACTION

BUILDING AN ALLIANCE FOR SOCIALISM

- Towards a two tier society?
- Sinn Fein conference
- Crisis in the soft left
- CND conference
- Lesbian and gay rights

## LOCAL COUNCILS, AIDS, RACISM, TRIDENT...



# Tory whirlwind of reaction

**THE TORY** Party has embarked on a course of preparing the general election by stoking up a wave of reaction in the country. They have been able to do this because of the complete failure of Kinnock's right-wing policies, and witch hunts against the left, to offer a credible alternative to Thatcherism. The result of a Labour Party conference which conceded the Thatcher case on trade union law, nationalisation and witch hunts against the left, has opened up the way for the Tory Party to drive the entire political spectrum further to the right.

One example of this came last week with Tory ministers in the House of Commons now demanding that Kinnock expels the leaders of

Haringey, Lambeth, Brent and Manchester Labour councils! Tory Environment Minister Nicholas Ridley made the grotesque claim that the residents of Haringey or Brent live in conditions like Poland or East Germany and in fear of 'the knock on the door in the middle of the night.'

Black Labour parliamentary candidates, Diane Abbott and Bernie Grant, were singled out for special racist attack by the Tory Party leadership. And the front bench response from the Parliamentary Labour Party, in the person of John Cunningham, is to claim that these are only 'one tenth of one per cent' of Labour councillors.

Labour councils like Haringey and Lambeth have tried to demonstrate, within the constraints imposed upon them by the government's attacks, a genuinely radical alternative to the Tory government's

policies. By campaigning for the interests of the black communities, fighting for positive action policies towards black people and women, seeking to overcome prejudice against gays and lesbians, these councils have been a thorn in Thatcher's side.

But Ridley's outburst was just one example of the hysteria Thatcher has been whipping up since Tory party conference. The first wave was the vicious campaign around visas for visitors from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Ghana and Nigeria. This wave of racism in the press stimulated racist attacks in many areas of the country.

The second campaign was on AIDS. Here a special Cabinet committee was established, and public attacks on gays and lesbians launched, to conceal the fact that the government refuses to take the effective measures that can be taken against AIDS.

Then Thatcher whipped up a campaign around defence of Trident and the need for 'the West' to have nuclear weapons.

Now the campaign is being whipped up against Labour councils.

But what has allowed Thatcher to launch this latest reactionary onslaught, and to recover from the gigantic damage to her government that the miners' strike inflicted in 1984-85, is the disastrous course of Kinnock and the party leadership. Instead of defending those under attack from Thatcher, Kinnock has added his tuppence worth to the attacks on Scargill, on the miners, on Bernie Grant, on Diane Abbott, on Brent council, on Lambeth council and so on. In this way he has undermined Labour not the Tories.

Instead of creating a political alternative to Thatcher Kinnock has incorporated elements of Thatcher's

politics into Labour's policy. Instead of enthusing and mobilising the ranks of the labour movement for alternative policies, and the removal of the Thatcher government, he has opened up a disastrous series of witch hunts within the Labour Party, attacked the so-called 'violations of democracy' in the unions, and failed to answer the racist campaigns by the Tories. Kinnock's course has weakened Labour — and conceded the political high ground to the Tories. The result is Labour slipping behind the Tories in the polls.

The way out starts with the defence of those in the inner cities, Labour councils, the leadership of the NUM, and all those who now face Thatcher's most venomous assault. Without that course Labour is heading for disaster at the election. Because the more Kinnock concedes to Thatcher today the more she will demand tomorrow.



# Socialist ACTION

BUILDING AN ALLIANCE FOR SOCIALISM

## Kinnock is leading Labour to disaster

IN ONE month since Labour Party conference the disastrous consequences of the last three years of Neil Kinnock's course have all come together. Many party members sat through Kinnock's sabotage of the miners strike, sabotage of the rate capping struggle, support for a conventional weapons build up, and launching the witch hunt with one thought: 'This may not be socialism but at least it'll work. It'll get rid of Thatcher and elect a Labour government.'

Well now the truth is coming in. Not merely isn't it socialism, but neither does it work.

The last month has told a horrific tale. The stage managed Labour Party conference was supposed to be a spring board for a Labour election victory. Instead the Tories have swept past Labour in the polls. Every single opinion poll since party conference has shown the Tories in the lead — with an average of a three per cent lead over Labour. The dreadful prospect of a third Thatcher government is now very real.

The Knowsley North by-election was an even worse disaster. Imposing Kinnock's candidate George Howarth was supposed to be a clever move to ensure Labour's victory by shutting out the left wing candidate Les Huckfield. Instead it turned into an electoral catastrophe.

Labour's majority in Knowsley slipped from over 17,000 to under 7,000. Its vote fell by nine per cent on the already abysmal showing of the general election. On the swing against Labour in Knowsley North there would only be 29 MPs in the House of Commons at the general election!

Instead of the witch hunt in Knowsley aiding Labour it resulted in the worst Labour electoral setback in this parliament.

There is no mystery whatever about why these disasters have occurred. They are the cumulative effect of three years of Kinnock's line for the party.

The event in this parliament which did most damage to the Tory government was the miners strike. By September 1985, in the aftermath of the strike, Labour had a four per cent lead over the Conservatives — and the Tories were level with the Alliance. Then came Kinnock's right wing speech to the 1985 party conference and within a month the Tories had closed down Labour's lead to one per cent. This year, following Kinnock's 'I would die for my country' speech, the Tories overtook Labour.

In fact Labour now looks like a right wing party with a bizarrely left wing position on nuclear weapons — a contradiction the Tories and SDP are going to utilise savagely in the election campaign. But for the last three years Kinnock has let the Tories set the agenda. Now, naturally, it is the Tories who are reaping the political benefit.

It is going to be very, very difficult to turn the situation around in the Labour Party before a general election. There are many things still working against Thatcher — the deteriorating situation in the economy, simple disgust at the consequences of seven years of Tory rule — but it is now clear that if Labour wins a general election it won't be because of the present policies but despite them.

Two conclusions flow from this. First that the entire labour movement must unite to fight to get rid of Thatcher. Second that many of those in the party who have been prepared to go along with Kinnock's line should rethink. The left in the party wasn't fighting for sectarian purity. It is the practical way to go forward to fight Thatcher.

Many people believed the course of defeating Thatcher lay in following Kinnock. By now they should know better. If the present course is continued it can end in disaster for the labour movement.

## CND CONFERENCE 1986



# US bases out campaign demand

'DEFENCE', and that means nuclear weapons, is going to be one of the central issues on the next year's political agenda. The Tories and the SDP have already chosen it as one of their central battle grounds in the run-up to the general election. The Labour leadership is still committed to a 'defence policy' calling for unilateral nuclear disarmament but stressing a build-up of conventional forces and NATO membership against the 'Russian threat' — a policy which is entirely incapable of meeting the Tory onslaught. Meanwhile, CND's leadership remains committed in practice to backing Kinnock's line, while the campaign's membership presses for mass action against nuclear weapons. CAROL TURNER reports from CND conference in Blackpool.

ACTION not words was the verdict of delegates to CND's annual conference last weekend. For the third year running they rebuffed the continued attempts by the CND leadership to divert the campaign away from mass action against nuclear weapons. This was reflected in the demand for a campaign to get rid of all US bases and the strength of support for an emergency resolution calling for a national Easter march. It was also reflected in the election of Helen John of Greenham as one of CND's four vice chairs for the coming year.

The bases out composite, moved by the Greater London Association of Trades Councils and seconded by Labour CND, called on CND 'to vigorously campaign for the removal of all US bases' and for a higher profile on NATO withdrawal. The vote on this was significantly up in comparison to NATO votes at previous conferences. This shows that after Libya raising the issues of US bases can be an effective way out of the impasse on NATO campaigning that has existed in the movement for a number of years. However, despite an increased majority, CND's leadership is likely to attempt to derail the decision of conference.

A clear example of this was encountered earlier this year. CND national council met after the hugely successful action in Grosvenor Square against the United States bombing of Libya. Delegates heard one report after another of similar actions staged across the country. Council called for CND to

launch a national petition demanding the removal of all US bases. When it emerged, many weeks later, that had been 'translated' into a demand for the removal of only nuclear bases.

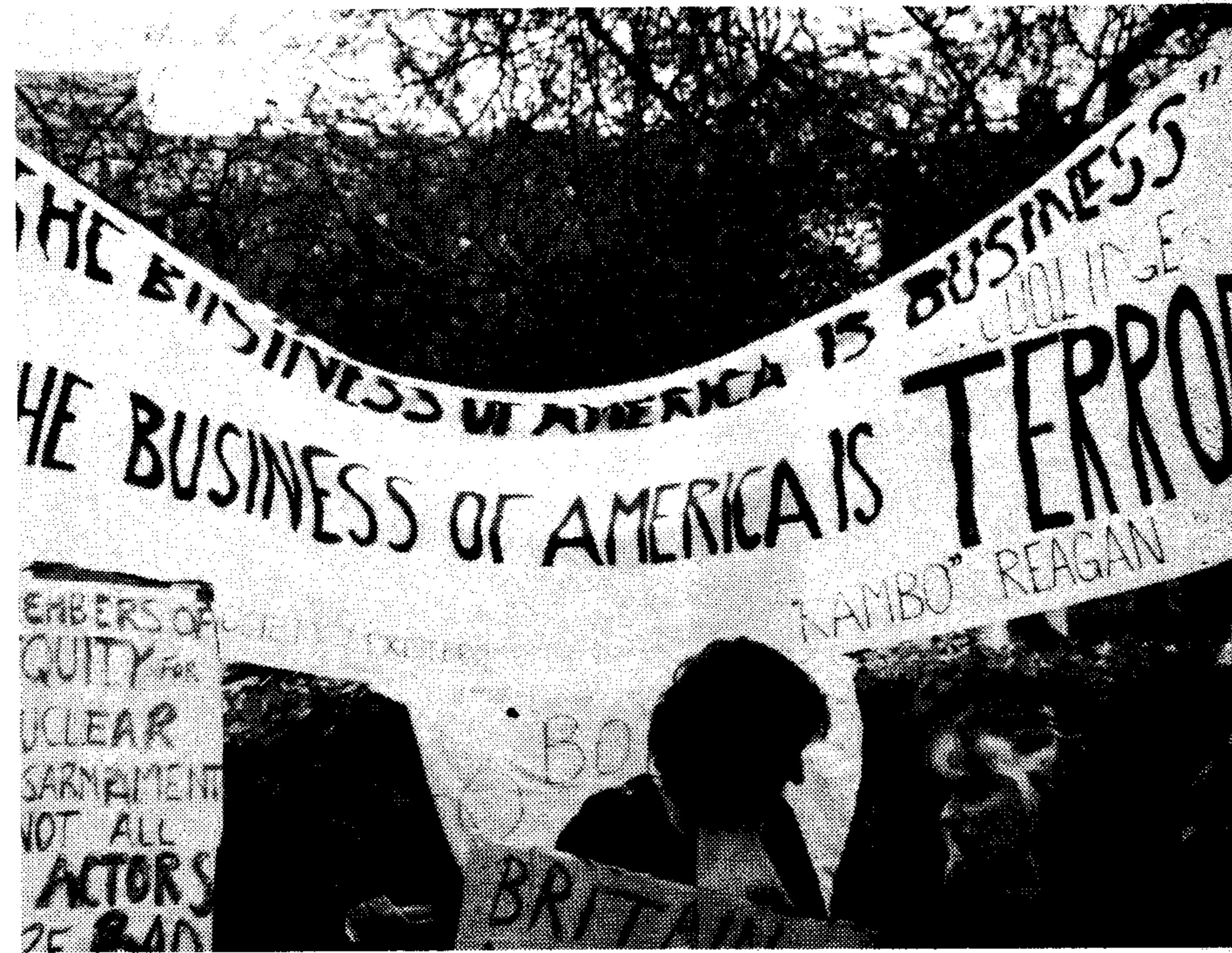
Dominated as the CND national leadership is by Euro-communists and Kinnock supporters, there is no doubt they will seize any opportunity of diluting this year's conference's demand.

Conference's determination to continue mass action against nuclear weapons was reflected in every main debate. An emergency resolution from CND Cymru noted that nuclear weapons would be a major issue in the forthcoming general election campaign, and called for a four-day march culminating in 'a major event in London on Easter Monday'.

CND Cymru accepted reference back to the incoming national council, which will not meet till January. Given the obvious reluctance of the leadership to stage such national mass actions, particularly in the run-up to a general election, this may prove a serious mistake.

Conference learned that member of CND nationally has dropped significantly in the last 12 months. From 106,000 in 1984, the figure is down to 91,000 for '85-86. This goes hand in hand with the leadership's demobilisation of the activist base of the campaign.

But despite the predictions of a dire drop in membership at the beginning of this year, out-going treasurer Mick Elliot reported that the bombing of Libya, followed by the



Chernobyl disaster, had brought a resurgence of support. These figures illustrate how disastrous the leadership's line of directing the campaign away from the very activities that bring CND its mass popular support really is.

The leadership's demobilising strategy was also contained in a constitutional amendment to replace annual conference with a biennial one, which came from national council. By the time this was debated on Sunday afternoon, the massive opposition to it was clear, as the mover himself recognised. The amendment was decisively defeated.

A significant development this year was that for the first time the issue of racism was taken onto the floor of conference, with a resolution moved by Wilmette Brown of CND's anti-racist working group. However, the proposed constitutional change was simply to call for 'withdrawal of membership' of those 'known to promote racist views'. It did not call for positive action for black members.

Genuine concern to prevent expulsions became confused with opposition to positive action for black members. Eventually, supporters of the resolution accepted the proposal of

Bruce Kent to refer it back to national council for further consideration.

While the beginnings of anti-racist consciousness was a welcome inclusion in conference discussion, the total absence of any debate on CND's political perspectives in the run-up to the general election was a glaring gap. CND leadership refuses to recognise that Labour is the *only* mass political party calling for unilateral nuclear disarmament and to set its political objectives accordingly. But workshops dealing with the issue were among the best attended at conference, including that of Labour CND on getting Labour to campaign, which attracted 50 delegates and a lively discussion.

The absence of plenary debate on election policy stems from the line the leadership has theorised since 1983: that of pursuing the mythical 'middle ground'. An injection of grass roots activism on unilateral nuclear disarmament and removing US bases would come as an extremely unwelcome disruption to the parliamentary lobbyist politics that CND leaders now pursue. It would also handicap CND's leadership from chasing after

'progressive' Liberal and SDP candidates.

The overall political line of the national leadership of CND has led to disorientation among activists, and a turn to localism which is now visibly taking its toll of membership.

The coming year will be an important one for anti-missiles campaigners. The Tories have already begun their pro-nuclear, pro-Reagan campaign, while the Labour leadership remains crippled by its own contradictions. It is vital that CND does not allow cold war propaganda to make the running in what has already become a central issue in the next general election campaign. There is only one way for anti-missiles activists to respond — by taking the offensive on the question of nuclear weapons.

CND's base — as conference shows — is committed to that perspective. The problem is that the leadership is still trying to break up that political potential. 'Defence' and that means nuclear weapons, will be a dominate issue on next year's political agenda. The movement is not going to be able to dodge the issues that its national leadership has been busy fudging at this year's conference.

## A grave error

DEBATES ON the role of women within the anti-missiles movement have taken place at many CND conferences, but this year's was particularly important. Among the emergency resolutions was one which called for action against three rapes which have taken place at the Molesworth peace camp over the last year.

CND leaders originally decided that these 'unfortunate incidents' should be hushed up because of the adverse publicity they were likely to generate. This guaranteed the issue blew up at conference without any preparatory discussion within the movement.

A three-point resolution was moved by Manchester-Withington CND which recognised 'that rape cannot be tolerated at any cost' and

instructed the national council to:

- 1) publicly to 'withdraw any support from those who wish to camp at Molesworth at the present time...'
- 2) 'encourage positive action in dealing with male violence within the peace movement...'
- 3) 'support further actions whether mixed or women only at Molesworth to stop

the arrival and operation of cruise'.

A preliminary move to refer back the resolution because 'rape is a matter for the police and the courts' was lost, but the resolution was voted in parts. Controversy centred on the first point, which was defeated.

The backward attitude of the conference majority was reflected by male delegates who heckled 'I came here to debate nuclear disarmament' and 'what's this got to do with nuclear weapons?'

The debate was sensitively handled by the platform: vice chair Elaine Lieven took the chair for

the duration of the debate, calling only women to contribute. But the political issues were not addressed.

Helen John pointed this out with great clarity. 'Women who have chosen to live there now,' she said, 'do so at the expense of the women who have been raped.' The chair failed to call a speaker from among the women who were at the camp at the time of the rapes.

Conference voted to pull the teeth of the resolution by rejecting the demand that CND dissociate itself from the presence now at Molesworth which has refused to take any effective action against the rapes.

Instead conference ef-

fectively turned the resolution on its head by confirming future support for the camp as it is *currently constituted*. This led to a silent protest by women, followed by a spontaneous walk-out from conference.

Throughout the mass radicalisation against the missiles which began at the end of the 1970s women have played a major role in leading the whole campaign, as the Greenham movement amply demonstrated.

Few women activists will be prepared to ignore the political implications of conference decision. It is a decision that must be rejected and campaigned against through the movement.



# 'Soft left' crisis sharpens

**THE LABOUR** Coordinating Committee (LCC) is the Labour Party's most politically significant 'soft left' organisation. For several months now that part of the political spectrum has been facing increasing contradictions. This year's LCC conference saw that crisis coming out into the open more clearly than ever before. The conflicts it is generating are likely to be increasingly important over the next year. JOHN ROSS looks at the choices now facing Labour's 'realigned left'.

**THIS YEAR'S** annual general meeting of the Labour Coordinating Committee (LCC) was an important one. It confirmed the crisis of perspective of Labour's 'soft left' — a crisis openly announced in an article entitled 'Whatever happened to realignment?' by *Tribune's* editor Nigel Williamson in that paper's Labour Party conference issue.

Williamson admitted that: 'The soft left has become probably the least coherent grouping in the party.' And that: 'the realigned left feels almost powerless to do anything about the situation. It is heavily locked into a strategy of supporting Kinnock (for the very best of electoral reasons, it must be said) and its criticisms of the party and its policies are tempered by this. As a result, a sense of what Peter Hain in a recent paper to the LCC executive called "drift and even inertia" has set in.'

This crisis came out clearly at Labour Party conference — where sharply counterposed positions were put forward by Ken Livingstone and the Clause 4 grouping in the LCC. Livingstone attacked the witch hunt at the *Tribune* rally at conference, declaring: 'There can be no support for the witch hunt. Those who warned at the beginning that the witch hunt would actually widen have been proved right.'

The Clause 4 controlled *Labour Activist*, supported by the LCC, however, started off its conference issue with a front page justifying the witch hunt, and stating: 'Militant asked for what it got.'

The crisis announced in *Tribune*, and the differences within the LCC expressed publicly at Blackpool, continued at the LCC's AGM — with an extreme right wing bloc around Clause 4 and the LCC's new chair, Paul Thompson, winning most of the key votes.

Thompson's unopposed election as chair was in fact a significant decision registered at the AGM. Thompson, as well as Clause 4, represents the extreme right wing of the LCC.

His politics may be judged by the article he wrote in *Tribune's* 31 October issue, entitled 'Debunking the myths about "state interference" in trade union affairs'. Thompson strongly argued in favour of state intervention in the unions and claimed: 'we need to recognise that individual members of organisations have minimum rights that need to be guaranteed by the state.' He stated: 'Practices, traditional in some unions or industries, such as decision making by

mass meeting, or strikes without ballots, were never likely to survive the more difficult circumstances of recession, new communication techniques and membership awareness. The miners strike was, in many ways, the death knell of these practices.'

Thompson argued that: 'Balloting to begin and, probably, to end industrial action, and to elect executives, is in our view a basic minimum right which is best backed up by legislation and legal redress.' He was in the forefront of organising the LCC to submit evidence arguing for expulsions to the enquiry into the Liverpool District Labour Party.

Thompson supported all the most right wing positions at the LCC AGM on such questions as relations with LLL.

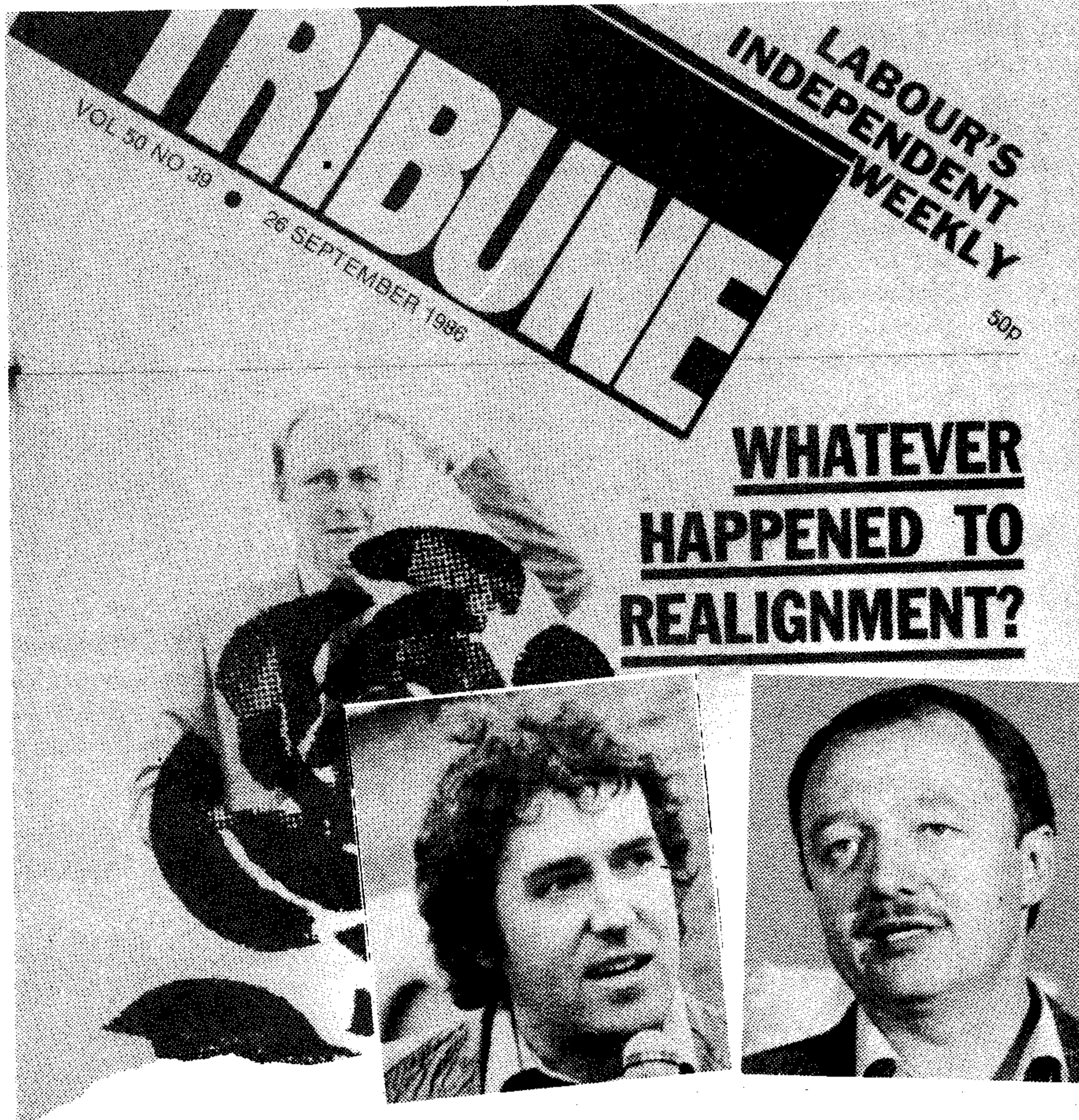
Charlotte Atkins defeated Anita Pollack by 61 votes to 48 for vice chair. Both candidates represented a significant shift to the right compared to the LCC's previous vice chair Peter Hain who was not standing for reelection.

The annual meeting moved further to the right on the witch hunt. Knowlesy North was not even discussed. Livingstone was not at the conference.

On reselection, both Clause 4 and Thompson were clearly in favour of some version of the so-called one member one vote position — that is, in practice, the destruction of the accountability of Labour MPs to their constituency general committees. LCC Scotland was not in favour of reopening the issue before the general election, although it favoured change after the election. The LCC was unable to come up with an agreed formula for altering the present reselection system.

A complicated formula based on GCs choosing the candidate but on the basis of mandate of delegates and restriction of the right of trade union branches to vote was submitted to the conference but referred back.

This is obviously going to be a crunch issue for the LCC. Hain did not speak in the debate. Livingstone's view on the issue are unknown.



## LCC and LLL

**THE CRUCIAL** debate at the LCC conference was that on relations with Labour Left Liaison — because this summarises the LCC's choice of orientation to ally either with the left wing or the right wing inside the party. A few people with their heads in the clouds might want to avoid that choice, but, in reality, the LCC has no option but to make it. Its relations with the LLL in fact define the basic political choices LCC has to take.

This choice had already come up at Labour Party conference. Livingstone had argued for the LCC to link up with the LLL. He followed this up ambiguously after conference with an article in the *Chartist* which said: 'the shift in power within Labour Left Liaison in favour of WAC, Black Sections and those groups who have always made these key issues, means that there is greater common ground between us and LLL than could have been imagined six months ago.'

But Livingstone also attacked the 'destructive oppositionism of the Campaign Group'. However, he drew the conclusion that the LCC should work together with the LLL rather than the perspective of a 'centre/*Tribune* majority'.

In the same issue of the *Chartist*, Nigel Stanley, one of the central figures in Clause 4, used his 'Inside Left' column for a diatribe against the LLL.

Totally counterposed resolutions on relations with LLL were submitted to the LCC annual meeting. Hain, adopting the same line as Livingstone at Labour Party conference, put forward a resolution calling for discussion with the LLL. This concluded: 'Although recognising that some involved in Labour Left Liaison display a sectarian hostility to the LCC, we nevertheless welcome LLL's invitation to explore the basis for joint cooperation and links.'

Hain put forward sectarian motivations for this in his speech to the AGM, calling for detaching WAC and the Black Section from the LLL, rather than asking whether the LCC could champion their demands and therefore gain their support as well. But nevertheless the conclusion was explicit: there should be discussions between LCC and LLL.

Thompson put forward a resolution which was another diatribe against the LLL. Showing considerable illusions in Labour's potential to win an election, it highlighted the 'progressive policies' of a future Kinnock government and called for support for this against 'ultra left' criticism. Thompson's conclusion was that: 'We should...reject any links with generalised ultra left coalitions like "Labour Left Liaison".'

Thompson's was so extreme a position that its motivation was largely deleted by Lindsey Thomas of Clause 4. However, Thomas only toned down the argument to maintain the practical conclusion of rejecting any relations with the LLL.

Hain's resolution was defeated 48 votes to 68. Thompson's amended resolution was passed. The LCC therefore is formally committed to having no 'links' with the LLL.

However, the real relation of forces was shown by who voted for which resolution. Hain's resolution was supported by the NUPE delegate, by LCC Scotland, and is clearly in line with Livingstone's

position expressed at Labour Party conference. Livingstone, Hain, NUPE and LCC Scotland are, bluntly, the only forces in the LCC with any significant base in the party.

The Clause 4 and Thompson groups may turn out individuals to vote at LCC AGMs, but they don't count for anything on the ground in the Labour Party. If Livingstone, Hain, NUPE or LCC Scotland allow themselves to be held back by Clause 4 or Thompson, it is only because they want to be held back.

What will take place now therefore depends on what decisions Livingstone, Hain, NUPE and LCC Scotland take. The idea that they are prevented from acting by what Paul Thompson or Clause 4 decide is ridiculous.

The LLL has made clear that its position is not manoeuvrist. It has made clear that it is not interested in discussing personalities but only policies. Its positions — against the witch hunt, for defence of reselection, for the demands of the Women's Action Committee, the Black Sections, Labour CND, for British withdrawal from Ireland, and other issues are well known. It has also made clear that it is prepared to work with anyone on the basis of these — as it did in the Khan-Scally campaign.

Whether those in the LCC who voted for the Hain position are prepared to discuss relations with the LLL, or whether they will allow themselves to be dictated to by the hopeless right wing sectarians of the Clause 4-Thompson type, remains to be seen. One thing though is clear, whatever constructive proposals are coming forward from Labour's left are coming from LLL and not from the LCC.

# LABOUR CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

THE RESOLUTIONS put to the LCC AGM on relations with Labour Left Liaison by Paul Thompson and Peter Hain are printed below.

## Hain resolution

The LCC would welcome closer cooperation with others on Labour's left especially over demands for women's rights and Black Sections. We welcome and encourage examples of joint work such as over the Khan-Scally campaign and we invite the widest possible support for initiatives like our new trade union charter, our economic statement, and our key points for the next election manifesto.

The LCC's present priorities do not include promoting yet more new organisations on the left. We retain a commitment to our distinctive 'third road' strategy for democratic socialist transformation. But we are not a sectarian organisation and this AGM therefore instructs the EC to respond constructively to invitations to discuss mutual cooperation with other groups or individuals on the left.

Although recognising that some involved in Labour Left Liaison display a sectarian hostility to the LCC, we nevertheless welcome LLL's invitation to explore the basis for joint cooperation and links.

This was defeated by 68 votes to 48.

## Thompson resolution

This AGM notes that the left of the party has changed markedly over the last five years, with the emergence of two divergent political forces. The LCC has committed itself to a third road strategy of working constructively for democratic socialism in the Labour Party. We have therefore rejected the politics of Trotskyism and the oppositionism which characterises the ultra-left.

This AGM believes that Labour Left Liaison is a sectarian political project whose aim is to reverse the decline of the so called hard left by hijacking the legitimate sectional demands of pressure groups and campaigns under an anti-leadership banner.

This AGM believes that any attempt to construct unity with the ultra left is pointless and damaging to our strategy for the following reasons:

- There are clear differences of politics and strategy between the LCC and the ultra left which will no doubt become more crucial after the election of a Labour government when our strategy should be to build support to ensure that the leadership carries out the party's radical policies, while combatting the inevitable ritual denunciations of the ultra left.

- The ultra left is declining in influence and becoming more and more fragmented. Dialogue would simply give renewed credibility to their emphasis on internal conflict and attacks on the leadership, and would depart from our view that the demands of WAC, the Black Sections, and other groups should be independent of any particular political formation.

- Any dialogue or organisational link at national level could not be reflected by unity on the ground or in the trade unions.

- To spend time and energy on inter-left debate would distract from our major aim, which must be to concentrate on winning support for the party and on developing the radical policy commitments which exist.

- Of course the LCC, both locally and nationally, should continue to work with other left groups and individuals on specific issues. In particular we should give unconditional support to the central demands of those such as WAC and the Black Sections campaign. We seek to change Labour Party structures to ensure the participation of more women and members of minority ethnic groups, and with those who are fighting to make the issues of race and women's and lesbian and gay liberation more central to party policy. We should however reject any links with generalised ultra left coalitions like 'Labour Left Liaison'.

The AGM instructs the LCC executive to conduct its relations with other left organisations on the basis of this resolution.

Rachel Brooks, Owen Tudor, Paul Thompson et al



## Youth in action

### Campaign Student launched

THE FIRST issue of a new student bulletin, *Campaign Student*, has been published. It contains contributions from activists in the Labour Committee on Ireland, the Labour Party Black Sections, the Labour Women's Action Committee, CLPD, Labour CND, the Labour Campaign for Lesbian and Gay Rights, as well as from student activists in the Anti-Apartheid Movement. We reprint below Campaign Student's editorial statement:

## Campaign Student

### Students and the alliance for socialism

CAMPAIGN STUDENT is published to help link the student movement to the alliance for socialism which Campaign Forum is building in the wider labour movement. Kinnock's public relations exercise is providing a disaster for the Labour Party. Phil Murphy has refused to have support for the miners, Thatcher on the black community, the printers, the black community, radical Labour councils, and support for anti-imperialist struggles. As a result the Tories have taken the offensive in a carnival of reaction since Labour Party conference — promoting racism, attacking the unemployed and spreading anti-lesbian and gay hysteria.

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In sharp contrast the launch of Campaign Forum — An Alliance for Socialism in September, marks the creation of the most effective left wing in the Labour Party for decades. Campaign Forum links the Campaign Group of MPs to campaigns like the Labour Party Black Sections, Labour Women's Action Committee, Labour CND, the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy and others in Labour Left Liaison, along with trade union activists. It campaigns for an anti-imperialist foreign policy, British withdrawal from Ireland, the total isolation of apartheid, for US bases out of Britain and Britain out of NATO, for the defence of the black community and for Black Sections, for the self-organisation of women, and for the defence of Labour Party democracy against purges and expulsions.

*Campaign Student* is convinced that the politics of Campaign Forum can be a majority in the left wing of the student movement. In demonstration after demonstration — against apartheid, the callous bombing of Libya, the Fowler proposals and above all in voting for the British withdrawal from Ireland — students have made their opposition to the policies of this government and its international allies clear. As yet this campaigning opposition lacks the organised voice in NOLS and NUS it needs to be most effective. Students are a vital part of the alliance for socialism that Campaign Forum is seeking to create. *Campaign Student* will promote the campaigns of Campaign Forum and help organise those who want to win NOLS and NUS to this alliance.

*Campaign Student* will be:

- ★ asking Labour Clubs to participate in Campaign Forum by affiliating to Labour Left Liaison.
- ★ promoting *Campaign Group News*, the newspaper of the Campaign Forum.
- ★ asking Labour Clubs to invite speakers from Campaign Forum including the Campaign Group of MPs and campaigns like Black Section and WAC.
- ★ organising at NUS conference in December.

● You can contact Campaign Student c/o 51 Grayson House, Radnor Street, London EC1.

# Tory racist attacks on Labour councils

ON 3 NOVEMBER Birmingham city council's ruling Labour group removed black councillor Phil Murphy from the position of vice chair of Birmingham's Race Relations and Equal Opportunities Committee. The decision, taken by 44 votes to 19, also removed Cllr Murphy from the committee itself. Phil Murphy has been an outspoken opponent of racism wherever it has occurred including in Birmingham council. He had been threatened with group discipline several times before and just one month earlier was assaulted by a white member of the Labour group.

Speaking to the right-wing *Birmingham Evening Mail* Labour leader, Dick Knowles explained the decision had been taken because Cllr Murphy 'doesn't concern himself with anything other than the fact that he considers the black community more important than anything else.' Knowles went on to say 'He doesn't appreciate that the problems of the white unemployed are equally bad as the problems of the black unemployed and that it is deprivation in our inner cities that is the fault.' Understandably these remarks produced two glowing editorials in the *Evening Mail* praising Cllr Knowles 'brand of socialism' and his 'earthly common sense'.

The *Mail* argued in an editorial on 4 November 'those who mould opinion about relationships within the community must look first to those areas in which everyone is united, not seek to aggravate divisions by condemning as racist disadvantages in which all sections of society share'. In other words according to the *Mail* Phil Murphy got his just deserts for talking about specific discrimination faced by black people.

But are problems like unemployment shared by black and white alike? Certainly in Birmingham the facts say no. As the report *A Different Reality*, drawn up after the Handsworth revolt in 1985 explains black people suffer from discrimination in jobs, housing, and education as well as many other areas of life. It is this discrimination based on race that distinguishes the situation facing black people from that facing

many poor whites.

As the report noted, research carried out by the Policy Studies Institute showed that the levels of discrimination in the job market in Birmingham were worse than in cities like London and Manchester. 'In Birmingham, black and Asian job applicants were over seven times more likely to be discriminated against than a white job applicant.' It was these findings that led Birmingham to be dubbed 'the capital of racial discrimination'.

By Mick Archer

This general conclusion of the report is also borne out by the work force of the city's principal employer, the council itself. No comprehensive statistics exist, but a voluntary self-classification survey carried out in August 1986 and answered by 61 per cent of workers revealed that a mere 4.9 per cent were Afro-Caribbean and a further one per cent Asian or Afro-Asian. This in a city where the black population is estimated at 22 per cent. The obvious explanation for this discrepancy is discriminatory employment practices under successive Tory and Labour administrations.

Since its return to power in 1984 the Labour group has come under increasing pressure to seriously tackle this and other issues of concern to the black community. But the Labour group has done little or nothing to meet their demands.

In employment they have now agreed to monitor all new recruits to ensure that 20 per cent are black, but they continue to fill new posts by simply upgrading existing employees. It is this



TORY PARTY leaders stepped up their racist campaign against Labour-controlled councils this week, beginning with a statement in parliament from environment spokesperson Nicholas Ridley. Likening councils such as Brent, Haringey and Lambeth to Poland or East Germany, he said 'ratepayers' were living in fear of the 'knock at the door in the middle of the night'. Ridley went on: 'They are afraid that chance remarks might lose them their jobs and their livelihood on the grounds of "racism".' The same night, Tory Party chairperson Norman Tebbit, speaking on the same theme at a public meeting in Ilford, claimed that: 'People like Bernie Grant and Diane Abbott are ... the poison that is concealed in the red rose.'

Replying to Ridley, Labour's shadow spokesperson John Cunningham totally capitulated — Ridley's accusations, he said, applied 'only to one-tenth of one per cent' of Labour councillors! In fact it is the example of left councils like Haringey, Lambeth and Brent which shows how Labour can build the alliances it needs to defeat the Tories. Unlike the Labour front bench these councils have responded to racism, anti-gay hysteria and attacks on jobs and services — by fighting back instead of capitulating.

That is why those councils, like the miners are the target of Thatcher. Their record, including at the polls, speaks for itself. They have built support for Labour by fighting racism, sexism and prejudice. Kinnock is leading the party to disaster by conceding the Tories case.

discriminatory practice that Phil Murphy was at the forefront in challenging at the time of the dismissal.

On the Race Relations and Equal Opportunities Committee they have sought out compliant black politicians prepared to help limit its activity. This meant that in 1985/86 it underspent its budget by 33 per cent. According to the city's own accounts this was largely 'a result of the lower level of expenditure than expected on information and training, publicity and promotional activity.'

Despite repeated decisions by the district party to increase the budget and status of the Race Relations Committee and its unit these changes have been blocked. This even involved group officers writing these commitments out of this year's manifesto over the heads of the district party

officers. The response of black party activists has been rapid. The Birmingham Black Section held a lobby of the Labour group on 3 November and has established a campaign to win Phil Murphy's reinstatement. It is organising a petition and a further lobby on Monday 1 December in support of this demand. As its statement explains 'What is at stake is the refusal of the Labour group and therefore the city council, to take a lead in the fight against racism.'

The District Labour Party also passed an emergency resolution on 12 November condemning the Labour group decision and demanding Phil Murphy's immediate and unconditional reinstatement. Behind all this, however, there is also a growing recognition that the Labour

group's reluctance to tackle racism head on is based on an unspoken fear that to do so would damage it electorally.

In the midst of right wing attacks on authorities like Brent and Haringey, which have adopted anti-racist measures the response of Dick Knowles is to deny the problem exists. But as the Black Section statement says racism will not go away. As the date of a general election draws nearer the Tories will exploit it to the full. It may not be as blatant as Peter Griffiths in Smethwick in 1964 when stickers appeared all over the constituency saying 'If you want a nigger neighbour vote Labour' but the message will be the same. Removing councillors like Phil Murphy merely accommodates to that view. He must be reinstated now.

# Labour women's strip search rally

A RALLY against strip searching, called by the National Labour Women's Committee (NLWC), took place in London last Saturday. It was attended by over 200 people, overwhelmingly women. Those present heard Pauline Deary, who had served nine years as a political prisoner in Armagh women's jail, describe in moving detail the inhuman practice of strip searching, and the clear intimidatory motivation for its use.

'Strip searching was first introduced in Armagh in November 1982 — four years ago this month. It was introduced without a moment's notice. Suddenly they just started asking women to strip.

'I was in Armagh at this time. I was so shocked when it started that I couldn't believe it would continue. I said not to worry it will be stopped within a week. Now four years later it is still going on.

'They say that strip searches are carried out in a "sensitive manner" so they do not cause the women stress. Well just three weeks ago a woman in Magha-

berry jail who was there for non-payment of a fine — she was not a political prisoner — was strip searched five times in four days. She was pregnant and she lost her baby on her way home.

'They tell us there is no stress involved. Well that woman was obviously stressed.

'Another woman miscarried her baby while in prison and was removed to hospital. On her return from hospital she was forced to strip search. She was still haemorrhaging heavily because they wouldn't keep her in hospital for more than the bare minimum of time.

'Is this "sensitive"? Does this involve "no stress"? They claimed they didn't know why she had been in hospital, but there were prison guards with her the whole time.

'Another woman was strip searched just after giving birth, and those of you who are mothers will know how you feel physically for a few weeks after birth. She was still haemorrhaging and needed breast supports, but she was forced to strip search. Was that "sensitive"?'

'They strip search everyone, from 75 year old women to 16 year old girls. Cathy Moore was strip searched 90 times while on remand and then she was acquitted. They strip search the women when they are menstruating, and they are forced to hand over their sanitary protection for inspection.

'Since moving to Maghaberry prison there have been 220 strip searches, and the prison was on-

ly opened in March. Sometimes they claim that the number of strip searches is falling and produce the figures from month to month, but they don't point out that the number of prisoners on remand has also fallen.

'There have been almost 4000 strip searches since 1982, and the prison population has virtually never been over 30, and it is now down to 25.

'Scott, the minister in charge of prisons, was questioned by Peter Archer in the House of Commons about his claims that items of contraband had been found through the strip searches. In the end he was forced to give details — a £5 note, a bottle of perfume, and a letter! Hardly a grave threat to security!

'The strip searches are there to intimidate and demoralise, to make us ashamed of our bodies. It is nothing to do with security.

'The issue is coming up at the European Court for

Human Rights in February next year. We will be presenting a petition. That is where we have our eyes set now in this campaign. We hope you will sign the petition and add your protest to ours.'

Given the importance of the issue, especially with the focus of the European Court hearing in the new year, it was unfortunate that much of the potential of this rally was lost in the way organised.

However despite these problems the fact that 200 women mobilised from all over the country indicates that a really well organised national united front campaign against strip searches could, in the words of Anita Richards of Birmingham LCI: 'mobilise not just 1000 women rather than 200, but 10,000 women'.

This is the campaign which is needed by Irish women prisoners in the run up to the European Court hearing.



# Sinn Fein debates abortion

The 1986 Ard Fheis (national conference) of Sinn Fein took place in Dublin's Mansion House over the weekend of 1/2 November. The conference will be remembered chiefly for its decision to end the 65-year old policy of refusing to take seats if elected to the Dublin

parliament, Leinster House.

We reported the debate on abstentionism in the last issue of Socialist Action, including publishing the text of Gerry Adams' presidential address. In this issue we look at other issues raised at the conference.

Sinn Fein's policy on abortion was the second most contentious issue at its recent Ard Fheis. Last year delegates had added the phrase 'We recognise that women have the right to choose' to existing policy, narrowly passed 77-73 after the majority of delegates had left.

The leadership considered the policy adopted was contradictory; the party had not been prepared and it took different positions publicly.

Toni Gorton reports from Dublin

The Ard Chomhairle (national committee) recommended the removal of the sentence in question. Overwhelmingly carried, the policy now reads 'We are opposed to the attitudes and forces that compel women to have abortions, we are opposed to abortion as a means of birth control but we accept the need for abortion where the woman's life is at risk or in grave danger, for example, ectopic pregnancy and all forms of cancer.'

Sile Fanning, officer for the women's department, set the tone for the debate. 'We export our abortion problem to Britain' she declared. 'No positive alternatives to abortion are given. Women who become pregnant outside marriage are punished — unwed mothers are forced out of their homes. Young girls are accused of deliberately 'seducing' men in order to get pregnant and get the paltry government handouts available. We must continue education on this issue.'

Rita O'Hare editor of *Republican News* emphasised the leadership's framework stating categorically that the 'woman's life is paramount'.

Broadly, three positions were put: no abortion under any circumstances; abortion under limited conditions (medical) and women's choice/discrimination.

The discussion takes place against the background of Ireland being dominated by the church. The south is one of the most Roman Catholic church-dominated countries in the world. The church is active, aggressive, and remorseless in its

political campaigns especially against women's rights. The recent defeat of the divorce bill, and the long delay in access to contraceptive facilities show the success the church has in maintaining its power.

The social conditions which allow the church teachings to prevail are a long way from being changed. The most important factor is the partition of Ireland. Meanwhile thousands of women and men suffer from the lack of individual freedom which the church/state official morality denies them north and south.

Following last year's Ard Fheis, women in Derry set up a working party on abortion which drafted a new resolution that recognised the problems set up by last year's decision. The resolution took as its starting point Sinn Fein's declared objective of establishing a secular state.

It goes on: 'As a secular organisation we believe that the state, its constitution, its law and criminal code should not embody the code of any particular religion, theology or morality. We therefore accept the individual's right to make a conscientious decision for or against abortion without coercion from any other individual or group. In the meantime we recognise that present legislation must respect the rights and beliefs of minorities and must not criminalise those who avail of abortion in accordance with their conscience. Our short term objective is to encourage further discussion and examination of all aspects of this issue aimed at advancing the

## International discussion

Half an hour of conference was devoted to discussing foreign affairs. The main resolution adopted reaffirmed the basic policy of Sinn Fein 'to a position of neutrality and non-alignment, both in the context of the 26 counties and of a future 32-County state'. The motion supported attempts 'to achieve unity in the Palestinian liberation movement' and defended the Palestinian people's 'right to a homeland and the formation of a democratic Palestine'; it condemned the regimes of South Africa and Namibia, recognised 'the legitimate struggles of

those attempting to overthrow these repressive systems' and called for 'effective sanctions'.

The motion also condemned the attempts by the British and US governments 'to remove the political exemption clause from the extradition treaties' and the policy of the US government in Central America, highlighting Washington's 'arming and financing of the contras in Nicaragua'.

The chief issue of debate during the international session was a resolution moved by Richard Behal that Sinn Fein 'strictly adheres to the policy on



Gerry Adams and Daisy Mules wait to speak in the Ard Fheis abortion debate; inset Sinn Fein's women's officer Sile Fanning

overall understanding to that end. Non-directive pregnancy counselling embodying all choices should be freely available.' This was defeated: 117 for 212 against.

Daisy Mules, a leader of the trade union department speaking for this motion, said she considered the Ard Chomhairle position to be 'disappointing' — they had given it inadequate time, resources or thought. 'We must lead the people of Ireland on this question. Freedom of choice should apply to all areas of life.'

She was supported by a number of women experienced in the life of Sinn Fein, who spoke as veterans of its major campaigns. It included some who give day to day counselling to prisoners' wives in the north.

Referring to her republican beliefs, one Belfast woman said that most people feel that life is

sacred but those here feel that other values are more important — justice and liberty for example. She felt people were using the 'sanctity of life' argument as a smokescreen to hide their real views which were that carrying through the pregnancy was a punishment. If women don't make the decisions over their own lives, who does decide? Doctors are given power over two lives.

A very small minority characterised abortion as 'murder' and expressed total opposition to it.

Queuing up to speak along with all the other delegates Gerry Adams said that last year the Ard Chomhairle had opposed the 'woman's choice' not because they're anti-feminist but because it's identified with the 'abortion on demand' slogan. He stressed its contradictory character and appealed for people not to 'go too far, too fast'; to keep the discussion going and

for others not to reject the basic policy.

Replying to the debate, Rita O'Hare objected that some delegates had 'defended the leadership's proposals for the wrong reasons. Ours is a 'progressive' stand she said. 'We will be taking a strong stand on our policies. We take positions because they are right and reasoned not because they'll win or lose votes.'

In other discussions the Ard Fheis reaffirmed policy on the organisation of childcare to encourage women to become active especially as candidates. It voted down a proposal to end the system of positive discrimination to women at the leadership level. On gays and lesbians it said:

'Sinn Fein publicly demands the de-criminalisation of homosexual acts between men, and also calls for full equal rights for lesbian women and gay men with their heterosexual counterparts.'

## Noraid stays united

Contrary to press statements that sections of the US organisation Irish Northern Aid, or Noraid, were supporting O'Bradaigh's breakaway group, the organisation remains united.



The statement rules out 'any possibility of a split between ourselves or within the ranks of Irish Northern Aid following Sunday's vote on abstentionism ... Irish Northern Aid is, and will continue to be, fully united behind the Republican Movement and fully united in opposition to British colonial rule in the North.'

## Ireland Unfree

### Loyalist fall-out

IN THE 18 months since it was signed the Anglo-Irish Accord has delivered nothing of substance to the nationalist minority in the North of Ireland. At the same time, it has produced new outbursts of sectarian terror from the loyalists. Hilda MacThomas analysed the developments in the loyalist camp in the 13 November edition of *An Phoblacht/Republican News*.

ONE year after the signing of the Anglo-Irish Accord, unionists are still as violently opposed to it, but they are deeply divided on the tactics they should adopt to smash it.

10 November saw the launching of 'Ulster Resistance' in the Ulster Hall, Belfast. The Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) leader Ian Paisley, his deputy Peter Robinson and Ulster Clubs leader Alan Wright stood on the platform with the founding committee. The declared aim of Ulster Resistance is to 'destroy its real enemies, Sinn Fein and the IRA'.

But there is more to his new fascist militia than just another attempt by Paisley to bare his fangs at the British government. Loyalists are frustrated by their failure to smash the Hillsborough Agreement. Loyalists are, to quote Alan Wright 'baying for action' — a euphemism for 'Fenian blood' no doubt.

The new movement has been launched at this time to clearly announce the loyalists' intention to escalate their protest.

It is also an attempt to involve greater numbers of working-class loyalists in a campaign hitherto largely confined to career politicians. The fact that working-class loyalists also perceive Dublin's involvement as a threat to their marginal economic privileges makes them more than willing to get involved.

There were few Official Unionist Party officials present at Monday's gathering, but little was heard in the way of condemnations from the reputedly 'moderate' OUP leader James Molyneux. Molyneux and many in the OUP leadership have opted for unionist unity as the best way to defeat the Accord, and by and large they have refrained from public rows with their DUP allies. But there are those in the OUP, in particular their 'legal and academic wing' led by Robert McCartney and the Young Unionists, who shirk from mixing with the DUP.

For months now, McCartney has lobbied the OUP for his 'campaign for equal citizenship', another name for total integration. If Northern Ireland was really part of the 'United Kingdom', he argues, not only could there be no question of meddling by Dublin in the affairs of the North, but there would not be any of this power sharing nonsense as the British Labour and Tory Parties would stand for elections in the Six Counties and majority rule would apply. These views have met with some success in the OUP, traditionally divided between devolutionists and integrationists, but united in its dislike of sharing any power with nationalists.

However, McCartney's views failed to triumph at the OUP annual conference. Molyneux, the OUP leader, decided to ban the press from his party's conference, and had an emergency motion inserted in the agenda to defer debate on integration 'until the Agreement has been smashed'. On Saturday, the amendment was proposed by Enoch Powell, himself an integrationist, and was carried by 199 votes to 153.

The ban on the media imposed by the OUP leadership shows a crisis within the party. Not the type of crisis foolishly predicted by John Hume throughout this year, which would see some 'moderate unionist leadership' emerging, but a crisis born of the frustration caused in the unionist middle class by London's decision to deal directly with the Dublin government. Unionists have been used to monopolising the political and economic power in the Six-County state for decades.

The fall of Stormont in 1972 chipped away at that power by taking away its parliamentary trappings. But while unionists absorbed that shock, they are not more prepared to accept the Accord than they were to accept Sunningdale in 1974. Northern nationalists will see in the new 'Ulster Resistance' movement yet another loyalists murder-gang ready to intimidate, burn and kill innocent Catholics in its campaign to preserve the unionist domination of the North.





Nuclear power workers lobby Labour Party conference.

# Towards tier soc

THE LONG phase of economic depression in which the capitalist economy finds itself offers no sign of recovery. Before coming to conclusions about the overall employment and unemployment trends, let us look at the trends industry by industry. They fall into three categories: those where there has been a clear, absolute decline in employment, those where there is an intermediary situation, and those where there has been an increase in employment.

In the first category, those industries hardest hit by unemployment, there is a combination of declining demand and the impact of introducing new technologies. Here there is a considerable drop in employment. Such industries include ship building, mining, steel, textiles, shoes and — to a certain extent — petrochemicals and oil refineries.



AEU president, Bill Jordan — 'aggressively right-wing'.

The second category is where demand, and therefore production, continue to increase, but at a slower tempo than in the past, and where there is a strong thrust of technological innovation. These are key industries, accounting for almost half the total volume of industrial employment — auto, electrical appliances, construction and public works.

Here, in the medium term, there is no decline in demand. Demand continues to increase. But it is being accompanied by increased productivity, hence by the application of new technologies. Therefore, there is a combined effect on employment that is hard to measure exactly, because competition plays a big role. The trends, therefore, are different from country to country.

Finally, there is the third category — that of industries that are enjoying a greater than average growth in demand and production. Paradoxically, in these high-tech industries, the new technologies are having far less impact on employment than in the others. The most important are the engineering industry, the entire machine and producer goods industry, electronics, scientific instruments, medical and pharmaceutical products.

If we put these data together, the first thing that emerges is that there is an increase in the numbers of unemployed and the rate of unemployment. But here there is a myth to be refuted — the idea that we are seeing fully fledged deindustrialisation or 'dewaging' in Europe and North America. The figures on the trends in the volume of employment in capitalist Europe are the following: a drop of 0.5 per cent in 1983, stabilisation in 1984, a slight rise of 0.2 per cent in 1985. Over the longer term it is about the same.

These are quite minimal fluctuations. If you compare them with those in the period 1930-38, the difference is striking. Then, there were nose dives in employment of the order of 30 per cent. The present drops are marginal ones. This does not mean that they are not grave or without social consequences. The drop in employment in industry properly speaking has been sharper. But the shift is not so extensive as it is felt to be in some circles.

Nonetheless particular remarks have to be made about youth and



'We are still largely in what is called the phase of "semi-automation".'

female unemployment. Since the onset of the crisis, female employment has been rising, and this has been rather marked. Male employment has been declining.

In Denmark, the level of employment for women rose from 63 per cent in 1975 to 72 per cent in 1983. In Sweden the rate rose from 67 per cent to 77 per cent. In Belgium the rate of employment for women rose from 44 per cent to 50 per cent, in France from 49 per cent to 51 per cent, and in Italy from 35 per cent to 40 per cent. Only in West Germany is the rise slow — from 49 per cent to 50 per cent.

This rising rate of female employment has to be qualified immediately by taking into consideration the scope of unsteady jobs. Most of the increase in female employment is accounted for by the increase in part time work.

This increase in part time work is different from one country to another. Between 1973 and 1983 part time jobs rose to 25 per cent of the total in Sweden, from 21 per cent to 24 per cent in Denmark, and from 16 per cent to 19 per cent in Britain.

In Europe women hold more than 80 per cent of part time jobs. In West Germany the rate is 92 per cent. In the other European countries, it is around 80-85 per cent. In Britain the proportion is lower, 70 per cent women as against 30 per cent for men.

Unemployment among young people between 16 and 25 is rising sharply. Long term unemployment, in which Belgium holds the disreputable record, is also increasing sharply. The rate of youth joblessness went from 4 per cent of total unemployment to 10 per cent at the beginning of the 1980s in West Germany, from 15 per cent to 26 per cent in France, from 14 per cent to 22 per cent

in Britain, from 25 per cent to 34 per cent in Italy, and so on.

In all these countries there is a growing number of young people who have never worked, who have never held any job since they left school. This phenomenon has obvious social and political implications, which represent grave threats for the workers movement.

If we turn to another issue, we are still in an initial stage of complete automation — we are still largely in what is called the phase of 'semi-automation'. There is no question of manual jobs or wage labour being radically eliminated from industry. In these conditions, the recomposition of the working class, the relations between labourers and skilled workers, of old and new skills, fluctuate greatly according to industries and from plant to plant, depending on whether the new technologies are applied to a large extent, partially, or only marginally.

Any conclusion drawn by generalising from high-tech industries, where robots are often used, assumes something that has not been proven — that is that in the coming ten years all of industry is going to be reorganised on this model. No one can say that, because no one knows that, and, for the moment, it seems extremely improbable.

When a radically new technology is introduced, that brings on a reorganisation of the whole labour process. But there are a whole series of burdens that go along with this changeover, and it cannot be predicted in advance how long they will have to be borne. Learning and trying out the new technology, and reorganising the work process, requires a lot of labour power. Likewise, plants have to be re-equipped as subse-

IN BRITAIN today every division and differential in society is growing. The political gap between the Labour north and the Tory south is widening. An increasingly open and aggressive right wing in the unions — Hammond in the EET-PU, Jordan in the AEU, Golding in the NCU — is strengthening itself at the same time as powerful movements of women and black people have developed in the Labour Party and the impact of the miners strike continues to be felt. Every pay differential — between skilled and unskilled, men and women, white and black, private sector and public sector, among teachers and white collar workers — is widening.

The gap between the employed and unemployed is becoming more

quent stages of the production process have to be brought into line with the new technology.

This requires building new plants and new machines, with corresponding effects on employment — effects that are very different than they would be if the technology was already in place.

The bourgeoisie, the bosses, the trade union bureaucracy, the bourgeois state and governments are deliberately using all this talk about robotisation to frighten the workers.

So where is the real problem of assessment of this process? It is that in most of the projections about the number of robots and the trend to robotisation, the question of markets — that is, the volume of production and sales, is left entirely out of the picture. The argument is built up as if the new technologies were introduced and applied solely in accordance with the criteria of technical efficiency and reducing wage costs, without taking account of the fact that these new technologies involve an enormous increase in the volume of production. They therefore require a big expansion of the market in order to be employed profitably.

In the production of the motor for the Fiat Uno car for example, the productivity of labour has more than doubled as a result of the use of computers and robots. But the production apparatus is utilised only to 30 per cent of capacity. Why? Because in order to run it at 100 per cent of capacity the Company would have to sell two or three times more cars than it does today. And where is it going to sell two or three times more cars? Today, auto sales are increasing in the order of 2-3 per cent a year.

Obviously, there is competition within the industry. Fiat can hope to increase its share of the market at the expense of other automobile manufacturers, but only by a little. This is wh



# ... a two tier society?



'Impact of the miners strike continues to be felt.'

workers unions are today the spearhead of working-class combativity. There is no reason beforehand to exclude the possibility that this trend may grow.

It is another question whether what have been traditional bastions of the workers movement, owing to the concentrations of workers and the traditions of militancy they represent, can be replaced by new bastions. Let me note only that the concentrations of wage earners in rail, the post office and telecommunications centres, the airports and the electronics industry is considerable. New bastions of the trade union movement may well develop in such places.

What have been the long term effects of the crisis on the level of direct real wages, social benefits, and on the problem of pauperisation? The bourgeoisie has calculated rightly that frontal attacks against social security would provoke sharper reactions than attacks against wages. For example, if they touched sick benefits, the response could be a general one rather than from a limited group. The bourgeoisie wants to fragment the working class. So, it has

an interest in moving more slowly to attack social security. It is in fact thanks to the protective net of social security that the socio-political effects of the crisis have been more limited up till now than they were in the 1930s.

This does not mean that there will not be attacks against the social security system, quite the contrary. As the crisis drags on, the deficits in the social security system are growing. In these conditions, the system of social protection is going to be strongly challenged.

The result of this is that even if overall social security spending is on the rise, the number of persons and households below the poverty line is markedly on the rise. In West Germany, the number of persons living on public benefits has practically doubled, rising from 1.9 to 2.5 million persons. In Britain the number of people who can be considered poor had almost doubled between 1975 and 1984 — rising from 4.5 million to 8.5 million.

By taking advantage of the economic depression and the relative weakening of the workers movement — which is a general phenomenon, although uneven from country to country — the bourgeoisie is trying to achieve a lasting change in the relationship of forces among the classes and to institutionalise it. This means essentially dismantling the most important gains of the workers movement over the preceding quarter of a century, if not over the past 50 years.

If we want to sum up these gains in a single formula, we could say that the workers movement managed to achieve a quantitative rise in the level of objective class solidarity through a combination of trade union power, control over the work process and political weight. The weight of the workers movement has been a force in society for better protection of all the underprivileged strata. That is the most general meaning of everything that has taken place since the crisis of the 1930s.

Moreover the bourgeoisie is not trying to hide what it wants. Its project is to deal a lasting blow not just to the incomes but to the status of a third or 40 per cent of the working class. This is why the term 'two tier society' is justified as a characterisation of the bourgeois project, because if it is achieved, if a third or 40 per cent of the working class is deprived of minimum protection and solidarity, then, for countries such as Belgium, we will go back to a pre-1914 situation.

All the bourgeoisie's projects aim at

increasing and institutionalising the divisions within the working class — divisions between native and foreign workers, between men and women, between young people and adults, between adults and retirees, between skilled and unskilled workers, between declining industries and high-tech ones, between public and private sectors and between the workers of different countries.

On all levels, the bourgeoisie's policy aims at provoking, broadening and institutionalising these divisions. It proposes different measures, suited to each case, to freeze such divisions and increase their weight in the relations between capital and labour as a whole. Some success have already been achieved: it would be wrong to deny it. Despite the very positive reactions by young people against racism, in a whole series of European countries chauvinism and racism have had real effects on the adult working class.

We can see three kinds of reaction by the working class in capitalist Europe to this overall situation. There is a minority that is resigned to it. There is a minority that has radicalised. The majority may fight back in specific cases, but it is hard to mobilise for general objectives.

As for the anti-war and anti-imperialist mobilisations, youth protests, and all the autonomous movements, they are a result of a double desynchronisation. On the one hand there is an objective desynchronisation, resulting from the fact that the various social layers are being hit in different ways by the crisis of bourgeois society. On the other hand, there is a subjective desynchronisation between the reactions of the organised workers movement and various strata of society. The workers organisations were backward on these questions. It was inevitable that others would take them up.

Now the question arises of reuniting all these components of a potential challenge to capitalism in a crisis into a fighting bloc against bourgeois society. It is easy to make such a reunification on paper, but in practice the revolutionary currents are still weak, while the bureaucratic apparatuses are still very strong. In these circumstances the reunification in deeds will be long and arduous. This requires, moreover, that the socialist project, the socialist programme, again gain credibility in the eyes of the broad masses.

Marxists must fight systematically for that.

permanent. Hysterical campaigns against gays and lesbians, on issues such as AIDS, accompany the adoption by the labour movement of its first ever progressive policy on gay and lesbian rights. Racist and chauvinist campaigns are growing at the same time as Black Sections have developed and there is more support for British withdrawal from Ireland than for many years. The political situation has moved to the right but with the continued development of radicalised minorities.

All these developments have an economic basis. Capitalism today is driving to create a 'two tier society': an economy with a stable core of skilled, overwhelmingly white, male, and older workers — the base of the Hammonds, Jordans and

Goldings — and a growing number of insecurely employed, mainly female, black, and young workers.

These trends are particularly sharp in Britain where the economic effects of the oil revenues have permitted increases in real wages of over 15 per cent under Thatcher for many of those in regular employment — coupled with drastic falls in income for those on low pay, unemployment benefit, pensions and with rapidly rising numbers in poverty and savage attacks on many fields of social spending.

If Britain is an extreme case the general trend has developed throughout Western Europe, Japan, and North America. In a powerful survey ERNEST MANDEL looks at the strength of these trends throughout Europe.

places limits on the introduction of the new technologies.

Overall economic growth, outlets, markets, buying power, overall sales figures have to be taken into account. The industrialists own projections and perspectives are pinned on that. At an international conference of robotics industrialists a year ago, the figures advanced were quiet modest. It was predicted that from now to 1990, only 1-2 per cent of industrial labour would be robotised. This is an overall figure. It does not mean that in certain industries, the figure may not be much higher. But in general the trend to robotisation remains quite marginal.

In the famous high tech workshop at Fiat mentioned, in which there are 103 computers and 56 robots, the total number of workers employed dropped from 3,100 to 2,670 — that is a drop of 13 per cent in employment. Even with the introduction of new technologies, the factory is far from having been totally automated.

If we now turn to look at the distribution of employment between sectors of the economy then generally over the last ten years a decline has been registered — although it is much less pronounced than usually thought — in employment in industry, and a new increase in employment in the so-called service sector. However it is only in the public sector that we are seeing a net expansion of non-industrial employment, one that is continuing.

But here also we have to avoid extrapolation. The more and more pronounced crisis of public finances and the cutbacks this is leading to in all countries could rapidly reverse this trend.

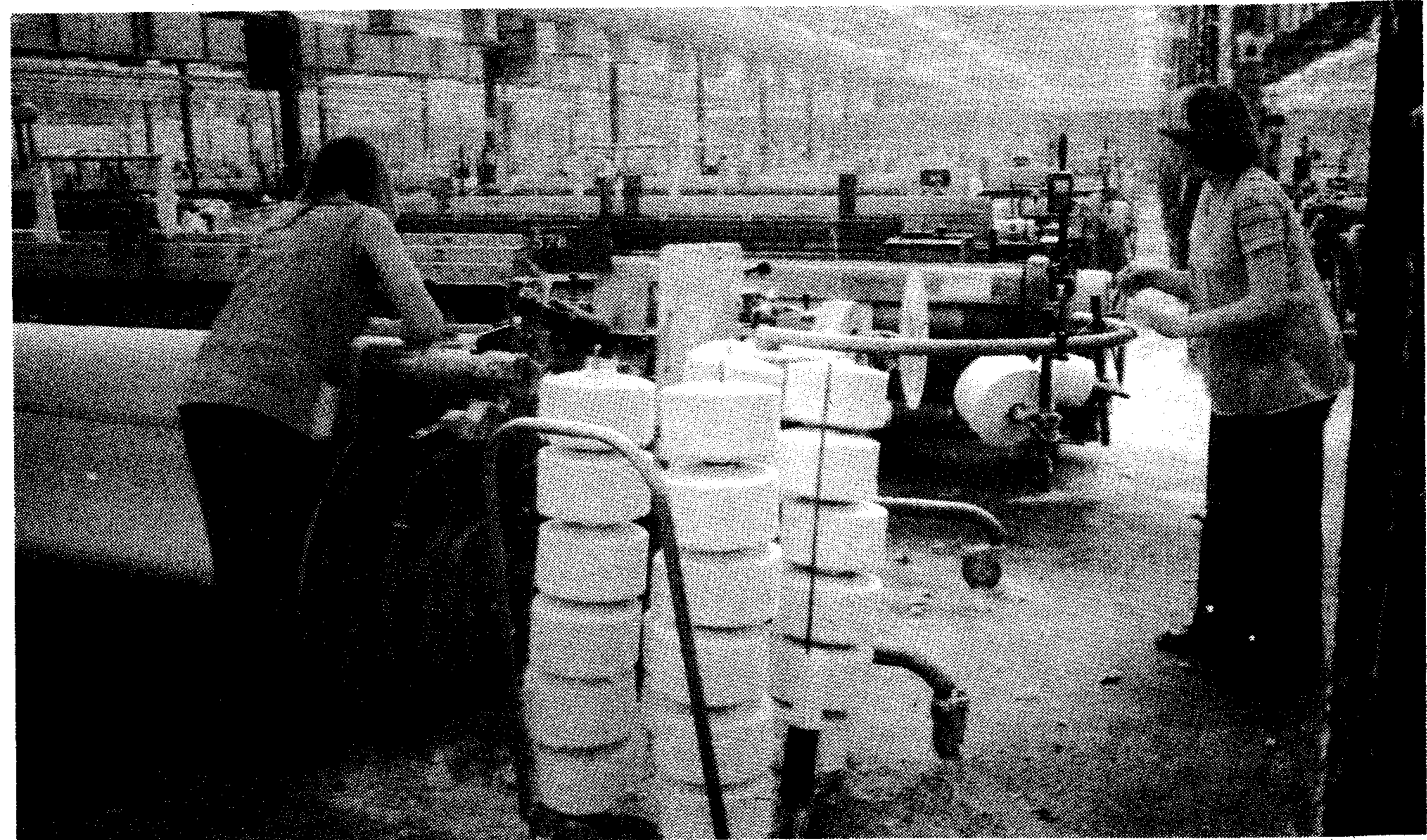
These sectoral shifts in employment are bringing about a recomposition of the working class. Do they inevitably mean a weakening of the organised workers movement? Here we have to



'The gap between the employed and unemployed is becoming more permanent.'

beware of extrapolations. The only constant that seems to emerge is that there relative increase in the weight of wage earners, and therefore of unions, in the public sector by comparison with the traditional sectors. But this does not automatically mean weakening working-class militancy or of the trade union movement's striking power.

Today, paralysing the telecommunications centres, the big transportation companies, the electricity generators, or even the banks can hit a capitalist economy just as hard as shutting down the mines, steel or even the auto industry could have in the past. In more than a few countries, some public



'Since the onset of the crisis, female employment has been rising, and this has been rather marked.'



# WAC launches "votes for women" campaign

**THE WOMEN'S Action Committee (WAC) has launched a major campaign around the review of women's organisation in the Labour Party decided upon by the 1986 party conference. This has two parts.**

The first is a statement of principle, submitted for wide endorsement in the party, demanding the right of women's conference to elect the women's places on the NEC. The appeal launched by WAC states: 'The 1986 Labour Party conference instructed the NEC and the national Labour women's committee to develop jointly proposals to make the national conference of Labour women more representative and thus to increase its weight and authority in the labour movement.'

## Priorities

'To be in line with the party's declared aim to make the interests of women a major priority, we consider it essential that these proposals must include the provision for the five women's places on the NEC to be elected by women at the national conference of Labour women.'

This statement, launched by the WAC executive, is going to all major campaigns and newspapers in the party. Sponsors received in the first week of the campaign include Labour Left Liaison, the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy, Socialist Action and Jane Prust from *Labour Briefing*.

Organisations which have been sent copies of the appeal include the Campaign Group of MPs, the *Tribune* Group of MPs, Labour Coordinating Committee, and the Labour Party Black Section.

The second part of WAC's campaign is the submission of detailed proposals for restructuring all aspects of women's organisation in the Labour Party. Ann Pettifor, executive member of WAC, outlines some of the key issues on this in the latest issue of *Campaign Group News*.

In particular, she calls for:

- election of the women's places on the NEC by the women's conference
- parity between the women's sections and trade unions in policy voting at women's conference
- reserved seats for trade union women on the standing orders committee of the women's conference
- restriction of delegates to women's conference to women only
- the right of women's conference to submit resolutions to the NEC and party conference
- election of the national Labour women's committee at women's conference, with reserved places for trade union women.

Pettifor also supports the women's NEC places being increased to six — with three of these to be elected by the women's sections and three by the trade unions at women's conference.

## Proposals

While these proposals are put forward for discussion, WAC has made it clear that it will finalise its proposals for restructuring the women's organisation at its AGM — and after discussion with those in the party who support its appeal for women to control their own organisations and elect their own representatives.



WAC's annual general meeting will be held on 13 December.

● WAC is asking for individuals and organisations to support its campaign.

It is calling for signatories for the appeal printed in the article above and for financial support for the campaign. It is requesting a donation of £5 from individuals and £10 from

organisations supporting the campaign. Notification of support should be sent to LWAC, Anni Marjoram, Secretary, 12 Chatham Row, Bath, Avon.

## Two steps forward for lesbian and gay rights

**The 79 per cent vote to implement Labour's policy for lesbian and gay rights was one of the more striking victories of this year's Party conference. But euphoria among supporters of the policy is well tempered with realism. There is a serious likelihood that the embarrassed silence with which the Party leadership arranged for the issue to be quickly and uncontroversially despatched at Blackpool will remain their approach in the run up to a general election.**

### Peter Purton, Labour Campaign for Lesbian and Gay Rights

The press and the other parties will not be so reticent. The reactionary furor whipped up against the pro-lesbian and gay policies of Labour local councils like Haringey and Ealing is a mild taster by comparison with the vicious scare-mongering homophobia we can expect in a national campaign. A recent article by Paul Johnson in the *Daily Mail* claims that a Labour government would aid the spread of AIDS epidemic through its lesbian and gay rights policy — when the truth is of course the opposite. It is evidence of the way that the ruling class and its minions will ruthlessly exploit every division within and among the working class and the oppressed. The only way to defeat such a campaign, indeed the only way to avoid capitulating to it, is to confront it head on and without compromise, in the way of the GLC and other local authorities.

Fortunately, that 79 per cent vote is not just a leadership manoeuvre! Years of work by Labour Campaign for Lesbian and Gay Rights (LCLGR) and by organisations and individuals in the trade unions, and the breakthrough created by the miners strike, mean that the base of commitment to



lesbian and gay rights is now much more solid. The support won in 1985 was consolidated at Blackpool. John Golding failed to prevent the NCU delegation from reaffirming its backing. The experience of Wapping and the solidarity of Lesbians and Gays Support the Printers won over the print unions. Under internal and external pressure, the GMBATU changed its vote and guaranteed the two-thirds.

If some members of the National Executive therefore were cynical in making their unanimous recommendation of support, the massive majority which was in part a fruit of that cynicism will be exploited to the full by LCLGR and the supporters of the policy.

Immediately, this means ensuring that we get the promised national working party and that it oversees the detailed implementation of a comprehensive policy. But lesbian and gay activists have no intention of leaving

others to organise for our rights. LCLGR has published its own proposals, *Legislation for Lesbian and Gay Rights: A Manifesto*. They will be the basis for a national conference in London in May 1987, sponsored jointly with the NCCL and the Campaign for Homosexual Equality. It is aimed at the broadest forces from the lesbian and gay movements and the women's movement and already has the sponsorship of many labour movement figures.

LCLGR's Manifesto is fundamentally different from previous law reform campaigns. It starts with the needs of lesbians and gay men, not with what we think is possible. It recognises the role of the law and the state in the oppression of lesbians, and is not narrowly restricted to male-oriented specific clauses of legislation like the 1967 Sexual Offences Act. Crucially, it recognises the role of the law in supporting and justifying heterosexism in society, and therefore

its validity as a target not just in terms of protecting individuals, but also in terms of campaigning to change society.

The main target of the draft bill, therefore, is that the legal system treats homosexuality as abnormal or unlawful even when it is not criminal. In stating in its first clause that 'homosexual sex acts... are in no way inferior from the standpoint of public morality or policy or the public interest to heterosexual acts' the whole basis of legal oppression is turned on its head and the way cleared for subsequent clauses which make it illegal to discriminate on ground of sexuality in employment (clause 2(i)) or in child custody and adoption (clause 2(ii)). Clause 2(iv)) strikes at another root when it declares that 'There is no public policy in favour of marriage or against sexual relations outside of

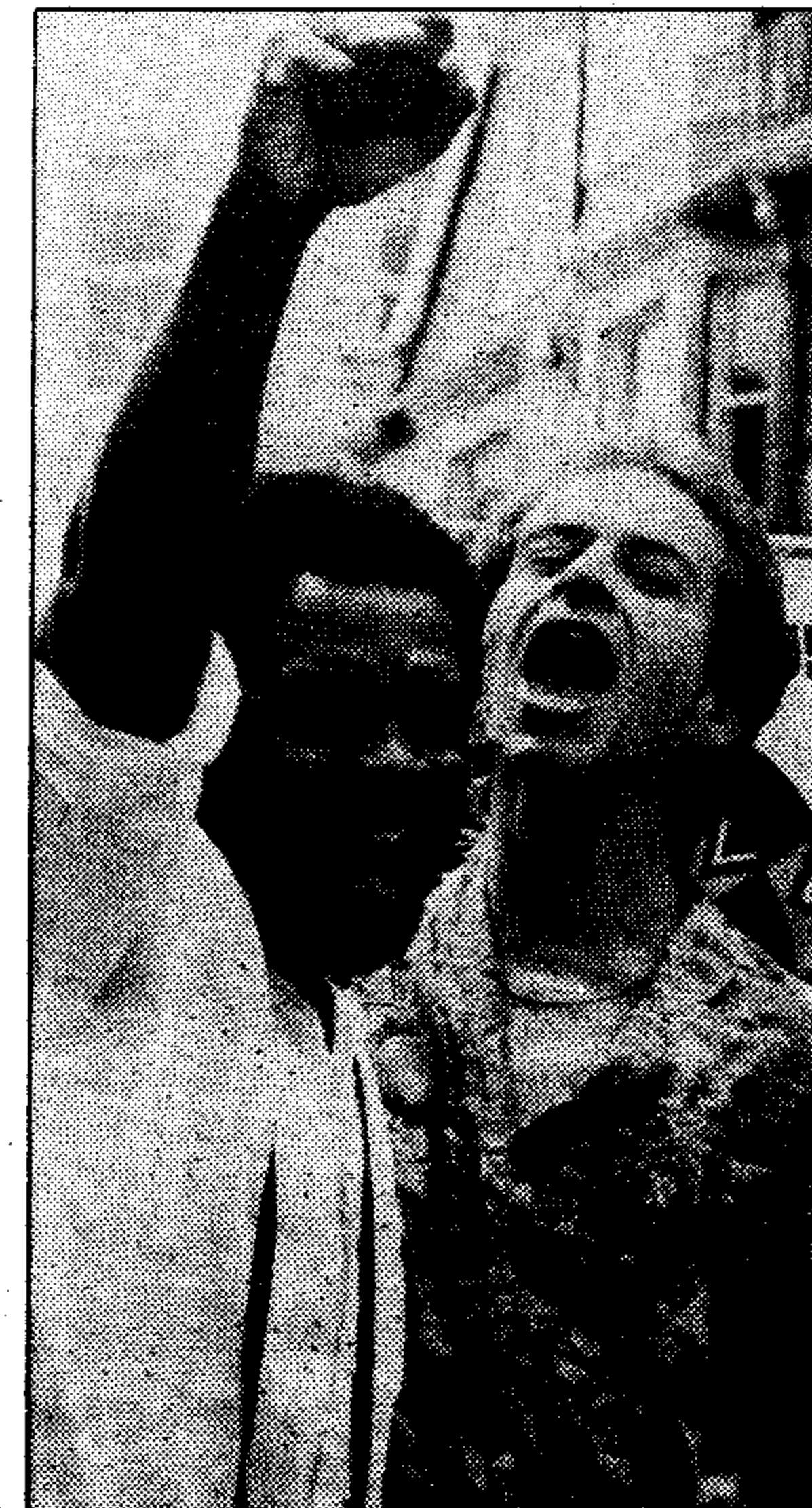
marriage...'. Subsequent sections make this concrete in terms of the rights of lesbians and gay men in housing, inheritance and immigration.

The draft proceeds to a radical assault on those sections of criminal law which concern 'sexual morality', following the lines of Labour's new policy. A central theme within this is that there should be 'no crime without a victim'. The result is to propose an equal age of consent at 16 and the abolition of the 'public order' offences now used against us. A new 'Sexual Harassment' offence supplies the safeguard.

One of the probably more controversial proposals concerns obscenity, in the wake of the 'Gays the Word' prosecution. Recognising the male-supremacist nature of society, and taking on board the debates around the connections between male violence and pornography, the draft abolishes all the existing legislation on obscenity and replaces it with a new crime of 'inciting violence against women'.

Next year's conference around these proposals will play two roles. The first, of course, is to debate as widely as possible what sort of legislation we should be demanding. The second, no less important, is to mobilise forces around the demand that the next government *does* legislate, and in the process to strengthen the links being built between lesbians and gay men and other sections of the oppressed. In the process, pressure can be mounted to ensure that lesbian and gay rights is an election issue *on our terms*, and that the Labour Party is compelled to stand its ground.

● 'Legislation for Lesbian & Gay Rights: A Manifesto', by LCLGR, is available for £1 from LGRB, c/o CHE, 38 Mount Pleasant, London WC1. The Conference will also be organised from this address. Cheques payable to 'LGRB'.





# Nicaragua Tory hand in 'contra' recruitment

REVELATIONS that a Tory MP's assistant is involved in the recruitment of Nicaraguan contra mercenaries have been made in parliament, writes NICK ADAMS.

Labour's foreign affairs spokesperson George Foulkes told the House of Commons that the misnamed 'Committee for a Free Nicaragua' is recruiting mercenaries to fight alongside the Contras and is run by an officer of the Federation of Conservative Students who had access to this House as a research assistant to the member for Luton North.

The MP in question is John Carlisle. His research assistant is David Hoyle, former senior vice-president of the FCS and now its foreign affairs chair.

Labour MPs demanded that the Foreign Office make a statement against any group supporting the Contras. Jeremy Corbyn called on secretary of state, Sir Geoffrey Howe, to stop recruitment in Britain.

But the foreign office minister Timothy Eggar made the government's position clear. Individuals and groups, he said, 'should be allowed to lobby freely...provided their activities remain within the law'.

The contras' activity in Nicaragua is terrorism, pure and simple. A recent report issued by the US embassy in Nicaragua itself deplored what it called the 'human rights' record of the contras.

The contras' campaign of terrorism has received a boost with US president Reagan's signing of an executive order to formally open the flow of the \$100 million contra aid, agreed by Congress in the summer.

The Sandinistas have described the aid package as marking a new stage in US intervention in

Nicaragua — a 'point of no return'. In addition to the \$100 million, the stepped up US involvement means

- direct CIA-funding; the CIA's budget is not published but its estimated that as much as \$500 million could be involved

- the training of contras in the US itself

- building up US military presence in Honduras as a contra launching pad — including selling new high performance jet fighters to Honduras and US training of Honduran pilots

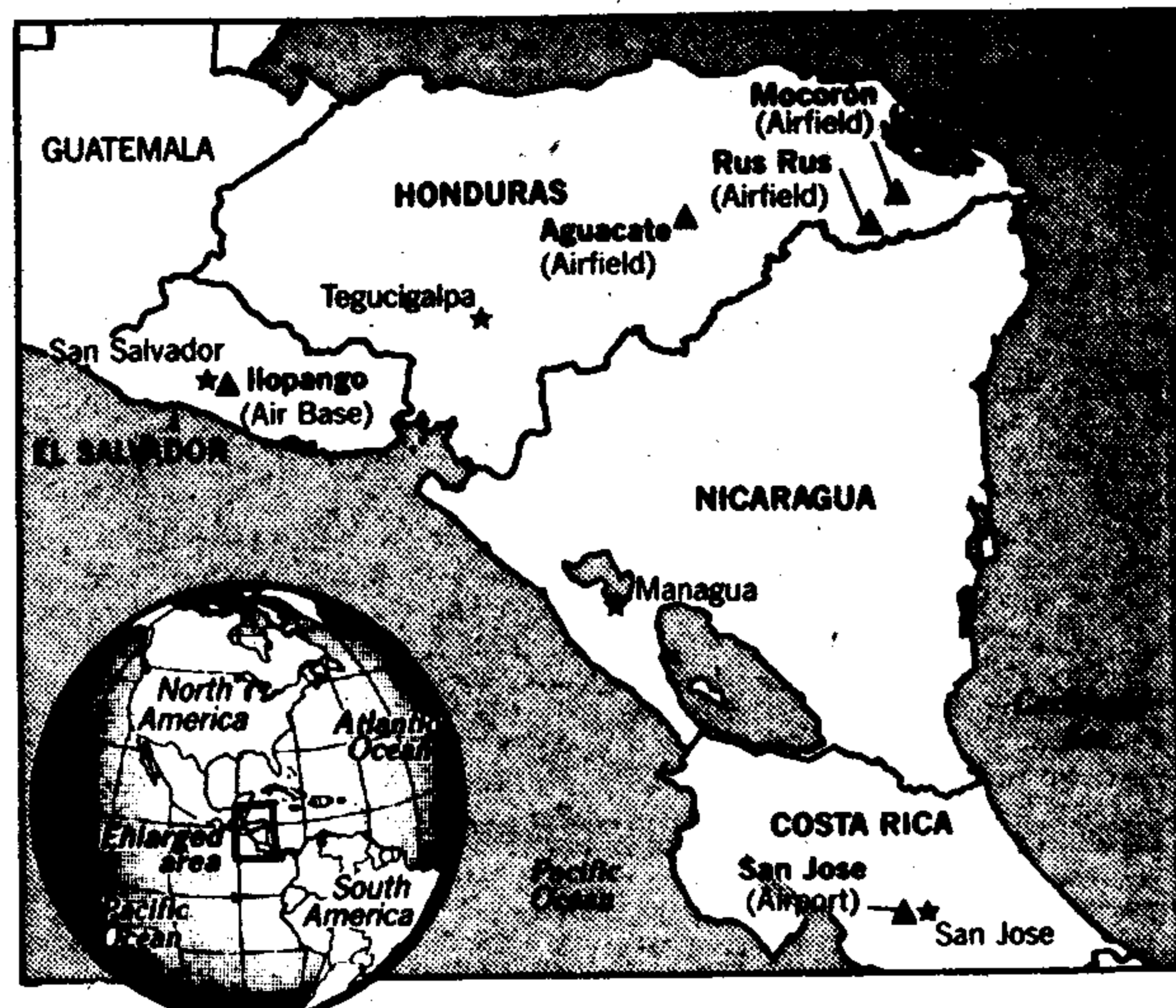
- building military staging bases on three islands near Nicaragua, including on El Tigre, 12 miles off the Nicaraguan coast in the Pacific and the Swan Islands in the Caribbean where the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba was launched from 25 years ago.


The contra war has already claimed 33,000 victims including over a thousand children under 12 years of age. The war effort is also a massive drain on the Nicaraguan economy, accounting for 50 per cent of its budget.

But such have been the gains of the revolution

that the Nicaraguan workers and peasants are redoubling their efforts to fight back against the terror campaign.

- Organising solidarity with the Nicaraguan revolution will be the theme of a Labour Movement Conference on Central America to be held in London early next year. Backed by 15 national trade unions, the conference takes place at the TUC's Congress House on 28 February. Credentials may be obtained from ELSOC, 13-16 Borough Road, London SE1 (tel 01-928 3412).





**Three faces of victory:** from left to right, Raul Antonio Acevedo, Byron Montiel Salas, Jose Fernando Canales, the young Nicaraguans who shot down the US plane on 5 October and captured CIA mercenary Eugene Hasenfus. The Hasenfus trial uncovered detailed information on CIA activity in the region.

In an interview with the US socialist newsweekly, *The Militant*, the three Nicaraguans explain their commitment to the country's defence. Typical of tens of thousands of Nicaraguan youth serving in the army they explain that there used to be many contra attacks in the San Carlos region of southern Nicaragua but now 'they run into our troops first'.

San Carlos had been one of the poorest areas in Nicaragua. 'The revolution brought us new housing, health clinics, roads and a land reform that gives land to the peasants.'

As a result the contras 'don't have any way to become stronger here. We dominate the territory and have the support of the people — that's the principal support that we have. You can see this in the assembly (at the Sandinista Workers Federation meeting hall rally to promote unity against the US aggression), hear what the people have to say, see the love they show for the soldiers fighting in the mountains. Really, even with the \$100 million, the contras can't do anything here.'

## CENTRAL AMERICA LABOUR GROUP AGM

Speakers from  
Nicaragua and  
El Salvador

Saturday, 6 December  
10am to 6pm, LSE  
Students Union,  
Houghton Street, London  
WC1

Details from CALG, 13-16  
Borough Road, London SE1

# Philippines government threatened

ON 13 NOVEMBER the mutilated body of the Philippines top left-wing labour leader Rolando Olalia was identified by relatives. Olalia had been missing for 24 hours. His widow, Feliciano, reported that her husband had been followed for some days by two strange men.

Rolando Olalia was chairperson of the May First Movement trade union federation and the newly-formed People's Party. The day after his murder, 10,000 people demonstrated in front of the headquarters of Defence Minister, Juan Ponce Enrile holding him responsible.

By Nick Adams

The day before saw an additional attack on the popular movement as a leader of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), Rodolfo Salas, was charged with being responsible for guerilla attacks. The CPP is linked up with the New People's Army still engaged in a conflict with the military. The NPA has declared in favour of a ceasefire and the government has announced it would resume talks to this end. But the military has increased its armed actions.

Armed forces chief Fidel Ramos had, a few days earlier, ordered troops to track down and neutralise what he described as the 'NPA terrorists'. Enrile

is closely associated with Ramos, and the defence ministry is known to favour a hard crack-down against the NPA, as the first step to a more general attack on democratic rights

The increasingly belligerent stance of Enrile and Ramos has fuelled speculation of a military coup. Aquino has publicly threatened to appeal to the people to take to the streets in such an event and on the day of Olalia's murder she sent her executive secretary to Enrile's military headquarters for high-level talks.

Aquino has been spending the last months in an attempt to drum up some much-needed financial aid and investment from the US, Europe and Japan. She issued a statement that she is anxious to resolve popular demands 'blood-

lessly' through such international economic assistance but in a clear concession to the hard-liners, said she 'would not tolerate a non-democratic challenge to our government and people from any quarter', specifying the so-called 'communist insurgency'.

The governments of the chief imperialist powers are providing aid and investment through an eye-dropper. Aquino's recent US visit provided aid of just \$300 million and Japan is providing support of another billion dollars. But as Aquino told the US Congress, the major problem is the country's \$26 billion foreign debt. 'Half our export earnings — \$2 billion out of \$4 billion — went to pay just the interest on a debt whose benefit the Filipino people never received'.

Moreover, the US insisted on political concessions even for this paltry aid. Washington wants clear guarantees for the future of US military bases and is opposed to the democratic rights that the people in the Philippines are seeking to extend. US big business fears that the workers and

peasants are using these democratic openings to improve their living standards to their cost.

Wage levels in the Philippines are lower than in any major country in Asia or the south Pacific. In 1985 the minimum wage legally was less than £2.50 per day. In practice, wage levels are sometimes as low as 50p per day — according



Enrile

to the May First Movement.

The situation facing the working population in the countryside is no better. So low are rural living standards that entire families, including very young children, are forced to work.

Such enduring conditions continue to fuel the mass movement. In the six months since the overthrow of Marcos strike action was twice that of the same period of the previous year.

Enrile and Ramos favour cracking down on the mass movement and curtailing democratic rights. According to Cesar Baguba, international liaison officer of the Philippines National Democratic Front they would like to do this without a coup, turning Aquino into a figurehead 'queen' while they take real power and eliminate all 'radical' elements from the government. But a coup attempt is clearly a serious option.

The popular movement has shown it will not accept attacks such as the Olalia killing. Thirty thousand workers struck Manila on Tuesday and a nationwide strike is planned for 19 November.

# East London Anti-Apartheid conference

THE FLAGS of the African National Congress (ANC) and the South West African Peoples Organisation (SWAPO) flew outside West Ham Town Hall last Saturday. Inside nearly 300 delegates attended a conference called by the east London anti-apartheid groups. Seventeen different unions, and nine trades councils sent delegations, including teachers, railworkers, local government workers, Fords workers and striking printers. Labour Party members and student activists were strongly represented.

In the opening words of AAM National Secretary Mike Terry the aim of the day was to 'ensure that the AAM deepens the understanding and support amongst the trade unions and amongst working people of this country both for the liberation struggle in southern Africa and for the campaign for sanctions against the apartheid regime.'

Speakers ensuring this happened included Dennis Goldberg of the ANC. Goldberg was one of the defendants at the Rivonia trial in the 1960's in which Nelson Mandela was sentenced. He was himself released only recently from detention in South Africa after twenty two years. Amongst other prominent speakers were Betty Heathfield of Women Against Pit Closures, Diane Abbott, Ken Gill, Andy Lavender of Portsmouth NUPE and representatives of SWAPO and SACTU.

In her contribution Betty Heathfield explained why miners wives were taking up the issue of South Africa. 'We know who our enemies are in this country' she said, 'they know who they are in their country. The sooner we get together and join forces in fighting against them the better it is going to be for all of us.'

In a deeply moving speech Dennis Goldberg made reference to a joint statement made in March this year by the ANC, SACTU and COSATU, the new trade union federation. He explained, 'It says what I am saying now. Unity is a weapon in the struggle for national liberation. This is the role of the working class of South Africa now. We call for the same kind of unity in Great Britain, we call for the same kind of unity in building the solidarity movement.'

Ten workshops dealt in detail with issues to campaign around, including the Front Line States, political repression, the South African trade unions, and the need for peoples' sanctions. Additionally lunch-time meetings were organised by youth and students, and by Rail Against Apartheid.

Advertisement

# International VIEWPOINT



10 November Issue  
Includes:

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- **Poland:** A new challenge for Solidarnosc
- **Chile:** The fight against Pinochet
- **Hungary:** The example of 1956
- **Bolivia:** Peoples referendum challenges government
- **Peru:** Peasants fight for land
- **Israeli State:** The Zionist bomb
- **Around the World:** Reports from South Africa, USA, Portugal, Ireland, Britain



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## Help Socialist Action, help yourself.

### Buy a raffle ticket

OUR supporters are now widely selling our raffle tickets. They are finding easy sales for the first prize of the new Amstrad personal computer or the latest Sharp video.

Railworkers and activists in the Anti-Apartheid Movement are amongst the best buyers. Fifty nine tickets sold at the Willesden depot, 100 in Stratford, 11 at Marlybone. One Telecom supporter alone has sold £30-worth of tickets in East London and a supporter in Cardiff has sold a similar amount in her factory. (Please let's have the accurate figures, and the money Cardiff). Glasgow supporters write that they think they can sell more than their allocation, and supporters in NW London have asked for an additional 80 tickets.

If you are still dallying with your tickets move out now and get your money in. Remember, this raffle is to help clear the unexpectedly big debts we incurred as a result of the split in our editorial board. We need £1500 from this raffle on top of our £10,000 publication fund if we are to return to a weekly paper.

Supporters	Target Sale	Tickets Sold
Aberdeen	120	
Bristol	360	35
Birmingham	640	
Cardiff	480	
Pontypridd	240	
Coventry	160	
Glasgow	360	61
Huddersfield	400	
Leeds	520	
Leicester	240	
Liverpool	200	
Manchester	920	
Newport	480	82
Nottingham	440	
S Yorks	640	
E London	1240	240
NW London	600	240
SE London	440	
N London	520	
OW London	760	
SW London	360	

## FUND DRIVE: Support our £10,000 appeal

FROM THIS weekend's 'Alliance for Socialism' conference, Socialist Action is launching a major publication fund for £10,000. The purpose of this is to reinstate the weekly schedule for our paper. If successful, we hope to resume weekly publication from the New Year. Such a large sum will only be generated, however, if intensive effort is made between now and the end of next January.

Socialist Action is unique. It is a paper that understands the practical necessity for an anti-imperialist stance in British politics. Only in combination with the assaults of the peoples oppressed by British imperialism will the British working class be able to end the power of British capitalism. Because the British ruling class derive their power not just from the exploitation of British workers but from their world-wide operations.

This is why we lay such stress on solidarity with the fight against apartheid in South Africa and against British domination of Ireland. This is also why we stand full square with the demands of Argentina for the return of the Malvinas. This is why we consider the fight to defend the Sandinista government in Nicaragua against the imperialist-inspired attacks on it should be at the centre of labour movement concern.

Socialist Action supports Labour Left Liaison and Campaign Group News. We gave our full support to the miners strike, and we welcome the campaigns of Black Section, the Women's Action Committee, Labour Committee on Ireland, the Labour Campaign for Lesbian and Gay Rights, Labour CND, and the Anti Apartheid Movement.

We appeal to all readers to contribute to our fund drive — and speed us on the way back to a weekly publication.

## Reviews

### Hungarian Tragedy

I RECALL a visit made to Eastern Europe some time ago. On returning, a CPGB member insisted that my observations could not possibly have been true! How easy is it, therefore, to understand Peter Fryer's experience in a book reprinted after 30 years.

By Patrick Field

The Hungarian Revolution of 1956 was particularly traumatic for those members of the CP who had to face up to events in Hungary. None more so than Peter Fryer, correspondent during the uprising in Hungary of the CP's paper, *Daily Worker*.

Fryer wrote what he saw. That truth was impossible for the British Stalinists who censored or omitted Fryer's despatches from the *Daily Worker*.

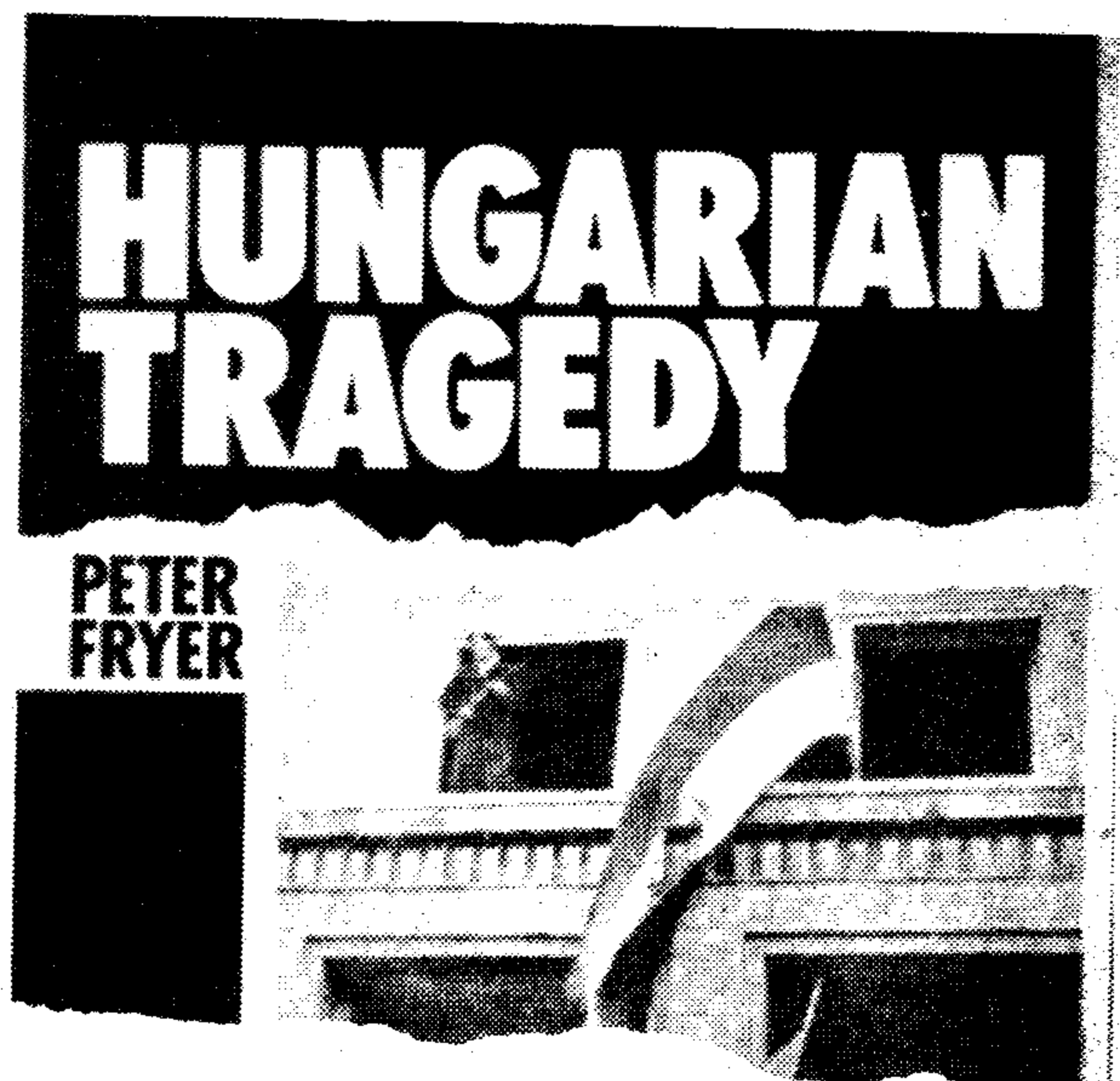
No censorship could prevent the crisis of Stalinism highlighted by the Hungarian revolution, seen again in a different form in Czechoslovakia and Poland.

Such a slim volume cannot be expected to detail all the background to the uprising. Yet, the book reports most of the essential ingredients that precipitated the uprising — mainly discontent and the inability of the regime to advance any reforms and maintain control. In particular we are told of

the hate for the AVH — the secret police and how ruthlessly they were dealt with.

As *Daily Worker* readers were told of 'counter-revolution', Fryer saw that in town after town there was no drive to restore capitalism. Instead we hear of democratic workers councils meeting in the towns and on the farms. *Political revolution was on the agenda — Hungary was cleansing itself of its Stalinist bureaucracy.*

Fryer understandably but wrongly characterised these developments as dual power 'divided between the Nagy government which had popular support of the people and the armed people themselves'. Unfortunately the Nagy government had no strategy. The armed people trusted Nagy and reform coming from above and therefore in that sense didn't take up the question of power. The workers councils did not develop into organs of



state power. Nagy, being part of the bureaucracy, brought in during the crisis, could not provide that strategy. Dual power only has meaning if the bureaucracy was to be overthrown.

Despite the inability of this book to draw conclu-

sions in relation to tasks facing the proletariat in deformed workers states, time has not devalued its valuable contribution and it is well worth reading.

● *Hungarian Tragedy* by Peter Fryer is published by New Park at £2.95.

### Ten years on Robben Island

*ISLAND in chains* is a remarkable book. Written by Indres Naidoo, a member of the African National Congress (ANC), it tells the story of his 10 year imprisonment on Robben Island.

By Ray Davis

The book starts in 1963 with Naidoo being caught planting explosives. Like many young militants of his generation Naidoo had joined the newly formed armed wing of the ANC. Called Umkhonto We Sizwe this armed wing was formed in 1961 following the massacre of 69 peaceful protesters in Sharpville the previous year. Having exhausted all

possible avenues for peaceful change the ANC concluded that apartheid could only be overthrown by armed struggle.

The regime's response was a vicious crackdown. They infiltrated the organisation with provocateurs and Naidoo's arrest was one of the results. Brutally beaten and tortured Naidoo refused to give the security forces any information. He was tried and sentenc-

ed and sent to the Robben Island prison where the story really begins.

The prisoners are subjected to persistent and unprovoked violence by the white warders. Kept half starved and frozen in filthy conditions the prisoners refuse to be broken and fight back in every way possible. The picture emerges of struggle against almost impossible odds.

The book is very readable. Most chapters are very short — a couple of pages or so — and each tells a self-contained story. You read about the despicable role that the

'liberal' prison visitors play, how Nelson Mandela and other ANC leaders are kept in a prison within a prison and the lengths the authorities go to to keep them isolated. You also read about the prisoners three successful strikes — two hunger and one work strike.

Each of the separate events related in the book go to make up the principal story. You can imprison men and women for years but you can never take away their spirit of freedom. Nor can you lock up the justice of their

cause. This book is a must not just for every Socialist Action supporter or Anti-Apartheid activist. It's a book to give to your workmates, friends and relations, even if they have never read a political book, pamphlet or paper before. It will arouse their indignation, inspire them with some of the spirit of the struggle against apartheid and encourage them to want to do something in solidarity with this mighty movement.

● *Island in Chains* by Indres Naidoo is published by Penguin at £1.95.

Tony Greenstein Labour Movement Campaign for Palestine

## AAM Appeal

As you may be aware the Anti-Apartheid Movement at this time produces a list of 'Known Families of Political Prisoners, Detainees, the Banned and the Banished in South Africa and Namibia'.

This list is now available and we are aiming to distribute it as widely as possible in order that people in Britain can show their support for those suffering for their opposition to apartheid by sending them seasonal greetings. To do this we depend very much on the willingness of publications such as yours to draw their readers attention to this list.

This year with the very high level of apartheid repression, the list is long and increasing all the time; however it represents only a fraction though of the total number of men and women incarcerated under apartheid laws especially with the current numbers of people in detention under the State of Emergency in South Africa.

We know from letters we receive back from South Africa and Namibia that such greetings are very much appreciated; we do hope that you will find space for the enclosed letter or some other notice of the availability of the list. The last posting date to Southern Africa is 5th December.

Thank you very much,

Abdul Minty Honorary Secretary, Anti-Apartheid Movement.

## Letters

### Zionism

If Sophie Nichol (Letters, 7 Nov) is interested in a 'serious discussion' then it would be helpful not to attribute to me views which I do not hold. Nowhere did I imply that Zionism was 'responsible for the Nazi holocaust, Czarist Russia.'

It is, however, indisputable that Zionism was a legal movement in Czarist Russia in return for which it concentrated its energies attacking the Jewish revolutionaries, which is why the Bund, the major party of Jewish workers, banned Zionists from their unions.

Although the Nazis were solely responsible for the Holocaust, it is also true that the Zionist movement collaborated in

a number of different ways (this was the finding of the Jerusalem District Court in the Kastner case 1953-6) and that in Western Europe the Zionists actively opposed lowering the immigration barriers, thus reinforcing the racist practices of the imperialist governments here and in the USA. It must have led to the deaths of many thousands of Jews who would otherwise have survived. Zionism was a quisling movement, a small minority of European Jews.

As David Ben Gurion, Israel's first Prime Minister wrote in a letter to the Zionist Executive (17.12.38): 'If the Jews are faced with a choice between the refugee problem and rescuing Jews from concentration camps on the one hand, and aid for the national museum on the other, the Jewish sense of pity will prevail... We are risking Zionism's very exist-

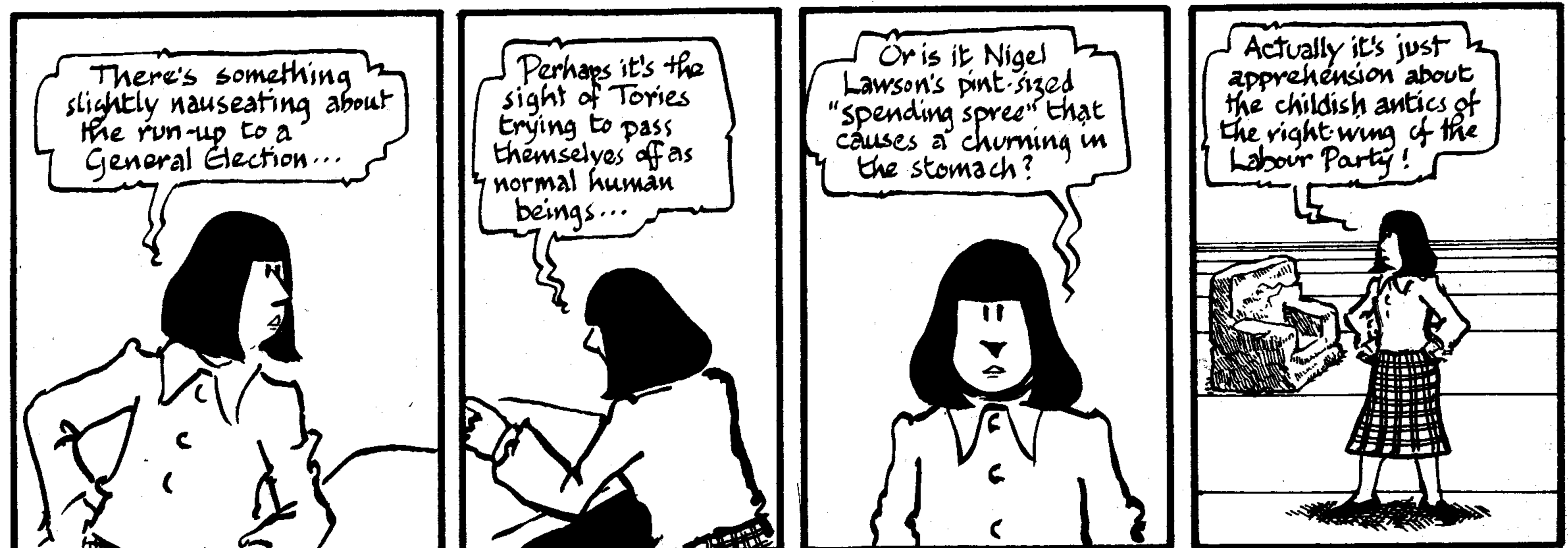
ence if we allow the refugee problem to be separated from the Palestine problem.' (Arie Bober, *The Other Israel*, Matzpen).

Likewise the Zionist campaign on Soviet Jewry has nothing to do with liberation and everything to do with providing more settlers in Israel. The Zionist organisation has tried to bar Soviet Jews from settling anywhere but Israel. It has been part of a cold war campaign in the USA. If it was simply a humanitarian campaign, why was there no similar campaign regarding Argentinian Jews, some 2-3000 of whom died at the hands of the fascist Junta? Did it have anything to do with Israel's relations with the Junta?

It is not possible to be a Jewish socialist today and to also give one's support to Zionism and the Israeli state.

## a piece of the ACTION

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The second meeting of Women Against Murdoch was held last Wednesday, 12 November. The meeting decided to step up their action — including picketing scabs and reaching out to Women Against Pit Closures — and to elect officers and a committee.

EILEEN BEER and PAULINE GOOD were elected secretary and assistant secretary. They spoke to JON SILBERMAN about the decision to launch WAM, and their experiences and involvement since the very beginning of the News International dispute.

A couple of the other wives suggested to us that we form some sort of a group and we said we thought it was a good idea. In fact we'd been talking about it on and off for months. So it was about time.

There were over 50 women at the first meeting. We discussed whether or not to form a support group. We were all in favour.

We then decided to have badges made, leaflets printed to try to get the wives who don't come down to Wapping to come. We wanted to get the men on the Saturday night marches to take them home to show their wives.

We also decided to try to help the wives of men who are in prison and also to try to be of some help to the wives of men who have died since the dispute started. And finally to see if we could give the kids of families involved in the dispute some help too, make Christmas a bit easier for them.

To do all this we need funds. So we also decided on fund-raising. It started off rather basic. We had decided we'd get a stall to sell our badges, but as the badges wouldn't be ready for a fortnight someone suggested making cakes and bread-pudding so that we could have a stall on the first Saturday after we'd set

ourselves up.

We'd had a donation of £50 from our husbands' chapel, the RIRMA Sun chapel. With this we went out and bought 200 rolls and four pounds of butter and cheese and we stood in Eileen's kitchen all afternoon and made them and took them down. We can't sell them — because of the police at Wapping would look for any excuse — so we ask for donations to the group when people get their roll and tomato. We've done quite well.

The stall has been very useful. It's allowed us to establish a presence down at Wapping. Now we want to go on from here to organise action and to get round the country and talk to people more. It's surprising how little people know about the dispute.

A few weeks ago we had a march in central London. It was the day we were lobbying the TUC. We walked the length of Oxford Street to Marble Arch and back. We were amazed, talking to people, how many thought the dispute was over! That dispute was over! That the print workers were back at work! Many people who do know that the dispute's on don't really know what's happening.

So we need to get out and explain what's really going on, act as emissaries for the strike. We would like to think that we could end

# WAM — here we go!



Eileen Beer at the Saturday night WAM stall



Pauline Good getting out the truth about the dispute

up as effective as the miners' wives movement. If we did raise any money, it could go towards petrol or to the dispute. But the main thing is getting out and telling the truth about what's going on.

We called ourselves WAM because that sums up what we are — women against Murdoch. We so hate Murdoch that that was the obvious name. WAM involves all women — wives, relatives and friends of sacked printers, and women workers formerly employed by News International. As long as they want to fight Murdoch and support the printers they can be involved.

We're beginning to make some contacts. We met some miners on the

picket. A group of councillors from Newham came up to our stall to offer support. They left their phone number. That's the sort of contact we want to build up round the country.

It's early days yet, of course. Though we are getting more women involved now than we did at the beginning.

One of the reasons that women were put off from coming to Wapping was the level of police violence. No one will ever forget the first time they went down. The horses charge. You're absolutely terrified. You say you'll never ever come again. But, of course, after a while we did. And now we walk down there and we're no longer shocked. We've even been on flying pickets.

We've got used to it. But we were terrified the first night.

Experiences like this have taught us so much. To tell you the truth, when the miners' strike was on we had no sympathy for them whatever. When our husbands came home and said they were paying a fiver a week to the miners we went through the roof. What for? They're all anarchists, they are all militants, look at them on the television — we know different now!

We went to a meeting in the early part of the dispute. Tony Benn was there. A bloke from Sinn Fein. And a miner. It was in Hampstead Town Hall. It was a good meeting. They were all terrific speakers.

When we got down

there and saw there was a man from Sinn Fein, we thought what've you brought us here for? But we listened to him and discovered that we just didn't know what was going on.

And then the miner spoke and told us what the BBC had done, reversing the sequence of the films. You only knew what you'd seen — pickets throwing bricks and then getting charged by the police. But the film had been cut about and it was the other way round!

Through going to meetings like this and through the experience of the dispute we've learnt what the truth really is.

## CSEU Lobby comments



Alec Steel, convenor Rolls Royce Motors Willesden: 'We've got about 25 here. We could've filled coaches. Our members feel so strongly about this issue. It's taken decades for trade unionists to fight to build up their rights. Now the union leadership is prepared to sell them out.'

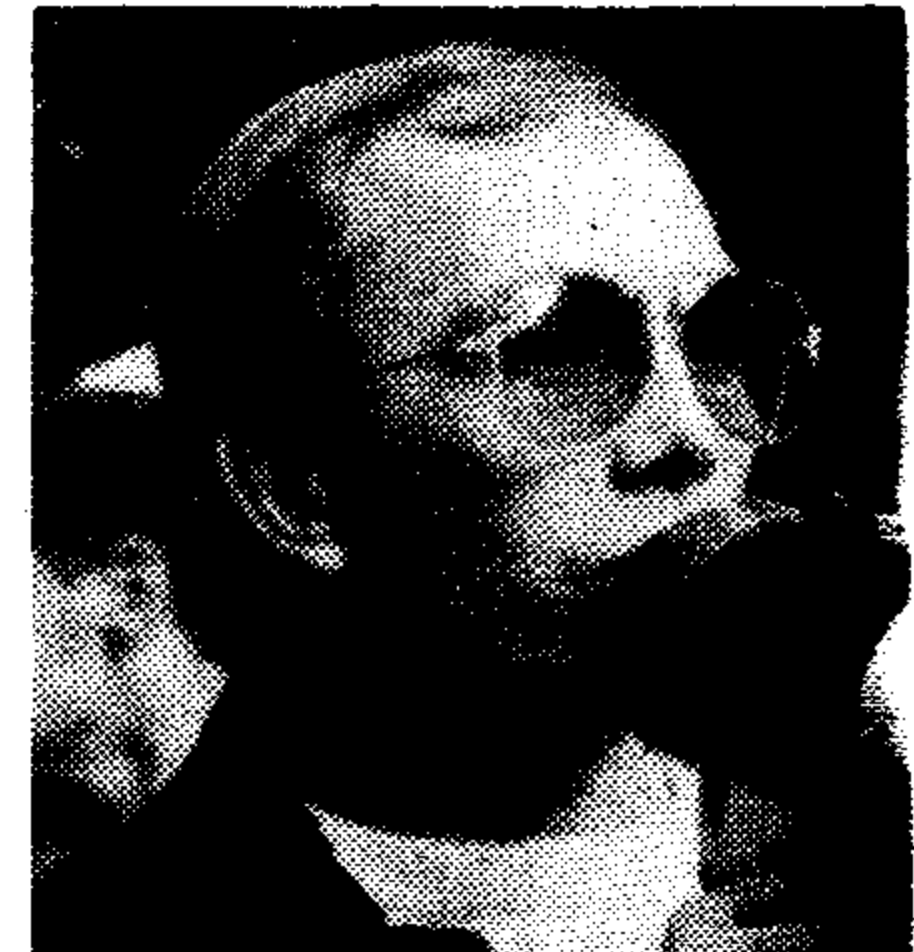
But although the likes of Bill Jordan wants to sell us out, when it goes back to the individual unions the membership will tell the leaders of the CSEU where to go.



Cyril Edwards with other workers from Baldwin and Francis, Altrincham, where he's the AEU convenor: 'There was a 250-strong mass meeting of shop stewards in Manchester. It passed a resolution in favour of a lobby of today's meeting. We took that resolution back to our factory and we had a unanimous decision to send a delegation — and 18 of our members, out of a workforce of about 250, are here.'



Dave Hodgkinson, convenor Thorn EMI, Manchester: 'As regards the officials who are prepared to sell us down the river — they're not fit to be where they are. They put their pin-striped suits on and they forget where they come from. They forget about the rank and file members. They've got to go.'



Steve Fletcher, convenor of National Supply in Stockport: 'Let's go for the shorter working week with no strings attached. And if the employers say "no", then go to the members and we'll fight like we did in 1979.' (when the 40-hour week was breached).

## 'Our rights are not for sale' say engineers

SIX HUNDRED engineering workers from all over the country lobbied the 6 November meeting of the executive of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions. They were protesting about the proposal of the engineering employers to make dramatic inroads into working conditions in the industry.

The employers are proposing to eliminate the guaranteed week and replace it by a 'flexible' hours system. This would mean that if the employers thought it appropriate, a factory would be opened for, say, 25 hours one week. Workers would make up the lost hours the following weeks — at management's command — but would not be paid overtime.

The guaranteed week was won over many years of struggle. Other such rights under attack include the principle of one worker, one job. The employers want complete 'flexibility' so that workers can be shifted about the factory — again at management's behest — irrespective of skill or contracts of employment.

'Full plant utilisation' is another term that the employers have floated, meaning that they would be able to impose shift patterns according to the company's and not the workers' needs.

Compulsory arbitration is another proposal the EEF are going for.

In return, they are offering a reduction in hours from the present 39 to 37½ in three ½-hourly stags from 1988 to 1990!

'Our rights are not for sale' was the message of the lobbyists who had travelled from Preston, Liverpool, Manchester,

Guilford, Cheltenham, Kingston, Wolverhampton and from all over London. Amongst the hundreds of engineers were sizeable factory delegations from Lucas in Birmingham who brought a coachload, Baldwin and Francis from Altrincham, Rolls Royce from Willesden, and British Aerospace from Kingston, to name but a few.

By Jon Silberman

The lobbyists demanded that AEU and Confed president, Bill Jordan address them. 'It's our voice he should hear' said Jack Prophet, president of North London AEU district who'd organised the lobby. 'The problem is that Jordan listens more to his close colleagues in the national press and to people from the Employers Federation than he does to his own members.'

Jordan had arrived at 8.15 when only a few people had arrived at the lobby. He refused to come down from the room in London's Imperial Hotel, where the meeting was being held, to address the lobby though a delegation of a few convenors did manage to get to see him.

One of them, John Styles, convenor at Smith's Aerospace and Defence Systems, Cheltenham, said that Jordan had 'listened to them but heard



nothing.'

Confed secretary Alex Ferry did arrive when the lobby was in full swing. Confronted by Doughty Rotal convenor Bill Evans whose members had delivered a petition to Jordan, Ferry said that 'the individual unions will be given the opportunity to consider what the proposals are'. The Confed executive would make a recommendation after taking soundings from the individual unions. Reports are that this could happen at the next meeting of the executive on 4 December.

Bill Jordan told the delegation that any changes to working conditions would be subject to plant level negotiations. This particularly angered the lobby when it was reported by Steve Fletcher, convenor of National Supply in Stockport. 'We can't allow them to pick us off one by one, and starting with the weakest' was the comment of a group of workers from Lucas CAV in West London — already facing company attacks on their conditions. 'We need clear national policy.'

Mick Martin, West London district president stressed what that meant for the AEU. 'Let's remind Jordan that in the AEU, the National Committee is the policy-making body. If there's a recommendation to be made, it's the National Committee that will make it'.

Martin warned AEU members to be vigilant lest Jordan tried to appeal over the heads of the National Committee to the members through a postal ballot as he'd done over the question of accepting government cash for

ballots.

North London district secretary, George Anthony said that the lobby showed that engineers were not a spent force. 'We want to return to the negotiating table on the basis of taking the employers on, not selling our hard-won rights'.

● The North London District of the AEU has called on engineers to lobby by the 4 December meeting of the CSEU. Imperial Hotel, Russell Square, London WC1 from 8.00am onwards.



# A Socialist ACTION

## Apartheid aggression as Machel murder evidence mounts

**SOUTH AFRICA** has stepped up its aggression against Mozambique and other 'frontline states' in the wake of the killing of Samora Machel. Two ministers who served in the cabinet of Leabua Jonathan of Lesotho were killed last weekend. Jonathan was deposed in an apartheid backed coup in January.

At the same time as the Lesotho killings, Pretoria launched a strike against a SWAPO base in Angola.

By Jon Silberman

For the last month there has been a significant escalation of terrorist activity by the South African-backed so-called Mozambique National Resistance. Newspaper reports state that 10,000 MNR forces have moved into Mozambique and have escalated their attacks on towns in the Zambezi region.

Mozambique is on full anti-apartheid alert whilst continuing their 60-day official mourning for Samora Machel. There is increasing evidence to confirm the statement issued by the six frontline states that Machel fell 'victim to apartheid that carries out aggression and murders innocent citizens in this region.'

Just days before the plane crash, Machel himself had spoken of an apartheid assassination attempt that had been uncovered and thwarted. At the time South African defence minister Magnus Malan was 'predicting' Mozambique's imminent collapse.

Malan threatened to 'take action' against Mozambique because of alleged bases for the African National Congress (ANC). Pretoria built up its troops along the Mozambique border.

Despite an 11-year campaign of aggression against the Machel government, South Africa's rulers strenuously denied their involvement in Machel's death. But evidence to confirm their blood-stained hands in the affair is piling up.

Their initial story was that the plane came down in stormy weather and severe turbulence. But residents in Maputo and villagers near to the scene of the crash report that the weather was perfectly calm.

Other evidence concerns South Africa's delay and inaction. The plane crashed at 9.30 pm on Sunday 19 October. One of the survivors contacted the police in Komatipoort within two hours of the crash. Yet South Africa did not inform Mozambique until 6.50 am on Monday.

Meanwhile radio listeners inside South Africa heard a news item concerning what was described as an 'intruding' plane. The bulletin said that the plane had been shot down. It was broadcast once and then taken off the air.

Two young survivors of the crash now report that medical help did not arrive until nine hours after the plane came down. Almeida Pedro, a camera operative, said the South Africans were 'not helping those who were screaming'. Pedro said that instead of helping the injured, the South African police scoured the debris for 'documents and money'.

There are further reports that Samora Machel was actually alive after the plane had crashed. The South African paper, *Ilanga*, said Machel was still alive when the police arrived!

But the most damning evidence of all has come from the Zimbabwe newspaper, *Herald*. Quoting a Johannesburg

news agency, the *Herald* said that a man identifying himself as a South African Air Force officer had alleged that apartheid forces used 'a powerful portable radio beacon' to mislead the plane's homing systems. The *Herald* report confirms the original allegations to the effect that the plane crash was the result of electronic interference.

The Maputo daily *Noticias* of Friday 24 October asked: 'Can the route of a plane be altered by technical interference? We know it can.'

The *Morning Star* of 25 October quotes a spokesperson of the British journal *Janes Defence Weekly* who confirms that such interference is possible: 'A plane deceived in this way would be 'tuned to the beacon it was heading for. Same frequency - different location' the spokesman said. Pilots would by no means be likely to register a problem until they had drifted considerably off course.' *Janes* acknowledged.

In Mozambique itself, there is no doubt about apartheid's responsibility for the death of Machel. Hundreds of thousands of people joined the funeral procession which turned into a demonstration against the Pretoria regime.

Banners declared the feelings of those present. 'The boers killed the best son of the Mozambique people', read one. 'Let every soldier avenge Samora's death', read another.

Frelimo leader Marcelino dos Santos who gave the funeral oration said that Machel had 'fallen in the struggle against apartheid'. Dos Santos pledged that the Mozambique people would not be cowed by the death of Machel, despite their sorrow. 'We shall build the Mozambique of your dreams,' he stated.



## Reject teachers pay fraud

**THE NEWS** of a 'settlement' on teachers pay and conditions came amidst daily threats by education minister Kenneth Baker and the desperate media-hyped tone of the negotiations between employers and union leaders. But neither the settlement nor the retreat by Baker can be any source of celebration for teachers, says East London NUT secretary **MONICA BRADY**.

The Labour-led authorities and the right-wing union leadership have simply done the Tories' dirty work for them. The proposed contract represents a worsening of conditions now in return for illusory promises of more money - and not yet.

The NUT leadership are presenting the deal as a victory. But this so-called 'victory' includes

- 28½ hours direct working time with pupils — an increase of one hour
- no guaranteed marking and preparation time, as demanded by teachers
- an extra four to five hours on the working week, to be determined by headteachers
- an extra five days on the working year, taken off holidays
- class size maxima of 33 when the union was demanding 27 and is presently refusing to teach classes of more than 30
- an acceptance that its a teacher's duty to cover for absent colleagues

The deal defines a teacher's job in the strictest sense and hands back to headteachers the power which school union groups have won during the period of the salaries action. Heads will now have the ability to define the priorities in areas like curriculum development and the new conditions will make it easier for any government to introduce centralised control, robbing schools of their autonomy. The agreement also includes an acceptance of the principle of

assessment, new teachers having to pass through a two year entry grade and others to be subjected to appraisal.

Moreover rumours that the deal promises substantial pay rises are simply fraudulent. The rises are minimised by what's known as 'end loading' - granting a pay award but paying it for just part of the year.

The deal runs over two years covering the period up to March 1988. A 'typical' teacher (maximum scale 2) would receive, in straight cash terms, £153 for the current year (or 1.4 per cent), payable from January to March '87. For the second year they would receive £502 or 4.3 per cent, payable over the seven month period of September '87 to March '88.

But even this figure is illusory because it includes teachers' present entitlement to yearly increments. Under the proposed deal a 'maximum scale 2' teacher would get £11,600 in April '87. In September their incremental entitlement would take them to £12,000. The employers' offer would give them £12,462 but because it is payable for just seven months it means a cash increase of just £269. So much for the cash bonanza reported in the media!

In reality the substantial increases reported in the press apply to a tiny number of teachers. Just 420 teachers in England and Wales would be entitled to the large rises quoted in the media; and whilst the top pay looks good, it would take a new teacher 15 years to get there!

For the bulk of the nearly half a million teachers the deal's promises of 'jam tomorrow' are hollow indeed.

It is clear that teachers will not give in easily. The NUT is committed to taking any proposed deal to a special union conference in Blackpool on 29 November. It will be the conference delegates who will agree what recommendation goes to the membership ballot.

The gains which teachers have made nationally over the last two years are significant — teachers have seen what life is like without cover, without meetings after

school and they've seen the numbers taken on as the result of such action.

Despite a campaign in favour of the deal by the union leadership and from council leaders like Frances Morrell in ILEA, teachers will not give up such gains lightly. The campaign for rejection by local associations and the Socialist Teachers Alliance is on too.

● *Eve-of-conference meeting to reject the deal has been called by Bradford, Inner London and other associations. 8pm, Friday 28 November, Opera House Foyer, Blackpool.*

## Anti-Apartheid conference

**THE ANTI-APARTHEID** Movement holds its AGM on 10 January 1987. It will register the dramatic growth of the AAM trebling the number of local groups to 5-600 over the past two years. The AGM will set the movement's priorities for 1987 — including stepping up the campaigns for sanctions, defending the front line states against escalating South African economic and military attacks, exposing support for apartheid by the British government and British capital, and putting forward various proposals to build the AAM as a mass popular movement against apartheid.

These proposals include remedying past weakness by stepping up the work of the AAM in the black communities, and seeking joint work with local and national black organisations. It is proposed to build on resolutions adopted by 1986 TUC and Labour Party conferences by calling for joint TUC and Labour Party sponsorship for a mass AAM demonstration in 1987.

Unfortunately there are no resolutions calling for the next Labour government to break all links with apartheid — although this can be remedied at the amendments stage. A youth section of the AAM and

greater powers for student groups are proposed.

A lot of attention is given in the resolutions to the formation of the trade union federation COSATU, and there are many calls for building links with COSATU and solidarity with it.

A major debate at this year's AGM will be on the document 'Challenging Apartheid' which proposes restructuring the AAM in line with its rapid growth — in particular for a delegate conference.

This year's conference is open to all AAM members and they are urged to attend — the registration deadline is 1 December.

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