

# Socialist Challenge

## Bosses to treat public sector workers as **SECOND CLASS CITIZENS**

Photo: MICHAEL ANN MULLEN



THE Tories are out to create a new breed of second class citizens.

Their targets are the hundreds of thousands of people who work in the public sector. The Tories' attack is double-barrelled.

Barrel one is aimed at cutting tens of thousands of jobs. Already 20,000 jobs are to go in the civil service.

It will not be bowler-hatted bureaucrats or the high expense account merchants in the treasury who will be joining the dole queue, but typists, clerks and lower grade posts normally filled by school leavers and working class women.

### Freeze

A freeze on recruitment is also to be placed on local government jobs.

Barrel two is aimed at the pay of public sector workers. The bosses'



organisation, the Confederation of British Industry, says public sector workers have an easy life and that they should be paid less than those in the private sector.

What is 'easy' about sweating in a hospital laundry, cleaning bedpans, teaching in overcrowded schools? Just who are the CBI to talk of 'fringe benefits' when tax-free cars and expense accounts come with directorships?

Thatcher claims they are cutting unnecessary wastes. For her and her friends in the CBI public transport is 'unnecessary' for they travel in chauffeur-driven cars.

For her and her friends in the CBI, NHS expenditure is 'unnecessary' for they have private hospital beds.

For Thatcher and scroungers who inhabit the executive suites comprehensive education is 'unnecessary' because their children are sent to

private schools.

But for ordinary working people these things are not just necessary, they are essentials.

The job of the Labour leaders and of the trade union leaders is to spell out these simple truths, to cut through the Tory propaganda about 'wasteful' schools, hospitals and social benefits.

### Action

But instead some of these leaders are urging cooperation with the Tories. Most notable is James Callaghan who pleads that the Tories must be given a chance and that trade unionists must not take action to 'thwart' the Tories' plans to slice the social wage.

But action is the only

thing which will stop the Tories. It was action which won the gains of the welfare state in the first place.

And, if Callaghan wishes to cast his mind back, it was mass action and not parliamentary games which brought Heath to power when Heath was overthrown in 1974.

The defence which needs to be mounted is not just a case of workers' solidarity with those threatened with unemployment. It is in all our interests to maintain the welfare state.

And no-one, especially Thatcher, and especially Callaghan, should be allowed to stand in our way.

## THIS WEEK

### TORIES ATTACK... Housing

The Tory policy of council house sales is already being carried out by the GLC. We look at what this means for tenants in Hackney... page 3

### Abortion

A leading Tory anti-abortionist has topped the ballot for Private Members' Bills... page 4

### Education

The age of the grammar school is also the age of the secondary modern... page 5

### Ireland

The Tories are already outdoing Labour in their use of the PTA... page 12

### Zimbabwe



Patriotic Front leader Nkomo calls Lord Carrington 'just a racist'. Read why... page 13

## OUR RESPONSE

### Organising

We review the public sector union conferences and argue why a new Minority Movement is still necessary... page 2

### Unions

Defending our unions was the theme of last Saturday's Socialist Challenge trade union conference. The Rank and File conference on 23 June can take this fight forward... pages 8 and 9

### Labour Party

We continue our debate on how to fight the Tories in an extended interview with Ernie Roberts MP... pages 6 and 7



## FEATURES

The role of the EEC — and how it affects women and migrant workers... pages 10 and 11

What we saw in the Six Counties — a report by two British trade unionists... page 12



As Thoughts Cascade — a short story by Jerry Lockseiser... page 15

### Defend Bill Geddes

HOSPITAL worker Bill Geddes was dead right when he said the health unions must put a stop to 'rich bastards' who are milking the NHS.

But if his aim is to be achieved, all of our active support is needed. It's also needed to defend Bill Geddes, now that he's been sacked.



## No to the Common Market — Rally 1 June

Ernest Mandel, Tariq Ali. Details page 10.

Photo: JOHN STURROCK (top); JOHN MURPHY (Socialist Challenge)

## OUR POLICIES

Capitalism is in crisis. The leaders of the Labour Party and the trade unions offer solutions that are in the interests not of the workers but of the capitalist class.

Socialist Challenge believes that the two vital tasks confronting revolutionary socialists are:

\* To build broad-based class struggle tendencies in opposition to class-collaborationism in the labour movement. These should be non-exclusive in character, grouping together militants holding a wide range of political views.

\* To begin to fight for the creation of a unified and democratic revolutionary socialist organisation which can, through an application of united front tactics, begin to be seen as an alternative by thousands of workers engaged in struggles.

Such an organisation should be based on the understanding that:

**1** The struggle for socialism seeks to unite the fight of workers against the bosses with that of other oppressed layers of society — women, black people, gays — struggling for their liberation. This socialism can only be achieved by creating new organs of power and defeating with all necessary means the power of the capitalist state.

**2** Our socialism will be infinitely more democratic than what exists in Britain today, with full rights for all political parties and currents that do not take up arms against the socialist state. The Stalinist models of 'socialism' in the USSR and Eastern Europe have discredited socialism in the eyes of millions of workers throughout the world. We are opposed to them and will offer full support to all those fighting for socialist democracy.

**3** The interests of workers and capitalists are irreconcilable on a world scale. Capitalism has not only created a world market, it has created world politics. Thus we fight for working class unity on an international scale. This unity will in the long run be decisive in defeating both the imperialist regimes in the West and the brutal dictatorships they sustain in Latin America, Africa and Asia.

In Britain it implies demanding the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Ireland and letting the Irish people determine their own future.

**4** The Communist parties in Europe are in crisis. Neither the 'Eurocommunist' nor the pro-Moscow wings have any meaningful strategy for the overthrow of the capitalist state. New revolutionary socialist parties are more necessary than ever before. Conditions today are more favourable than over the preceding three decades. But such parties can only be built by rejecting sectarianism and seeing internal democracy not as a luxury but as a vital necessity. This means the right to organise factions and tendencies.

If you agree with these principles and want to be involved in activities by Socialist Challenge supporters in your area, fill in the form below and send it to us.

\* I am interested in more information about activities in my area.  
\* I would like additional literature and enclose 50p to cover costs. (Delete if not applicable)

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Address.....

Send to Socialist Challenge, 328/9 Upper St, London N1.

## EDITORIAL

Socialist Challenge, 328/9 Upper Street, London N1 2XQ. Editorial: 01-359 8180/9. Distribution/Advertising: 01-359 8371.

# The say-nothings and the do-nothings

AFTER LESS than a month in office the reactionary spots of the Tory government are plain for all to see. For the labour movement the issue is what to do about them.

'Nothing', says one wing. The latest example was the weekend speech of Bill Sims, general secretary of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation. Unions must 'resist any tendency to allow their disappointment to turn into petulance', he said. Trade unionists have to 'accept the will of the electorate', he demanded. 'There must be some basic understanding between the new government and the TUC as to where progress can be made over the next five years', he implored.

These words follow similar ones from Callaghan, electricians' leader Frank Chapple, and Charles Donnet of the General and Municipal Workers. Having carried out policies during the Labour government which opened the Downing Street door for Thatcher they now ask trade unionists to lie down in front of her, with their hands tied and their eyes closed.

Others are not so open about advocating suicide. For instance Alan Fisher of the National Union of Public Employees talked at his union's conference about his unyielding opposition to pay beds and his determination to fight low pay. But then after these fiery words came the decision of NUPE's executive to oppose the resolution calling for industrial action from 1 January on pay beds and pay increases.

This explains why often it is best not to pay much attention to words. A more appropriate test is a commitment to mass action. What were the significant victories of the last ten years? They were issues such as the defeat of Labour's 'In Place of Strife' in 1969, the defeat of the Tories' Industrial Relations Act, the big movement for women's liberation, the bringing down of the Heath government, the activity of the Anti Nazi League and the successes last winter of the Ford workers and lorry drivers. Each was based on mass action.

But no action can be built without organisation. For example when the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions took some valuable steps

in 1970 and 1971, including calling two successful one day strikes against the Industrial Relations Act, it organised not only a highly successful 2000-strong national conference but also dozens of local Liaison Committees. The successful campaign of the Anti Nazi League against the National Front could likewise never have been carried out without the creation of hundreds of local committees involving thousands of activists.

In the fight against Thatcher something more substantial than either the old LCDTU or the ANL is needed. Trade union defence committees based locally and nationally on the official labour movement. Committees of trade unionists fighting the cuts and defending the public sector. Widespread trade union support for the fight to defend abortion rights. These are the types of organisation which are needed.

These two principles — mass action and organisation of the rank and file — are fundamental if any effective fight back is to be waged. Any force claiming to build a left wing can be judged by how far it measures up to them.

## FIRST WORD

# Organising the minority again

By Rich Palser

WHEN Labour was in office Socialist Challenge argued that it was necessary to build a new Minority Movement — or organised left wing — inside the working class organisations, to fight those collaborating with Callaghan's capitalist policies. Is this still relevant under the Tories?

The TUC has decided to talk with the Tories about 'trade union reform'. They say the Tories will be 'ill-advised' to assume that the TUC would agree on legal changes in picketing and other union rights. Len Murray told Employment Secretary Jim Prior that voluntary TUC guidelines were a 'better way to proceed'.

## Logic

Frank Chapple of the electricians' union has gone further. He gave a personal pledge to stop strikes taking place before agreements run out or without a secret ballot, to accept that 'conscientious objectors' have the right to break a closed shop, and not to use strikes for political purposes.

But he is only following the logic of miners' leader Joe Gormley, who said that the unions should get the best deal possible from the Tories. To convince Margaret Thatcher that legal changes are not necessary the union leaderships are prepared to implement her 'reforms' for her.

So far they have failed. The TUC 'guidelines' on picketing were largely ignored during the struggles of last winter — in the public sector dispute and lorry drivers' strike in particular — as the rank and file realised they would render their action ineffective.

## Haggling

So the right wing are not content with just talking to the Tories — they want to prove they can deliver the goods. Their offensive has already begun at the union conferences.

At the T&GWU conference the experience of the lorry drivers' strike will be at the centre of debate. Three branches have submitted motions expressing concern at the 'apparent inability of the elected leadership of the union to control and influence the actions of some members involved in industrial disputes.' They call for the executive not to make strikes official unless union directives are being observed.



But more importantly the line of the right wing will be tested in action. With Thatcher already attacking jobs and wages in the public sector, and not ruling out a wage freeze in the future, we will see more union leaders openly attacking workers in struggle as Chapple did during the health workers' dispute last winter.

The left must respond by rejecting the idea that union 'reform' is necessary and opposing the talks. As

Ken Gill, the white collar engineers' leader, says: 'We are not in business to haggle about the weight of the ball and chain'.

But we have to learn from the defeats of the last five years. Left-wing members of the TUC General Council refused to mount any opposition to the Concordat, for fear of being accused of ruining Callaghan's election strategy. That attitude has left the way open for the current right-wing offensive.

The right wing will be echoing Callaghan's theme that the unions should not take political decisions to thwart the Tory government's plans — it does after all have a mandate from the electorate. Those like Alan Fisher of the public employees' union who believe the unions have to 'live with' the Tory government offer no alternative.

## Reversals

The recent public sector union conferences show that the right-wing ascendancy can be reversed. NUPE conference mandated Fisher to oppose talks with the Tories, the left regained the CPSA leadership, and even in the G&MWU general secretary David Bassett was defeated when the conference voted for action for a £65 minimum wage and 35 hour week.

The viciousness of the Tories' attacks on the public sector brought these unions up with a jolt. They realised how 'trade union reform' would hamper their resistance to these attacks.

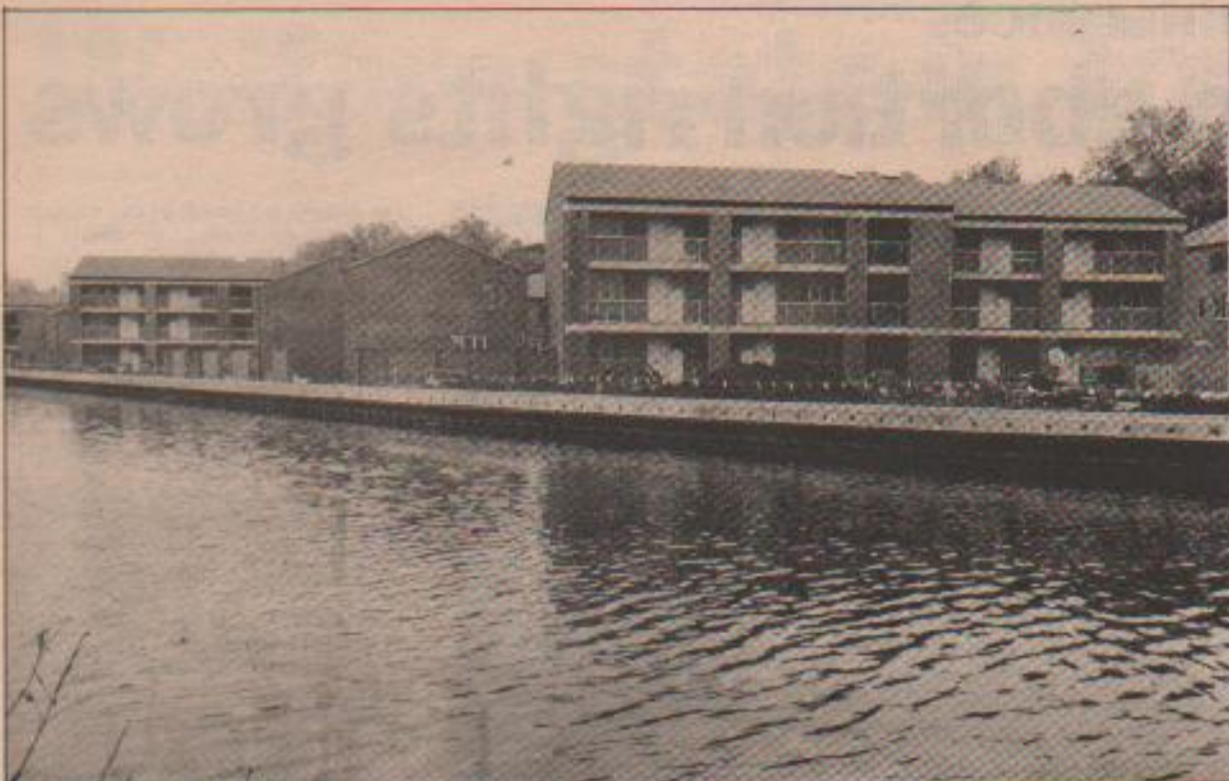
## Political

But more than this, the left in these unions was organised to fight for socialist policies which provide an alternative to collaboration with the Tories.

In the CPSA the left campaigned for individual workplace voting as an alternative to the present branch block vote system, and soundly defeated the right's attempt to win postal ballot elections.

They were organised to fight for a strike strategy as opposed to the right-wing line of limited selective action 'designed not to hurt the public', in pursuit of the pay claim. The left also won a censure of the executive. The left candidates for the executive who were most associated with these policies won some of the highest votes.

If over the last five years it was essential to build an organised left wing in the unions — a new Minority Movement — to fight the right-wing collaborators with Callaghan, today that left wing is just as vital. What the public sector conferences showed was that the fight to unite the labour movement in action against the Tories requires a political fight against the right wing.



All photos: G. M. COOKSON (Socialist Challenge)

# Tories' Sale of the Century Only the rich need apply

By Tom Mariowe

ANYBODY who wants to know what the Tory government's plans for selling off council housing really mean should visit Homerton in the East London borough of Hackney and look over two housing estates.

Estate One is called Kingsmead. It's run down, pre-war, and occupied mainly by low income families.

Estate Two is nearby Sherry's Wharf. It rests on the banks of the River Lea and consists of 143 maisonettes with gardens. It has just been completed and lies empty.

Both estates are owned by the Greater London Council. At the last election, two years ago, the GLC went Tory.

When Labour was in office at County Hall the council had discussions with Kingsmead tenants. They were promised that they would have priority when the new flats became available for renting, because many of them had long ago requested transfer to more habitable homes.

With 2,500 tenants at Kingsmead chasing 143 maisonettes at Sherry's Wharf only a minority would have been able to move. But at least the former Labour GLC had offered some of them a chance of living in decent conditions.

Now, however, the Tories have announced their plans — to sell off the flats at Sherry's Wharf. The minimum asking price of £30,000 is way out of the reach of most of the tenants in Kingsmead.

Kingsmead tenants secretary Ken Hanson told Socialist Challenge:

'The Labour council told us the flats would be rented. Some would be offered to senior citizens, but the priority would be given to tenants on our estate.'

'As far as we are concerned the flats should never be up for sale. It's disgusting.'

The Tory GLC, headed by millionaire Horace



Flats at Sherry's Wharf (top) are now on sale. Tenants on Kingsmead (below) can't afford them.

Cutler, has already sold off around 7,000 council properties since it came to power. And council tenants haven't always been the buyers.

Take the example of the Brentford Dock estate near London's Kew Gardens. When those properties were put up for sale few GLC tenants could afford the £60,000 price

tag. Eventually the Tories put the estate on the open market, and the houses and flats which had supposedly been built for those in greatest need were sold off to anyone who could afford them.

Ken Livingstone, GLC member for Hackney North and the Labour opposition housing

spokesperson, fears the same could happen at Sherry's Wharf.

'The incomes of Hackney tenants are lower than average', he told Socialist Challenge. 'No way will the majority of tenants be able to afford them.'

'Whoever eventually gets the new flats will do so on the basis of buying their way in.'

The worst fears of many involved in London's housing are now being realised.

The reduction in the number of council houses for rent means a growing waiting list, while tenants who put in for transfers to new houses or flats now find there is little prospect of being offered a move.

'People coming into our advice centres are at their wits' end', says Livingstone. 'The requests for transfers keep flooding in but there are less and less areas open to transfer.'

If the Tory government gets away with its plans, what is happening in London and other Tory-controlled councils today will be happening nationally tomorrow.

In the process the Tories could add the type of insult to the type of injury they have in Kingsmead. As Ken Hanson explains:

'The final cheek was when the GLC said they were about to start work rebuilding our courtyard. We have been waiting months for this work to start... but it was obvious that the GLC only wanted to avoid offending the eyes of their new purchasers for Sherry's Wharf.'

Kingsmead tenants refused to allow work on the 'offending' courtyard to begin unless work was done first on the courtyard areas Sherry Wharf purchasers could not see.

That was one small act of defiance, but greater ones are needed if the Tories' plans are to be thwarted nationally.

For a start, that would mean Labour-controlled councils giving a point blank refusal to operate the Tories' 'sale of the century'.

# News from nowhere

## Scotching rumours



Scottish hooligan

CHAUVINIST London is still recoiling from the visit of thousands of Scots football fans over the weekend. The papers were full of the drunken misdeeds of our subhuman cousins from north of the border. Scandalised by this shocking behaviour News from Nowhere decided to mount its own investigation of the 'tartan trouble-makers'.

Needless to say, the real picture is rather different. For example, according to the press 2000 fans 'bolted onto' the tube line near Willesden Green. In fact what happened was that a packed train — about 200 people in each of 10 carriages — stopped about 300 yards short of Dollis Hill.

For a long time the passengers were not told what was happening. Those who were stuck on the train tell of how they were packed tight in the airless carriage. They tried to wedge the doors open with beer cans to get fresh air, but railway staff told them that if the doors were open the train would never go.

Our informants, two Scottish CPSA members, tell us that one old man collapsed and an eight-year-old girl was near fainting. In desperation the passengers broke the windows (yes, that's the truth about the broken tube windows).

Eventually, only minutes before the match started, police arrived telling them to get out and walk along the line. Apparently local people were very sympathetic to the Scots and many gave them lifts from there to Wembley.

But the ordeal of our two CPSA members was not yet over. On Saturday evening they were drinking at a pub near Haymarket called the Captain's Cabin. They had been there every evening since Thursday and had seen no trouble there. But at about 8.30 the police arrived and ordered a reluctant publican to call time. Protesting customers were escorted from the pub by police. The verdict of two of them: 'The way the fuzz treat us here is racism.'

Considering all the hue and cry, NFN has decided to award a biennial Scottish Hooligan Award. This year's winner is Sir David McNee, the Metropolitan Police Commissioner.

## Save the Wales

WHEN is a country not a country? Answer: when it's Wales. Or rather that is the attitude of the European Commissioners, following in the best traditions of Whitehall boundary drawing. Wales has only four seats in the European Parliament compared with the South of Ireland which has a similar population and 15 seats.

Plaid Cymru, the Welsh Nationalist party, made this point when they launched their European manifesto last week and demanded 15 seats for Wales. They pointed out that Wales even did badly in comparison to Luxembourg: 'six seats with a

population the size of Gwent.'

Our Sports Correspondent adds: This is of a piece with the discrimination practised by the International Cricket Conference, whose trophy competition began last week as part of the run-up to the better-known Prudential World Cup.

Wales competes in the ICC Trophy but, not being an ICC member, is not allowed to score points for victories. Points scored against Wales count in the competition.

## No lift off

IT'S NOT every day that we can report a successful conclusion to a News from Nowhere campaign. But the decision of the Zaire government to throw out the West German rocket company OTRAG must fall into that category.

As we have explained before, the Mobutu regime leased a 10,000 square mile area of Shaba province [formerly Katanga] to OTRAG for rocket testing. The agreement allowed the company unprecedented rights over the region and its inhabitants.

This alone aroused the anger of much African and left-wing opinion. But there were also strong indications that the business of selling rockets to third world countries for launching spy satellites was a cover for something even more sinister.

OTRAG seemed to be part of the nuclear collaboration between West Germany and South Africa. This is aimed at circumventing international opposition to South African nuclear development as well as the 1954 ban on West German nuclear re-armament.

OTRAG and Zaire both denied the charges, but they failed to answer a number of questions convincingly:

'Why was the first OTRAG test launch preceded by tests at the West German national aerospace authority

'Why does OTRAG, a 'private company', enjoy full tax exemption in West Germany?

'Why did a photographic blow-up of a cruise missile appear on the OTRAG stand at the 1977 Le Bourget air show? US specialists reckoned the missile was flying over African terrain.

Obviously the questions were beginning to come a bit thick and fast since, at the end of last month, the Zaire government unilaterally ended the contract.

## Faux pas

DOES the French post office know something we don't about the intentions of the new Canadian government? In its latest Paris telephone directory the post office, not normally given to commenting on transatlantic politics, lists the diplomatic delegation from Quebec as the 'Embassy of Quebec'.

In a past age that sort of faux pas might well have been the occasion for a war, or at the very least the breaking off of diplomatic relations. This time there was nothing more than a few red faces at the postes et telecommunications, where an inquiry has been ordered.

Over at the Canadian Embassy they have gone through the whole affair with great sang froid. Still...

## Apology

THE pictures of the campaign to defend Pat Arrowsmith in Cardiff, which have appeared in Socialist Challenge over the last three weeks, are by Chris Gregory. Our apologies for not crediting her before.

**OXFORD ANL**, weekend school 'Fascism Today'. Speakers from ANL, CARF, Searchlight, BASH and others. Films, socials. 500 places only. £2.50 or £1.50 students/claimants. ANL, PO Box 16, Oxford OX1 2JE.

**POLITICS of Food**, Day conference Sat 2 June. 10am to 5pm, Gregory House, Brunswick Square, London. Contact BSSRS, 9 Poland St, London W1V 3DG. 01-4372738.

**WORKERS Against Imperialism: the British labour movement and Ireland**, by Mary Masters. Revolutionary Communist Tendency. This pamphlet explores how British workers have responded in the past to the struggles of the Irish people against imperialist domination, and shows the possibility and necessity for building an anti-imperialist movement in the British working class today. 35p + 15p postage. Payments to RCT Association, BM RCT(4), London WC1V 6XX.

**REVOLUTIONARY Communist Tendency**, 'Racial oppression — how to fight it'. First of three forums on how to build working class defence against attacks on black communities. 1. The struggle against racism and fascism — lessons from the past. Frank Richards. North Library, Manor Gardens, N7 (Tubes: Archway, Halloway Road). 7.30pm.

**ANTI NAZI LEAGUE** enamel badge now available. Red arrow set in silver metal, with lapel pin fitting. 60p each plus 10p postage — free for £3.25 post free, from Civil Servants Against the Nazis, c/o Bookmarks, 265 Seven Sisters Road, London N4 2DE. (Please make cheques/POs out to 'Bookmarks').

**WOMEN Against Racism and Fascism**, national meeting, Saturday 9 June, 10.5. Methodist Church Hall, Lancaster Road, London (nearest tube, Ladbroke Grove).

**'THE DEAD ARE NOT SILENT'** — new documentary feature on the murder of two former Popular Unity ministers by the junta. With 'Patchworks of Santiago'. 8pm, Monday 4 June, ICA Cinema, The Mall, SW1. Tickets £1 from Chile Solidarity Campaign, 129 Seven Sisters Road, London N7 7QG.

**EDINBURGH UTOM** Irish Folk Night, Saturday 9 June, Heriot Watt Union, Grindly Street, Edinburgh. The Edinburgh UTOM meets on the first Monday of each month at the Trade Union Centre, Picardy Place. Next meeting 4 June.

**POSTERS** showing arrest of Hugo Blanco by the Peruvian army, 50p each, funds to be shared by IMG Fund Drive and Peruvian PRT. Write for poster, enclosing 10p for p&pc, to R.D. Duckworth, 35 Malvern Avenue, Frenchwood, Preston.

**VEGETARIAN? Anti-racist? Support Vegetarians Against the Nazis**. See to PO Box 151, London, WC2 for Red Carrot badges (20p) and details.

MARXISM 79

6-13 July, Poly of North London Prince of Wales Road, NWS

Courses on Science and Technology, Women Intro to Marxism, Political and Personal, Marxist Economics, Literature, Marxist Traditions, Black and Asian Studies, TLs since the War, Art Film and Cinema, 20th Century Revolutionary Movements. Plus films, theatre, music and debates. £8 for week in advance. Details from SWSO, PO Box 82, London E2 (01-986 8355). Accommodation and creche provided. Cheques payable to SWSO.

**WANTED!** Full-time refuge worker for Hackney Women's Aid. Write: HWA, 87 Cecil St, E8 for details.

**'NICARAGUA, Free Country or Death'**. British premier of this feature-length documentary, made in collaboration with the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) who are fighting the Somoza dictatorship. Benefit for FSLN with speakers. Friday 1 June, 7.30pm, LSL, Houghton St., WC2. 11. Film available for hire from The Other Cinema (01-7548508).

**WOMEN'S Motorcycle Maintenance Co-op**. Meeting to plan future programme, Sunday 10 June, 2pm, 12 Castle Street, Cannon (Kensich Town tube). All women welcome, especially new members.

BLAIR PEACH FUNERAL



2pm, 13 June

Assemble Phoenix School, Bow Rd (Bow Road tube)

No banners

NAC's timely conference

Threat to abortion rights grows

By Judy Watson

THE fears of the pro-abortion movement seemed realised last week when the Tory MP for Ayrshire North and Bute, John Corrie, drew first place in the ballot at Westminster for private members' Bills.

Corrie immediately announced he would introduce a Bill to further limit a woman's right to choose whether or not to have a child. His proposal was to cut the limit on abortions from the 28th week of pregnancy to either the 16th or the 20th.

Within hours of Corrie announcing his intention he began to have second thoughts. By last weekend he said it was 'considerably less likely' that he would choose abortion as the subject for his Bill. Apparently he had been told he would face '100 per cent' opposition.

Whatever Corrie finally decides the threat to abortion rights continues to grow.

\* First because of the successful 'propaganda war' conducted by anti-abortionists in the form of abortion 'horror stories' in the run-up to the election.

\* Second because of the size of the Tory majority in parliament.

\* Third because of the length of the parliamentary session — 18 months — which means any private



member's Bill will have a better than usual chance of passing through the necessary legislative stages.

Whether or not Corrie sponsors an anti-abortion Bill it seems certain that such a Bill will be drafted and that its main aim will be to cut down the abortion time limit. A 16-week limit would rule out the possibility of screening for foetal abnormalities, such as spina bifida and mongolism, for usually this can only be performed

after the 16-week period.

Less than 4 per cent of abortions are performed after the 16th week, less than 1 per cent after 20 weeks and less than 0.1 per cent after 24 weeks. But this does not mean that cutting the time limit would be of little consequence.

Instead the figures suggest that because so few abortions are performed after 16 weeks there are often special circumstances. These

can include the health of the woman, a deformed foetus, or delays in getting the operation performed. Women do not lightly decide to have a late abortion.

In the shadow of these new threats the National Abortion Campaign holds its annual conference on 9-10 June in Nottingham. It is there that the plans for a massive defence of abortion rights will be discussed and decided.

The obvious first step is building a massive demonstration. NAC has already called upon the TUC and Women's TUC to honour their own conference resolutions calling such a protest in the event of any new abortion restrictions. The NAC conference will also hear proposals for a conference on positive legislation directed at the Labour movement.

The present uncertainty over John Corrie's intentions need not confuse the pro-choice movement. So far the strength of that movement has persuaded him to have second thoughts but the anti-abortion lobby remains powerful and highly influential in the new Tory parliament.

The first step to countering that lobby is the NAC conference. Further details of it from 374 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1. Or phone 01-278 0153.

Angry and black

By Rich Palsar

'Police and immigration officers' violence has become an everyday occurrence. Our youth are facing constant brutality.

'Our families are terrorised by passport raids. Our homes are battered by the police. Our men and women are harassed and sexually humiliated when they enter the country.'

This is the reality of life for black people in Britain, and a broad range of black organisations will be demonstrating about it this Sunday, 3 June.

Just two examples are enough to prove their point. One is the case of Abdul Azad, who faces possible deportation for being an 'illegal immigrant'.

Abdul's mother was brutally murdered. It was obvious that Abdul was not responsible, but the police held him for 10 days of questioning — and forced him to sign a statement that he was an illegal immigrant.

After twelve and a half weeks in Risley remand centre the defence campaign finally won his release — but now the threat of deportation is looming again.

Meanwhile police visited 1,300 homes in connection with the murder. But Detective Superintendent Bou-



ABDUL AZAD

stead complained that 'many of the immigrant community have got the

impression we were more interested in looking for illegal immigrants than we were in looking for the murderer'.

Since they requested to see passports in many cases, this is hardly surprising.

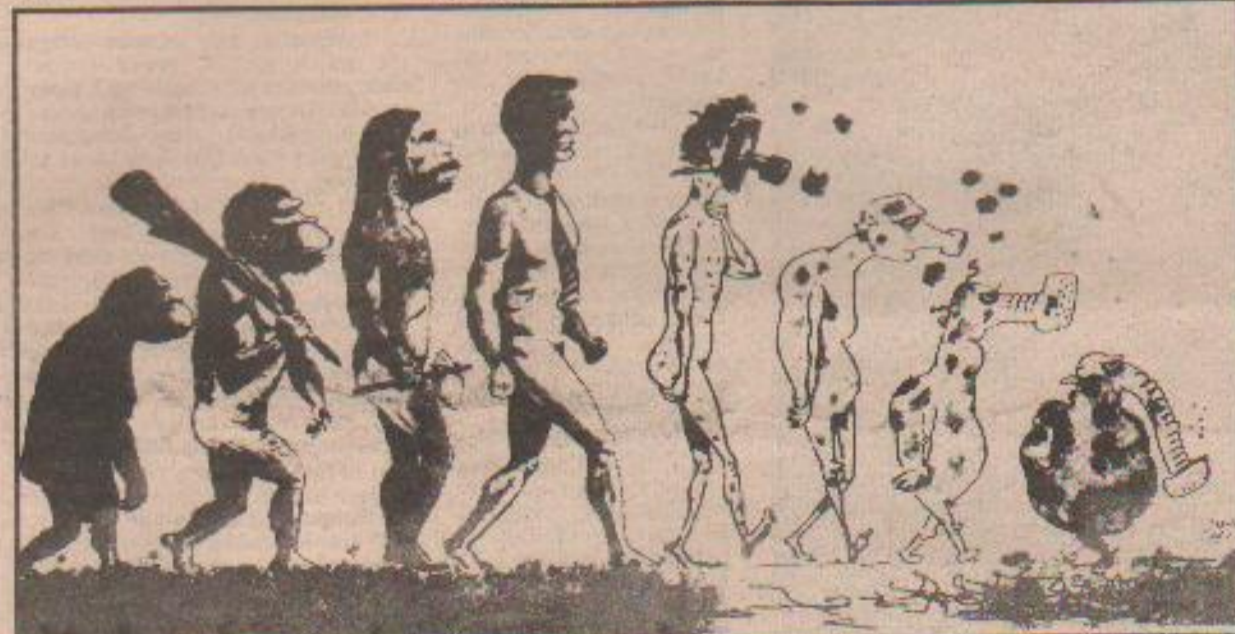
The second example is that of the Virk brothers from Newham. When they defended themselves against an assault by racist white youth they were arrested and sent to prison.

Their appeal is being heard on 7 June at the Royal Courts of Justice in the Strand, London. The Steering Committee of Asian Organisations is organising a demonstration outside at 10am.

These are just two instances of the police harassment which has led to the 3 June demonstration, called by 'Black People Against State Brutality' — a coalition of the Asian Women's Movement (AWAZ), the Brixton Black Women's Collective, and the Indian Workers Association (GI).

They came together earlier to protest against the 'virginity tests' carried out by immigration officials, but they regard this as just a part of the broader state brutality towards black people. They are asking all anti-racists to join the demonstration with their banners, but no placards.

\* The demonstration assembles 1pm, Speakers Corner (Hyde Park).



No nukes anywhere!

AN appeal for worldwide demonstrations on 3 June for international cooperation against atomic energy has been launched by the International Coordination Conference of the anti-nuclear movement.

The appeal says: 'The struggle against the usage of nuclear energy is the most visible expression of a worldwide movement to preserve our health and our environment.'

It explains that to fight against 'these inhuman conditions is part of the struggle against the loss of social and democratic rights, against unemployment, starvation, underdevelopment and war', and stresses that these aspects 'are inseparable'.

The appeal therefore puts a big emphasis on winning support inside the organisations of the working class. It recog-

nises that fears about loss of jobs have held back many unions in opposing nuclear development, and stresses the need to explain that jobs which 'draughtically endanger health and environment' are against workers' interests.

The organisers urge greater investment and other measures to exploit alternative sources of energy. Socialists would point out that this is not a

matter of persuading the employers and their states, who want to develop nuclear power for reasons of profit and war.

We should put forward the need to take out of their hands the right to take such decisions, explaining that the way to end the nuclear threat lies through a fight for a planned economy under the democratic control of the working class.

Picket Brum club

POLLYANNA'S is a club in the city centre of Birmingham. The Commission for Racial Equality recently found that its owners and manager operated an illegal colour bar quota.

But since this disclosure the management have publicly defended their actions, and further complaints of a continuing colour bar flood in.

The Birmingham Action Committee Against Racism in Clubs is holding a picket of Pollyanna's on Saturday 16 June. The picket assembles at 9pm at Chamberlain Square.

# Welfare state in Tories' gunsights

By Bob Pennington

CUTS in public spending totalling at least one billion pounds can be expected during 1979-80.

Industry, Employment, Environment, Trade, and Education will all come under the axe. Double figure inflation, expected to top 15 per cent by the autumn, will mean even further reductions in services.

Environment Secretary Michael Heseltine has been telling local authority associations and trade unions that there must be an immediate 'voluntary' freeze on recruitment, and that this will be followed in three months' time by cuts in staff.

## Catastrophic

Prime targets for cuts are education, other social services, and direct labour departments — a blow to more than one million people on the housing waiting lists and a bonus for the private builders.

Bus services are also on the target list. Local authorities have been told to take 'a hard look at subsidies'. Bus users — workers, school students and older people — will have to pay higher fares for even worse services.

The cuts planned for the health service would have catastrophic results. The NHS is already under-equipped and understaffed and the workforce drastically underpaid.

The proposed cuts are not simply 'economies'. They represent a well thought out move by the Tories to rescue a crisis-ridden private sector by making more funds available to British industry through tax cuts.

## Timid

Sir Geoffrey Howe, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was quite explicit about this when he complained about the Labour government's 'use of £3,000 millions' to delay the collapse of so-called dying jobs.

The Tories have got the welfare state in their gunsights. The introduction of the welfare state after the election of the Labour Government in 1945 stopped on the borders of timid reforms. However it did encourage working people to

think that health, education, child-care, and housing were not privileges, but the rights of everyone.

In order to cut the welfare state now the Tories have to weaken that belief. In this they have been helped by the preceding Labour government.

## Sacrifices

It was the Labour government which introduced the first serious unemployment among teachers for decades, closed hospitals, and cut back on nurseries. Labour Ministers preached that Britain's national interests demanded sacrifices from all.

Now the Tories are trying to capitalise on that. Profitability is being put above all else; social need takes a poor second place. If people want education they must pay for it. If they want health care they must take out a private insurance scheme.

A surprised David Bassett, general secretary of the General and Municipal Workers Union complained to his union conference last week that Ministers had 'displayed a contempt for union views which unions have never experienced before.' Perhaps he would have liked a union-cabinet consultation at Downing Street to work out the most civilised ways to slash public expenditure!

## Threats

For the millions of people threatened with unemployment and massive reductions in essential social services, the fact that Ministers have not had a chat with them is not the issue. They are faced with the problem of how to defend what they have got and how to go on the attack so that they can meet their social needs.

The task now is to organise action inside the trade unions, the workplaces and the community to fight these cuts. Labour councils who refuse to accept cuts and who violate the Tories' cash limits must get the full support of the workers' movement, from demonstrations and pickets to all-out strike action.



## Job creation—Tory style

By John Ross

If you thought Labour's 1½ million unemployed was bad just wait until Tory policy gets going.

First it was the three month ban on civil service and local government hiring. Given job turnover that is already a 5 per cent cut — a loss of 22,000 jobs in the civil service alone.

Next for cutting are almost certainly the £460 million in regional development grants. For Scotland, the North West, Wales and many other areas this means the loss of tens of thousands of jobs. This is in a situation where unemployment, even on official figures, is already over 7 per cent in Scotland, 7½ per cent in Wales, and 8 per cent in the North and North East.

Next in line for attack are the job creation schemes. Over 170,000 workers are directly dependent on these. Tens of thousands more are kept off the dole queue producing the goods bought by workers on the job schemes. These will all be under attack.

Also coming are attacks on the nationalised industries. For example, the last Labour government put £85 million into the intervention scheme for shipbuilding. This will now be for the chop.

All this is over and above the massive unemployment built into the monetarist economic policies of Joseph, Howe, Thatcher and the other Tory leaders.

The Tory alternative is supposed to be job creation in the private sector. What private industry thinks about unemployment was shown very clearly in the last three months. Investment in machines and capital goods fell by 4 per cent and construction investment by 7 per cent. The private sector will cut back jobs in the years to come, not create them.

Labour's state handouts to private industry and their cuts in public spending were no solution to the crisis. Only a massive programme of public spending and nationalisation could restore the right to work. But under the Tories workers will be deliberately pushed onto the dole queue. That lesson has to be rammed home.

## Schools: whose freedom, whose choice?

By Betty Hunter, NUT

BEFORE the general election the Tories asked the Department of Education to suggest ways of axing £400m from the education budget.

So it's cuts, and what else? The Queen's Speech stated that legislation would be introduced to allow those councils which have not gone comprehensive to retain their grammar schools, while money will be provided to cover fees at independent schools for selected pupils.

The fact that nothing is intended for the extension of nursery education, nothing for developing further and higher education, emphasises that Thatcher's so-called freedom is for that deprived sector of society, the middle class families, who want us to pay for their educational privileges through local authority finances.

The extra money for the private sector and the expected increases in the salaries' bill, coupled with the cuts in expenditure, will simply mean a run down of education for the majority of students of all ages.

To make all this palatable, the idea of parental choice and the pursuit of excellence are bandied about.

What this means is indicated by the plans unveiled by Education Secretary Mark Carlisle before the election.

There will be more tests for school students, and results will be measured against a national yardstick. Working for exams will be the prospect facing students of all ages.

Methods of teaching associated with progressivism, such as mixed ability teaching, will be actively discouraged.



For the majority, comprehensive schools will do, provided they have an inbuilt screening process to cream off a selected few to fill the needs of industry.

To keep the schools on their toes the inspectorate is to be increased, exam results will be published and a parents' charter will give them more choice over secondary schools.

Parental choice for the Tories is simply another pressure on the schools to maintain traditional curriculum and values. No doubt corporal punishment will be encouraged as a way to improve standards.

In the context of cuts and falling rolls, when school finance is allocated on the number of students, these

policies can only lead to false and pernicious competition between schools, rather than united demands for improvement.

It is the old divide and rule strategy. But instead of campaigning for working class involvement in discussing educational policy and the needs of students, the National Union of Teachers has rejected the Taylor proposals on parental representation.

Instead of fighting for the improvement of conditions in schools as falling rolls made that possible, the NUT shuts its eyes to school closures.

Instead of resourcing all schools so that they could provide a wide curriculum, the Labour Party allowed parents to be diverted into making choices based on school reputation.

Those are policies we have to reverse in the battle against the Tories.

**How do you regard the Tory victory?**

In my opinion the balance of power in Britain had been swinging in the direction of the organised working class. The Tories saw quite clearly that there had to be a fightback in order to weaken that power. To do this they realised they had to win a general election — which of course was made easy for them because of the policies pursued by the last Labour government.

As a result of these policies, some important sections of the working people either abstained from voting or turned to the Tory Party. This gave to the Tories the chance they needed to reverse the increasing power of the working class and to move to reassert in an undisputed way the power of the establishment, capital, and the Stock Exchange.

**What do you think about the argument that Labour failed because it had lost 'the middle ground'?**

Elections are never won or lost in the three or four weeks preceding the election. People vote on the basis of the experience of the government's action and record in the previous years.

We must never forget, those of us in the trade union and labour movement, that the majority of Britain's people are working people. If the interests of those people were being adequately represented and properly looked after by a Labour government then there need never be any fear of having a Tory government.

The problem is not that perhaps we lost the marginal votes of people who are in effect middle class — the middle of the road voters. The problem is not about a million and half or two million votes of this type that didn't come to us but went to the Tories.

The struggle is to hold working class support. If we win the working class vote we win the majority of the British people.

**How should the fightback against the Tory government be carried out?**

For example, in a statement after the election you said: 'My job is to link up with the Tribune group and the trade union group in Parliament, but also to promote extra-Parliamentary struggle'.

**Which do you think is more important — the struggle in Parliament or the struggle outside it?**

I think struggle in both places will be important. There has to be a struggle outside in order that support can be got in Parliament for the action outside.

People should not just elect their MP and then leave them alone, but demand to know what their position is on what's taking place outside. So struggle has to take place in both places and they must be linked.

**What about the argument that action outside parliament to oppose the government and its laws is not acceptable? I ask this because, for example, NUPE has said it will rid the health service of pay beds and this has been attacked by Tories as violating the law.**

Also, the picketing during the 1972 and 1974 miners' strikes, the actions taken to free the Pentonville Five, and against the Industrial Relations Act would be illegal under the Tories' new proposals.

**What do you think of the argument used among others by Shirley Williams, Callaghan, and Reg Prentice when he was in the Labour Party that people have the right to agitate to change the law, but while the law exists you must carry it out?**

The working class throughout its history has had to struggle against existing legislation. And that has meant opposing Acts of Parliament and compelling changes. The situation is no different now.

If there are Acts of Parliament or acts committed by a government which don't meet with the support of the majority of the working class then that class will have to fight either to stop legislation or to oppose it.

I don't agree with the position that was put by Nye Bevan. He said in his book *In Place of Fear* that he didn't

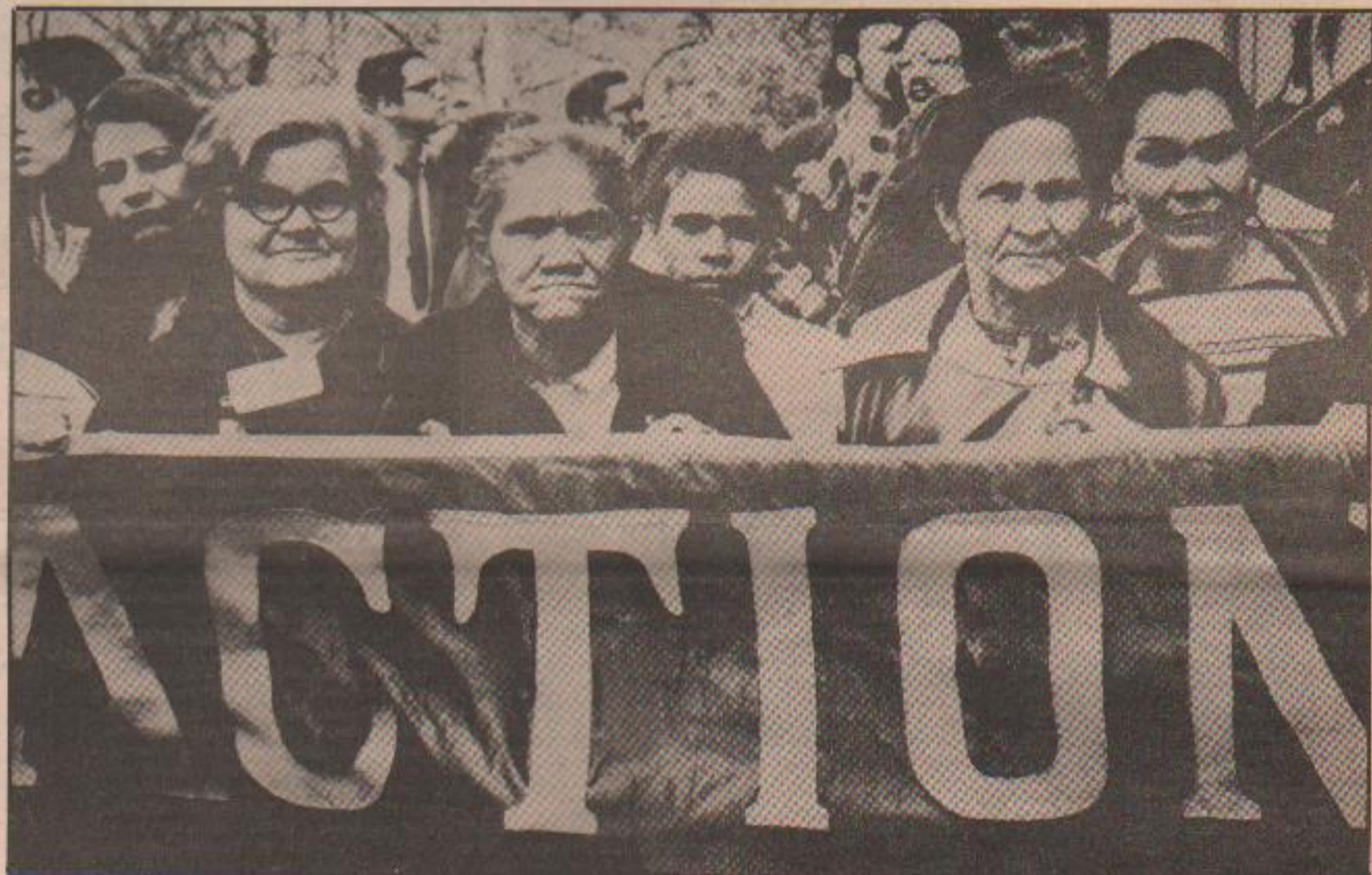
# Talk to the Tories?

## 'It is stupid for anyone to make arrangements with their jailers'

In the week when Callaghan told the unions they must not take political action against the Tories, John Ross asked ERNIE ROBERTS — the newly-elected Labour MP for Hackney North and a leading left winger — about the reasons for Labour's defeat, his views on action

outside Parliament to bring down Thatcher's government, and whether we should obey the law.

On the issue of the Labour Party leadership, Roberts says that Benn should challenge Callaghan now.



agree with industrial action for political ends.

It is important that industrial action should be taken for economic ends, for political ends, or for whatever ends the working class wishes to achieve. That's the strength, in fact the only real strength of the working class movement — that it has the power to withhold its labour and insist upon justice.

My own union, the AUEW, emphatically rejected legislation which was on the statute book — the Industrial Relations Act. People said to us it was an Act of Parliament, therefore you have to accept it and wait until a Labour government and then try and change it.

But, of course, that is not logical. If an Act of Parliament is so onerous it is taking away the liberties of the people, in this case of trade unionists, those trade unionists have the right to fight against such a denial of liberty, which is what we did.

We said we were not prepared to operate the Act, ignored it, and despite the penalties imposed and the confiscating of union funds, the union still refused to accept that legislation and was on the point of calling a general strike of engineers on the issue. This was only stopped, as you may remember, because some anonymous wealthy individual paid the fines and got the government off the hook.

As a result of that struggle by working people the Act was removed by the next Labour government. If there hadn't been that struggle there is

no guarantee that the Labour government would have removed the Act from the statute book.

**So you would support industrial action taken against pay beds?**

I think that any kind of industrial action by workers which is in line with the decisions taken by the organised trade union movement or by the Labour Party annual conference is justified.

The conference and the trade unions have discussed pay beds and have taken decisions to end them. If the workers feel that these decisions are being contravened or stopped or made inapplicable then they have the right to compel these decisions to be brought into operation.

**What do you think about the argument that by calling for the implementation of Labour Party or TUC conference decisions you are placing these organisations above Parliament and the law and threatening democratic rights?**

This is the Tory 'Who rules, the trade unions or the law?' argument.

Parliament, almost since its inception, has had to change according to the forces outside Parliament—whether it has been the struggle against the powers of the monarchy, the Lords, the landlords, or the capitalists.

Of course there have been struggles outside Parliament in order to make changes. And these struggles have

been reflected in the statute book by various laws being passed, because they have been demanded by those forces outside Parliament.

So there is nothing new or strange in forces outside Parliament bringing forces to bear to make Parliament change the law and even change the very character of Parliament itself.

**In a statement following the election you called for 'a complete change of leadership and direction' in the labour movement.**

But no one challenged Callaghan as leader of the Labour Party. Isn't that a contradiction? Doesn't it hold back the fight in the constituencies and trade unions because he can claim no one is challenging him?

While there is a need for a complete change in direction that doesn't mean it will get the support that is needed within the Parliamentary Labour Party (PLP). This, of course, reflects the fact that there has been very little change in the composition of the PLP.

There should be a challenge to the leadership of Jim Callaghan. I would like to see that challenge come from Tony Benn, for the following reason. Tony Benn has quite considerable support and following; the highest vote in the constituency section at the annual conference. That indicates there is the feeling in the Labour Party that he would make a better leader.

I would like to see him come forward now as an alternative leader,

and for the socialist section of the Labour Party, including the PLP, to give all the support necessary to see that Benn and those that support him become the new leadership inside the Labour Party and the PLP.

My view is that the leader of the Labour Party should be elected by the annual conference in the same way that the treasurer is. But it isn't just a problem of personalities, and I don't see the fight against the Tories as just being expressed through the leader of the Labour Party.

We must always remember to keep absolute loyalty to the principles of socialism, but always only qualified loyalty to whoever is elected as leader.

There must be another Labour government, which must be a socialist government, so there has to be a struggle within the Labour Party, and all the constituencies — which are responsible for their own MPs — to make certain that their political representatives are in fact representing the types of policies they want.

It is the responsibility of every single member of the Labour Party and affiliated members to play an active part in finding where their MP stands on the issues and struggles of the day and make certain they are playing their part in the fightback.

**You have talked about the struggle in the constituency Labour Parties, but what about the trade unions?**

These are the most powerful



organisations of the labour movement. Failure to organise in the past has been one of the main reasons for the defeat of the left. Bevan, for example, was defeated by the right-wing union leaders of the 1950s.

Do you think it's necessary to organise in the unions to struggle against those who won't fight the Tories?

Yes. The left must come together in all trade unions. The aim of the trade union movement is to bring about a fundamental change in the society in which we live, and that can only be done through the struggle for socialism.

So we have to carry on that fight inside the unions, and where leaders refuse to carry out the policies for struggle we have to fight where necessary for an alternative leadership.

As you pointed out, under the Heath government the TUC refused to allow unions to register under the Industrial Relations Act, and unions took action against the Act.

Do you believe the TUC should now be talking with the Tories about union laws?

I think it is stupid for any person to make arrangements with their jailors, with those who would handcuff and chain them, and restrict their liberties.

The thing to do is that if there is any attempt to restrict the liberties of the trade unions, which have been fought for over 150 years, those liberties must be maintained.

We should refuse, the TUC should refuse, to have any connection at all with those who want to introduce legislation to restrict the liberties of working people, whether on picketing, a hundred per cent trade unionism, or any other question of trade union rights.

What are the most important policies which have to be fought for at the present time?

Wages, of course, are always paramount. Without decent wages workers can't have a reasonable standard of living. Therefore we must support the engineers' present claim, and the wage claims of all the other unions.

Secondly, the shorter working week. We also have to fight on the conditions under which people are working and on the question of genuine industrial democracy.

The issue of racism is also a serious problem inside the working class movement. Many workers have had their minds bent and distorted by the media and have swallowed lies.

My election manifesto, put out to all the electors of Hackney North, called for abortion on demand, for troops out of Ireland, and for further nationalisations of banks and big business.

The issue of denationalisation is one we faced on a previous occasion after the 1945 Labour government. We should make it clear that on the return of a Labour government we will nationalise without compensation any industries that have been de-nationalised.

Quite clearly, there has to be the

greatest possible amount of unity we can obtain in the trade union field against these attacks from the Tory government. This means that all those on the left should be united in helping to conduct the struggle against any anti-trade union legislation.

This last point obviously brings up the question of united action against the Tories in general, and the question of left unity. What are your views on this?

It ought to be possible on all the issues I've talked about to get unity of all working class political and trade union organisations. Certainly, on the problem of fascism and the National Front, this has been done successfully by the Anti Nazi League.

Those who don't support unity are only acting as disrupters, because the problems I've mentioned, like the problem of a wages struggle in a trade union, cannot permit sectarian differences. If we conducted trade union battles on wages in that way we'd be defeated on all occasions.

It's only because workers sink their sectarian differences in struggles about wages and working conditions that they are ever successful.

The press is saying that Thatcher has a mandate for five years. But the previous Tory government was essentially brought down by action outside parliament.

Should the working class accept Thatcher being in office until 1984, or should it fight to do to this Tory government what was done to the last one?

When the workers are faced with problems in life, whether it's their jobs, their homes, or whatever, they don't ask themselves the question about what sort of government we've got. They fight to solve those problems. And there will be a fight put up to overcome the problems that have been forced on them by the Thatcher Tory government.

It has been well said, and I believe it, that 'the will of the people is the highest law'.

If the nation's people want to make changes and a Parliament, government, or any other body which has ceased to be representative of their interests stands in their way, the people have the right to take action which will bring the results that they want.

If this calls into question the continuation of a Tory government, then they have the right to do that too. A government, even though elected, is not elected to continue as a government in spite of the will of the people.

The likelihood is that if the Thatcher government goes ahead with the sort of policies that it has already put forward and those that will follow, then the people will be faced with having to take some action to defend their real democratic rights against an undemocratic and autocratic government.

If the struggles are so sharp that it brings into question the continuation of the government, then the labour movement — trade unionists and politicians — will be faced with the question of whether they support the workers in their continued struggles to change the conditions of life, or whether they say to the workers, No, you must capitulate and not challenge the government too much, not push the issue to the point where the government itself is called into question, as was the case with the miners in 1974.

The vital question is whether the interests of the mass of the people — and the majority of people in Britain are working people — are being properly represented by the government of the day, or whether attacks are being made which will have disastrous consequences for the majority of people.

We must maintain the principle of Abraham Lincoln — 'Government for the people, by the people, and of the people'.

As has often been said in history, and practiced by the people, the people have the right, the inviolable right, to bring down that government and put another government in its place.

## So what should Labour councils do about the rates and cuts?

WITH local council spending high on the Tories' agenda for the axe, the 16 June conference on the crisis of local government — called by supporters of the Socialist Campaign for a Labour Victory — is well timed.

The following appeal for the conference, initially called by the Haringey Labour group of councillors, is now supported by nearly 40 Labour councillors in London. The appeal was written before the Tories' general election victory.

“We are campaigning hard against cuts in public expenditure and the system of cash limits. We have argued for a massive injection of central government funds for the inner city areas to cater for the employment, housing, social and special needs of these decaying areas.

We believe that only a fundamental reorganisation of finance to local authorities and a break in the debt stranglehold can solve these problems.

The Labour government's much-lauded Inner City Partnership scheme has been little more than a cosmetic exercise. In Lambeth, for example, most of the £5m annual injection has had to be used to offset cuts in other sources of central government funding like the area health authority budget and locally determined needs allocation. Moreover, councils themselves have to find 25 per cent of the partnership money.

### Wrong

The whole system of local government financing is wrong. Hackney, for example, the London borough highest on the needs league, is 22nd on the cash receipts per head of population league. A 1p rate yields one of the lowest amounts in inner London, £340,000.

In Camden, rich in commercial and industrial property, a 1p rate yields £1m. Seventy-five per cent of any rate increase in Camden falls on these commercial dwellings. Even more astounding, a 1p rate in Westminster yields £2,880,000, and in the City of London £2,100,000.

It is not only central government that exercises a stranglehold over local authorities. The banks and money-lenders take their pound of flesh. Hackney has an estimated debt for 1978-9 of £215m (£200m in 1977-8).

Interest charges on this debt are a colossal £23,167,340 (estimated) for this year — that's almost a third of Hackney's £80m plus budget. Put another way the debt is £1,065.45 per person, two years ago it was only (sic) £772.80.

In Islington the total debt in 1974 was £137m. This year's budget projects it reaching £352m. Interest payments increased from £10m in 1973-4 to £36m for 1978-9. Rate income for the same periods by comparison was £20m in 1973-4 and £40m this year.

### Interest

This means that all the money council tenants pay in rent and much of the rates in these boroughs — and they are typical — is consumed by the money-lenders. Finance capital and government are literally holding local authorities to ransom. And the problem gets worse every year. At present interest takes a third of all expenditure.

Controlling Labour groups in boroughs like Hackney, Lambeth, Haringey, Islington and Camden were elected on radical reform manifestos pledging expansion of child-care and nursery provision, day-care centres for the elderly, house-building and improvement programmes, an end to slum housing, adequate recreation facilities for young and old, municipal enterprises, expansion of direct works departments to eliminate private profiteering, and a range of community and public works projects.

This is the minimum necessary to avert continuing inner-city decay with its attendant blight of heightened racial prejudice, vandalism, violence, unemployment, illness and misery.

We are also committed to freezing rents while wages are restrained and paying local authority employees a £60 minimum wage for a 35-hour week. We oppose the rent increases in Islington and Hackney which put an extra penalty on council tenants over that which they are already paying.

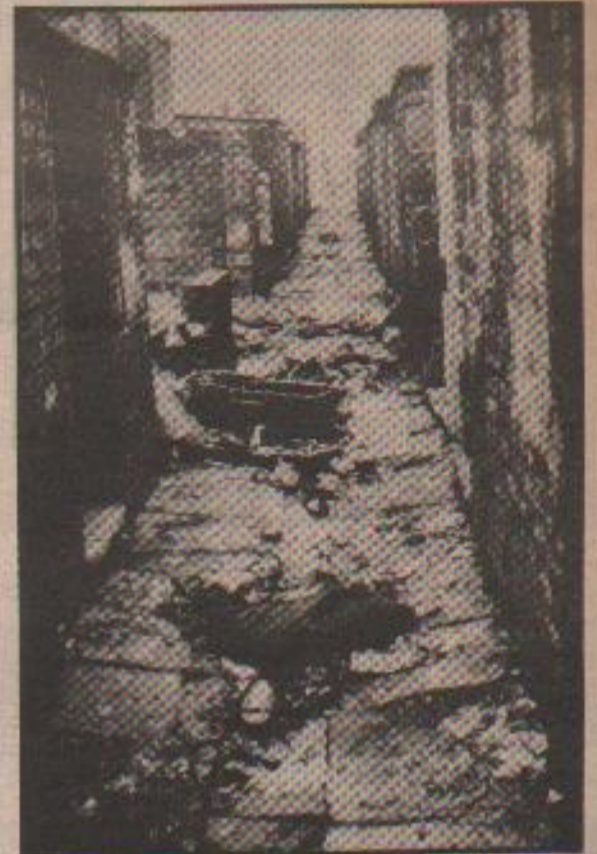
### Tories

We have no time for the Tories' hypocritical carping about 'spendthrift councils'. They have no time for the unemployed, those in housing need, the sick and the victims of their market system which throws the weakest to the wall. Their policy of savage cuts in spending will only exacerbate inner-city decay.

But short of abandoning our manifestos we see only two ways of implementing our programmes for inner city rejuvenation. One is enormous rate increases or a form of deficit financing. For example, in Hackney it is estimated that a 233 per cent rate rise would be necessary to begin implementing our main pledges.

Clearly this is not on. It is not on because it still hits at working people's pockets. It is also an illusory solution while the present system of finance exists. Rate rises can only be a stop-gap measure to maintain jobs and services and marginal expansion.

Hence we are fighting for a massive increase in central government finance and rate support. We want to see public ownership of banking and finance and a



centralised scheme of finance protected from inflation. Enormous resources and labour exist in the inner cities to renovate production and services. The financial lubricant is necessary to set them in motion. Private enterprise is daily failing to employ these resources and meet social needs. That is why we believe production should be geared to socially useful products and requires a socialist reconstruction of society.

The Labour government refused to take responsibility for the inner city areas. Hence councillors are faced with the Hobson's choice of bankrupting the council or bankrupting the people.

In Lambeth the rate has been increased by 39.8 per cent — 28 per cent is merely to stand still, the rest is to continue expansion programmes. Camden's rate is up 17.7 per cent, but because of the high rateable values this can also finance the local settlement of £60 and a 35-hour week to the council manual workers.

As socialist councillors we are committed to the provision of jobs and services. Until we successfully force the government to restructure finance to local authorities we are forced to use the least anti-working class means of raising finance. We aim to co-ordinate activities in as many boroughs as possible to achieve this fundamental overhauling of local authority financing.

### Community

Small initiatives are already being made in this direction by Lambeth, Islington and Hackney, but these are behind closed doors and inadequate to achieve the necessary changes. We need to turn the local councils out into the community involving the Labour Parties, tenants and the entire organised labour movement.

Only with the full involvement of the working class community can we build a strong and united movement to rescue the inner cities.

Mindful of these problems we call on all Labour groups, CLPs, trade unions and labour movement bodies to support the call for a conference on the crisis of local government finance and services. We ask you to sponsor the conference and come as delegates or visitors.

SIGNED: Ted Knight, Sylvia Ingerson, Bryn Davies, Mike Jerram, Bill Bowring, Kevin Moore, Paul Moore, Mathew Warburton (Lambeth council); John Sweeney, Ron Heister, Dinah Morley, Keith Lichman, Peter Kahn, Patrick Kodikara, George Armstrong (Hackney council);

Jenny Morris, Val Veness, Alex Farrell, Cathy Powlowski, Jane Streather, Ian Wilson (Islington council); Ken Livingstone, Anna Bowman, Pat Driscoll, Neal Fletcher, Mick Morrissey, Phil Turner, Tom Duvine (Camden council); Jeremy Corbyn, Ron Blanchard, Colin Sherrif, June Chapman, Bernie Grant (Haringey council); Enda Donnelly (Hounslow council); Bob Lewis (Hillingdon council).

\* The conference is to be held on Saturday, 16 June, 10am-5.30pm at Humpstead Town Hall, Haverstock Hill, London NW3 (Belsize Park tube). Workshops include: the lessons of Clay Cross and Poplar; rates, finances and where the money goes; democracy, Labour groups and the working class; and direct labour.

Admission £1 for delegates and visitors. Resolutions and background papers can be submitted. Creche available. Further details from: Local government conference, c/o 5 Stamford Hill, London N16.

# We need every weapon we've



RAY MILLS, convenor of Kambala Road building site in Wandsworth.

I HAVE been sacked for sending a letter to the press criticising the way the direct works department has been run down under the Tory council. They gave me the chop even though my letter was never published.

At first the council claimed that my views amounted to a breach of confidentiality, but they now say it's defamation. The real reason behind this move is because I have been outspoken and have fought against the conditions and wages of building workers, and attacks on union organisation.

All of the best trade unionists have been sacked. I was the last one because I was convenor.

A mass picket on 4 June at the site will be demanding my immediate reinstatement and will hopefully instil some basic trade union principles in the fight against the Tories.

Further details and donations to: Ray Mills Defence Campaign, 17 Ravenet Court, London SW11. Tel 01-622 3221.



TONI GORTON, member of the print union SLADE, and convenor of Labour Abortion Rights Campaign.

LABOUR's legislation for women might have been a joke — the gap between men and women's wages has widened since it was introduced! — but the election of the Tories is disastrous.

Attacks on working class jobs, wages and services will hit us especially hard. But in my view, any attempts to further restrict women's control over our fertility is fundamental.

The British labour movement is unique in the world. It has been forced to take a position on the abortion issue. These paper policies now need to be rapidly turned into action. The National Abortion Campaign and the Labour Abortion Rights Campaign have already made a call for a fightback against the proposed restrictive Private Member's Bill.

The fight for women's rights in the unions through caucuses where it's suitable — enlisting the power of the unions behind the demands of the women's movement — is a vital part of any class struggle alternative.

But it involves developing a clear programme of work prospects for women. In the United States, women have become miners, steelworkers and oilworkers. This has really challenged stereotypes of women and given them enormous confidence which benefits the working class as a whole.



JOHN WALSH, convenor, British Oxygen, Hackney

BRITISH OXYGEN workers were the first to defeat the 10 per cent wage policy of the Labour government. Today it looks like we'll be the first group in industry to test out Thatcher's policies as well.

Our victory against the Labour government's 10 per cent policy can be put down to one thing: our long struggle over twenty years in building up a militant shop stewards organisation.

Today we have a national joint shop stewards' committee meeting every three months to decide on the demands which British Oxygen workers will fight for nationally, and to plan the fight.

British Oxygen didn't think we were strong enough to win our just wage claim in 1977. The company offered us only 8.5 per cent — although they had £89 million profit! After three weeks, however, they realised that the Joint Shop Stewards Committee meant business. That's when they offered us a 25 per cent increase.

Because of our strong union organisation — and our twenty year fight to convince the membership that we had a movement capable of taking on any company, employer, or government — we didn't even have to take action in 1977. The employers knew what we could do from the previous year's struggle.

# DEEF OUR U

Jesse Chequer is chairperson of the Vickers Combine Committee, UK. In his own words, his job in the recent years has been more like that of a chairperson of a Redundancy Committee.

His comments at the Socialist Challenge Trade Union Conference held in London last weekend struck a common note with the ideas expressed by many of the 150 participants.

'I was like you twenty years ago,' he said. 'And little has changed. Today I still see the need to put up a militant fight for socialist policies. The lesson I have learned — and one which Socialist Challenge should share — is that we have to take forward our fight for socialist policies twenty four hours a day.'

## Callaghan to blame

'Today I represent 12,000 workers. This used to be 36,000, but many of those jobs have gone by the board through redundancies. And the reason is this — there has been no consistent socialist challenge to take forward the fight against unemployment.

'James Callaghan has to take his responsibility — he's been the biggest disaster which the labour movement has had to put up with in recent years.'

Summarising the conference John Parkinson, secretary of Preston Trades Council said: 'This has been a working conference to discuss the fightback against the Tories. We haven't got all the answers yet, but we've made an important start.'

The conference voted for the following immediate action to be taken in the unions:

1. The campaign against any talks with the Tories about curbs on basic union rights. 'You don't discuss with your jailor' as one participant put it.

Lobbies of the talks themselves and the Trade Union Congress in September, have to be organised.

But while we demand action from the union leaderships to defend the right to strike and picket, the rank and file must be prepared to act.

Delegates from union bodies must be won for the Rank and File 'Defend Our Unions' conference on 23 June. Trades Councils must be urged to

# Build conference of

NEIL DAVIES, Rank and File, Barnet Council shop steward.

MANY people have been surprised at how quickly the Tories have started their attacks. They've given the police and soldiers big wage increases. Oil prices have been allowed to rocket.

They have started to weaken our ability to fight back with the prospect of attacks on women and with new immigration laws.

The trade union leaders have offered no real resistance. General secretary Jarvis was prepared to sell out his members in the National Union of Teachers for a measly nine per cent. If Jarvis will sell out so easily on wages, he certainly won't be able to fight attacks on education.

And we've already seen what's been happening on unemployment, particularly with the impact of the new technology. United Biscuits have cut their workforce by 50 per cent.

In ICI there has been a reduction in the workforce of five per cent every year for the last five years.

With the election of the Tory government, all the most reactionary forces in society have been given a boost. Some, in the North-East, have already started to make attacks on the closed shop.

The leadership simply want to see



THE last Rank and File conference held in Manchester

the return of the Labour government, hoping that it will be a bit more left wing next time. But it's not a question of relying on the leaders. We believe that what's needed is a rank and file movement.

The forthcoming Rank and File Conference is not such a movement, but is a step in that direction. We want the most massive fight for delegates.

From the Conference, we must go out and actively encourage united

action. This is In South W the Welsh TU the Labour Pe Party, as well achieved sim Merseyside, closure of Du In Septem! massive and u We're under t on the bure



# got to fight the Tories' attacks

# DEFEND UNIONS

organise local conferences which can establish labour movement-based 'defend the unions' committees in the localities.

2. To campaign for the defence of the welfare state against the Tory cutbacks. The first step in this is to establish an alliance between all public sector workers to build industrial action which can win the solidarity of private sector workers.

Labour movement-based action committees spanning all unions need to be built at a local level.

3. To campaign in defence of the right to work and for a 35-hour week without loss of pay. In particular, jobs for youth must be defended — the lobby of the Trade Union Congress the lobby of the Trade Union Congress for action against youth unemployment needs massive trade union backing.

4. Women's rights are under attack. The unions must be forced to carry out their paper commitment to a woman's right to choose whether to have an abortion.

We must win support for actions called by the National Abortion Campaign against any restrictive anti-abortion legislation.

Around these issues, the conference pledged itself to fight for the broadest unity in action. This includes a fight to force the trade union and Labour leaders to support and mobilise for mass action.

## What policies?

'Benn might be visiting picket lines now, but where has he been for the last five years? Is he prepared to put his weight behind workers in struggle to spread the fightback?' asked John Parkinson.

The conference set aside an entire session to look at what socialist policies are needed to defend jobs, under the impact of the new technology. The debate took up the Lucas Aerospace workers' corporate plan as one important contribution to the fight against unemployment.

Next week we will be reporting on the contributions made in this session.

## Rank and file workers



November 1977

something new. a united lobby of olved members of of the Communist WP members. We united action in ing against the a Speke factory. et's have the most lobby of the TUC. and we can't rely ts. We need an

alternative to fight back, an ongoing campaign in the workplaces. Action will decide.

The Defend Our Unions Conference will be held at the New Century Hall, Manchester on 23 June.

Transport from: Liverpool 8.30am Amberling Coach Depot, Garston; 8.45am Mann Island Pierhead; 9.00am, Black Bull, Walton Vale; 9.15am, Golden Eagle,

Kirkby. Tickets £1.50. Edinburgh: 6am Waverley Station.

London/South East: Special train from Euston, 7.35am. Watford stop at 8.00am. £7 return. (Tel. 01-254 5915).

Birmingham: Hall of Memory, 9am.

South Wales: Pontypridd Post Office, 6.30am; Cardiff General Station, 7am. (Tel. Pontypridd 3499).

For Delegates credentials please fill in the slip below and send to Defend Our Unions Conference, 265a Seven Sisters Road, London N1 (Cheques to Defend Our Unions Conference)

Name of Trade Union Organisation .....

Secretary's Name and Address .....

Address to which credentials should be sent (if different from above) .....

No of delegates credentials required ..

Enclosed £..... (£1 per delegate)

CANDY UDWIN, Save the EGA Campaign, Fightback

THE Tories announced last week that the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson hospital would be 'saved' but that was only half the truth. The Tory proposals will put us right on the road to a two-tiered health service and the health service provided for women at the EGA is far from over.

The Tories want the EGA to be bolstered through charity, and even if the thousands of pounds necessary are raised, their plans will involve enormous cuts in the EGA facilities.

The reason these proposals are even being considered is because of the present weakness of the anti-cuts movement. We seem to have two choices: to accept the Tory plans or to agree to closure.

We have to win broad support for our campaign, but it must be based on winning an understanding throughout the working class as to why the cuts are continuing. This can be done best if we raise ideas about what a socialist health service would entail.

There are clear steps that every one can take in the next weeks. First, we have mounted a 24-hour picket. We are asking all organisations to take on a half-day rota. The picket is demanding that the EGA remains open, and is opposing charity funding.

Second, invite a speaker from our campaign to your union branch.

Finally, win support for our demands that the EGA should be saved by integrating it in the NHS, and for the defence of the health service in this country.



SUE OWEN, Civil and Public Services Association

THE media might have its own image of the (male) Whitehall bureaucrat in pin-stripe suit and bowler hat, but for the vast majority of civil servants — who are women — dull, low-grade clerical jobs are the reality.

The three-month recruitment freeze imposed by the Tories on civil service jobs will hit us hard.

The Tory action could bring to a halt all benefits services in London within about a month. That's how high the staff turnover is. And because the civil servants are the first group of workers to feel Tory policies directly, their response will be decisive for the working class as a whole.

A refusal to cooperate with cuts or to cover for the lost jobs will mean suspensions, without any doubt. But the will to resist does exist in the CPSA.

That much was shown when our union's recent conference elected a Broad Left NEC and when Ken Thomas, general secretary, was censured for signing 'A Better Way', the pro-incomes policy document which went one hundred per cent against conference mandate.

Furthermore, the Civil Service Women's Rights Group has kept the pressure on the leadership to defend the special interests of the majority of the membership. The crèche campaign's fight for workplace nurseries financed by the government got massive support at conference.



DENNY FITZPATRICK, Westminster NUT

THE Tories have seized on the crisis in education to attack the comprehensive school system. It's not surprising. After all, as long as there are still schools to take care of educating future judges, army officers and diplomats, why should the Tories worry about the 80 per cent who go to comprehensives?

Thousands of parents and teachers are concerned, however. And they are busy organising a genuine alternative to the closures and cuts that Labour forced down our throats during the last five years.

Top of the list is plans for smaller classes and schools, based in the community and well-equipped. A firm policy of no job losses is equally important. These kinds of plans are first steps in the fight to control education.

Union leaders haven't helped these struggles. Too often they have worked hand in glove with the government axes. That's why teachers who have joined together in the Socialist Teachers' Alliance are committed to fighting to replace the union leadership.

The STA has become best known amongst the left for its policies concerning unity. It has stood on a platform that promotes every step towards the broadest possible unity for policies which can bring lasting gains to education.

But the fight for left unity within the unions means little if we cannot build unity amongst socialists. That's why the STA has campaigned for democratically organised united work with the Rank and File Teachers group, led by the Socialist Workers' Party.



## National barriers raised against Mandel

THEY'RE called the 'European' elections. They're supposed to be all about breaking down national barriers and so on. In theory.

In practice it's a different story, as Ernest Mandel, a Trotskyist candidate in the elections in Belgium, found out last week when he was refused entry into France. He has been banned from the country since 1972 because of his 'political activities'.

Proof once more that the EEC is just a bosses' Market where working class politics aren't wanted.

\* Mandel will be among the speakers at the 'Rally Against the EEC' organised by the IMG this Friday at Porchester Hall.

# Out of the bosses' Market - now!

By Martin Meteyard

TARIQ ALL, the International Marxist Group candidate for the 'European Parliament' elections in West London, is virtually the only labour movement candidate demanding immediate withdrawal from the EEC.

The IMG says that the Common Market is simply an arrangement by the European capitalists to coordinate and reinforce their exploitation of the working class and 'Third World' peoples.

And we're not the only ones who say it's a bosses' Market. Capitalist spokespersons also admit it in their less guarded moments. This is how a CBI pamphlet, Britain into Europe, argued for British entry in the early 1970s:

'Many large firms have...reached the point at which further national restructuring is impossible because of the present scale of the enterprise in relation to the market... If Western Europe is to compete effectively in world markets, restructuring on a sufficient and European basis is essential.'

## Squeezed

These arguments were repeated in a speech last week by Edward Heath, the Tory architect of Britain's entry:

'Much of Europe's industry is being progressively squeezed between the deep penetration by the developing countries of our traditional markets — at home and overseas — and increasing American and Japanese domination of the world's rapidly expanding high technology markets...'

'To emulate American achievements, we will have to make more use of... the opportunities which such a market (the EEC) provides of achieving the economies of scale which will enable us to compete more successfully worldwide.'

The aim of the EEC is not merely to strengthen imperialism as a whole but, by encouraging the free flow of capital and flexibility of cheap labour, simultaneously to strengthen the capitalist class of each member country in relation to its own working class.

## Alliances

The Treaty of Rome, by which the EEC was founded, allows for the use of the armies of the member states against the working class in any one country; it serves as a cover for the concentration of power in the hands of the capitalist class behind the backs of the West European working class.

Above all, alongside NATO, the EEC constitutes the European component in a system of global alliances by which the imperialist powers attempt to protect themselves against the spread of world revolution.

As such the EEC can't be transformed into its opposite. It has to be destroyed.

British withdrawal, combined with a fight for workers' unity in struggle throughout Europe (East as well as West), would be an important step in that direction.



THERE was a big hoo-ha last week about the Callaghan/Benn 'split' over Labour's manifesto for the EEC elections. Callaghan doesn't like the manifesto's suggestion that Britain's membership of the Common Market might have to be reconsidered if certain changes aren't made. But it was all papered over in the end, because Benn and the Labour lefts don't actually propose to do anything about the EEC now.

In the 1975 referendum they did at least come out for immediate withdrawal, even if the red-white-and-blue arguments they used simply harked back to the 'go it alone' days of the Empire, reinforcing all the instincts which bind British workers to their own ruling class.

Today even this break with the Labour leadership is too much for them to contemplate.

## EEC throws women on the dole

By Simone Hamelin

THE EEC Commission includes an office on the employment of women. Statistics it has recently published, along with a commentary, provide a sharp contrast with the declared policy of the EEC countries, particularly in relation to the 'proportion' of part-time jobs held by women.

About 40 million women go out to work in the nine EEC countries — 44 per cent of all women aged from 14 to 59. The rate has increased in all countries, despite the economic crisis and appeals to stay in or return to the home.

### Jobless

But the document underlines that 'the rate of unemployment of women has risen still more rapidly'. The total number of women registered as unemployed is 2,611,000 or one in 15 (the figure is 1 in 20 for men).

These figures also underestimate the situation, because, as is pointed out, 'the importance in certain countries of part-time working, which can be a form of hidden unemployment; frequent discrimination against women in payment of unemployment benefit (according to family situation, non-recognition of part-time work); the limited number of job opportunities really open to women (in spite of equal opportunities legislation) all discourage them from registering.'

### Gains

Despite this the official figure for women unemployed hasn't fallen below 6.2 per cent (for men it is 5.7 per cent). Between August 1977 and August 1978 it rose by 5 per cent (as against less than 1.3 per cent for men).

However, women are clinging onto their gains: 'They no longer leave the labour market in massive numbers between 25 and 35.'

24.7 per cent of all women between 14 and 19 go out to work, 61.4 per cent between 20 and 24, 50.9 per cent between 25 and 29, over 45 per cent between 30 and 39, and over 46 per cent between 40 and 49.

These higher rates in turn mean a greater need for social provision, notably in the area of pre-school nurseries as well as in the organisation of play activities for children outside the school term.'

Part-time working, however, remains a 'female' phenomenon. 23.6 per cent of women as compared with 1.9 per cent of men work less than 40 hours a week (the figures for the UK are 40.9 and 2.2 per cent).

### No choice

'It's not always a matter of deliberate choice... To consider part-time work as a solution for women to reconcile their professional and family commitments is only to state this double burden: lack of social provision and failure of men to share family responsibilities.' That's what the document says!

Women's employment breaks down into different sectors as follows: the number employed in agriculture is 2,366,000 (7.1 per cent of all women employed, 31.2 per cent of the agricultural workforce); 9,472,000 in industry (28.1 per cent of all women employed, 22.7 per cent of the industrial workforce); and 21,441,000 in the services sector (64.8 per cent of all women employed, and 44.6 per cent of the workforce here).

### Concentrated

Here again the comments which follow the figures largely confirm what we know already but what governments never admit: in industry, 'women are concentrated in certain sectors: textiles, clothing, footwear, electrical goods, light engineering (which) are the most affected by the economic crisis and competition... They occupy the least skilled positions and form half of all those who work on a production line.'

Furthermore: 'Legislation which is supposed to be protective is a bar to their employment in three or even two shift systems.'

In the services sector they are also 'concentrated in certain services, notably trade and distribution, health, education, office-work. Even in these areas, where they form a majority, women generally occupy subordinate positions.'

In the light of this finding, the 'three directives' adopted by the Council of Europe appear pathetic: they concern equal pay for men and women (with the possibility of appeal in case of discrimination); equal treatment of men and women in access to jobs, training, promotion and working conditions; and finally a gradual move to equality in the field

of social security.

It's a bandage on a wooden leg which even then doesn't stick, because according to an EEC Commission report: 'The principle of equal pay has been achieved completely in none of the EEC countries,' for the good reason that it implies the 'same work' or 'work of the same value', and women aren't in general in the same jobs as men, while the value of their work is determined by the bosses.

The solution cannot therefore be found in the Commission's recom-

mendation of individual recourse to a tribunal — which in most cases simply leads to the sacking of the plaintiff.

It lies in the struggle for all jobs to be open to women and men, the ending of night work and duties which aren't socially necessary (in some places women are paid less than men for the simple reason that the latter are 'capable' of working at night), and the removal with a 35-hour week of the enormous army of unemployed which acts as a pressure to lower wages.



RALLY AGAINST THE EEC  
FRIDAY 1 JUNE

Speakers:

Ernest Mandel (FI candidate in Belgium)  
Lutte Ouvrière representative (from joint  
revolutionary slate in France)

Down with the bosses' Market!  
For a United  
Socialist States of Europe!  
Tariq Ali (IMG candidate, West London)  
7.30pm, Porchester Hall, Porchester Road, Paddington

THE latest Intercontinental Press/Inprecor (Vol 17, No 20) includes the full text of Ernest Mandel's article on the workers' response to the European austerity offensive.

Individual copies of each issue are 30p plus postage. Subscriptions are £9 for one year, £5 for six months or £2.50 for an introductory offer of 10 issues. Write now to Intercontinental Press/Inprecor, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP. Cheques payable to Intercontinental Press.

# French state cracks down on non-EEC migrants

By Robin Thompson

MY BLOND HAIR and Anglo-Saxon features have attracted the attention of the police three times in the six years that I have spent in Paris. But it took a visiting Jamaican friend less than 48 hours to equal my six year record.

On each occasion he was stopped in the Metro (underground) and asked for his identification papers. Under a law passed by the wartime Vichy regime, everybody in France must carry an identity card or a passport.

My friend was relatively lucky. During the last four weeks of 1978, at least four cases of serious beating — amounting to torture — of North Africans by the police in Marseilles were reported.

More recently, in the Paris suburbs, five immigrant workers who were beaten up and thrown out of a supermarket by a group of private security guards then found themselves arrested by the CRS police and charged with breaking windows.

## Stepped up

Attacks against immigrant workers by the police are nothing new in France. What is new is a vastly stepped up programme of police control in immigrant regions, in the streets, and particularly in the Paris and Marseilles underground systems.

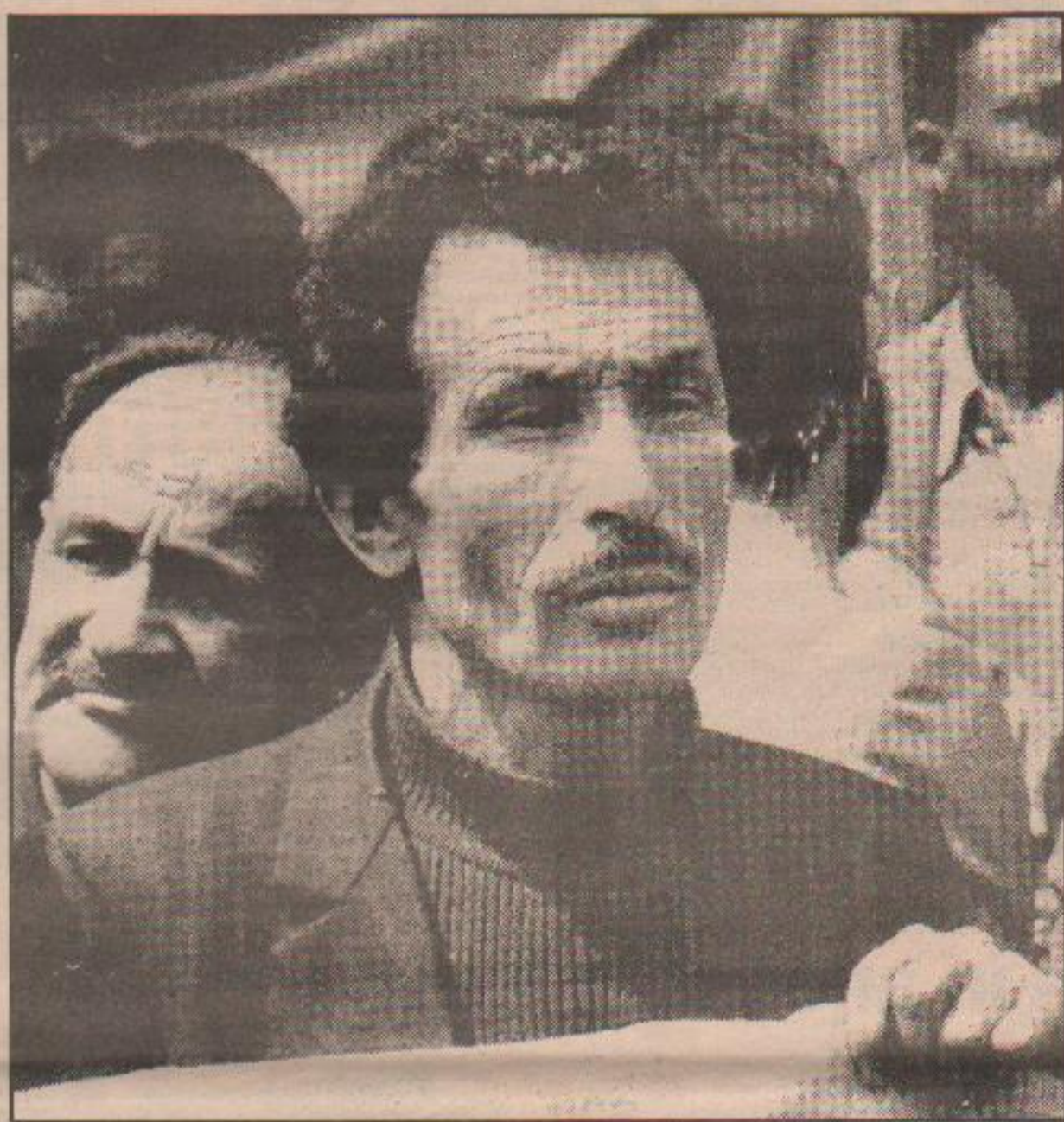
In these identity checks the police invariably address blacks and North Africans using the familiar 'tu' form, whereas they would only ever use the more formal 'vous' when addressing a white person. The 'tu' form of address, normally used between friends and with small children, may be compared in these circumstances to a white South African's use of the word 'boy'.

The blatantly racist and discriminatory form of these identity checks is the object of a new campaign by a broad based anti-racist group in France, the MRAP (Movement against Racism and for Friendship between Peoples).

## Holocaust

MRAP has cleverly cashed in on the recent showing of *Holocaust* on French TV. It is a well known (but little talked about) fact that the Vichy government — the same one that passed the law on identity cards — organised the deportation of some 300,000 Jews from France to Nazi concentration camps during the Second World War.

As in Germany and Poland,



French Jews were made to wear the infamous yellow star. The symbol of the MRAP campaign is a green five-pointed star bearing the words 'stop racist identity checks'. This both reminds people of French complicity with the Nazis and points out that blacks and North Africans have now replaced the Jews as the main victims of racism in the country.

The police say that the massive increase in the number of identity checks over the last three months is needed to combat hooliganism and

muggings. Their real aim, of course, is to tighten up the already very strict system of control of immigrant workers.

Unlike Britain, France never granted citizenship to the population of any of its colonies. The vast majority of its 4 million plus immigrants (about 7 per cent of the total population) are thus dependent on the granting of a residence permit to stay in the country.

If their permit has lapsed, or is

considered by the police to be in any way unlawful, they can be thrown out at a moment's notice with no effective right of appeal.

Today, in common with the British and other governments, the French government would like to get rid of its population of long-staying non-EEC immigrants. 'The longer they stay, the more they become integrated; they learn the language, and they begin to learn to fight for their rights', explains an MRAP militant.

New legislation to be presented to the French parliament later this year aims to replace the present system of one, five and ten year residence permits with a single one year permit. This will only be renewed on condition that the worker stays in the same job and doesn't fall ill or have an accident.

To obtain a 'privileged' five year permit the immigrant from outside the EEC will have to stay not four years as at present, but 25 years!

## Profitable

The savings incurred for French bosses by such a system are obvious; they were neatly summed up by a writer in an industrial journal:

'Immigration is even more profitable inasmuch as it allows our country to avoid paying part of workers' education costs... young people and immigrants often pay more in social security contributions (the equivalent of National Insurance) than they receive in benefits.'

For MRAP, this change of policy means that it is no longer appropriate to talk about 'immigrant workers'; what is being created is quite simply a system of short-term migrant labour, on the German 'gastarbeiter' model.

Already there seems to be a deliberate policy of bureaucratic delay in the granting of residence permits. People are not infrequently made to wait until well after their old permit has run out before they are given an appointment to get a new one; in the intervening period they can be picked off by the police at will and expelled.

## Complicity

The entry of foreign students is more and more tightly controlled — often with the complicity of their own governments, who are only too happy to have the French government help them weed out 'undesirables'.

And over 350,000 Algerian workers, most of whom have been here for more than five years, have been threatened with non-renewal of their residence permits next year.

All in all, whether it be under the 'Sus' laws in Britain, or arbitrary expulsion orders from France or West Germany, the problems of non-EEC migrant workers inside the EEC seem to be becoming more similar with every year that passes.

It would be difficult to find a more striking example of the need for working class internationalism at the present time.

TARIQ ALI is standing in the EEC elections as the candidate of the International Marxist Group in the West London constituency. Below we print his election address.

### ENOUGH FOR ALL

There are enough resources in Europe for every working person to have a decent standard of living. Education, health services, and even public transport could all be free.

The proper use of technology, under the control of working people, would mean a shorter working week. This would end unemployment and we would have more time for leisure and enjoyment.

This is not happening. Capitalist Europe is organised to keep the division between those who work and those who control and reap the profits.

The EEC strengthens the bosses against the workers. They intend to use it to make sure the workers pay for their crisis.

### A SOCIALIST EUROPE

The IMG and its candidate Tariq Ali want a Europe which is socialist and democratic. They want working people to control their own lives and decide their own futures.

We believe this can only be done by building an alliance of all working people of Europe, black and white, women and men. We say:

- Britain out of the bosses' Market.

To do this we must develop economic cooperation with the Comecon countries, the countries of the Third World, and ally ourselves with the labour movement in Western Europe. We say:

- For a united socialist Europe.

# Tariq Ali's platform

This is why the Fourth International, the party of world socialism, to which the IMG is affiliated, is running campaigns in every country in the EEC, as well as in Greece, Portugal and Spain, whose governments want to join the EEC.

### THE CRISIS

Everyone agrees a major crisis is sweeping the capitalist countries. Millions are unemployed. Hundreds of factories are being closed.

The working class, particularly black and immigrant workers, the youth, the low paid and the women are suffering.

The bosses want to solve their crisis at our expense. They want mass unemployment. They want to take away our trade union rights.

The IMG fights against this. We say:

- For a planned socialist economy.
- Nationalisation under workers control of all the multinationals and key sectors of the economy.
- Make the bosses pay for inflation, tie wages to the rise in the cost of living.
- For a 35-hour week without loss of pay.

### DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS

In France, Germany, and other EEC countries the immigrant workers are treated like slaves. They can be expelled and deported at will. They do not have the right to vote.

In Britain they are harassed, by the fascist National Front and the police. The few rights

they do have are under attack.

The Nationality Bill threatened by the Tories would bring the vicious laws of the other EEC countries into Britain.

We say:

- Full and equal rights for all immigrant workers in Europe.

- End all immigration controls.
- Abolish the 'Sus' laws.
- End all police harassment of black and Asian people in Britain.

A bloody war of repression is being carried out by Britain in Ireland. The scandal of the British torture camps in the Maze and Long Kesh must be ended. We say:

- Self-determination for the Irish people.
- British troops out of Ireland now.
- Political status for the Irish freedom fighters.

Right across Europe, women are denied their rights. They get the worst paid jobs. Very few get equal pay. Even fewer of them get equal opportunity.

Abortion rights are under threat in every country. No country grants them abortion on demand, which means they do not have the right to choose whether they have children or not.

- We say:
- Full and equal rights for women.
  - Equal pay now.
  - Free abortion and contraception on demand.

In all the capitalist countries most youth face a future of dead-end jobs or unemployment. They do not have the right to vote. They are not allowed to run their own lives and decide their own sexuality.

- We say:
- Votes at 16.
  - A job for every school leaver.
  - For the right of young people to live their own lives and decide their own sexuality.

### MILITARISM

NATO, the military alliance of the bosses, is their weapon to crush the workers movement both inside and outside the EEC.

The unrestrained development of nuclear energy to bolster up the military machine, and make bigger profits, throws a shadow over the future of humanity itself.

- We say:
- Break up the NATO alliance.
  - Stop all nuclear development.
  - Use the money and resources for sane purposes like health, education, housing and other social services.

### THE WAY FORWARD

The way forward is through mass working class action against the bosses. Have no faith in their parliaments and their states.

The election is just one way we can put forward what the interests of working people are. The fight will not only go on after the election, but will grow even sharper.

To carry forward that struggle we need a party that unites people on a world scale in the battle for socialism. The IMG will, along with its sister organisations in Europe, America, Asia, Africa and Australasia, be doing exactly that.

**Major Irish  
demo  
12 August**

PLANS have been announced for a major demonstration in London on 12 August to mark the tenth anniversary of the sending of British troops onto the streets of the North of Ireland.

The organisers of the demonstration have already assembled an impressive list of sponsors. These include five MPs: Cyril Smith, Joan Maynard, Stan Thorne, Ernie Roberts and Frank Maguire.

The National League of Young Liberals, the Campaign for Democracy in Ulster, and the Belfast-based Association for Legal Justice are among the sponsoring organisations.

The theme of the demonstration is to call on the British government to 'commit itself to a policy of withdrawal from Ireland'. The United Troops Out Movement is backing the protest but is organising a separate 'troops out now' contingent.

The demonstration has the potential to be the largest so far on the Irish issue. Support for it should be raised now in labour, student and women's movement bodies.

Further details from: Steven Dawe, Youth Officer, National Liberal Club, 1 Whitehall Place, London SW1.

# IRSP are target in terror swoop

By Geoff Bell

PETER GRIMES left the British Army in 1969. He bought himself out for £250. He didn't approve of what the Army was up to in the North of Ireland.

Those who do approve have never forgiven Peter for his opposition. On Tuesday 22 May he was arrested for the ninth time, a victim of the latest terror swoop in London under the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

It was the fourth time Peter has been arrested. This time his flatmate, Dorothy Mercedy, was taken with him. Peter told Socialist Challenge what happened:

'They came at six in the morning. Twelve of them with two Labrador dogs. They said they had a warrant for Dorothy's arrest. When I tried to phone a solicitor they said they were arresting me as well, under the PTA.'

## Others held

Grimes and Mercedy were arrested three weeks after Grimes alone had been pulled in, and three days after Margaret Crowley was arrested. And while Peter was being arrested yet again, Iris Lyle was being taken from her flat in North London, although the police suggested they were really looking for her flatmate.

When her flatmate's solicitor later contacted the police, however, they said she wasn't required for questioning 'at the moment'.

Iris was held for six hours, Margaret Crowley for about 100 hours, and Grimes and Mercedy for

36 hours. Jimmy Scanlon, who was also a victim of the dawn swoop on 22 May, was still being held as Socialist Challenge went to press.

Grimes too might still have been in custody had it not been for a dramatic court bid to free him on 23 May. For after a day of relentless 'interrogation', Peter says he was 'very weak'.

## Habeas Corpus

Finally his solicitor was allowed to see him. She immediately contacted a doctor, who confirmed that Peter was in no fit state to answer further questions. This statement provided the opportunity to apply for a writ of habeas corpus demanding Peter's release. One hour before the case was heard, Peter and Dorothy were released.

The arrests were supposed to be in connection with the assassination of Airey Neave. This has been claimed by the Irish National Liberation Army, the military wing of the Irish Republican Socialist Party.

Grimes used to be an organiser of the IRSP, but he is no longer a member of the organisation. Iris Lyle has no connection with the IRSP. All the others arrested are members.

From Peter's account the police were most interested in members of the IRSP in Dublin. They also wanted to know 'who in the IRSP was gay and who was sleeping with whom'.

In this context the aim of the arrests is clear: generally to harass and intimidate members of the IRSP, an open and legal organisation; and to collect what 'counter-insurgency' expert Brigadier Kitson has called 'low intelligence information'.



PETER GRIMES

During both periods of Peter's recent interrogations he was threatened — with deportation — and offered bribes. 'They tried to get me to implicate others, and to implicate myself', is how Peter describes it.

The PTA was used with great regularity under the Labour government. The signs are that Irish activists in Britain are in for an even tougher time under the Tories.

## Stop press

Stop press: Jimmy Scanlon served with deportation order, late Monday night.

# Five days in another country

NEWCASTLE Trades Council recently sent a delegation to the North of Ireland.

Two of the delegates, GEOFF RYAN and PETE SHORT, write here about their experiences.

IMAGINE IT! Walking into the city centre late on a Thursday afternoon. A bite to eat, and then a drink.

But before you get there it's through a turnstile, unbutton your coat, arms stretched sideways, a quick pat. The British Army has satisfied itself that you are not about to blow half of central Belfast to kingdom come.

The English accent helps, of course. A familiar voice amongst all the hostility.

We saw and were told what is being done to the North of Ireland by the British government:

\*The steward from Harland and Wolff's shipyard who does not want to dwell overmuch on what will happen to 8,000 jobs when the present orders run out in 18 months time.

\*Three young lads in early morning Derry throwing bottles and stones at an army landrover.

\*On the Creggan Heights overlooking the Republican Creggan estate a large army barracks occupies the land marked on the Derry town plan as being for industrial development.

\*People with no hope of a job trying to live on social security — or what is left of it after the Payments for Debt Act has allowed the gas and electricity boards to recoup their outstanding bills.

## Status

Nearly everyone we speak to agrees on one thing: nothing will be resolved until Northern Ireland's 'constitutional status' is resolved. Whether it is a socialist republic, a united Ireland, independence, a return to the old Stormont, or integration with Britain — the national question is at the heart of most people's thoughts.

The trade unions bend over backwards to avoid taking any position on the national question. To do so, they say, would split the movement. Yet some unions are affiliated to the TUC, others to the Irish Congress of Trades Unions.

Derry was the last walled city to be



PRISONERS' relatives on their way to Long Kesh

built in Europe. It has a further, more dubious distinction. It is the last place in Europe where the walls are still used for their original purpose.

Off Bishop Street is yet another army post. This one nestles in the corner of the city walls overlooking the Bogside.

A large notice prohibits the taking of photographs — but not if you are in the army, of course! Which is why our delegation was photographed, and one extra reason why the army at the border post obviously knew who we were and why we were there.

Five days is not a long time to find out about a place. But it takes only five minutes to know you are in an occupied country.

Only the colour of the uniform distinguishes the army from the police. And the few police you do see

are in armoured landrovers, their fingers on the trigger of a self-loading rifle. Somehow you cannot believe that the weapons are real.

As we walk past the Cramlin Road prison a police patrol stops and flags down a passing car for a spot check. Between the various ghettos of North and West Belfast the army sits secure in its barracks, watching what passes for normal life go by.

## 'Black Taxis'

Buses are few and far between up the Falls Road, so the 'Black Taxis' of the Falls Taxi Association step in. Mysteriously, people know where to wait for the taxis, what their destination is. Is it imagination, or does Citybus really send its oldest vehicles through the nationalist ghettos?

In the Bogside, it's a different world. 'You are now entering Free Derry', says the slogan on the end wall of a terrace. The terrace itself has been knocked down.

Much of the Bogside made famous by the TV camera crews of 1969 has disappeared. But there are many from the area on the blanket in the H-blocks of Long Kesh.

More can be found on the hillside between the Creggan and the Bogside where the cemetery is. Volunteers for Oglagh na h'Eireann, the Provisional IRA. Those murdered by British paratroopers on Bloody Sunday seven years ago are buried here.

The memory of that day does not fade. That is where Johnnie Johnson fell, the first to be shot that day. Another day... a wall against which a young man was crushed to death by a Saracen.

How different it all is from Short's aircraft factory in Belfast. 'There's no sectarianism here.' But not many Catholics? 'That's because they have to come through East Belfast to get here.'

Most on the delegation, including ourselves, are keen to go back to Ireland. We want to follow up the contacts we made. We want to prove to ourselves that the nightmare which is Ireland is for real.

And the message? Get the trades councils and trade unions to fight the repressive legislation. Tell people the truth about what is happening in Ireland. And that is just what we intend to do.

The writers of this article are willing to speak at union, public or other meetings on what they saw. They can be contacted c/o Socialist Challenge.



# Shah's men up against the wall

By Steve Potter

MEHDI BAZARGAN, the Iranian Prime Minister appointed by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, has called for an amnesty for the criminals of the Shah's regime.

The announcement last week came after more than 200 people had been executed by revolutionary tribunals since the February insurrection.

Local committees have arrested suspected SAVAK agents, top officers in the Shah's army and other functionaries of the old regime responsible for crimes against the Iranian people.

From these prisoners were sent to the Islamic Revolutionary Council similar bodies in other cities known as 'Inam Committees'. At this level some of those arrested were released or bought their freedom. But under the pressure of these masses the most well-known of these figures were given secret trials by 'Islamic courts' and executed.

It is these actions which have created the hue and cry in the world press, boosted by the call of Ayatollah Sadegh Khalkhali for the killing of the Shah.

Now Bazargan has used the excuse that his government is becoming

bogged down in the controversy over the courts and is unable to deal with other more 'pressing' problems to call for an amnesty.

Bazargan's real motive is different. He is desperately trying to put back together the pieces of the old Shah regime to carry out a repressive pro-capitalist drive against the workers and the oppressed nationalities.

He was in favour of the secrecy which surrounds the Islamic courts and backs it up by refusing to open SAVAK files to public view. In this way he hopes to prevent the links between those accused in the courts and other elements of the old regime

being exposed — particularly as many of the top officials of the new regime were collaborators with the old.

Islamic courts also tried people on moral charges, executing some for homosexuality and flogging others for 'crimes' like adultery or drinking alcohol. While these cases are the exception rather than the rule they have been part of an attempt to intimidate those who are opposed to the Islamic religion being imposed through the law.

The Trotskyists of the Socialist Workers Party in Iran have argued against the secret courts, pointing out that open and democratic trials by the

people would be a hundred times more effective in exposing the network of reaction that backed up the Shah.

Trials conducted in this way would also show clearly the democratic gains that had been made since the February insurrection.

Likewise they oppose Bazargan's amnesty call, demanding that the criminals who aided the Shah, particularly those who now are attempting to rehabilitate themselves, are brought to justice.

# Carrington 'just a racist'

By Richard Carver

THE Tory government is drifting towards recognition of the Rhodesian regime. The decision to send a permanent envoy to Salisbury is the most open gesture of friendship since Ian Smith's government made its Unilateral Declaration of Independence in 1965.

Anti-racists in East London at least will note Lord Carrington's appropriate choice for the Salisbury post: Derek Day, namesake of the notorious Hoxton racist.

## Minerals

Joshua Nkomo, joint leader of the Patriotic Front, underlined the point: 'Lord Carrington is just a racist and he's talking racism. Carrington is the chairman of Rio Tinto mining group in Southern Rhodesia. One understands because he will be in control to exploit the mineral resources of our country.'

The report of the Tory team of observers covering the April 'internal settlement' election has been accepted without question. Lord Boyd and his colleagues make light of the fact that the black majority of the population has never had the chance to endorse the 'internal settlement'.

'The great jubilation among blacks and whites when the high poll was announced, before the count had even started, must lead to the conclusion that the election was not merely about which party would win, but contained within it a further, perhaps more profound, question... We are satisfied that the election did, in fact, constitute a kind of referendum on the constitution.'

## Con-trick

This 'jubilation' is not to be seen in the Chitnis report. Lord Chitnis and a colleague went to Zimbabwe on behalf of the non-party Parliamentary Human Rights Group. Chitnis, who is of Indian origin, had to endure racist remarks from Rhodesians about 'curry merchants in the House of Lords'. His report has hardly been mentioned in the British press.

'At a visit to Chipunga Social Club we talked with a white farmer from the area.

'He owned a tea plantation with about 250 workers. When we met him he was still in his security forces uniform, was slightly drunk and was brandishing a Mauser and dropping live ammunition into the ashtray.'

'He told us that as soon as he finished patrol in the morning he was going to return to his farm and see which of his "Kaffirs" had not voted.'

'In our opinion there was

whether it will be able to recognise the regime as presently constituted is still an open question. Lord Carrington's talks with US Secretary of State Cyrus Vance left undecided the option of a settlement involving a section of the Patriotic Front.

The Tory press has chosen to ignore this aspect of government policy. The significance of the Vance-Carrington talks was that the British and US

African governments, Lord Harlech, will also be a special representative in Salisbury and will have responsibility for trying to get the Patriotic Front leaders into talks with the government of Bishop Muzorewa.

## Hidden

This aspect remains hidden because in the past the Tories have always denounced the efforts of the Labour government to get talks with the 'terrorists'. But even Carrington and Thatcher recognise that the Patriotic Front commands mass support, making it the key to a stable settlement and therefore indispensable to any imperialist strategy.

The prospect of such a strategy working is rather dim, not least because the plan for splitting the Patriotic Front, which the Americans and British have long seen as essential, now looks further from success than ever. Yet it is important to understand the complexity of Tory policy to provide a guide to the sort of solidarity action we must build.

The demonstration on 30 June is of paramount importance in building the solidarity movement, but its central slogan is crucially deficient.

## Interests

'No Tory Sell-out in Zimbabwe' can only imply that the previous Labour government policy — a pro-imperialist settlement involving a section of the Patriotic Front — was in the interests of the people of Zimbabwe. That is the view of many of the organisers of the demonstration.

Unfortunately for them, despite the drift to recognition, the Tories have not yet made any fundamental break with the policy of their predecessors. They have not 'sold out'; on the contrary they continue to serve their own best interests.

The fundamental principle for a solidarity movement in Britain, the former imperial power, is that no imperialist regime has any right to interfere with the right of the people of Zimbabwe to determine their own political future. Although supporters of the Labour government's policy will be part of that movement, the slogan 'Hands off Zimbabwe' applies equally whatever party is in power in this country.



absolutely no way that any of this man's employees would refuse to go to the polling station.'

Chitnis concludes that the election 'was nothing more than a gigantic confidence trick... A high percentage poll was all that was deemed necessary to hoodwink the international community and secure recognition.'

The British government is only too willing to be hoodwinked, but

governments continue to pursue a joint initiative, resisting pressure from the extreme right wing in the House of Commons and Senate. The content of the Anglo-American initiative may have changed, but only in response to changing events in Zimbabwe itself.

Carrington has deliberately tried to obscure the fact that his new appointee as envoy to meet the black

# Gonzalez calls left's bluff

By Richard Carver

FELIPE Gonzalez, general secretary of Spain's Socialist Party, called the left wing's bluff when he resigned at the party's recent congress. He had led the move to drop all references to Marxism from the party's statutes. When his challenge fell he resigned, leaving his opponents in disarray.

Under Gonzalez's leadership the Socialist Party (PSOE) has established itself as the leading opposition party, but only through a policy of collaboration and support for the right-wing government on crucial questions of austerity and law and order.

Nevertheless, the party has always formally maintained the adherence to Marxism bequeathed it by its founder, Pablo Iglesias, at the end of last century. The motion moved by delegates from the mining region of Asturias, declaring the PSOE to be a class party based on Marxism, came as no break with tradition.

Gonzalez's resignation was not, as some commentators have suggested, a matter of honour, but a long term move to consolidate his leadership. By withdrawing he has neatly exposed the political weakness of his 'Marxist' opponents.

Happy enough to indulge in theoretical chest-beating, the 'left' was completely taken aback when the leadership of the party was offered it. A temporary steering committee has taken over the direction of the party pending an extraordinary conference within six months to elect a new leader.

Having had a few days to recover, the executive members who supported the 'Marxism' motion are now trying to assemble a new leadership team from the party's centre. But Gonzalez's return may well be sooner rather than later.

Most ominously Enrique Tierno Galvan, the PSOE's president, has referred to the fact that the Socialist International will tolerate no alternative to Gonzalez. The lesson should not be lost on those left-wing supporters of 'national sovereignty' in the British Labour Party.

Fisher's hypocrisy

AS a delegate to the NUPE conference, I found it incredible to hear Alan Fisher defend the miserable pittance handed out to public sector workers as a positive gain and proof of his skill and leadership in negotiating, and then go on to say that no more was available as the membership had shown its unwillingness to fight!

The hypocrisy of the man was such that on the one hand he lashed out at his critics for wanting to do the Tory media a good turn by 'washing our dirty linen in public', and then went on to please the same media by a divisive attack on other public sector unions.

So he won the support of conference. One reason advanced as to why he shouldn't go was that there was no-one to replace him! But that one's easy. There are a number of fighting socialists who could do the job, and for an average worker's wage!

The way forward in NUPE now is a united fight by all left militants in the union who see the need to fight vigorously for the just demands of our members, to fight to change the structure of the union to a fully democratic organisation with election and total recall of all officials.

Then we can get rid of the Fishers & co. and elect a leadership capable of leading the struggles that are looming ahead.

ERIC TOMLINSON (Nottingham)

Not all 'rich bastards'

AT a time when unity of NHS workers of all kinds is likely to be more critical than ever, I must express extreme disappointment that a leading NHS militant, Bill Geddes, has played right into the hands of Fleet Street and the misguided, reactionary 'public opinion' which it succours by implicitly classifying all occupants of private beds in NHS hospitals as 'rich bastards'.

'Rich bastards' hardly constitutes a 'concrete analysis of a concrete situation' when considering the various occupants of private beds in our hospitals. These range from wealthy scroungers through the comfortably off to those of ordinary means, bewildered and frightened by accounts of NHS standards of care, who part with some portion of their savings or even seriously cut their own living standard to obtain what they hope will be decent treatment, after-care, etc.

Private beds in the NHS must be opposed uncompromisingly, but difficult 'humanitarian' questions cannot be sidestepped by such falsification of the issue.

The working class movement wrested from the bourgeoisie the principle of a high standard of health-care for all, independent of their means, within the British

Tapes reveal network of bribery by Pretoria



capitalist system. That hard-won right must be defended against both outright theft by the state on behalf of private sector interests and petty pilfering by private practitioners.

On this principled class struggle basis only we must oppose the existence of private beds in NHS hospitals and refute petty accountancy/book-keeping arguments that private practice subsidises the health service.

ANDY HERRING (ASTMS group secretary, Hammersmith hospital—in personal capacity)

Turning the Labour Party outwards

HOW to relate to the Labour Party — which is what is at issue in the letters (17 May) attacking Martin Meteyard's article on the Socialist Campaign for a Labour Victory (24 April) — is a question that has bedevilled the revolutionary movement for decades.

Some groups, such as the SWP or WRP, straightforwardly counterpose themselves to the Labour Party. Others, feeling impotent in the face of the stranglehold of reformism, simply bury themselves in it — as Militant have done.

So it was a relief last July when the SCLV was formed with the aim of steering between the two problems. Its founding conference unanimously passed a resolution committing it to build campaigns such as the ANL, NAC, UTOM, etc. by getting CLPs to actively support initiatives from these campaigns as well as taking up the issues through the structures of the Labour Party.

Socialist Challenge supporters welcomed the SCLV because it appeared to have an orientation of turning the CLPs outwards to participate actively in the struggles of the working class.

But that resolution has since been quietly forgotten by the majority of the SCLV leadership. It didn't actively build for Carnival 2 (the ANL could do that as they had larger forces!), it didn't mobilise for the NAC trade union conference, its support for the day of action on international abortion rights was a short article in Socialist Organiser.

Even the SCLV's programme can be amended at will. The founding conference accepted the policy of no rate or rent increases, but SCLV supporters of the Socialist Charter have been supporting and arguing for massive rate increases in London.

This example helps to explain the obvious moves away from the SCLV's own programme and orientation. To have come out against rate increases would have jeopardised the SCLV's relationship with certain Labour lefts such as Ted Knight and Ken Livingstone. This relationship, rather than the job of 'turning the Labour Party outwards', is what the SCLV has come to be all about.

Thus the fight to get Knight and Livingstone elected became the important issue in the election. Canvassing in Islington North, for instance, was left to the right wing despite the previous successes in the fight for democracy in this party.

In other constituencies SCLV supporters left their local campaigns completely to canvass for Knight and Livingstone. This played straight into the hands of the right wing. They could simply argue that the left went off because it couldn't win its politics in their party. So much for credibility.

The two letters you printed contain many inaccuracies, such as the claim that UTOM 'shares the IMG's reluctance to take its campaign into the labour movement' (why then does the IMG support the International Tribunal?).

We are also told that Socialist Challenge supporters 'have done nothing to build the SCLV apart from distribute a few copies of its paper'. Strange, then, that it is Socialist Challenge supporters on their own who have built some of the very few active SCLV branches (e.g. Oxford, Swindon).

In fact we are presented with a string of accusations (particularly from the Workers Action EB) which seem to be more of a cover for avoiding political debate over the orientation of the SCLV than any serious contribution to it.

Socialist Challenge supporters will be arguing at the forthcoming SCLV conference for an orientation that turns the Labour Party outwards to the living struggles of the working class, and against the SCLV's present propagandist orientation with its reliance on certain Labour lefts. We

hope that the debate there will be serious rather than relying on 'insinuation and distortion'.

JON DUVEEN (SC supporter on SCLV steering committee)

Gay book appeal

WE are two of the authors of *The Law and Sexuality* recently published by Grass Roots Books, and we have been approached by a major publishing company to write a book about lesbians and gay men.

We feel that a general, positively written book about being gay is sorely needed on the mass market, so we have agreed to write it. We aim to cover: realising that we are lesbian or gay; coming out; lesbian/gay lifestyles — as well as looking into society's attitudes to all women and men, particularly lesbians and gay men, with a view to how we can and are changing things.

To do this we want to draw on as wide a variety of people's experience as possible, and we are asking people interested in helping us to answer a fairly comprehensive list of questions about themselves and their sexuality, their experiences and their views. Some of the replies along with some interviews will be used directly as quotes in the book, and all will be used to create a wider picture than our own experience could offer.

If you would like to help us in this way please write to us at: 109 Oxford Road, Manchester M1 7DU. All answers will be treated as confidential but we will credit you if you want us to.

JANET SLADE, STEPHANIE GREEN (Manchester)

Pomp on a Nazi

I WAS disappointed to see that 'Schoolkids for Stanton' (12 April) made the common mistake of identifying the music of Edward Elgar with the politics of the National Front. It was not the composer who added the appalling 'Land of Hope and Glory' words to his March of Pomp and Circumstance No. 1. Indeed, Elgar himself was a pacifist.

Setting the record straight on Elgar

is one reason why we plan to set up Elgar Lovers Against the Nazis (ELAN) with its own badge (Pomp on a Nazi). Perhaps this is also the moment to announce plans for a Baroque Against Racism concert. Anyone interested in performing or helping should contact A. Hall, c/o Socialist Challenge.

HAROLD HILL (Essex)

Muldergate

THOUGH most readers (myself included) will not have followed the intricacies of the great Muldergate scandal, I'm sure you will have noticed a few things about it: 1) It's very big. 2) It's about covert state funding of pro-apartheid propaganda inside and outside South Africa. 3) It has reduced central figures in the regime to lacerating each other's reputations.

About two months ago it came to London. Two tight-lipped heavies were seen on TV, arriving here to continue the investigation. David Owen declared that in future they should tell the UK government when they do this.

Britain's links with South Africa are stronger than those of any other imperialist country in the world. Surely it's obvious that if the Muldergate money actually went to anyone, a lot of it must have come here. Yet it seems that the government is happy to leave it to South Africa to investigate Muldergate corruption in Britain, and that the press here is looking the other way, regarding it as a foreign scandal.

The left press should start to look into this, and should call for a public inquiry without delay.

DAVID EDMOND (London E1)

THE LENGTH of letters printed will usually be kept down to 400 words in order to encourage as wide a range of contributions as possible. All letters may be cut at the Editor's discretion.

Unsigned letters will not normally be published, although we will withhold real names from publication on request.

SOCIALIST CHALLENGE EVENTS

NORTH WEST

MOSS SIDE Socialist Challenge supporters sell the paper at Moss Side Centre, Saturday, 11-1.

OLDHAM SC group meets regularly at the Gardeners Arms, Middleton Road, Westwood. Next meetings: Thur 31 May, 'The EEC elections'; Thur 7 June, 'Democracy and the labour movement'. Both at 7.30pm. Paper sales every Saturday, 11-1, outside Yorkshire Bank, High St. For further details tel. 061-652 7851.

NORTH EAST

MIDDLESBROUGH Socialist Challenge sales, Saturday lunchtime near the lottery stand at Cleveland Centre. Also available from Newsfare in Linthorpe Road.

DURHAM Socialist Challenge Supporters Group. For details contact: Dave Brown, 2 Pioneer Cottages, Low Pitington, Durham.

STOCKTON-ON-Tees readers can buy Socialist Challenge from Green Books, upstairs in the Spencer Hall shopping centre.

MIDDLESBROUGH SC group open meeting: 'Socialists and the Common Market'. Thur 31 May, 8pm, AUEW Hall, Borough Road.

SCOTLAND

For information about the paper or its supporters' activities throughout Scotland please contact Socialist Challenge Books, 64 Queen St, Glasgow. Open Wed, Thurs, Fri and Sat afternoons. Phone for alternative

arrangement (221 7481). Wide range of Fourth International publications.

HAMILTON supporters sell Socialist Challenge every Saturday in the Hamilton shopping centre, 1-5pm. For details of local activities contact John Ford, 553 Eliot Crescent, Hamilton.

EDINBURGH Socialist Challenge supporters group meets regularly. Phone George at 011-346 0466 for details.

DUNDEE Information about Socialist Challenge activities from 64 Queen St, Glasgow. Join in SC sales outside Boots (corner of Reform St) each Saturday 11am-2pm.

MIDLANDS

COVENTRY SC group meeting: 'Abortion — the new threat'. Tues 12 June, 8pm. Wedge Bookshop.

NOTTINGHAM readers can buy Socialist Challenge regularly at Mushroom Books, Heathcote St.

LEAMINGTON Socialist Challenge group meets every other Sunday. Contact 311772.

YORKSHIRE

HUDDERSFIELD Socialist Challenge group meets fortnightly on Thursdays at the Friendly & Trades Club, Northumberland St.

DEWSBURY Socialist Challenge sales regularly on Saturday mornings in Westgate at the Nat.

Westminster Bank, 12.30-2.00pm.

LEEDS Socialist Challenge sales every Saturday at City Centre Precinct, 11am-1.30pm. And at Eliand Rd — when Leeds Utd are playing at home!

HUDDERSFIELD Socialist Challenge sales regularly Saturdays 11am-1pm in the Piazza.

YORK Socialist Challenge is on sale at the York Community Bookshop, 73 Walmgate or from sellers on Thursdays (12.30-1.45) at York University, Vanbrugh College; Saturdays (11.30-1.30) at Coney Street.

SOUTH WEST

FOR INFORMATION on activities in the South-West, write to Box 902, c/o Fulmarks, 110 Cheltenham Rd, Bristol 6.

SOUTHAMPTON Socialist Challenge sales every Saturday from 10am-1pm above bar, Post Office, Bargate.

BRISTOL Socialist Challenge sales every Saturday, 11am-1pm in the 'Hole in the Ground', Haymarket.

ISLE OF WIGHT readers can buy Socialist Challenge from the Oz Shop, 44 Union St, Ryde.

BATH Socialist Challenge sales every Saturday, 2.30pm, outside Macfisheries, Ring Bath 20298 for further details.

SWINDON supporters sell Socialist Challenge 11am-1pm Saturdays, Regent St (Brunel Centre).

PORTSMOUTH Socialist Challenge sales, Saturdays 11.30am-1pm, Commercial Road Precinct.

SOUTH EAST

NORWICH Socialist Challenge sales every Saturday in Davey Place (opp. market) and bookstall Thursdays at University of East Anglia.

COLCHESTER SC supporters meet regularly. For details phone Steve on Wivenhoe 2949.

BRIGHTON SC forums fortnightly on Tuesdays. Contact Micky on 605052.

LONDON

TOWER HAMLETS Socialist Challenge Group meets every fortnight (phone 247 2717 for details).

PADDINGTON/N KENSINGTON supporters sell the paper every Saturday at noon at junction Portobello Rd/Westbourne Park Rd, W11.

BRENT supporters sell every Saturday, 2.30pm, in Kilburn Sq, Kilburn High Rd, London NW5.

HEMEL HEMPSTEAD supporters meet regularly on Sunday evenings. For details phone Mick on Hemel Hempstead 41037. Also paper sales Saturday mornings in Times Square.

TOWER HAMLETS jumble sale, Sat 2 June, 12.30-2.30, St Hilda's Club-Row, E1.

WALTHAMSTOW readers can buy Socialist Challenge regularly from Sheridan's Newsagents, 86 Hoe St, E17.

LEYTON readers can buy Socialist Challenge from Patel's Newsagents, 326 Lea Bridge Road, E10.

TOWER HAMLETS Socialist Challenge supporters sell every weekend: Saturdays meet 10.30am, Whitechapel tube; Sundays meet 10am, Brick Lane (corner of Buxton St).

HACKNEY supporters sell every Saturday, 12-2pm, in Kingsland High St, Dalston — meet outside Sainsbury's.

HARROW Socialist Challenge supporters meet regularly, details from Box 50, London N1 2XP.

HARINGEY paper sales at Finsbury Park and Seven Sisters tubes, Thurs evening, Muswell Hill and Crouch End Broadways, Saturday morning. Also available at Muswell Hill Bookshop, Muswell Hill Broadway; Vages newsagent, Middle Lane, N8; and Bookmark, Finsbury Park.

BRENT Socialist Challenge open forum: 'Zimbabwe — the struggle continues!' Tues 5 June, 7.30pm. Speakers from Zimbabwe Information Group, Kent Room, Anson Hall, Chichester Road, NW2. All welcome.

BENEFIT BOP for Socialist Challenge with SpolSports/Oxy and the Morons plus disco, food and drink. Sat 2 June, 8pm till late, City Poly, Fairchild House, 102 Whitechapel High St. (Aldgate East tube/253 bus). Adm. £1.

CATHY put down her Tesco's carrier bag and picked up the same copy of the *Observer* magazine that she had pretended to read on her first visit. There were only two other patients in the surgery, sitting side by side and flicking well thumbed copies of *Woman's Own* and *Illustrated London News*. Unconsciously, but with deliberation, Cathy cemented their nervous communication of a desire for non-communication by sitting apart from them. Glancing up from the *Observer* magazine, she realised that she was sitting in exactly the same place as on her first visit three months previously.

The waiting room held an atmosphere of timelessness. Unaltered but all-knowing, the mirror still hung listlessly to one side and the anti-smoking poster continued to gradually free itself from the wall. Even the magazines, those instruments of privatisation, remained unchanged. Returning her eyes to the *Observer*, Cathy wondered how many others had hidden their anxieties or temporarily anaesthetised their fears in those hope creating articles and you-too-can-be-like-this advertisements. What other, unwritten, stories could the magazines have told?

Cathy was two months overdue before she went for her pregnancy test. Feeling pregnant in a way she found difficult to articulate accurately, the positive result came as no real surprise. What did surprise her was the pervading sense of fear that engulfed her when it was confirmed — a fear of the abortion to come, itself overshadowed by a deep and lurking questioning of why she had let herself become pregnant at all.

### Abortion

Always cautious, her unthinking and unspoken decision to stop taking the pill frightened her. What kind of inadequacy (if inadequacy it was) could make a person refute all rationality by such an act? Disturbed by thoughts of a bizarre and desperate need to draw attention to herself, Peter's understanding provided some consolation.

He reacted as she knew he would, distancing himself just enough for her to know that it was her body and her decision but still remaining close enough to be as supportive and caring as any man could be. When they talked through the causes of her fears, Peter listened; holding her when she cried, comforting her when she woke in the night. Solid story book stuff she knew, but it helped nonetheless — not to remove the spectres of her dreams or the doubts that substituted for thoughts, but in giving her strength to live with them. She was glad of the amelioration Peter gave to her apprehension: his support gave her confidence to confront the doctor with her desire for an abortion.

Visiting the surgery was not as she had anticipated. At first tripping over words as she tried to explain her situation, the doctor's warmth and gentleness quickly put her at ease. It was a strangely exciting and relaxing meeting, free from the probing questions and accusations of carelessness she had expected.

Friendly and understanding, the doctor demanded no justification from her but concentrated on making the whole procedure as painless as possible. Cathy learnt that she would have to be referred to a consultant and that she might have to spend three or four days in hospital if the operation was performed on the NHS. She thought that rather a long time for a simple operation. The doctor agreed it might be: there was much to be said for day-care centres, but at the same time it was as well to be able to check against possible complications.

### Confidence

Cathy frowned at the thought: the doctor reassured her. And so they continued, with doubts from one and reassurances from the other. The conversation turned to other things, to Peter, to Cathy's job, the new cinema, Jonathan Miller's *The Body in Question*, the social workers' strike (Cathy was in support, the doctor was ambivalent).

The more they talked the more Cathy lost any sense of how long she'd been there, or of the fact that it was her doctor she was enjoying being with. When it was finally pointed out that there were other patients waiting, Cathy impulsively asked if she could return for a general check-up after the operation. Smiling, perhaps at the faint hint of pleading in Cathy's request, the doctor readily consented.

Returning home, Cathy felt more assured and confident than at any time since the pregnancy test. In the days leading up to the abortion her thoughts were no longer filled with the over-riding weight of the operation but more and more with the prospect of returning to the doctor's surgery. Her unexpected affinity with the doctor excited but confused her. As affinity beckoned attraction, Peter's continued support — so important before — became increasingly superfluous.

Cathy's feelings of guilt at her ingratitude

# AS THOUGHTS CASCADE



A short story by Jerry Lockspeiser

Pic: Graveyard Graphics

towards him was compounded by the sense of exhilaration that surrounded her thoughts of the doctor. For the second time in a matter of weeks she was thrown back into introspection and self-doubt. How could she be drawn to someone else after such a short meeting? After all the support Peter had given her? Especially when she was soon to abort their child. Especially when it was her doctor.

The operation itself was almost brutally clinical and efficient and she was glad when Peter came to take her home. In the next few days he was even more considerate than usual, taking her to her favourite pubs and accommodating her most capricious whims. He even drove her to the second meeting with the doctor. She had tried, genuinely tried, not to positively look forward to this time, but without success. The doctor appeared glad to see her again and carried out the routine check-up she had requested. As before, their meeting was relaxed and informal and Cathy felt, or thought she felt, the empathy growing between them. They talked of how Cathy had felt at the time of the operation; of how she felt now that it was over; of whether she had encountered any problems getting time off work.

Medical matters dealt with, they talked again of other things. But not — significantly to

Cathy at least — of Peter. Once more uplifted, it was not until she was on the bus home that Cathy realised she had no arrangement and no excuse to see the doctor again.

For the next two weeks Cathy filled her days with work, her evenings with friends and books, and her nights with unwanted dreams. Peter puzzled over her behaviour, attributing her oscillation between bouts of heavy drinking and hours spent in front of the fire with a novel to the after-effects of having an abortion. Cathy knew he accepted this explanation, and because it was wrong she was happy that he did. She was happier still that he couldn't see into the life she lived asleep, full of doctors but devoid of Peters.

It was a kind of coping, but not much of a success at conquering. Perhaps she should change her choice of novels: *G* contained too many truths, *The Magus* was too disorienting, *Sometimes A Great Notion* was amazingly powerful but made her life seem even more unsatisfactory. And *The Dicerman* — well, *The Dicerman* was all of those and more. Cathy wondered if she too might let the die decide.

It did. Waiting alone for a friend in the lounge bar of a small Irish pub on the far side of town, the elaborate structures of her coping collapsed in on themselves as soon as the doctor walked in. At first unnoticed, Cathy seized the gift that

chance had granted — and another drink — and sauntered as casually as her excitement allowed to where the doctor was sitting. Surprisingly, the doctor took her sudden appearance almost as a matter of course, as though it had somehow been anticipated. Both evidently found this meeting if anything more pleasurable than those of the past and both were disappointed when Cathy's friend arrived after only 10 minutes, so ending for the time being the opening that chance had dealt them.

But Cathy had discovered where the doctor went drinking, and her life changed accordingly.

The more Cathy travelled across town to meet the doctor the more their relationship developed, despite (or perhaps because of) its secrecy. Peter seemed to accept Cathy's various explanations for the increasing amount of time she spent away from him as stoically as he accepted everything, never showing a hint of disbelief.

### Pledge

She knew why he was so confident: she never lied to him. They'd agreed that at the beginning — no lies. And they'd always carried it through, hiding things perhaps, but never actually lying. How naive and idealistic they had been! It was easy to have truth as an ideal when their relationship itself seemed to represent the epitome of all ideals. So long as the apparent harmony remained, so too did the freedom from any desire to lie. Hence the ideal of truthfulness had neither need nor occasion to be tested. It had seemed to Cathy at that time that the pledge to truth had hardly been a pledge at all, more of an aspect of something greater, beyond pledges, contracts and guarantees. No longer. Now that the ideal had ceased to exist so had the meaning of the pledge.

Cathy needed to talk to someone, preferably another woman. She tried to explain to a friend at work, but the disparaging response she met sent her scurrying to the canteen. She almost spoke to a friend of Peter's, but drew back at the last moment.

Perhaps it didn't matter, she would have to tell Peter soon anyway. Practical and emotional pressures forbade any alternative. Knowing the suffering it would cause him, and the awesome possibility that he for once wouldn't, perhaps couldn't, understand, she determined to tell him. But how to explain, how to cushion the blow? As gently as she knew how, she told him that it wasn't his fault, that she didn't dislike him, didn't regret their time together, didn't even know if she wanted them to live apart. And then, unasily, to try and convey that this other was somehow different, qualitatively different, with different feelings, different understandings, different levels.

But she could see it didn't really work. Peter was visibly hurt. He was even more visibly baffled. A week later he moved out.

### Card

Although the abruptness of Peter's departure shocked her, Cathy had anticipated his leaving. As a last concession and show of friendship she had decided to discontinue her journeys across town until he had grown to accept the new situation. It was her way of easing him into an acceptance of the consequences of what she had told him. It had not been an easy time for either of them, but it seemed the least she could do. On the day of his departure Cathy spent the hours before sleep contemplating the week just passed, being sad for Peter in his sadness but happy at having simplified her own life.

The first morning she woke alone in the flat brought a card from the doctor. Would she attend the surgery at 2.30pm that afternoon? Initially unperturbed, the peculiarity of this gradually re-awakened the fears of past months. Why was she being so urgently summoned?

She checked her diary but knew she hadn't made an appointment. Was there a medical explanation? Was she ill? No, she'd passed the check-up after the operation with ease. It was too formal a way of recommending contact after a week apart, and she had already explained how she would have to stay away while Peter got used to the news. What else, what other possibility unless... She'd thought briefly before about the problems of doctor-patient relationships, the Hippocratic Oath and medical ethics. But surely? Cathy went to her appointment that afternoon with greater trepidation than on her first visit.

The impregnation of Cathy's thoughts into the pages of the *Observer* magazine was abruptly terminated by the brash call of the receptionist. 'Miss Morgan? Cathy Morgan?'

'Yes?'

'Dr Judith will see you now.'

'Thank you.'

As she rose and walked hesitantly towards the consulting room Cathy remembered how comforting Judith's insistence on being called 'Dr Judith' had seemed three months before. Much more than 'Dr Hart' or even 'Dr Judith Hart'. And now?

# Socialist Challenge

## OUR FUND DRIVE

Dear Comrades,

Now I realise that many of you are withholding your pounds from Socialist Challenge in anticipation of picking up shares in the industries to be denationalised.

I don't blame you. I too have issued my stockbroker with orders to stand by for the coming free-for-all. We are a-quiver with anticipation.

Who'd ever have thought the Tories were dumb-dumb enough to state their intentions so openly? Well, it gives us the upper hand, doesn't it? I mean, they're ideologically committed to selling off chunks of the state sector; so if we decide not to offer them the gentlemanly price, there's not much they can do about it.

In fact, I've got an even better idea. Let's tell the Tories that we shall have to further lower our offer because the shares represent 'risk' capital — the risk of being renationalised by Labour.

In their present state of euphoria I don't think the Tories would notice the flaws in my argument; one, that Labour doesn't nationalise profitable industries; two, that if however our acquisitions should prove unprofitable, we can expect a future Labour government to follow tradition by compensating us generously for a discredited shareholding that the hard-headed stock exchange wouldn't even glance at.

Anyway, fund-raising. I must succeed in raising monies because Socialist Challenge has promised me 250 ordinary shares for every £50 and 100 preferential shares (of the 1976 SC rights issue) for every £100 raised in standing orders.

I believe that if you can help the paper reach its target of £500, I'm entitled to an honorary Kruegerand. And honestly comrades, my children and I do need the money. Schooling is so damned expensive.

I've been told that only £230 a month is given in standing orders by readers of this paper, which has a circulation of 8,500. This level of support is humiliating.

If we switched the name to Christian Challenge and touted the evangelical community, you can bet your sweet bippy that we'd reach the target in no time. Materialists outflanked by mystics; this is doubly humiliating.

So I am going to ask you to make a Big Sacrifice: those pounds that were earmarked for that denationalisation shopping spree, give them to us.

Use the form below. £1 each from everyone please, or add £1 to your current order. It will immeasurably boost the paper and educate my children.

Paul Russell

PAUL Russell's message is unfortunately emphasised by another disappointing week's total. Our thanks to:

T Boushier (USA)	£ 1.19
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Cardiff SC Forum	14.00
A Blundell	10.00
Week's Total	115.84
Cumulative Total	£1,074.79

# ZIMBABWE

## 10 good reasons for marching on 30 June



**1** The Tory government is drifting into recognition of Ian Smith's Rhodesian government. Under pressure from the right wing in the United States, Secretary of State Vance has said that he will go along with this for the time being.

**2** The new Rhodesian government will have a black man at its head. But that is as significant as the fact that the British Prime Minister is a woman. The apparatus of discrimination remains virtually untouched. Even where it has been slightly altered — in land purchase for example — blacks are so poor that they cannot hope to redress the racial imbalance. Land expropriation is outlawed under the 'internal settlement'.

**3** In the 'internal settlement', described by Tory observers as 'free and fair', black people had a vote that was only worth one seventh of a white vote. The black majority has never even been asked whether it supports the new constitution.

**4** The idea that black people were keen to vote is a lie. The British Parliamentary Human Rights Group sent a team of observers to watch the election. Their report has not been as widely publicised as the Tory Boyd report. This is one of the examples it gives of 'democratic' participation in the election: 'In the Sipolilo area security forces came to our informant's village and wanted people to go to a meeting to teach people how to vote.

'The kua head refused and said that his people were not interested in the elections. The security forces reported to headquarters, then returned. Some 15 people were shot and killed including our informant's daughter, aged 14, his nine-year-old son and his nephew, an infant aged two years.'

**5** Parties opposed to the 'internal settlement' were banned, yet black voters were often prevented from boycotting, which was their only form of protest: 'Mobile polling stations serviced large

numbers of mines and factories. When the station arrived, mines and factories shut down operations and ordered their employees to go and vote.'

**6** 'The recent election in Rhodesia was nothing more than a gigantic confidence trick... A high percentage poll was all that was deemed necessary to hoodwink the international community and secure recognition.' (Report of Parliamentary Human Rights Group)

**7** Multinational companies already pay scant attention to sanctions on Rhodesia. Recognition would allow arms and aid to flood into the country legally. A massive labour movement campaign will be needed to impose sanctions and stop racist trade.

**8** Even if recognition does not go ahead, the Tories will follow their Labour predecessors in trying to split the liberation movement. Their special emissary Lord Harlech has instructions to meet the Patriotic Front leaders with that in mind.

**9** Whatever tactic the Tory government tries, the labour movement in Britain has one responsibility: to say that no outside government has the right to dictate to the people of Zimbabwe. Hands Off Zimbabwe!

**10** Solidarity becomes ever more urgent as the possibility looms of British troops being sent in to impose a pro-imperialist settlement. Against that we argue for self-determination for the people of Zimbabwe.

\* 30 June, 2.30pm. Assemble Smithfield Market, London. Robert Mugabe and Joshua Nkomo of the Patriotic Front invited.

\* 6 June, meeting of Zimbabwe Emergency Campaign Committee, Central Hall, Westminster. Supporters should try to get their organisations to send delegates.  
\* Now turn to page 13.

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