

# Socialist Challenge

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# STOP TORY UNION BASHERS



**THREE MILLION UNEMPLOYED.** Wages down, rents, rates and prices up. And still the Tories aren't satisfied. This vicious government wants its pound of flesh, and every last drop of blood too.

Now the Tory Employment Minister Norman Tebbit, has announced new union-bashing laws. He wants compulsory ballots and cooling off periods in strikes in 'essential services'. He wants employers to be able to sue the unions, and an end to commercial contracts which specify union labour only.

This proposed legislation is a fundamental attack on the right of workers to organise, a right that has been fought for since the Tolpuddle Martyrs were transported to Australia over 150 years ago.

The labour movement has to throw its full weight behind a campaign to defeat this union-

bashing legislation. It has to move every muscle to stop the Tories in their tracks. The best way to start is to build the maximum support for those workers taking on the employers and the government.

The Laurence Scott workers have been out on strike now for seven months. In that time they've had everything thrown at them, including withdrawal of official support from the unions. It's bad enough already with union leaders like Duffy and Boyd, without Tebbit's new Bill.

A victory for the Laurence Scott workers would strengthen all those workers fighting back against redundancies, as at Staffa and Hoovers, and those struggling against the Tories' four per cent pay policy like the Fords workers and the tanker drivers.

A victory for the Scott's workers would be a mighty blow against the Tories' union-bashing plans. It would lay the basis for kicking out the Tories once and for all.

*'WE'VE had everything thrown at us. Now we have no choice but to go back onto the offensive against Snipe. We are going to put back on secondary picketing at one of his factories in the next week.*

*'We've been made un-official by the national union leaders. We've been evicted by bailiffs. the gates have been burnt open by scabs, protected by the police.*

*'We've seen a mass police presence to attempt to let*

*management through our picket line. We've been stabbed in the back, once again, by Duffy's sabotage of the AUEW Final Appeal Court.*

*'Finally, last week, we had the helicopter raid. Although we feel it was only a pro-paganda exercise to try and weaken our spirit, we're appalled at the silence of our national Confed officials.*

*'We can only assume that they con-done this union-bashing. Of course,*

*they were also silent when the bailiffs came, so we're not really surprised.*

*'We're going to need support for our picket from wherever we can get it. We're looking for all trade unionists, employed or unemployed, to support our struggle.'*

**Denis Barry, Laurence Scott convenor**



## AFTER LEYLAND

Amid the archaic pomp and ceremonial which accompanies the big occasions of the British state, and graced with the presence of Lady Di, parliament was opened on 4 November. The Queen's speech outlined a programme of legislation which adds up to a massive attack on the working class, and on trade union rights in particular.

The timing was ironic, for just the day before the leaders of the engineering and transport unions had sold out the struggle at British Leyland. A massive nationwide struggle against the Tory government had been averted — opening the way for the Tories to escalate their anti-working class offensive.

Last week the British Leyland workers voted overwhelmingly for strike action against the company's 3.8 per cent pay offer. On the first full day of the strike last Monday huge pickets were put on the plants.

Two thousand pickets turned up outside the Cowley plant, making a mockery of the Employment Act which limits the number of pickets to six.

The mood was militant; angry workers waived their pay slips at TV cameras, showing take home pay of £50 to £60 for a 40-hour week.

Meanwhile, the trade union leaders had cooked up their deal with management: no increase in the basic rate of pay, a tiny increase in the bonus scheme. While the national meeting of shop stewards rejected the deal, a crucial sabotaging role was played by the union leaders.

### Duffy

Terry Duffy, president of the engineering union, called on workers to accept the offer 'for the good of England'.

Alex Kitson of the transport workers played a more perfidious role: he just told his members to listen to the proposals of the shop stewards and 'make up their own minds'.

At the mass meetings the next morning to decide on the new offer the workforce was split. At

the largest plant, Longbridge in Birmingham, a meeting of 15,000 workers was split 60-40 in favour of accepting the offer and returning to work.

The Cowley plant with 6400 workers voted overwhelmingly against it, but a clear majority of the 58,000 manual workers had voted for a return to work.

### Close

Clearly the threat of Leyland boss Michael Edwardes to close down the company if there was a long strike played a role. The workers were harassed by a massive newspaper and television campaign against them.

But the role of the union leaderships was decisive. The vote revealed a tremendous anger and frustration at falling living standards and constant speed up, and a growing mood of defiance and determination to struggle.

### Lead

But in a situation of mass unemployment the majority were not prepared to enter a prolonged struggle without a clear lead from the union tops.

This result is symbolic of the situation inside the whole working class. The mood of resistance to mass unemployment and falling living standards is being suppressed by a right wing union leadership.

This leadership is the product of a previous period. It consolidated its strength during the last Labour government in the mid 1970s — a low ebb of workers struggles.

In particular Duffy-Boyd leadership of the AUEW is the major obstacle to left wing advance both inside the unions and the Labour Party.

Apart from regularly sabotaging struggles against unemployment in the engineering industry

And now...

**THE TORIES certainly lack subtlety. Within days of forcing Leyland workers back to work under threat of closing the company down, Industry Secretary Patrick Jenkin has declared that BL, as it exists at present, has a very limited future.**

**In a speech at the weekend, he said it was the government's intention to sell-off to private enterprise the profitable sections of BL.**

**That means that the cuts in real wages BL workers have suffered in the last couple of years, and all the jobs they have lost will be used to finance profitable plants which will then be handed over to private bosses.**

**If the sell-off plan goes ahead it could also mean that BL will then close down the 'unprofitable' sections.**

**It all amounts to one more Tory rip-off of the nationalised industries — and one more rip off of the BL workers.**

(symbolised by their failure to support the Laurence Scott occupation in Manchester), it is their block vote at Labour Party conference which prevented the left wing from winning more decisive victories.

Removing this leadership is a crucial task if the working class is to fight back against the Tory austerity offensive.

The consequences of this defeat of the Leyland workers will have a dampening effect on the current 'round' of pay demands. Sections of workers like the miners, Ford workers and public employees have been holding off to see the outcome of the Leyland struggle. The defeat of the Leyland workers will thus reinforce Thatcher's four per cent wage norm.

### Many

Many workers will feel discouraged, fearing isolation and betrayal by their leaders. The Tory government will base itself on these feelings in trying to push forward its proposed legislation on trade union reform.

Among the measures in the proposed legislation on trade unions are compulsory ballots and cooling off periods in strikes in 'essential services'; making procedure agreements legally binding; removing

Defeats like the one at Leyland will also have a negative effect on the level of union membership, which has already fallen by one million in the past three years.

In the build up to the Leyland strike dozens of workers were joining the unions in the car plants. Now they will be leaving in droves.

### Order

At the same time, the sense of bitterness among thousands of Leyland workers will lead to a resurgence of the effort to call their union leaders to order.

The fight for democracy in the Labour Party has taken enormous strides forward over the past three years. This process must begin to overflow into the trade unions if the left advance in the labour movement is to continue.

### Top

But it is excluded that the trade union bureaucracy can sit on top of this seething discontent at the base indefinitely.

A victorious struggle at British Leyland would have put the continued existence of the Tory government in question. It is only a matter of time before such a major national struggle occurs.

## JOIN THE FIGHT FOR SOCIALISM

If you would like to be put in touch with Socialist Challenge supporters in your area or would like more information fill in the form below

Name.....

Address.....

Age.....

Union/CLP (if any).....

Send to: Socialist Challenge, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

# Strike a blow against Thatcher - and Duffy

**NATIONAL SOLIDARITY CONFERENCE**  
Saturday 14 November

By Tessa van Gelderen and Patrick Sikorski

**THE BATTLE for Laurence Scott continues. In their seven-month strike the workers have faced the combined onslaught of attacks from management, the state and the union leadership.**

Arthur Snipe, the Laurence Scott boss, has resorted to every trick in the book. When he failed to 'entice' workers to scab on the strikers, he sent in helicopters to grab a few small motors, with the connivance of the police.

When the workforce turned down a miserly offer, union leaders, led by Terry Duffy and Ken Cure of the engineering union, withdrew official support. But the Scott strikers are more determined than ever that they will win this dispute.

They know only too well that a victory for them will give confidence and inspiration to other workers fighting to save their jobs and to improve their living standards. That is why they have organised a solidarity conference this weekend.

Solidarity with Laurence Scott means much more than saving several hundred jobs in Manchester. It means fighting for socialist policies that take on both the Tory government and its cohorts like Snipe, as well as the leaders of our own organisations who are not prepared to promote the struggle against Thatcher.

That's why the conference will discuss both the lessons of the Scott workers' fight for jobs and union rights, and the right for democracy in the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions.

Building solidarity has not been the 'icing on the cake' for Laurence Scott but a vital ingredient of fighting back and winning. In their seven months' fight for jobs, Laurence Scott workers have seen the victory of Lee Jeans, and the Liverpool dockers, the fight at Staffa and the Liverpool typists. They have also seen the setback at Leyland and the uncertainties of a fightback at Hoovers in West London.

## Breaches

In all these cases the workers have been pressed to fight back. But the action of the union leadership has left workers isolated, and all too often defeated.

With 3 million on the dole, union officials know that workers will not lightly rush to the aid of struggles like Scott's. Thus the fight for solidarity is also the fight for official support.

That is why the Scott strikers have now three times mailed every single one of the 2,800 AUEW

branches and districts as well as the National Committee members to campaign against breaches of the rule book and misleading circulars from Boyd and Duffy.

Without official support it is very difficult for the stewards to convince the members to fight. Leyland showed that. If the union officials can ignore the decisions of the membership then more jobs, and the fight for better pay and conditions will be lost.

At every stage of the fight Scott's workers have built support throughout the labour movement. At the beginning of the dispute they sought advice from Gardner's workers who had just won a victory against redundancies.

## Picket

They have also fought to win the support of over 100 MPs. At both the TUC and Labour Party conferences they linked up with Tony Benn's fight for the deputy leadership and for democracy in the Labour Party.

They have continually drawn attention to the treacherous role of Boyd and Duffy, occupying the union headquarters, harassing them at every opportunity — at conferences, meetings and lobbies.

Laurence Scott workers are determined to win. To do that and to defeat Boyd and Duffy they need the full support of the entire labour movement, in particular support from AUEW members.

The strength of feeling in the membership can be demonstrated by a national picket of the AUEW executive in December. Such a picket, demanding a recall of the National Committee and the Final Appeal Court to bring the executive into line, would be an ideal opportunity for every AUEW member to demonstrate their anger at the erosion of democracy in their union.

This solidarity conference has not only to discuss the lessons of Laurence Scott, but also the urgent need for national action to win this dispute once and for all.

**Such a victory will be a blow to Arthur Snipe, Margaret Thatcher and Terry Duffy. Let's give them all that they deserve.**

All messages of support and donations can be sent to G Fryer, 20 Roundcroft, Romiley, Cheshire.

November 1981

5p

# LAURENCE SCOTT STRIKE BULLETIN

Issued by Laurence Scott Joint Shop Stewards Committee



## Snipe's Air Service

**ON TUESDAY 3 November two helicopters raided the Laurence Scott factory in Manchester. With the protection of 200 policemen — some of them mounted — eight masked men whisked away a few small motors.**

Laurence Scott boss, Arthur Snipe may have hijacked some motors but he is unlikely to put them into service. Within 48 hours, Vickers in Barrow in Furness and Laurence Scott in Norwich agreed not to handle the goods.

Similar support has come from the main dockyards in Scotland after a visit from a Laurence Scott delegation. Such an embargo has to be extended to cover other Admiralty and Coal Board work normally done by Laurence Scott's in Manchester.

It is this type of national action which has to come out of the solidarity conference this weekend.

Support from miners, shipyard, dock and transport workers will also be needed if the strikers decide to take the fight right back to Snipe by picketing Mining Supplies in Doncaster again.

The last time the strikers initiated this so-called 'illegal, secondary' picket, Snipe was forced to make an offer — an offer the workers could and did refuse, but nonetheless an offer after months of refusing to talk with the unions.

The union leaders wanted to go along with this deal, which, without a 'no enforced redundancy' clause, exposed the stewards to victimisation. When the strikers rejected the offer, the unions withdrew official support.

Since then Boyd, Duffy and Co have refused to condemn the eviction of the occupying workers at the hands of the

bailiffs. They have had nothing to say on the helicopter raid.

Yet the policies of the Tory government give a green light for the forces of the state to intervene directly in anti-union activity. At Staffa, it was the police, rather than the bailiffs, who evicted the strikers — and who then proceeded to occupy the plant for several days.

The police were also well informed about Arthur Snipe's planned helicopter capers. So were the television cameras who just happened to be present for the landing.

Now Employment Secretary, Norman 'Skinhead' Tebbit, plans to legalise such activities. He wants to erode union rights still further by insisting on the use of secret ballots, and on making trade union funds liable to civil damages in the courts by employers in strikes that are deemed 'unlawful'.

Thus the Laurence Scott Solidarity Conference comes at a most appropriate time. Snipe's Air Service and all that goes with it has to be well and truly grounded.



Available from 20 Roundcroft, Romiley, Cheshire

PHOTO: MORNING STAR

# Stop the missiles

## CND- steps to victory

AS THE Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament goes into its 1981 annual conference the threat of nuclear war hangs heavy in the air.

When US President Reagan says that tactical nuclear weapons might be used without escalating into a full-scale atomic exchange between the super powers he's talking about a European battlefield.

And despite subsequent attempts to cover up, Alexander Haig, the US Secretary of State, has revealed that NATO has a plan to fire a nuclear demonstration shot.

Where could the spark come from to set the world on fire? Just as in 1962 when the US was prepared to risk all-out confrontation with the Soviet Union over Cuba's missiles, new noises are being made about military intervention in Cuba and Nicaragua.

Cuba has responded by placing its armed forces, including the reserve and territorial militia on full alert.

One of the main reasons for the step-up in belligerent noises from the US in recent months lies in its need to contain the growing revolutionary ferment in central America and the Caribbean.

The rattling of nuclear weapons is a key part of their strategy.

Whether deliberate or accidental the use of nuclear weapons cannot be tolerated. Now is the time to drive ahead the movement against the missiles, against the war makers and for unilateral disarmament.

**Brian Heron** spotlights the vital decisions to be taken at CND's annual conference to take us forward.

THE annual conference of CND, to be held 13-15 November in London, has a huge responsibility. It must lead the way for the biggest mass movement seen in Britain since the war.

Last month two hundred and fifty thousand people marched in London for nuclear disarmament. Over a million marched in Western Europe, protesting Reagan's missiles.

It was a display of strength that sent shock waves right to the heart of the US administration and their European allies.

Foreign policy advisor and ex-NATO commander General Haig is now under threat. Pressure for his removal comes in part from the Reagan regime's fear of presenting too hawkish a face to its European allies.

Eight European governments now face a growing revolt against the US-inspired war drive.

Cruise and Pershing missiles are the major target for nuclear protesters in Europe. This underlines the failure of the Reagan/Thatcher team to place the blame for the nuclear build up on the USSR.

Despite the anxious efforts of defence spokesperson John Nott on this side of the Atlantic (who has just denounced the BBC for bias) and Weinberger in the USA, few are convinced that NATO is just 'responding' to the Soviet drive to nuclear confrontation.

One glance at the performance of Thatcher in command of the British economy, or Reagan's pursuit of 'peace' in El Salvador gives the lie to their excuses for a missile build up.

In Britain two factors have proved decisive in building CND over the past year.

The first is the mobilisation of youth. Some estimates give more than one hundred and twenty thousand people under twenty five on CND's monster demonstration.

Every mass action against the missiles in the past year has been supported by thousands of young people.

The second factor is the decision by both the TUC and Labour Party conferences to back unilateral disarmament.

This is the biggest political victory in CND's history.

The Labour and TUC decisions give real weight to the prospect of a future Labour government being forced to abandon Britain's nuclear weapons.

They also hold out the prospect of direct industrial action against the missiles, to turn the TUC and Labour Party resolutions into action in the shops, offices, mines and factories.

It's not a matter of adopting Jobs not Bombs slogans, nor of debating alternative production schemes for arms workers. These questions aren't for CND to solve.

We should concentrate on mobilising working class support, an important aspect of which will be to press for joint CND, Labour Party and TUC action on the streets to stop the missiles.

CND has to change to do this, not by tinkering with the constitution but by adopting the measures outlined in resolution four from Rotherham.

It proposes that there should be a reduction in the membership fee, representation at every level from affiliated mass organisations like the trade unions, workplace CND branches, and every National Council place to be elected at conference.

It is alarming that there are only three resolutions on youth. We need an open, democratic youth organisation to lead the anti-missiles movement among young people.

Youth must be free to make their own decisions and run their own organisation. But this is far from agreed. National Council arbitrarily reversed the decisions of the first YCND conference held in Birmingham.

Conference must register its support for, and confidence in our young leaders. Resolutions 117 and 119 embody this support and confidence.

It is not so much CND, but the antics of Reagan and Thatcher that have put NATO back on our agenda.

Although the vote against NATO was larger at this year's Labour Party conference than at last year's, there is still a long way to go.

### Build Youth CND

By Richard Rozanski, YCND National Committee in his personal capacity

ACROSS Europe, thousands of young people have led demonstrations against cruise missiles, and against Reagan's war drive.

On 24 October, the CND demonstration was not only the largest demonstration ever seen in London, but it had the largest number of young people ever out, on the streets fighting for a future free from the threat of nuclear war.

Over the last year, Youth CND groups have been set up across the country, leading the nuclear disarmament campaign in their areas.

In schools, colleges, and in the workplaces, it is young people who are taking action against the missiles — that was what the 24 October march reflected.

It is clear that youth are in the forefront of the nuclear disarmament campaign local-

ly and nationally. This must be placed at the centre of the CND conference this year.

Young people are the future of the CND in this country, as they are internationally.

A clear commitment to build Youth CND, as the best way to organise and involve these thousands of young people, must be the message from the CND conference.

This means opening it up to all young workers, students, and school students, raising the age limit to 25, and turning the youth campaign towards the trade union movement and the Labour Party Young Socialists.

Any attempts to lower the age limit to 18, or to restrict resources available to Youth CND, will only hold back the campaign as a whole.

CND can't afford to turn its back on the thousands of youth who marched on 24 October and who have led the campaign against cruise and Trident, and against Thatcher's war drive.



Youth and trade unions on 24 October march in London

Many like Tony Benn apparently believe that the backbone of NATO's nuclear strategy can be broken, without killing off the beast altogether.

On this issue we require a sustained educational campaign, directed particularly at the labour movement. Resolution 88 from Sheffield best fits this particular bill.

Finally the campaign needs a further action focus. Last year, the October demonstration was a guiding light for the campaign.

Its success was confirmation of the confidence and hard work of the campaign over the last year.

A similar action focus, designed to draw together the international

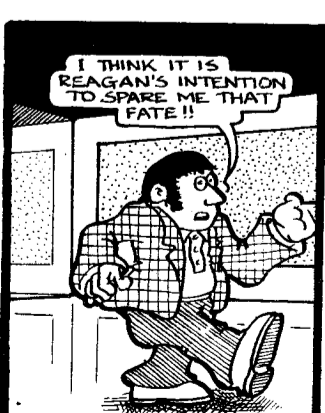
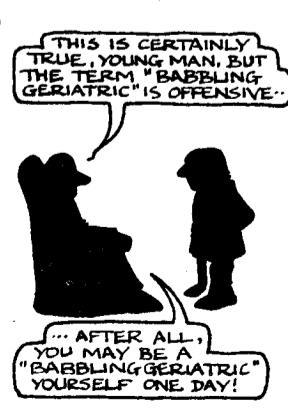
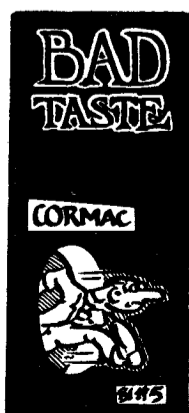
movement with the labour movement in this country is the prize in 1982.

Greater Manchester and District CND committee have given that focus for mass action in their proposal for an international demonstration in resolution 45.

These are the steps for CND in '82 — if we take them, victory will be much

closer. CND Annual Conference will be held on 13-14 November in Queen Mary College, Mile End Road, London E1.

Socialist Challenge readers who support our views on how to build CND and to commit the next Labour government to unilateral disarmament will be supporting resolutions 27, 29, 31, 41, 45, 71, 88, 108 and 119.



Polish workers race against time



Lech Walesa tries to persuade women workers at Zyrardow to return to work

By Davy Jones

HUNGER has returned to the streets of Poland. As reports mount of workers collapsing on the job from lack of food, the ruling authorities cynically allow the economic crisis to deteriorate in an attempt to discredit the independent union movement, Solidarity.

The appalling food crisis has prompted widespread strikes over recent weeks. The most publicised was that of the textile workers at Zyrardow near Warsaw who finally returned to work last week. In a Solidarity bulletin one of them, who were mainly women, explained their plight:

Nothing

'If I want to buy meat on Tuesday I have to get in the queue on Monday morning by 6am and stay there for the whole day and night. Even then sometimes there's nothing left. The first five people find something and the others nothing. Those who are retired can spend the whole day and night in the queue and usually end up with something, those of us at work can find nothing.'

With the growing paralysis of the authorities in dealing with the crisis, it's hardly surprising that the movement for workers' self-management and workers' control is spreading fast. On 17 October there was the first national meeting of elected delegates of workers' councils held in Warsaw.

Some 17 regions of Solidarity were represented at the meeting, and a steering committee was established, based on the regional self-management bodies. A resolution was passed outlining the aims of the movement (see box accompanying this article).

The ruling bureaucrats too are searching for new political solutions to the growing chaos. It's no accident that General Jaruzelski has become the new party leader as the army is drawn increasingly into the centre of the political stage to bolster the discredited party apparatus.

Army

But this manoeuvre has its dangers for the authorities. There are signs of unease within the army itself. A letter from soldiers at the Lublin barracks was recently printed in the Warsaw Solidarity bulletin. It declared: 'We will not be a tool in the hands of those in power. We declare that we do not want to struggle against the workers. We want to serve them.'

And the Solidarity branch at the Huta Batory

foundry in Katowice recently sent the following telex to all other workplaces: 'You must organise meetings with those called up for the army, as we did in our factory on 20 October on the theme: "Soldiers must never again be used against the workers as they were in 1956, 1970 and 1976". Organise similar meetings

in your workplaces.' So now the Polish rulers are toying with the idea of an even bolder move: a 'historic compromise' government of national unity involving not just the party and the army, but also the church and Solidarity.

Talks

Top level talks have been held between General Jaruzelski, Archbishop Glemp and Lech Walesa to explore the possibility. Last week the paper *Zycie Warszawy* underlined the

importance of the talks: 'This unprecedented meeting between political, social and moral authorities may be of crucial importance for a quick establishment of national agreement.'

Not everyone in Solidarity is happy with the idea of such a formula of 'national salvation'. The Lodz branch of Solidarity passed a resolution on 19 October pointing out that bodies such as a 'national front for understanding and co-operation' would have 'a decorative character whose competence would

be limited and its composition and less representative.'

'Its creation would be aimed at establishing a semblance of control over the initiatives of the authorities, thereby giving them a certain legitimacy. Solidarity should only take part in institutions really representative of society, assuring a real control over the actions of the authorities.'

In the race against time before the economic chaos demoralises the Polish workers there are broadly two trends of thought developing within the

union movement over the way forward. There are those who seek a broad compromise with the authorities allowing the independent unions to share power.

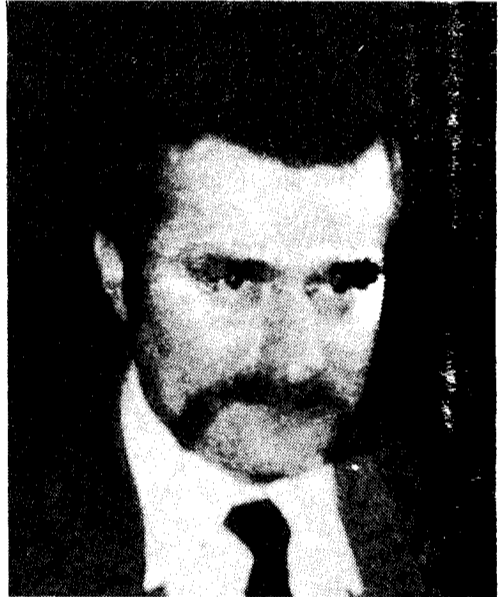
On the other hand there are those who put the emphasis on the development of the movement for workers' self-management, linked to a national council of self-management with a right of veto over the government's economic policies. The outcome of this race may shape the future development of the Polish crisis.



Archbishop Glemp



General Jaruzelski



Lech Walesa

Advertisement for Solidarnosc magazine. It features the title 'Solidarnosc' in large, stylized letters. Below it, the text reads: 'What you can do to help Solidarity'. Three numbered points are listed: 1) Argue for political and practical support for Solidarity inside your labour movement organisations... 2) Raise within the labour movement funds for printing equipment... 3) Get your labour movement organisation to order Labour Focus on Eastern Europe... The ad also includes contact information for Labour Focus on Eastern Europe.

Advertisement for the magazine 'INPREKOR'. The title 'INPREKOR' is prominently displayed. Below it, the text reads: 'Miesięcznik Numer 1 s.dnia 1 października 1981 roku'. The ad describes the magazine as a publication for the Polish edition of Inprekor, distributed in Poland by supporters of the Fourth International. It includes details about the magazine's content, such as articles on the SAMORZĄD, SOLIDARNOŚĆ, BIUROKRACJA, and the role of the KZ KFS. The ad also provides contact information for the Polish fund.

INPREKOR — first number of a Polish edition of Inprekor, is now being distributed in Poland by supporters of the Fourth International. You can help get revolutionary Marxist literature into Poland. Send cash to: Red Weekly (Polish fund), c/o PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

Resolution from the national meeting of council delegates

- 1. A steering committee (KZ) of the national federation of self-management (KFS) is created.
2. This steering committee is constituted by the regional co-ordinations of the workers' councils. It comprises two representatives from each region. Each region has a consultative voice.
3. The workers' councils of institutions and enterprises are represented inside the KZ KFS through the regional co-ordination.
4. KZ KFS is a provisional body until the holding of a national congress of workers' councils or until otherwise decided by the regional councils of self-management.
5. KZ KFS is open to all regional co-ordinations of councils.
6. KZ KFS has no power over the workers' councils. It can take decisions in the form of: resolutions which bind its executive or resolutions representing a common point of view.
7. The aim of the KFS is to allow the creation and functioning of social structures and organisations regulating the functioning of a self-management model for the economy and state.
8. The KFS realises this statutory aim by: — organising co-operation between the existing councils or those in formation and between their territorial representatives;

— participating in the elaboration of draft legislation and other parliamentary decrees, presenting its opinion on such acts, and putting forward its own proposals within this framework;

— checking the existing laws and other acts, with a view to modifying or abrogating them;

— representing the position of the self-management councils to the state authorities, organisations and institutions;

— organising consultation on economic problems in the broadest sense, including through referenda;

— explaining its point of view on the socio-economic reform;

— acting with the aim of creating socio-economic chambers in the national and regional parliaments;

— setting out the ways and means of socialisation of the economy and state;

— preparing and distributing information;

— co-operating with other organisations on common goals of action.

The steering committee should realise the above-mentioned goals insofar as no national federation of self-management councils is set up. It should not however forget its primary objective to elaborate the future form of statutes and the establishment of the aforementioned federation. The provisional seat of the KZ KFS is the Upper Silesia Region, Katowice, ul. Stalmacha 17, tel: 51 60 06, telex: 0315292.

## What way forward for the Labour Left?

By Tom Marlowe

**NOT FOR** a long time has the left in the Labour Party debated itself to the extent that it has been doing in the last couple of months.

The use of the term 'left' in this context is widely applied. It ranges from Neil Kinnock to Reg Race, and from *Tribune* to *Socialist Challenge* and *Socialist Organiser*.

The issues at stake in this debate were stated firmly by Neil Kinnock writing in *Tribune* on the eve of the Labour conference. Kinnock took two pages to explain why he could not vote for Tony Benn in the deputy contest. 'The Labour Party is now in a seriously weak position', he argued and he blamed this on 'the particular form of divisions in recent years, immeasurably worsened by the nature and conduct of the deputy leadership election campaign.'

### Logic

Kinnock's logic led him to allow Denis Healey to become deputy leader. This was seen as a way of healing the left/right divisions in the party by having a 'left' leader in Michael Foot and a right wing deputy in Healey.

More than a score of other *Tribune* MPs also refused to vote for Benn.

It is hardly surprising that in the aftermath of the anti-Benn vote by these Tribunites the debate within the left should intensify. Speaking at the *Tribune* rally at party conference Tony Benn floated the idea of a new 'Labour Representation Committee' as a means of organising what he termed as the 'socialists' inside the Labour Party. He counter-posed this to *Tribune*.

*Tribune* itself has also argued on these lines. Attacking both the right and what it called the 'ultra-left' in the party, the newspaper argued on 6 November: 'We want "unity in action" for the Labour movement. We want the campaign against the Thatcher administration to be taken out into every highway and byway in Britain. The actions of those who call for "unity" but spend most of their time fighting within the party will be judged by the wider Labour movement as a whole.'



Eric Heffer

That *Tribune* should call for a cease-fire is hardly surprising. Its own organisation, even its newspaper, is threatened by the campaign of Reg Race and others. What is more surprising is the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy, who initiated the democratic reform movement in the Labour Party, should also be coming to a similar conclusion, albeit from a different

viewpoint.

Writing in *Socialist Organiser* on 22 October, Vladimir Derer of the CLPD reported that this organisation's executive had decided that the 'CLPD should not participate in the proposed formation of a "new left wing" organisation'.

Vladimir gave two reasons for this decision. First, 'the need to restore to the Labour Party the credibility crucial if the unprecedentedly



Reg Race

reactionary policies of Thatcher are to be successfully challenged in the next general election.'

Second, 'the realisation that Labour will not acquire this credibility as long as it appears to be a hopelessly divided party'.

One of the difficulties with this argument was illustrated in the House of Commons last Thursday. In the course of the debate on the Queen's speech Denis Healey declared he was

a multilateralist, and added, 'I don't believe that the expulsion of American bases would contribute to peace.' Here, Healey was openly defying and attacking the decisions of the party conference which did adopt a unilateralist position and called for the closing of US nuclear bases in Britain.

That suggests that whatever the left may choose to do, the right in the party does not intend to cease defying conference policy. Moreover, the organised right in the Manifesto Group is now taking up the battle to such an extent that it has called for the expulsion of supporters of the *Militant* newspaper.

### Church

It is not just the right wing as identified in the Manifesto group who is on the witch-hunt trail. In a letter in the *Guardian* on 8 October Frank Field, another anti-Benn Tribunitite, called upon Labour's national executive to launch an inquiry into *Militant*. Field's suggestion was that this inquiry should aim at kicking out 'the hard core of *Militant* party members', while allowing less enthusiastic supporters of *Militant* to stay in.

If nothing else, Field's call for a purge underlines what Reg Race and others have been saying: that the old Tribunitite left is now as 'broad' a 'church' as the Labour Party itself.

The conclusion is that an alternative form of left organisation in the Labour Party is necessary. How that left should organise and on what policies, *Socialist Challenge* will return to in subsequent issues.

This view has, since then, been spelt out more firmly by such MPs as Reg Race and Bob Cryer. Reg Race told a fringe meeting at the end of the party conference: 'A majority of the *Tribune* Group has always resented any attempt to try and make the *Tribune* Group reach out into the wider labour movement to contact CLPs and trade unions. In the present circumstances where the right wing are organising ... it is absurd to say that the *Tribune* group could possibly perform the kind of role that is necessary.'

### New

Race saw a new group coming out of the Rank and File Mobilising Committee and the Benn campaign committee. In effect, he was proposing a differentiation between the 'old left', as represented by Kinnock, and the 'new left' as represented by Benn.

These suggestions have in turn been attacked from a variety of sources. On 23 October in *Tribune* Eric Heffer maintained 'the left must not divide its forces'. He insisted, 'Concern over Labour's chances to win the next election which are threatened by the present divisions, has made the need for party unity an urgent priority even at the cost of entering into compromises with that wing of the party which is led by the majority of MPs and trade union leaders.'

## Labour Co-ordinating Committee adopts low profile

By Des Tierney

**THIS** weekend saw the second of the Labour Co-ordinating Committee's 'Trade Union and Socialism' conferences in Glasgow.

The conference attracted only 120 delegates and observers, considerably less than might have been expected, considering that 1,500 turned up to the first of these conferences, held last July in London.

### Small

The small numbers attending emphasised the problems which face the LCC in its attempt to involve the unions in its plans.

First, it was clear from the speakers and contributions at the conference that the LCC has little relationship with workers presently fighting the Tories. None of the major speakers mentioned the struggles going on at Laurence Scott or Robb Caledon where workers are fighting redundancies.

The only mention of the previous week's events at BL was when George Galloway, Scottish chairperson of the Labour Party and leading spokesperson of the LCC in

Scotland, went out of his way to defend Alex Kitson, TGWU acting general secretary, for the role he played in ending the dispute.

Bob Wright, assistant general secretary of the AUEW, one of the other main speakers at the conference, called on the left to discipline itself to allow the Labour Party to win the next election.

### Appeal

He stressed the need to broaden the appeal of the Labour Party to attract the support of the middle classes.

This narrow electoralist approach was present throughout the conference. Without supporting and encouraging workers to struggle against the Tories then the plans outlined at the conference, to launch a bulletin for trade union activists and to promote the formation of workplace Labour Party branches, will come to nothing.

These failures were continued at the LCC annual general meeting the next day. Radical options on the economy and the fight against the cuts were voted down or remitted.

This low profile approach was also shown in the LCC's policy towards the Labour Party leadership elections next year. Speaking after the AGM former MP Audrey Wise

said the LCC would not be 'forced into a 12 month election campaign'.

### Policy

The only reservation about this, expressed by leading member of the LCC Michael Meacher MP, was that the shadow cabinet and the Labour Party front bench should reflect policy as decided by conference.

Both the LCC trade union conference and the AGM recognised the threat posed by the right wing through its attempt to witch-hunt *Militant* supporters. The AGM unanimously called on the Labour executive to stop the witch-hunt, and to recognise Pat Wall, a *Militant* supporter, as the parliamentary candidate for Bradford North.



Audrey Wise

# Ireland what should the labour movement say?

## NO SIMPLE SOLUTIONS

By Alex Kitson

The article headed 'How the Labour Party's statement on Ireland has been rigged' contains a number of inaccuracies and untruths. In order that everyone clearly understands how the statement was prepared, a little background information is essential.

Early last year the Labour Party's national executive committee agreed to set up a study group with the task of producing new, comprehensive and detailed policy proposals on Northern Ireland. All members of the NEC were invited to serve; and the Parliamentary Labour Party's Northern Ireland group and the Shadow Cabinet were also asked to nominate members.

The final membership of the study group was then a matter for the NEC itself. Officials of the party, including Dick Barry (joint-secretary to the study group, who is incorrectly described in the article as a member), thus had no say in its composition.

As far as the personal views of the members are concerned, it would be true to say that the great majority favoured Irish unity. To suggest, therefore, that the study group was 'heavily weighted in favour of pro-Loyalists', and that Dick Barry 'organised it and was able to control how it operated' is quite ludicrous.

It is an insult to the experience and intelligence of its members. It also reeks of Fleet Street gutter journalism and is a sad indication of the depths to which Mr Bell is prepared to sink.

The article appears to regret that on its visits to Ireland the study group actually met Unionist organisations, including the most influential of them, the Democratic



Alex Kitson

Unionist Party. Does the author suggest that we should have ignored them? It then complains that it did not meet Peoples Democracy, or the Irish Republican Socialist Party, both of which, it says, 'have elected Belfast councillors'.

When the visits were made to Ireland in June and July 1980, neither PD nor the IRSP had any elected councillors in Belfast or anywhere else for that matter. But there was no conscious decision not to meet these two organisations and, what is more, neither of these organisations asked to see us.

We did, incidentally, arrange a meeting with, to use the author's label, the anti-unionist Irish Independence Party; but this was cancelled at the last minute due to circumstances completely beyond our control.

The article also states, correctly, that the study group did not meet Sinn

Fein. But it was our clear intention to try to meet Sinn Fein, if this could be arranged.

The study group thus wrote to Sinn Fein suggesting a meeting in Belfast. Sinn Fein, however, preferred to meet in Dublin as there were difficulties over the attendance in Belfast of its president. Equally, however, the Irish Labour Party were unhappy at the prospect of us meeting Sinn Fein in Dublin.

We therefore attempted to persuade Sinn Fein to agree to meet in Belfast. In spite of letters and telephone calls between ourselves and Sinn Fein it was not possible to get their agreement.

Altogether the study group met 35 organisations in Ireland, including such anti-unionist bodies as the SDLP, Republican Clubs, and the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association in the North, and Fianna Fail, Fine Gael, and the Labour Par-

ty and the Irish Transport and General Workers Union in the Republic. The list of organisations was agreed by the study group and every member was free to add to the list if he or she so wished. We were determined to listen to as wide a cross section of opinion as possible.

The evidence we received from constituency Labour Parties, branches and individual members in Great Britain, plus that which was submitted by any interested organisation or individual in Ireland, was considered with great interest and sympathy. The views contained in it were reported accurately and concisely to the study group.

They were not censored or rigged in any way. But no study group, whether on Northern Ireland or anything else, should be completely bound by the evidence it receives. It ought to be free to decide whether to accept or reject all or parts of any evidence.

The vast majority of the members of the study group had considerable experience and knowledge of Northern Ireland and were, therefore, quite capable of making these decisions. I can assure you they were not made lightly.

The article also makes a serious allegation concerning myself. It alleges that I 'threatened to resign from the study group if it came out strongly in favour of Irish unity'. This is completely untrue, and is a slur on my character.

As chairperson of the study group I sought to proceed on a basis of agreement and consensus within the group; and I deliberately refused to take up a hard and fast position on any of the issues before us. However, it is true that I was strongly opposed to the NEC making major new declara-

tions of policy, whilst the group was trying to complete its work. And, incidentally, I agree fully with the proposals outlined in the statement presented by me to conference.

The article as a whole represents an attack not only on the study group which prepared the Northern Ireland statement for the national executive committee, but on the national executive committee itself, which finally approved the statement before submission to the annual conference.

To the best of my knowledge the author of the article did not consult any of those named in the article for any information, before it was written. It makes no attempt to understand the very difficult decisions which had to be made by the study group; nor does it acknowledge the enormous amount of work that went into producing the statement.

This is perhaps understandable, bearing in mind Mr Bell's clear opinion that he is the only person with the right answer, but an attempt to justify his point by stooping to gutter journalism and total misrepresentation of the facts makes one wonder if the wider labour movement can take Socialist Challenge seriously in the future.

## IN REPLY

By Geoff Bell

1) **The membership of the study group.** Of those on the study group the following has a record of supporting partition, until the Unionist majority in the North of Ireland decide otherwise, and of opposing British withdrawal: Roy Mason, Don Concannon, Merlyn Rees and Brynmor John.

To that list I would add Stan Orme, whose period as junior minister in the North of Ireland suggested a move away from his previous anti-Unionist position.

MPs on the study group who were generally hostile to such views were Martin Flannery, Joan Maynard, Jo Richardson, Jock Stallard and Stan Thorne.

Of other members of the group, Tony Saunois of the LPYS has often expressed the view that the Irish national question is irrelevant, and that what is needed is class unity in the North of Ireland state.

At the Labour Committee on Ireland fringe meeting at party conference both Joan Maynard and Kevin McNamara labelled this opinion as pro-partitionist in ideology. McNamara described it as 'the first barricade of Unionism'.

Of the trade union representatives on the group, Alex Kitson (TGWU), Alan Hadden (Boilermakers) and Neville Hough (GMWU), were all members of unions whose North of Ireland branches gave evidence to the group which was generally hostile to Irish unity and British withdrawal.

This does not necessarily mean the leaders of these unions would endorse such views, but surely it had some influence on their thinking.

Such was the thinking on which I based my judgement, not an exact one admittedly, that the study group had an eight-to-five majority generally hostile to the anti-partition pro-British withdrawal view.

2) **Dick Barry.** Contrary to what Alex Kitson says, Dick Barry is listed as part of the 'membership' of the group in the NEC report to the 1981 party conference.

Dick Barry did also, on occasions play a more significant part in the work of the group than the title 'joint-secretary' suggests. For example on 26 March he, and he alone, on behalf of the study group visited Bobby Sands, then on hunger strike.

3) **Those the study group met.** I would, of course, accept Alex Kitson's assurance that the study group were unable to meet either Sinn Fein or the Irish Independence Party for technical reasons. However, this was rather unfortunate considering the group met, not so much the DUP, but the para-military Ulster Defence Association through its front organisation, the New Ulster Political Research Group.

The point remains of the 35 groups and organisations the study group met the overwhelming majority were pro-partitionist. This did not reflect Irish opinion as a whole or the views of Irish trade unionists as a whole.

4) **Alex Kitson's 'resignation'.** I accept that Alex Kitson at no time threatened to resign. However, at one meeting of the group Alex Kitson and Dick Barry protested at the decision of a previous meeting of the group against the Labour Party organising in the North of Ireland.

So strong were their protests that they demanded and won, a revote. Although the final report recommended instead a conference in the North of Ireland to establish a Labour Party, it is also the case that of the 79 submissions made, in writing to the study group, only four supported such a call.

5) **'Simple solution'.** Alex Kitson's major point is a political one. I maintain my view that the study group, as expressed in its reports, was, politically, pro-Unionist.

I note that Kevin McNamara in a speech on 19 June called the consultative paper from the study group 'an Orange paper'.

I would also point out that the NEC watered down the final report of the study group when it rejected a recommendation that any constitutional change in Ireland should be sanctioned by a referendum in the North.

I do not claim to be the only person with a 'solution' to the Irish question. Rather I would, in general, align myself with the majority of constituency parties who voted for the motion supporting British withdrawal from Ireland at the recent party conference.



The New Ulster Political Research Group — a front organisation for the Ulster Defence Association

# THE MINERS: A QUESTION OF

## 'I'm not in this business to compromise'

**WE ARE** reproducing an edited version of a speech by Arthur Scargill at Sherwood Miners Welfare in Mansfield. At the end of the meeting, which was attended by over 300 of the 800 miners at Sherwood Colliery, Scargill was given a standing ovation.

Meetings like this are taking place up and down the country in the run up to the National Union of Mineworkers' presidential elections. Branch nominations are running strongly in favour of Scargill even in traditionally 'moderate' areas.

Rank and file members, fed up with the weak-kneed leadership of Joe Gormley, the retiring president, are looking for a change and a leadership that can take on the Tories.

There is little doubt that today we face the most serious economic crisis in our history. The very foundation of our industrial future is being decimated — our steel, engineering, machine tools, cars and textile industries are being systematically destroyed.

Decades of accumulated skill and human investment are being discarded without thought as three and a half million people are condemned to the obscenity of the dole queue.

How the hell can we say we are a civilised society when we educate young people up to the age of 16 and then turn around and say that there is no useful work for them, no responsible task for them to perform? The coal industry cannot be exempt or stand apart from the systematic attack on jobs and living standards.

In the '60s the philosophy of the leadership of the union was to accept pit closures and job losses. We saw the loss of 600 pits in 12 years, the loss of half a million jobs. The miners became industrial gypsies moving from area to area, from pit to pit.

Even today there are those prepared to sell jobs for redundancy or transfer money. I want to state my position here and now: no man has the right to sell his job, no one has the right to sell their children's or grandchildren's jobs in exchange for permanent unemployment.

During the '60s Britain became dependent on imported oil. That wasn't the policy of a Tory government. The job losses and the pit closures were the result of the policies of a Labour government.

I hope that the next Labour government will learn one thing from the Tories. I hope they will show the same loyalty to their class that the Tories have shown to theirs.

Earlier this year the National Coal Board published a list of 50 pits it wanted to close. Industrial action forced the withdrawal of the closure list. But the Tories have simply side stepped. Since the beginning of this year the NCB has closed seven pits and they intend to continue with pit closures.

This year 6,000 jobs have been lost. The Board's policy is clear; they intend to continue with cutbacks on labour. It is the height of stupidity not to develop the coal industry. Our union must demand, as a priority, no closures except on the grounds of exhaustion and a ban on imports.

Five million tons of coal are being imported into Britain, simply as a result of the distribution of the world market. The West German coal industry gives a subsidy of £40 per ton. British coal has a production cost of £33 per ton.



Joe Gormley: 'We'

We get a miser per ton compared sides given by th Germany, America could be proved th produced for less, ferent matter. But question of defenc obscenity of dist market.

The first step m ports. Import contr an immediate redu and probably the pearance in the ne cost of oil is now than that of coal. of the madhouse to oil while closing d imports of oil and a an unprecedented industry.

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'Arthur,' one 'you can look at don't believe me.' me looking at the b 'I didn't cook 'em.

You know that told us in '72 and '7 their stories, we w

Photo: GM COOKSON (Socialist Challenge)



Coping with the miners' strike, 1974 vintage



Has Gormley given up his seat to Scargill?



# LEADERSHIP



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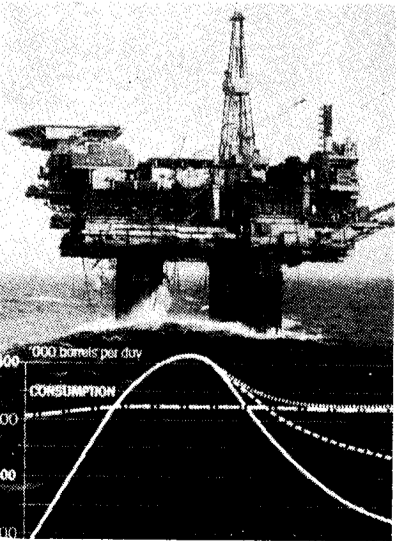
strike. We'd have had a whip round to help them out. We didn't hear any complaints when Ezra's salary went up from £33,000 to £45,000 or from £25,000 to £33,000 for the rest of them. There was no aggravation then.

When interest rates went up, the Board paid out, without question, an extra £160m a year. There was no aggravation. When the private contractors put up their prices, the Board paid up without question, paid cash on the nail.

A trade union leader has one obligation above all else — to put the members first. It's the miners who get the coal. Machinery and interest payment cannot be allowed to override wage increases. The Coal Board should meet the full claim and if that means at the end of the year the industry is in debt, the Board should go



While pits close, Britain becomes dependent on imported oil



to the government and say the reason we are in debt is because you forced up interest charges.

When we went to meet the Board they told us there was £71m available. We asked what that worked out as. They said £6.45 for a faceworker, 5.7 per cent on basic pay or 3 per cent on take home pay. No way would we accept such an offer.

When we went back for the second meeting, we'd actually got a bloody reduction! They were offering £4.25 for a surface worker, that's two per cent on take home pay plus £1 on the incentive scheme.

That's at a time when mortgages have gone up by £3 to £5, rents are set to go up the same amount, prices are going up by 12 per cent. Our last increase was 9.8 per cent at a time of 16 per cent inflation.

For the first time I sat on the National Executive Committee and heard other members of the executive arguing for acceptance of a cut in wages. I hope I never have to sit through another meeting like it.

If Prince Charles and Lady Diana can get 25 per cent, if the Honda man Edwardes can get 35 per cent, then the miners have a right to 23 per cent.

Now I'm a moderate and reasonable man. I'll settle for seven per cent tomorrow — on one condition. That condition is that we get seven per cent of Ezra's salary. You can't spend a percentage, you can only spend money.

There's an infection affecting this industry. It's called the overtime bug. We all have to examine our consciences on the amount of overtime being worked in this industry.

It's time we had a salary arrangement for everyone working in the mines. If it's good enough for Derek Ezra, for Joe Gormley, for your manager, if it's good enough for me, it's good enough for you.

A salary arrangement and the elimination of overtime could create 50,000 new jobs and be a step in the direction of a shorter working week.

I want to say where I stand on the question of the presidency. I believe it is in the long term interests of the miners to have a strong, vigorous and democratic union which responds quickly and effectively to the wishes of the members. The union cannot shirk its responsibilities. I'm not in this business to compromise.

I'm here to fight for my members, whatever the press and the Coal Board say, I will fight to the end for my members' interests. I want to say that if the price of the Presidency is compromising on my beliefs, then I don't want the job. I only want the job if you agree with the policies I stand for.

I will fight for a democratic union whose leaders are accountable at regular intervals, whose leaders do not ignore conference decisions.

The press, the *Mail*, *Sun* and *Mirror*, are preparing a massive campaign against me. They want anyone but me as president of the National Union of Mineworkers. The Coal Board and Thatcher want anyone but Arthur Scargill.

Keir Hardie once said that if the press and the Tories attack you then you must be doing something right. The reason they oppose me is because they know I'll fight.

Someone once asked me what I thought was the finest achievement of my career. I told them that one week after the end of the '72 strike I was standing on the street in Barnsley when an old man in his eighties came up to me with tears in his eyes. He held out his hand and said he wanted to thank me and the miners for wiping out the bitter memory of 1926. That was the finest moment in my life.

If you want a president who won't compromise, who'll stand and fight the Coal Board and the government, whatever its colour, then you should vote for me. I stand by my record as the only candidate who has consistently fought for better wages and conditions, the only candidate who has consistently fought to defend jobs and our industry.



## SCARGILL FOR PRESIDENT

By Jack Lavin

**AT THE beginning of December, 250,000 miners will elect a new president. The right wing campaign to stop Arthur Scargill is in disarray. Voting in branches on the nomination of the president is running heavily in Scargill's favour.**

The major right wing candidate, Ray Chadburn, president of the traditionally right wing Nottinghamshire area, received a major setback when his own area council voted to nominate Scargill by a two to one majority.

The miners' strike earlier this year forced the Tories to back off from their threat to close 23 pits. Since then, seven pits have been closed and 6,000 jobs lost. The Tories are planning a new offensive. Together with the National Coal Board, they are sticking firm on a 6 per cent pay offer.

Scargill's policies to combat this threat are contained in a recently published pamphlet, *Miners in the Eighties*, which is being widely circulated throughout the miners union. He argues for industrial action against pit closures and to defend jobs.

Miners should go on the offensive to fight for a 35 hour week and a massive programme of investment to create thousands of new jobs. Such policies represent a complete contrast to the policies of the current leadership which has allowed thousands of jobs to be destroyed.

The Leyland workers

were left to fight alone, thus weakening the fight for the miners' own claim when agreement was reached to a month long adjournment of pay negotiations.

The policies put forward by Scargill represent a real challenge to the bankrupt policies of Gormley, Chadburn and their supporters. Scargill stands for a leadership that will mobilise the strength of the rank and file to defend jobs and living standards, instead of accepting that miners should bear the burden of the economic crisis.

The election of Scargill will not be the end of the fight against the right wing in the NUM. The right is hoping to control Scargill through its majority on the executive which favours small areas and sections.

For this reason Scargill places great stress on the introduction of a block vote system on the executive which would give the majority to the left wing areas who represent the majority of NUM members. The demand for a representative NEC has to be linked to a demand for regular elections of full time officials.

At the moment they are elected for life. *Miners in the Eighties* is silent on this question. Many NUM

members feel that the officials say one thing before they are elected and another when they have their jobs for life. The demand for periodic elections strengthens the left's fight against the policies of the right wing.

The biggest weakness of Scargill's programme is support for import controls. This demand plays into the hands of the right wing. It puts the blame for the crisis on American and Polish workers and not where it belongs — on the Tories and the parasitic private suppliers and contractors.

Support for import controls undermines the fight to stop pit closures and job losses. When the Bedlay pit in Scotland was faced with closure, Mick McGahey, Communist Party member and a leading supporter of import controls refused to organise a fight. When the Bedlay miners came out on strike to keep their pit open, McGahey refused to back them.

Despite such differences on policy, Socialist Challenge supports Scargill against Ray Chadburn and the other right wing candidates. The miners strike in February 1981 showed that it is possible to take on and defeat the Tories.

A victory for Scargill will be a step forward in the fight to get rid of officials like Boyd and Duffy who have scabbed on the fight to defend jobs and to kick out the Tories.

## NATO's new member

By Frank McBride

**THE Spanish parliament has voted in favour of the country entering NATO.**

With the help of the traditional Catalan and Basque nationalists the government won an easy majority. Opinion polls, however, clearly show an overwhelming majority of the Spanish people opposed to this move. Because of and despite this sentiment all appeals for a referendum on the issue were defeated.

The army, which favoured entry into the NATO, also made sure that an amendment demanding that no nuclear weapons be installed in Spain was defeated.

Opposition to NATO was voiced by the entire Spanish left, though the Spanish Socialist Party's involvement was somewhat weak. Their opposition was not based on hostility to NATO as an organisation. Indeed, Socialist leader Felipe Gonzalez, went so far as to oppose the Greek socialists' election campaign to leave NATO.

The Socialist Party did promise that a future Socialist government

would call a referendum over NATO. Meanwhile they have called a demonstration for 'peace', as part of their policy of not destabilising the government.

The NATO debate was remarkable for the biased TV coverage imposed by the new director, ex-Francoist censor Carlos Robles. Most time was given over to pro-government speakers and Robles ensured that a pro-NATO documentary was screened.

The United States has naturally welcomed the decision and denied putting any pressure on Spain. Spanish big business meanwhile will be looking for improved conditions for trade with the USA, while the American arms manufacturers will look to Spain for new NATO arms deals.

Increased arms expenditure will hit the Spanish people hard. Little enough is spent now on schools and hospitals, and on combatting unemployment. The Jobs not Bombs slogan may soon be translated into Spanish!



King Juan Carlos inspects the Spanish troops

# 'Raise your voices to support the Sierra Leonean workers'

Sierra Leone is a small West African state with a population of 2.5 million people. This ex-British colony became independent in 1961 under a pro-imperialist government led by Milton Margai. On 1 September this year a general strike was called against the Stevens government, in protest against low wages, the cost of rice, unemployment and the lack of health care, education and transportation. LARRY HERMAN interviewed BAI KABLAI, an exiled journalist, in London whose paper *The Tablet* was closed down on the first day of the strike.

**What were the events that led to the general strike?**

The workers in the rutile, diamond, port and other industries live and work in appalling conditions. They live six to a room and earn £35 a month when a bag of rice costs £45. Health facilities are virtually non-existent, and the few houses that have been built are occupied by the local ruling party officials and executive officers of the mining companies.

These conditions have been going on for years and there was not really any one incident that sparked off the strike. Ibrahim Langley and Lames Kabia, the secretary general and president of the Sierra Leone Labour Congress, Tejam Kassim of the Employed Workers Federation and many shop stewards, were thrown into the Freetown Maximum Security Prison.

The only radical independent newspaper was attacked and its premises bombed and printing presses destroyed. IB Kargbo, a journalist, Pius Foray the editor and Lans Joe Sesay, correspondent for the London-based magazine *Africa Now* are in gaol. Teachers and pupils have been shot, rioting was widespread and Special Branch police attacked activists and political groups.

When people turned up to protest the closing of the newspaper 25 were shot and killed by State Security Detachment officers.

The strike was effective

throughout the country. In Makeni, in the north, and in the southern province of Bo, there was a virtual shut-down. In Kenema Province in the east peasants joined demonstrations and refused to sell their produce in the markets. In the capital, Freetown, no work was done at all.

**How did the Stevens' government react?**

A state of emergency was declared, a curfew imposed and the army was put on alert. But because of the governments' lack of popular support, Stevens had to call in 700 troops from neighbouring Guinea. These troops were everywhere in the capital, armed with automatic weapons, grenades and tear gas.

They attempted to neutralise the strike by monitoring workplaces and killing and jailing strike leaders and those who followed them. The Guinean Army is in charge of security operations.

**What affect has the strike had on neighbouring countries?**

The new Liberian government of Sergeant Doe has 200 Green Berets from the American army to ensure that the government stays in power. Gambia totally supports Stevens.

The governments of the neighbouring states are afraid of the effect of the militancy of the Sierra Leoneans flowing over their borders. And, as the last chairman of the OAU,

Stevens has received messages of support from various African governments.

Siaka Stevens came to power after a coup in 1969. He came from the trade union movement, and after he became head of state he destabilised the trade union movement, hanged several of his party members, executed top military commanders and non-commissioned officers in the army.

He courted Seku Torre of Guinea who provided troops to put down the radicals who objected to the influence of big business and corruption. For the next few years Stevens solidified his power, but in 1977 radical students rebelled and the Sierra Leone army killed 250 people.

**What is happening at the moment in Sierra Leone?**

The general strike came to a temporary halt at the beginning of October, after 4 weeks without any pay, workers and their families were starving to death. Troops were continually harassing anyone involved in the strike.

**What can people in Britain do to help the workers and peasants in Sierra Leone?**

One of the main contributing factors to the ending of the general strike was the lack of sustained pressure from trade union organisations outside my country. People in Britain and the rest of Europe must develop a new sense of awareness for the plight of workers in Sierra Leone and other countries for that matter.

We implore the trade union movement in Britain to raise their voices in condemnation and to take industrial action against those British and multinational firms that are shattering the liberty of the Sierra Leone people.

We take responsibility for our own struggle against imperialism, but we cannot be successful without international support.

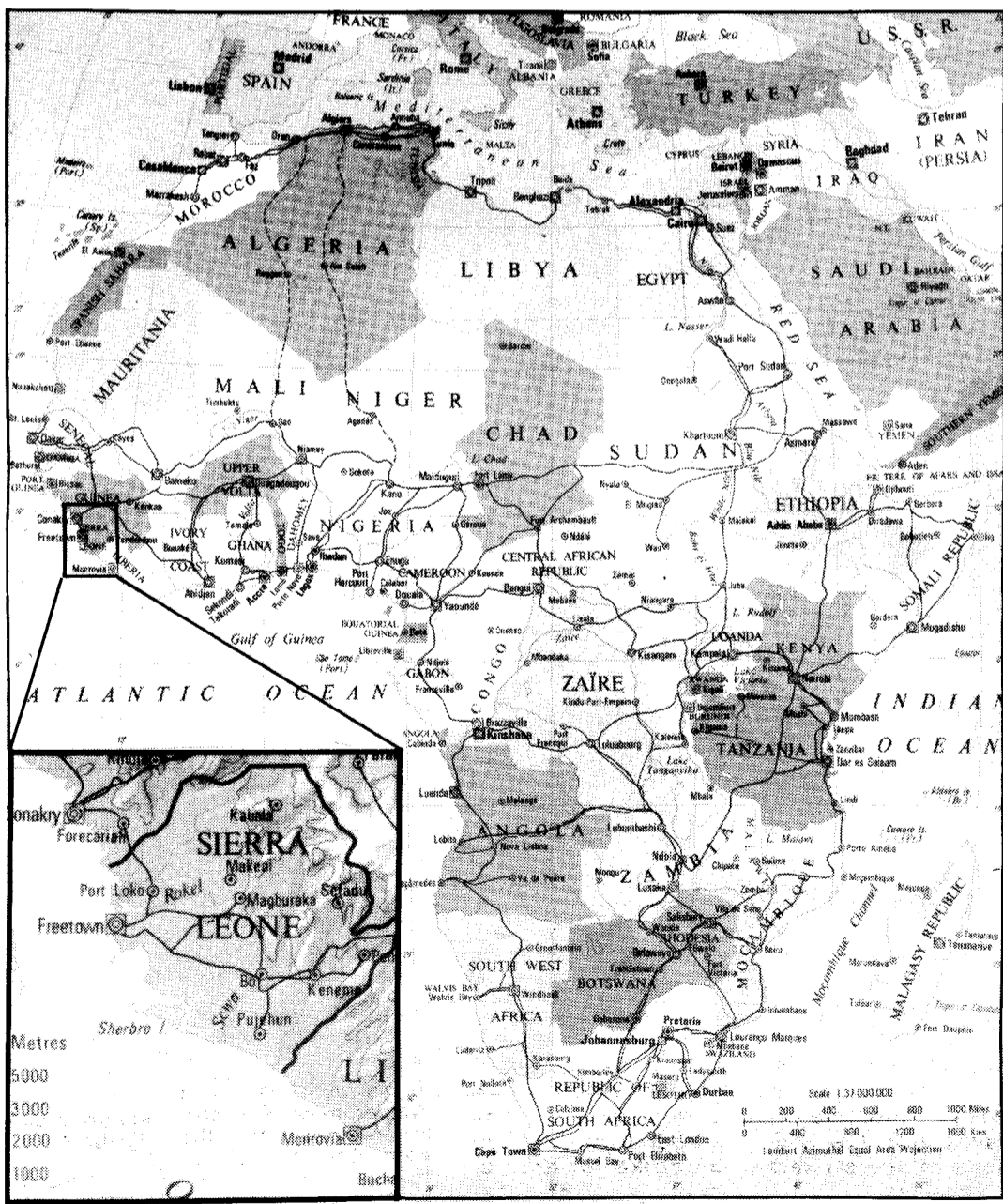
In 1978 Stevens called a snap general election and by various means only 15 per cent of the population was allowed to vote. That same year a one party state was ratified in parliament — a parliament thoroughly in the pay of international business.

**Who controls the Sierra Leonean economy?**

As in the South African-occupied territory of Namibia, Sierra Leone is dominated by diamond mining and the

Anglo-American Corporation is the most active company in their extraction. In fact, the Anglo-American Corporation virtually controls Sierra Leone.

But there are others! German, French, British, American and Lebanese companies predominate.



Letters **letters** Letters  
 Letters **LETTERS**

# Liverpool typists' strike: which way forward?

## An ultra-left perspective

For the past two weeks, the employers and NALGO nationally have been wrangling over the form of arbitration to be set up to settle the typists' and machine operators' strike. Talks are due to start locally to try and break the deadlock and the Liverpool NALGO branch has decided on further escalation.

Whatever form of arbitration is agreed, it will obviously be a compromise aimed at ending the 18 weeks old strike.

The fact the typists and machine operators are prepared to accept such a compromise has produced a number of articles in *Socialist Worker* in recent weeks alleging a sell-out. The Liverpool branch officers are accused of failing to organise the dispute, and the whole strategy of NALGO Left, of which three of the branch officers are founder members, has been brought into question.

To justify these criticisms, the views of the vast majority of typists and machine operators have been ignored and the extent of support for them hopelessly exaggerated.

For instance, *Socialist Worker* (24 October) reported that the typists and machine operators had been railroaded by branch officials into accepting arbitration. However, it was the typists and machine operators themselves, at a mass strike meeting in the ninth week of the strike who proposed arbitration as a solution.

This was then put forward by them as a possible alternative to a full branch meeting on 21 September and was approved with the full support of the Strike Committee.

At that time, some typists had returned to work and

others were suffering extreme hardship. Also a mass meeting of 1,500 members of the branch had previously voted against escalation.

Faced with such difficulties, the strikers adopted the compromise formula of seeking 'an improved offer or arbitration.'

The arbitration service, ACAS, had already been brought in by the national employers and the national leadership of NALGO. Also, NALGO had said that the branch must accept arbitration if it were offered. Even at this stage, the branch regarded arbitration as a last resort and continued to press for an improved offer.

In more recent weeks, the situation has changed for the better and support for the typists has grown. The branch officers' proposals for escalation were finally agreed at the

branch meeting on 21 October. Prior to this meeting the Strike Committee had been against proposing any escalation at all.

However, as a result of that meeting, there have been mass walk-outs across the branch, stoppages in several departments and there are now over 250 key groups of workers on indefinite strike. These include Housing Rent Cashiers, City Treasury Staff and groups of workers in the City Solicitors and Planning Departments.

This was reported in *Socialist Worker* (17 October) as branch officers 'failing to organise the dispute'.

This escalation was mainly in response to an attempt to smash the branch by laying off all members who refused to scab on the typists. The branch responded to this by bringing out these groups on indefinite strike.

Under the impetus of these 'dispersions' over a period of a few days, there was the likelihood that an all-out strike of the branch might develop. However, once the Authority

The developing situation in the Liverpool typists' and machine operators' strike has become the subject of strong disagreement between socialists who have been supporting the women's three month long fight with the City Council over improved pay grades and opportunities.

Below JOHN STRAUTHER and AL WALKER explain the two different views that are held.



Photo: Socialist Worker

## What kind of step forward is this?

AL WALKER'S REPORT of the current position in the Liverpool typists' strike completely leaves out the opinions of the strikers themselves.

Contrary to the agreement between

Liverpool NALGO and the City Council, Rose Jones on behalf of the typists strike committee has stated 'You don't go on strike for arbitration'. (*Socialist Worker*, 24.10.81)

The three leading

branch officials of Liverpool NALGO, Graham Burgess, Pete

Cresswell and Alan Walker, have all recently referred to the possibility of an all-out strike by the branch leading to victory for the typists' claim.

Why then was this

proposal never put to the branch, especially at the meeting on 21 October, simultaneously with the City Council's special meeting on the dispute?

At that time, such a victory was a real possibility. Instead of this, the

Branch officers, over the heads of the strikers, have allowed Sir Trevor Jones, leader of the City Council, to take the initiative from them with his proposal for a form of arbitration.

In so doing, they have abandoned the

## What have you heard about the Labour Party's new magazine?

# New Socialist

'New Socialist is lively, new and socialist.'  
**DENIS HEALEY, MP**

'New Socialist has made a great start. Please be sure of my continued co-operation with the venture.'

**JACK JONES**  
 President, TGWU Retired Members Associations

'The poverty of philosophy and theory in the British labour movement is well known and deplorable. New Socialist is shaping up to be a great antidote.'

**GEORGE GALLOWAY**  
 Chairperson, Scottish Labour Party

'The only really relevant debate about the future of Britain and the world is taking place between different sorts of socialists. Labour's new analytical journal is now the best forum within which those who subscribe to democratic socialism can argue their case.'

**TONY BENN, MP**

'I regard New Socialist as quite remarkably good. It certainly deserves to succeed.'

**COLIN BARNETT**  
 Secretary, North-west TUC

'New Socialist is a really important means of developing the discussion of what we mean by socialism and what kind of society we're trying to make.'

**SHEILA ROWBOTHAM**  
 Feminist historian

'A splendid way to run Labour's internal election.'

**RICHARD CLEMENTS**  
 writing in *Tribune* on the New Socialist Deputy Debate held at the TUC



Issue 2, Nov-Dec '81, on sale at main newsagents and radical bookshops, price 60p, or direct from New Socialist, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17 1JT. Tel 01-703 5298

## Cuba: where the power really lies

I CANNOT AGREE with Steve Archer's claim (15 October) that the Cuban revolution 'didn't throw up organs of workers' power.'

The Committees in Defence of the Revolution (CDRs) are popular assemblies based on the localities. In them women, youngsters and men organise themselves in allocation of houses, popular justice, social activity, childcare and so on.

When they mobilise block by block, area by area, city by city, you see where the power really lies in Cuba.

I was in Cuba the day after the fascist coup in Chile. Far right wing developments were afoot in Argentina, Bolivia and Peru and it was a serious fear that Cuba might well be invaded. A Cuban ship was at that very time being pursued and shelled by the Chilean navy.

The CDRs mobilised from one end of the Island to the other and flooded into Havana on horses, ox carts, trucks and army vehicles. It looked like the whole island was on the move. This was repeat performance of what had happened during the US Bay of Pigs invasion.

The yanks had looked at the small standing Revolutionary Army and thought Cuba would be a pushover. They too forgot about the CDRs and the armed strength of millions of Cuban workers.

If Fidel is a Stalinist, I wish the Russian bureaucrats were as 'Stalinist' as he.

**DAVE DOUGLAS**  
 Branch Delegate, Hatfield Main NUM.

position of strength built up in the previous weeks of solidarity actions by thousands of NALGO branch members and Jones has almost succeeded in getting the typists back to work after four months — for nothing.

What kind of a step forward is this?

The real leaps forward in the course of the strike — in the organisation and

militancy of the typists and the mass solidarity actions of others in their support, have all been ignored in Alan Walker's analysis and may have been lost in the outcome.

Is this what Socialist Challenge wants?

**JOHN STRAUTHER,**  
 Liverpool NALGO Action Group

## Lee Jeans, Eiser: 'a common struggle'



Ellen Monaghan (right) with one of the visiting Eiser women

In the beginning of October, two women from the Eiser factory occupation in northern Sweden visited the Lee Jeans occupation in Scotland. The women from Eiser and from Lee Jeans have been involved in similar struggles to defend their jobs.

Now the Lee Jeans women have won their fight, ELLEN MONAGHAN will be returning the visit to speak at a large solidarity meeting in Stockholm.

The contact between the two factory occupations was sparked off by Swedish National Radio which sponsored the Eiser women's visit.

Ellen Monaghan spoke to our sister paper in Sweden, *Internationalen* about the similarities between the two campaigns and the situation at Lee Jeans today.

I HAVEN'T been in Sweden before, and I'm looking forward to coming to your country, I'm quite excited about it.

I've met two of the girls from the occupation

who were over here, I had them at my home and we talked a lot about their occupation and compared notes.

There are a lot of similarities between the two struggles. We're both working for multi-

nationals, who took grants from the government and, once the grants were finished, said there was no longer a market for the goods.

Both of us felt very strongly that an injustice had been done.

At Lee Jeans, we felt that the goods and the machinery belonged to us. All the Swedish women had machinery and I asked them whether they thought this was enough.

They said that it was. They felt that the machinery was rightfully theirs because the government had paid for it.

I felt we had a common situation and a common struggle.

We feel really marvellous going back to work. There's a great atmosphere, a good working relationship and we're all doing very well.

There were no problems during negotiations. We have the same terms and conditions as we had before.

They gave us the same union conditions we were used to.

I feel quite optimistic about the future. You know, I feel a real good bit of determination.

We feel its more of our company now.

At the end of the year the company is going to show us the books — what profits have been made — and, we will share the profits.

We'll get bonuses at the end of every six months, at Christmas time and at the end of next summer time.

So you feel as though you're working for something.

We have been given a contract for three years for

as many jeans as we can make. And then an extension for another three years. So we feel pretty secure about our jobs.

We're all changing after the occupation. Girls who didn't know what trade unionism was all about really understand a lot more of what's going on.

They've become more union conscious and even more politically aware.

There were girls who had never been to meetings before who got up at mass meetings.

Some girls can do this now, and we're still sending young girls away to speak.

It's made them all different people, more aware. Before they took a lot of things for granted and now they are more active in the union.

I'm very optimistic for the future.

# Turning policies into practice

VALERIE WISE in one of eight women members of the 49 strong Greater London Council (GLC) Labour Group which took office in the spring. She is also Vice-Chairperson of the GLC's Industry and Employment Committee and a committed socialist feminist. JUDITH ARKWRIGHT asked her about the sort of policies she wants to see the GLC implementing on behalf of women.

What do you think are the main problems facing women today?

Unemployment is really the major issue which women have to face at the moment. That and cuts in social services.

Unemployment in London is supposedly 8.9 per cent but in some areas it's as high as in Liverpool. In Stepney and Poplar, for instance, one in four of the male population and one in five of the female population is unemployed.

Given this situation, do you think that the GLC Labour Manifesto offers enough in terms of policies to promote equal opportunities for women?

Our manifesto is very weak on women. That's mainly because it's drawn up by men. They tend to assume that everything that is proposed will help women as well as men. This is wrong. There are specific questions which men don't see.

Members of the GLC and ILEA who consider themselves socialist-feminists have begun to meet regularly with other similarly committed women Labour Party members. We are looking at the Manifesto and trying to broaden it to reflect the needs of women in London.

What sorts of policies have you been considering?

One example of the sort of policy we are looking at is the proposals we are making in relation to the Greater London Enterprise Board (GLEB).

The GLEB will be investing in industrial co-operatives, new public

enterprise and municipal enterprise as part of the GLC's Alternative Economic Strategy.

Investment will be on condition that the local community and shop-stewards committees are involved in drawing up local planning agreements.

These planning agreements need to include a positive action programme for women. The lease agreements GLEB has with enterprises could include clauses about the number of part-time jobs, the provision of day care facilities and equal pay for work of equal value.

The GLC has a massive supplies depot for London boroughs and, here again, we're working on a code of conduct. We could refuse



Valerie Wise

to deal with firms that don't comply.

When the GLC sets up its new direct labour

organisation, London Community Builders, we could lay down guidelines for training women — say

one in every five apprentices should be a woman.

I'd been in favour of an actual quota system which would go further than this but it's illegal at the moment.

I'm also planning to organise a conference on women and employment — a working conference with trade unionists, women from employment projects and so forth.

What other questions have you been concerned with?

One issue we've been looking into is sexist advertising. Some of us feel we should have a committee of women to look into this.

The GLC has the power to change the classification of films — A, X or private club viewing only.

I may be puritanical but I think a lot of these films exploit women. I want to use our powers to make them private club viewing only so that fewer

people will see them.

Censorship of some degree has to be used while women are exploited. Men don't see this — they aren't being degraded as we are.

Some of us want to take up adverts on the underground — posters like the one for the Shining or the James Bond films. It's degrading and it's encouraging people to have the wrong attitude to women.

It can incite violence and it's difficult for women travelling late at night.

We're going to meet with the managing director of buses to work out a code of conduct of what is acceptable.

Have you thought about improving educational opportunities for girls in the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) area?

There are specific steps which the ILEA could take now to bring about equal opportunities in schools. It could appoint advisers

who would be responsible for promoting Equal Opportunities in schools and inspect schools to see that equal provision is being made.

The appointment and promotion of female and male staff could be monitored and in service training to encourage the development of non-sexist practices introduced.

For schools which are re-organising as co-educational schools, non-sexist guidelines could be established.

I want the GLC to be able to put some of these policies into practice while we're here — we want to show we've got an alternative.

We have to encourage women inside and outside the Labour Party.

I think a future Labour Government should change the law to help women, for example to allow for quotas.

But changing the law is not the only means to achieve women's rights — you can use legislation to back up the fight women are already making.



Alex Kitson receiving a bouquet from women delegates at the Labour Party conference. They were angry at his patronising attitude to them.

# Britain 1981

**THE REAGAN  
TARISM  
REAGAN/THATCHER  
EMPLOYMENT  
RACISM/FASCISM  
MONETARISM  
CAPITAL/PROFITS  
LAW AND ORDER  
WAGES/PRICES**

COUNTER INFORMATION SERVICES have produced their 'Anti-Report' for 1981. In 1980 the 'Book of the Year' produced by Ink Links catalogued the events of the year, but failed to give a coherent overview of the meaning of these events. CIS's 'Anti-Report' avoids this mistake.

It contains concise accounts of the summer riots, the fascists and racism, the plight of the unemployed, an excellent account of the year in Ireland (widely rumoured to have been written by Socialist Challenge journalist Geoff Bell). But the core of the Anti-Report is a mass of facts and analyses of the recession.

The different sections — on the banks, the asset strippers, prices unemployment and big business — add up to an overall analysis of the dynamics of the crisis.

Every economic recession is simultaneously an attack on the working class. For in-



dustrial capital this means a grim fight to 'discipline the workforce and boost profits', as the report puts it. The long list of plant closures and jobs lost, and the attempts of the big firms to force down wages and increase productivity are carefully dissected.

The meaning of this for ordinary people, at a time when monetary policy has failed to stop prices rising, is hammered home through a mass of statistical and graphical material.

**CIS Anti Report 1981**  
Available from *The Other Bookshop*  
Price £1.95

Here are some price increases over the year ending May 1981:

GAS	+28
ELECTRICITY	+27
TOBACCO	+23
RATES	+21
RENTS	+43

In every recession some sections of capital do better than others. In Britain, banking capital is particularly strong and is doing very nicely from the sky-high interest rates.

As industry runs into liquidity problems, it is forced to borrow from the banks. So high are interest rates that the major firms are having to borrow even more to service these debts. The result is that British industry is now completely mortgaged to the banks — which is one reason among many why the nationalisation of the banks is a crucial demand for socialists.

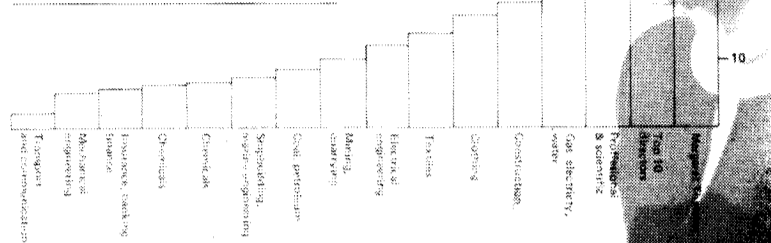
The 'Anti-Report' details the operations of the banks, how the 'base rate' for lending is used to bring in huge profits, how the banks fought the 'windfall profit' tax proposal and how they avoid paying billions more in taxation.

The 'Anti-Report' is therefore more than just a 'report'. It is a weapon for

This shows wage rises in various sectors. There are some who don't fit on the scale:

Cabinet Minister (Commons)	101.7
Minister of State (Commons)	122.4
Minister of State (Lords)	163.8
Parliamentary Secretary	124.5

Wage increases by sector between June 1980 and June 1981



The government says average earnings rose by 11.8% between June 1980 and June 1981. But this figure conceals the truth. It takes no account of people who's income has been drastically cut by unemployment. In addition, it is too heavy because those with high wages pull the average up.

## TARGET BRITAIN

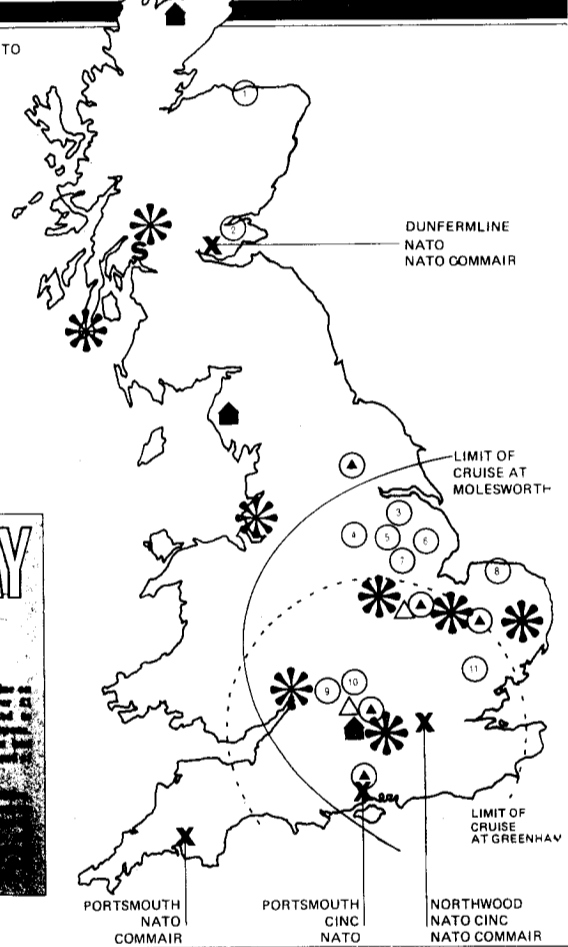
WHAT BRITAIN LOOKS LIKE TO OTHER NUCLEAR POWERS!

- ▲ USAF + RAF BASE CONCENTRATIONS
  - △ CENTRE OF CRUISE MISSILE ZONES
  - S SUB BASES
  - NUCLEAR WARHEAD PRODUCTION
  - ✱ NUCLEAR WEAPONS STORES
- USAF AND RAF BASES
- 1 KINLOSS + LOSSIEMOUTH
  - 2 LEUCHARS
  - 3 BINSBROOK
  - 4 SCAMPTON
  - 5 WADDINGTON
  - 6 CORNINGSBY
  - 7 CRANWELL
  - 8 SULTHORPE
  - 9 FAIRFORD
  - 10 UPPER HEYFORD
  - 11 WETHERSFIELD

**RUNAWAY COSTS**

'Trident to cost 20% more' was the headline on September 7, a massive increase of over £1 billion on the £500m already allocated to replace Britain's aging Polaris nuclear weapons. The reason for the rise was that Britain had opted for the larger Trident D2 missile, instead of the original Trident 1.

But this is only the start of the cost increase. The huge extra needed would have to be met by the higher interest rates on the debt, and the higher taxes on the profits of the banks.



militants, an invaluable source of facts and figures for those countless arguments in pubs, on the shopfloor and in the

labour movement about who runs the country and who benefits from the crisis.

**Phil Hearse**



The two faces of Tory Britain



**Where you can buy Socialist Challenge**

**Scotland**

**ABERDEEN:** SC available at Boomtown books, King St. For more info ring Bill 896 284.  
**DUNDEE:** SC available from Dundee City Square outside Boots, Thur 4-5.30pm, Fri 4-5.30pm, Sat 11-4pm.  
**EDINBURGH:** SC sold Thur 4.15-5.15pm Bus Station, St. Andrews Square and bottom of Waverly steps 4.30-5.30; Sat 11.30-2pm East End, Princes St. Also available from 1st May Books, or Better Books, Forrest Rd. More info on local activity from SC c/o Box 6, 1st May Bookshop, Candlemaker Row.  
**GLASGOW:** SC sales every Thur/Fri 4.30-5.30pm at Central Station. Also available at Barrets, Byres Rd; Clyde Books, High St; Glasgow Bookshop Collective, Cresswell Lane; Hope Street Book Centre.  
**HAMILTON:** SC sale every Sat 1-5pm outside Safeway, shopping centre. For more info contact John Ford, 53 Eliot Crescent, Hamilton or Paul Youngson, 18 Forrest Crescent, Hamilton.

**Wales**

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

**England**

**BATH:** SC on sale at 1985 Books, London Road, and Saturdays 2pm-3pm outside the Roman Baths. Phone 20298 for more details.  
**BIRKENHEAD:** SC on sale at Labour Club, Cleveland st, Thur nights; in precinct outside Littlewoods, Sat 11-12.  
**BIRMINGHAM:** SC on sale at The Ramp, Fri 4.30-5.40, Sat 10-4. For more info phone 643 0669.  
**BOLSOVER:** Cross Keys, every Fri 8.9pm, Bluebell 9-10.  
**BRADFORD:** SC at Fourth Idea Bookshop, 14 Southgate.  
**BRISTOL:** SC on sale 11-1, 'Hole in Ground', Haymarket. More info Box 2, c/o Fullmarks, 110 Cheltenham Rd, Montpellier, Bristol 06.  
**BURNLEY:** SC on sale every Sat morning 11.30-1pm St James St.  
**CHESTERFIELD:** SC sold outside Boots, Marketplace, Sat 11.30am-12.30pm.  
**COVENTRY:** SC available from Wedge Bookshop.  
**HEMEL HEMPSTEAD:** SC sales in Time Square, Sat 10.30-1.30pm.  
**Huddersfield:** SC sold Sat 11am-1pm. The Piazza. SC also available at Peaceworks.  
**LEEDS:** Sat 11-1 at Lands Lane Pedestrian Precinct and 10.30-12.00 at Headingly Arndale Centre. Corner Bookshop, Woodhouse Lane.  
**LIVERPOOL:** SC on sale from News from Nowhere, Whitechapel and Progressive Books, Berry St.  
**MANCHESTER:** SC sold 11-1pm Sat at OLDHAM outside the Yorkshire Bank, High St; at BURY in the shopping precinct and at Metro Books; at BOLTON in the town centre; and in MANCHESTER outside the central reference library in St Peter's Square and at Grassroots and Percivals Bookshop. Tel: 061-236 4905 for further info.  
**NEWCASTLE:** SC on sale every Sat 11-1pm outside Fenwicks. Also available at Days of Hope bookshop, Westgate Rd. Every Friday outside Newcastle University between 1-2 and outside Newcastle Polytechnic between 12-1 every Monday.  
**OLDHAM:** SC sold every Saturday outside Yorkshire Bank, High Street. For more information about local activities. Tel. 061-682 5151.  
**OXFORD:** SC sold Fri 12-2pm outside Kings Arms and every Sat 10.30-12.30pm in Cornmarket.

**SHEFFIELD:** SC on sale Thursday, Pond St, 4.30-6pm; Saturday, Fargate 10.30-12.30pm.  
**STAFFORD:** SC on Sale Market Sq Sat lunch-time.  
**STOCKPORT:** SC sold every Saturday, 1pm, Mersey Way. Can be delivered weekly; phone 483 8909 (evening), 236 4905 (day).  
**SWINDON:** SC on sale 11-1 every Sat, Regent St (Brunel Centre).  
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**WOLVERHAMPTON:** SC sales on Thur/Fri at Poly Students Union from noon-2pm and British Rail 4.30-6pm; and Saturday near Beatles, town centre from 11am-2pm.  
**YORK:** on sale every Thursday, dole office, Clifford Street, 9.30-11; University Vanburgh College 12-2; Saturday at Coney Street 11-1.

**London**

**BRENT:** SC sold Willesden Junction Thur 4.30pm.  
**EALING:** SC sold Thur, Ealing Broadway tube, 4.30-5.30pm  
**ENFIELD:** SC at Nelsons newsgents, London Rd, Enfield Town.  
**HACKNEY:** SC on sale on estates throughout Hackney, at public meetings, and local factories. Contact us c/o PO Box 36, 136 Kingsland Rd, London E8 2NF or phone Megan or John at 359 8288.  
**HILLINGDON:** SC sold Fri, 4.30-5.30 at Uxbridge tube station; Sat 10.30-12.00 outside Woolworths, Uxbridge shopping centre.  
**KILBURN:** SC sales every Sat, 10am in Kilburn Square, and Thursday 8.30am at Queens Park tube.  
**LAMBETH:** SC available from Village Books, Streatham; Tethic Books, Clapham; Paperback Centre, Brixton; Oval tube kiosk. Also sold Thur and Fri evenings and Thur mornings outside Brixton tube.  
**NEWHAM:** SC sold Sat 11am to noon, Queen's Rd Mkt, Upton Park.  
**PADDINGTON:** SC sold at Portobello Rd market Sat at noon.  
**WEMBLEY:** SC sales Fri 6.45am at North Wembley BR Station.

**Bookshops**

**BANGOR:** Rainbows, Holyhead Road, Upper Bangor, Gwynedd.  
**BRADFORD:** Fourth Idea Bookshop, 14 Southgate.  
**BRIGHTON:** The Public House, Little Preston St.  
**BRISTOL:** Fullmarks, 110 Cheltenham Rd, Bristol 6.  
**BIRMINGHAM:** Other Bookshop, 137 Digbeth, Birmingham.  
**DURHAM:** Durham City Co-op Bookshop, 85a New Elvet.  
**ILFORD:** South Essex Bookshop, 335 Ley Street.  
**MILTON KEYNES:** Oakleaf Books, 109 Church Street, Wolverton.  
**OXFORD:** EOA Books, 34 Cowley Rd.  
**LEICESTER:** Blackthorn Books, 70 High St, Leicester, and V Karia, 53A London Rd, Leicester.  
**LIVERPOOL:** News from Nowhere, 100 Whitechapel, Liverpool L1  
**LONDON:** Central Books, 37 Grays Inn Rd; Collets, Charing Cross Rd, WC2; Paperback Books, Brixton and Charlotte St; Kilburn Bookshop, Kilburn High Road, NW6; The Bookplace, Peckham High St, SE15; Books Plus, Lewisham; Balham Food Co-op; Housmans, 5 Caledonian Rd, N1; Compendium, Camden Town NW1; Owl, Kentish Town; New Beacon, Seven Sisters Rd, N4; The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper St, N1; Bookmarks, Seven Sisters Rd, N4; Centreprise, 126 Kingsland High St, E8; Dillons, QMC, Page One, E15; The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper St, N1; Reading Matters, Wood Green next to Sainsbury's.  
**YORK:** Community Books, Walmgate.

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**BADGES MADE:** Glasgow SC supporters have badge-making machine, will make badges quickly and cheaply for your campaign/union/labour Party — and all the money goes back into the struggle for socialism! Write for details/quotes to: SC (Glasgow), PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

**SOUTHERN AFRICA:** workshops. A series of meetings to re-examine campaigning methods and develop new strategies to help make Southern Africa more urgent a public issue, begins next Thursday 19 November, 7.30pm. Venue: Archway Development Education Centre, 173 Archway Road, N6. All welcome. Organised by Highgate Archway Anti-Apartheid Group. Details from Gloria 341 0144 or Christina 348 3030.

**IRELAND:** Which way forward conference organised by Greenwich Labour Party, Sat 28 November 9.30-5.30pm. Goldsmiths College students union, New Cross. Speakers include: Richard Balfe, EuroMP, Clive Soley MP, Mike Biggs ex-Captain British Army, Carl Gardner City Limits, Paddy Logue H Block/Armagh Committee, Des O'Hagan Sinn Fein Workers Party, Prof John Murphy University College Cork. Creche available. Lunch provided. Registration £2.50 from Greenwich Labour Party, 32 Woolwich Road, SE10.

**IRELAND:** Manchester Martyrs commemoration on Sunday 29 November, assemblies St. Patrick's church, Oldham Rd, Manchester 1.30pm. Coaches leave Action Town Hall at 9am to go to march. (Bloody Sunday commemoration march in Coventry 31 January 1982 organised by Bloody Sunday Commemoration Committee).

**WHO ARE** the real terrorists? Smash the PTA Campaign North and Midlands Labour Movement Conference on Ireland. Saturday 5 December, 10.00-17.00. Belle Vue Community Centre, Belle Vue Road, Leeds. Workshops on: trade unions and Ireland, students and the Irish War, report from Six Counties. Evening social. 01-274 3951

**Socialist Challenge events**

**NALGO** fraction: Sat 21 Nov 12 noon to 5pm. Venue from SC office.

**Nasreen stays but more under threat**

By Toni Gorton

**AFTER four years of uncertainty and two years of sustained struggle, Nasreen Akhtar and her daughters have won the right to stay in Britain. But the list is growing of other black people, especially women, who are threatened with deportation.**

Nasreen and her children live in Rochdale. The Home Office moved against her when her marriage broke down. She appeared before a tribunal on 23 October for her final appeal against deportation and heard that she had been granted permission to stay.

The most amazing thing about the case is that the Home Office refused to offer any evidence as to why she was not legally entitled to stay.

This was after two years of referring the case to the appeal system.

Nasreen's MP, Cyril Smith, is taking up the question of a parliamentary enquiry and of compensation (£20,000) from the Home Office.

Shirley Graham, a Jamaican by birth, has lived in Britain since 1974. She has left and entered the country several times and has 'indefinite leave to enter' stamped in her passport.

In August, after a short trip abroad, she was held at the airport for five days.

During this time she was very ill, her diabetes and blood pressure was aggravated by the harassment of immigration officers and their delay in giving her proper medical treatment.

She went into hospital for major abdominal surgery upon her release.

In addition, while she was on holiday, her home in Forest Gate, East London was burgled.

So when she came home from hospital she didn't have a bed to sleep on. The police refused to take up her case.

A worker at Newham Law Centre said:

'Because she is being treated as an illegal immigrant, her civil rights as the victim of a burglary have been suspended'.

Lord Avebury has taken up Shirley's case but her MP, Arthur Lewis, Newham North West, doesn't want to know.

In a letter to Lord Avebury he says that, according to the Electoral Register, there is no such address as that given by Shirley Graham and also



Shirley Graham

that he objects to a non elected and non democratic hereditary Peer getting involved!

Labour movement support is urgently needed to stop the deportation of Shirley and others, some

of whom are listed below. Petitions, briefings and information about planned public activities are available from the defence campaign.

Shirley Graham Defence Campaign

c/o 285 Romford Road, Forest Gate, London E7  
 Friends of Aziz Malik  
 c/o 104 Commercial Street, Batley  
 Mumtaz Kiani Defence Committee  
 c/o 4th Idea Bookshop, 14 Southgate, Bradford 1



One of many demonstrations to keep Nasreen Akhtar here

**Labour movement support urged to defend Bradford 12**

**THE Leicester support group of the Bradford 12 is urging a national campaign throughout the Labour movement to win the release of the 12 Asian youth arrested in Bradford following the uprisings in many cities during the summer.**

This case is a flagrant example of young people being victimised because of their colour and their political activities.

They are being charged under conspiracy laws which carry a possible sentence of life imprisonment and are all pleading not guilty.

**Model resolution:** This trade union/organisation calls for the immediate release of the Bradford 12 and the dropping of all charges.

It resolves to:

1. Send a resolution to the Director of Public Prosecutions calling for their release;
2. Organise and call a meeting with a speaker from the July 11th Action Committee;
3. Send a donation of £10 to the July 11 Action Committee;
4. To attend and actively support this Committee's activity.

**Public meeting Manchester Sunday 8 November at 3pm Longsight Library Stockport Road.** Speakers include **Darcus Howe Anwar Ditta**

The Bradford 12 can be contacted c/o Raddle Bookshop, 70 Berners Street, Leicester and, c/o 54 High Street, Southall 01-571 4920

**Celebrate the third anniversary of the Grenadan Revolution in Grenada!**

The New Jewel Movement Support Group has organised a special flight to celebrate the third anniversary of the revolution on 13 March, 1982. What a winter break!

**6 March to 10 April £320 flight only.** Expect to need another £200 for food and accommodation. For further information contact New Jewel Movement (UK) c/o 4 Windus Walk, London N16 or phone Grenada High Commission 01-373 7808.

# Trade Unions

## Liverpool Ferries occupation

# 'This is a fight for jobs'

By John Gomez and Mark Turnbull

The crews of the P&O ferries, Ulster Prince and Ulster Queen, occupied their ships on 6/7 November to stop management's closure plans.

The company wants to end the 160-year old service on 11 November. If this succeeds, it will follow the path of Cunard, Manchester Liners, Canadian Pacific and other firms who have put hundreds of Liverpool seafarers on the dole.

The other service to Ireland, British and Irish Ferry and Jetfoil to Dublin is in doubt, which may mean the end of the centuries old shipping links between Liverpool and Ireland.

The occupation is a defiant move to stop this rundown and job losses.

The national Union of Seamen convenor on the Ulster Queen, Danny McGee, told Socialist Challenge, 'We are not interested in talking about redundancy money. This is a fight for jobs.'

P&O originally planned to close down the two Liverpool-Belfast ferries last January.

They claimed to be making a loss of £600,000 but that isn't the full story.

Roy Physick, NUS convenor on the Ulster Prince said, 'the firm had eight years of good profits from this run, but now we

are in recession they want to close us down.'

The company had to back off after a six day occupation by the crews.

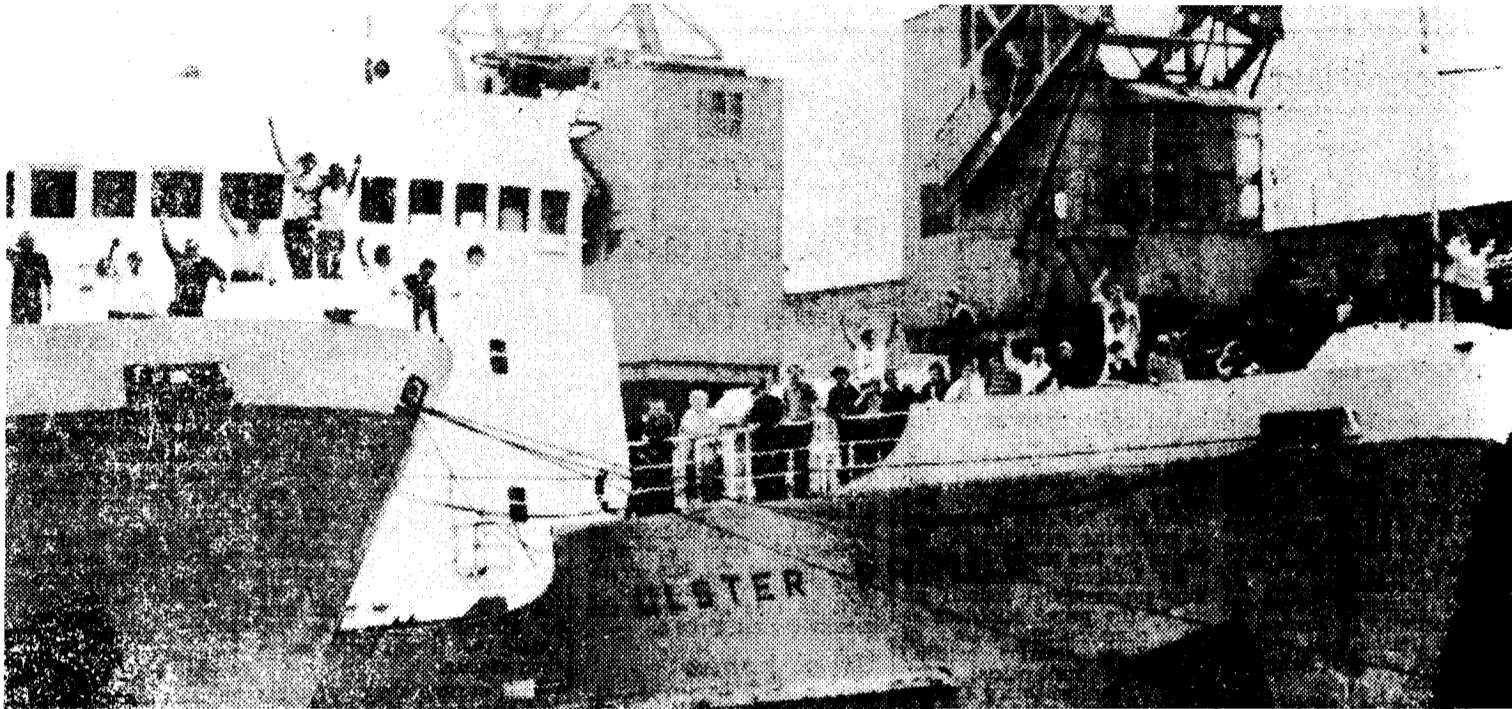
The NUS made suggestions for saving £370,000 and the other unions involved made similar suggestions totalling £900,000.

P&O then claimed that their losses really ran to over £1 million, in a situation where the company overall made £40 million profit.

This backs up the union view that P&O want to pull out of shipping altogether. They already have substantial dealings in oil and construction (Bovis).

For the workers it is a straight fight for jobs. 350 on both ships, with office staff, dockers and suppliers making nearly a thousand jobs at stake.

The NUS members in-



Pickets on the Ulster Prince and Ulster Queen

involved are determined not to see these go. One unemployed seaman told us that when he first went to sea in the 1950s the union was 100,000 strong. Today it has about 21,000 members of which 3,000 are unemployed, 900

of them in Liverpool. Danny McGee summed it up this way: 'We hope to get the backing of the NUS executive to stop every P&O ship in the country.'

'This is our last chance to save our jobs. There are

already 900 seamen out of work. If we join them it will be virtually impossible to get work.'

At the recent Labour Party conference, chairperson Alex Kitson of the transport union pledged full support to them.

Many of the workers who deal with the shops, dockers, drivers, tug and gig boat men are in Kitson's union and can play an important part in bringing P&O to a halt.

Send messages of support from trade unions and

Labour Party branches. Invite speakers from the occupation to your branch or workplace. Hold collections.

All messages and donations to: P&O Action committee, National Union of Seamen, 49 Paradise St., Liverpool 1. Telephone 051-709 1786/7.

## Leeds engineering workers reject 5½ %

By Mick Foley

SOME 300 ENGINEERING workers at Sulzer Engineering in Leeds are going into the third week of strike against their bosses' offer of five and a half per cent — not on the flat rate, but in the form of bonus payments.

### New

The workers are demanding a 20 per cent increase from the Swiss multinational and have challenged the management to open the books to prove that they can't meet the claim.

The Leeds factory is brand new, costing £22m.

It is complete with plush carpets, double glazing and an enormous perimeter of plants.

### Level

So many, in fact, that the managing director William Walton has applied to the AUEW district for permission for gardeners to cross the picket line to prevent his plants dying.

Walton is also the president of the Yorkshire and Humberside Engineering Employers Association and he is trying to force the Sulzer workers to accept an offer which will determine the level of pay deals for the Yorkshire district.

Andy Halligan, a shop steward, said that it is the complete intransigence of management that has brought things to a head.

The workforce is now preparing for a long hard fight.

Messages of support and contributions can be sent to Tommy Wake c/o AUEW House, Bridge St, Leeds 1.

## POEU special conference debates federation

By Colin Talbot, Westminster POEU

The British Telecommunications Act came into force on 1 October. This new Tory law split the Post Office in two, creating the new British Telecommunications Corporation. It also laid the basis for the hiving-off of parts of the highly profitable telecoms business to private enterprise.

The leaders of the Post Office Engineering Union mounted a weak, half-hearted protest against the new Act. Once it became clear that the Tories were going to steam-roller it through Parliament our leaders adopted a new tack.

### Gear

They started to tell us that we were now in 'a competitive environment' and had to gear ourselves up to the competition.

Meanwhile, they have been busy feathering their own nests. They have come up with a plan to create a 'bureaucrats' paradise — a federal trade union based in British Telecom.

The proposed federation embraces the posts and telecoms section of the civil servants union, the CPSA. No-one on the left of the union objects to

merging with our fellow clerical workers.

We do object to merging with our bosses — the third partner in the Society of Post Office Executives, SPOE, represents our engineering supervisors.

The left, organised by the POEU Broad Left, is campaigning hard to prevent a merger with SPOE, which would cripple any joint union.

The Broad Left is also campaigning against the proposed federal structure. The POEU national executive claims that the federation provides the advantages of 'size with autonomy'.

What it really provides for is all the disadvantages of size and none of the benefits of unity.

A cumbersome federal council, federal conference and federal officers' structure will be created, a whole second

tier of bureaucracy removed from the rank and file members.

It will work mainly by consensus, thus allowing the minority of supervisors to block action.

There will be no rank and file unity, because the existing branches will remain as they are, separated into engineering, clerical and supervisory at the local level.

Most importantly, this is an attempt by the trade union officials to carry the split in the Post Office into the structures of the trade unions themselves.

### Leave

The new union would be based mainly in British Telecom. It would include a minority (about 10 per cent) of POEU members who work in Posts, but it would be essentially a BT Union.

It would leave the Union of Communications Workers, UCW (formerly the UPW) as the main union in Posts.

It would create a situation of two power blocks, one in each business, with

the inevitable pressure for further 'rationalisation' within each business, further reinforcing the split.

Last summer, the UCW Annual Conference voted for a single, non-supervisory union covering Posts, Telecoms and their subsidiaries.

### Composite

A composite resolution from 17 POEU Branches is going forward to our special conference of the Federation, which reads:

'To negotiate the reorganisation of the Post Office unions, POEU, UCW, CPSA and P&T Group, with the intent to create a rank and file industrial union embracing BT, PO and Girobank and their subsidiaries and not on a federal structure.'

The POEU left will be going all out to defeat the executives federation and win support for this motion.

As a Broad Left broadsheet widely circulating in the union puts it: 'Unity Yes—Federation No!'



## Sheffield workers sit in to defend jobs

By Brian Lyons

ON 3 November, 35 mainly electrical workers occupied the factory of Davy Instruments in Sheffield.

The action followed the announcement by management that 34 out of 40 manual workers and 46 out of 105 staff workers were getting the boot.

According to the bosses the sole reason for the closure of Davy Instruments is that labour costs are too high.

Formally, Davy Instruments is an independent

company. Actually it forms part of the Davy-Loewy Group and is situated on the same site as the large Davy-Loewy factory in Darnall, Sheffield.

Both D-L and DI are prosperous companies despite the recession. They have recently received a number of large export orders.

DI is about to merge with Davy Systems to form a new company which plans to shed the manufacturing side, placing emphasis

on computers, production control methods and analysis.

It is also planned that the manufacturing needs of the new company will be met by sub-contract labour presumably at reduced costs.

Management have so far refused even to negotiate the future of the existing work force.

In their statement the Joint Shop Stewards Committee stated: 'We will

that a loyal and experienced workforce of some 25 years standing cannot, and should not, be allowed to be discarded through no fault of their own.'

'While there is work to do it is our right to do it, and our right to do our jobs and we will strive to achieve these ends.'

Messages of support and donations can be sent to: Joint Shop Stewards Committee, 49 Paradise St., Liverpool 1. Telephone 051-709 1786/7.

# Socialist Challenge

## Coventry workers strike against the cuts

**Public sector workers taking massive strike action in Coventry have brought normal school working to a halt.**

The 4,000 strikers — mainly school cleaners, caretakers and school meals staff — are all members of the public sector workers union NUPE. They are protesting about the local council's decision to make spending cuts to the tune of £2m, with education bearing the brunt.

The council proposes, among other things, to cut the hours of ancillary workers in education by 10 per cent, to chop the holiday period retainer fee in half, and to increase the price of school meals to 50p.

The decision of Coventry's Labour-controlled council was taken after a local referendum produced a seven-to-one majority in favour of spending cuts rather than a big rates increase.

### Talks

As we go to press, the council is adamant that it will stand by its decision to make cuts, although it is prepared to talk to NUPE about 'the ways in which savings can be made.' In a press statement, the council said: 'Coventry stands to lose large amounts of government grants unless it cuts its spending.'

NUPE, however, are equally firm. Jo Little, secretary of the Coventry branch has estimated that the proposed cuts will mean a 12.5 per cent reduction in wages. The strikers refuse to have talks with the council until the letters that have been sent out changing their conditions of service are withdrawn.

Only 25 per cent of the electorate in Coventry participated in the council's referendum, which was held in August. Coventry's working people, already suffering mass unemployment, were clearly not keen to choose by which particular method the Tory government's pound of flesh was to be exacted by their Labour council.

# Labour MPs back Staffa fight for jobs

By Toni Gorton

**STRIKING workers at Staffa Products in Leyton, East London are preparing to present their case to Labour MPs at a meeting in the House of Commons this Thursday 12 November.**

**The MPs will be asked to support the Staffa dispute as the spearhead of the fight against unemployment in the inner cities, and to issue a call for a total embargo on all Staffa products.**

The workers are now into the eighth week of what looks like being a long struggle to save the 390 jobs.

The strike began on 29 September with a 17 day occupation which ended when a force of 300 police invaded the site, evicting the workers and removing all the stock of hydraulic motors.

So far the AUEW and the TGWU as well as the electricians' union EET-PU, and ASTMS have all made the strike official.

### Fight

The company, which is owned by the American Hydraulics firm, Brown & Sharpe, has been offered a £4m government grant to make the move to Plymouth.

The Labour Greater London Council offered to match this offer to keep the jobs in London but this was rejected.

In a debate at the full council meeting on 3 November a policy was adopted — which the Tories were forced to endorse — that Staffa should stay in London.

Nationally, the Tories have argued that moving Staffa to Plymouth is preferable to allowing the

whole operation to go out of the country, as has been threatened by its US owners.

Labour should answer this threat by fighting for Staffa to be brought into public ownership in order to save jobs.

Staffa has a full order



### Model resolution

*THIS branch pledges its full support to the strike against closure by workers at the Staffa plant in East London. We note with alarm the growing problem of unemployment in inner city areas and roundly condemn the government's decision to give the firm of Browne and Sharpe a £4m grant to move to Plymouth.*

*We resolve to give material support to the workers in the following ways:*

- 1) To send a donation/collection for the strike fund
- 2) To ask a speaker to the branch or general committee
- 3) To encourage our members to join the picket lines, in particular the mass meetings on Monday mornings.
- 4) To demand that our MP trade union sponsor the national campaign to stop the Tory relocation grant and join the appeal for a national embargo on Staffa products.

book, its products are in demand. Higher profits for the bosses is no

justification for allowing 400 workers to be thrown on the scrapheap.

The issues raised by the Staffa dispute go well beyond any local borders, as do those raised by the Laurence Scott strike in Manchester.

Both struggles are in the vanguard against Tory job-killing, union-bashing moves.

The LSE dispute has also had to contend with the AUEW national leadership withdrawing official support which has meant no strike pay, and the strikers' ability to spread picketing has also been hindered.

So far strike pay has still not been given to the AUEW members at Staffa and no moves on a national level appear to have been made to help the

workers.

The record of the AUEW leaders, Boyd and Duffy, at LSE and at British Leyland, gives a warning for the future.

*Send all messages of support, donations and telegrams to Chris Newson, AUEW Strike Committee, 39 Somers Road, Walthamstow E17, Tel 01-539 0886.*

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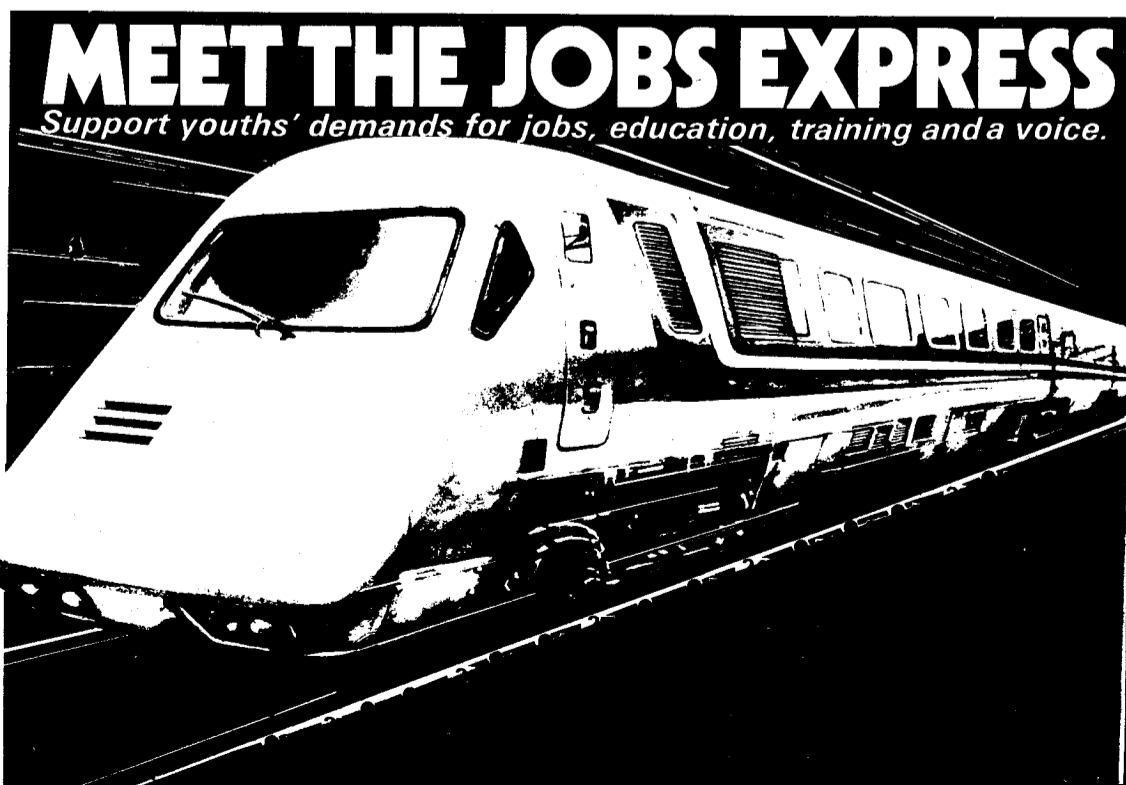
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