

**TELECOM
DISPUTE:
SEE
PAGE
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ACT UP!
ACTION

**MILLIONS
ACROSS
EUROPE
SAY...**



**STOP THE
MISSILES!**

**US BASES
OUT!!**

Socialist ACTION

22 October
— and after

NEXT SATURDAY'S demonstration against the missiles is likely to be the biggest ever turnout in Britain against the Reagan-Thatcher plans to escalate the arms race. With cruise missiles due to arrive any day (some say they are already here) the demonstration can be a powerful expression of the opposition of a majority of the British people.

But before we celebrate too loudly, let's remember that the 27 October 1968 Vietnam demonstration was by far the biggest — and the last — of VSC's major demonstrations. CND activists have to make sure that 22 October is not CND's swansong.

Up until now a big opportunity has been missed. Yes, there have been large demonstrations. Yes, CND is more influential than ever. But the decisive forces in the labour movement to defeat nuclear weapons have not been mobilised.

Despite the fact that the Labour Party and the TUC are both now unilateralist, the labour bureaucrats have not taken action. They have not organised industrial action — and that it can be done was shown by last week's 5-minute 'warning' strike by 1½ million German workers, which is being emulated in Copenhagen next week. They did not even produce the joint Labour Party-TUC demonstration promised for Hiroshima day.

No wonder many CND activists are dubious about orientating their activity towards the labour movement.

In the new situation after the general election, there are powerful forces organising to tone down unilateralist policies in the Labour Party, in the unions, and alas in CND itself.

Socialist Action has always pointed out that stopping cruise and Trident, let alone unilateral nuclear disarmament, means confronting really fundamental interests of the capitalist class.

That cannot be done without mobilising huge and decisive social forces — the labour movement. And it cannot be done by making political concessions to the multilateralists by promoting the 'Freeze movement' (see page eight).

In reality, CND has already suffered a first defeat. The missiles will come to Britain. To redirect movement after December, we have to break with the EP Thompson line of whining to the SDP, and even 'progressive' Tories, to support us.

It means basing the movement on those active and intransigent forces that exist — the Greenham women and the youth — and reaching out to those who have the power to junk cruise, Trident and the rest.

Without such a course, CND won't die — but it may well just fade away.

Your Socialist Action

OWING to a number of financial and technical difficulties since the summer, Socialist Action has been 12 pages. But starting next week we shall be back to our 16-page schedule. We thank all our readers and subscribers for bearing with us during this period. Nevertheless, keeping the paper at 16 pages is going to be extremely difficult. So keep those donations rolling in!

Why Thatcher's got that sinking feeling



Sombre faces at the Tory top table

THERE ARE few things funnier in politics than the press trying to be profound. Only four months ago we were reliably informed that Margaret Thatcher's Tories were the most triumphantly popular force which had ever existed in British politics. Now abruptly we have the Cecil Parkinson scandal, the huge row over the National Health Service cuts, and the government pushing through an absurd bill to make local government simultaneously less efficient and more undemocratic.

The *Times* had editorialised against the plan to abolish the metropolitan counties. The *Financial Times* spent the entire week of the Tory conference running editorials criticising the government. The Tory Party has already started what we can be sure will be a long decline in the opinion polls.

What is the explanation of these events, given by the press? The word was invented in advance. It is *hubris* — the Greek word for excessive pride. Allegedly at the very height of her power the seeds of Thatcher's errors were sown due to 'excessive arrogance'.

Another candidate is 'luck'. According to Peter Kellner, the political editor of the *New Statesman*, the left underestimates the role played by 'chance and style' in politics. It was simply by chance, you see, that all Thatcher's good luck came before the election, and simply by chance that all the bad luck came only after the election was over. As they say, if you believe that you'll believe anything.

In reality the Conservative government's present problems, as they exploded at the Tory Party conference, were easy to see in advance. For, as we have consistently pointed out in Socialist Action, Thatcher's electoral victory in June was a fake

parliamentary landslide and not a real popular one.

Thatcher won 61 per cent of the seats, but only 42 per cent of the votes — the lowest real percentage of the vote won by a Prime Minister with a safe majority in Parliament in British history.

By John Ross

This fact of lack of mass political support is not a question of trying to make socialists feel cheerful. It profoundly affects the real relation of forces in society.

When there is a genuine popular landslide — say the 67 per cent of the vote won by the National government in 1931 or the 53 per cent gained by the Conservative government in 1935 — then the consequences of that reach into every town, every street, and every factory.

It is a horrifying fact, but true, that many of those even in a town such as Jarrow in the 1930s voted Tory. Political campaigners and trade union activists were crushed and isolated. A government in those circumstances can carry through its policies almost without serious resistance — as the Tories did for most of the inter-war period.

But Thatcher's victory in June 1983 was different. The Conservative government brilliantly utilised Labour's weakness and Britain's undemocratic electoral system, to gain a huge Parliamentary majority. But no great wave of popular electoral support for the Thatcher government was generated despite attempts of the press to create it and claim

it existed.

The result is that political campaigners, those fighting in the big cities, defending the NHS, those struggling against privatisation, did not feel the invincible hordes of new Tory voters on their necks. After the inevitable initial shock, and even paralysis caused by Thatcher's victory, this underlying social relation of forces inevitably asserted itself.

Forced

It is this social and political relation of forces which existed after June 1983 that also underlies the one serious attempt in the press to explain the Tories' sudden rash of problems. This is allegedly mounting internal Tory argument on public expenditure.

Day after day the papers have been full of statements concerning differences between the alleged 'tax cutters' Lawson and Thatcher and the 'spending ministers' Fowler and Heseltine. The terms 'consolidators' and 'radicals' have temporarily replaced the 'wets' and 'dries' of yesteryear.

Service. Or unemployment pay could be cut in half. The Treasury could come up with a technical answer in five minutes. And there would be no shortage of Tory ideologues to justify it — as Blackpool clearly showed.

The real problem in cutting public expenditure which faces the Tory Party is *political*. Thatcher has not yet gained public support to destroy the NHS or slash unemployment pay — something she would have achieved had she gained a real popular landslide. The mounting Tory 'argument' on public spending is a political problem of mass opposition to the cuts and not one of technical means to deal with the situation.

These political problems however, do require a certain flexibility in tactics. Norman Tebbit (of all people!) was suddenly alleged to have become more 'conciliatory' to the trade union leaders over the last period. The explanation is not hard to find.

If the Tory Party has its problems then it needs to guard its flanks more carefully. If the Conser-

When Neil Kinnock moves Labour as far to the right as the ruling class thinks he can go, then they will unceremoniously jump on him from a great height. Once again the press will discover that the Alliance is 'the only alternative to the Tories' — and the only way forward for Labour is in coalition with them.

Coalition

Meanwhile, Thatcher went out of her way in Blackpool to be conciliatory in tone, but not to change her policies one iota. Putting Tebbit in charge of Trade and Industry, and bringing the monetarist freak Nicholas Ridley into the cabinet, is a clear signal of continuing monetarism. The financial press want a more decisive action by Thatcher, not a change of course.

However, the Tories' problems do give Labour an opportunity. One of the positive things to come out of the Labour Party conference was Neil Kinnock's call in his speech to defend the Health Service. This is a campaign which the labour movement has every interest in pursuing.

It is quite possible, given the worsening economic situation, that the Tories can be sent spinning down the opinion polls. If Labour really mobilises to defend the NHS then the party's prospects for the election next May can be strengthened. That means the left should step up calls to break off talks with Thatcher and fight against the SDP/Liberal coalition plan.

After two years when the labour movement has had its back against the ropes there is going to be more room to make gains.

Labour should waste no time speculating about the internal divisions in the Tory ranks. It should totally reject the coalition proposals being offered to it by Frank Chapple, Eric Hobsbawm and others. But Labour can and should take advantage of Thatcher's political problems to rebuild its own base and support.

Kicking your Tory opponents when they are down is an old and excellent tradition in politics.

Kicking your Tory opponents when they're down is an excellent tradition.

There is indeed no reason to doubt that haggling over a few million pounds of public spending is taking place in the Tory Cabinet today — although the real economic crunch on public spending is going to come in the late 1980s and early 1990s and not in the next two years. There are also more Tories than just ex-Defence Minister John Nott who think that £3,000 million a year would be better use reinforcing NATO than defending penguins in the South Atlantic.

But what is the basis of these arguments? There are no technical problems in cutting public expenditure. Several thousand million could always be cut off the National Health

Service. Or unemployment pay could be cut in half. The Treasury could come up with a technical answer in five minutes. And there would be no shortage of Tory ideologues to justify it — as Blackpool clearly showed.

Simultaneously the Labour Party, with the aid of Neil Kinnock's new 'Labour Co-ordinating Committee' team should also be encouraged to move Labour 'back to the political centre'. Even if the SDP-Liberal Alliance fall in the opinion polls now, as they did before the general election, they will be dusted off for the Euro-elections. They remain a fundamental part of British politics.

Socialist ACTION

Join the fight for socialism

Name

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If you want more information about Socialist Action or to be put in touch with local supporters send this form to Socialist Action, 328 Upper Street, London N1.

Dispute Diary

WED. 5 OCTOBER: Mercury issues a writ on the POEU and the general secretary, Brian Stanley under the government's employment legislation, seeking to force the union to abandon its industrial action against the private telecoms company and its backers.

THUR. 6 OCTOBER: BT suspends about 50 engineers, 30 at one of the three international exchanges, where the union has been operating a work to rule.

Others are from Central London and Aberdeen, for boycotting Mercury's Cable and Wireless and British Petroleum.

SAT. 8 OCTOBER: Senior BT management take control of the three international exchanges shortly after midnight.

In a military style operation involving police and private security personnel, they evict the night shift.

Workers reporting on the day shift are turned away. 1600 are locked out as lower management are locked in and begin to clear faults which, with the work to rule, have taken 50 per cent of international circuits out of action.

MON. 10 OCTOBER: The 1600 international engineers refuse to attend management meetings or sign a declaration of good behaviour and stay locked out.

POEU boycotts faults on lines into the international exchange. A further 850 engineers working on fitting and maintenance duties in Central London are suspended for refusing to carry out work boycotted by the union, or refusing to sign commitments to 'work as directed'.

Mercury's injunction against the union is adjourned at the High Court for one week.

Several hundred POEU engineers picket BT's Gresham Street Headquarters in protest at the action taken against their colleagues.

TUES. 11 OCTOBER: The union instructs most of the 850 inland engineers, suspended by BT, to sign management's declaration of commitment to work normally and they return to work.

Union policy of secondary boycotting of Mercury and its backers is rescinded, with the exception of the interconnection of Mercury to the public service.

Engineers on private circuit provision and telex maintenance stay out. BT-POEU peace talks break down after three hours.

WED. 12 OCTOBER: BT management bus in POEU engineers from Outer London to scab on those suspended during the previous two days.

They refuse to cross picket lines and are suspended on the spot, or when eventually they make their way back to their workplaces.

After union instructions to sign BT's 'good behaviour' declaration, they return to work.

POEU members at two earth satellites at Goochilly, Cornwall and Madley, Hereford begin to boycott circuits linking them to the international exchanges.

THURS. 13 OCTOBER: BT continues its policy of bussing in engineers in their attempt to break picket lines. All POEU members refuse to cross picket lines and are suspended, some for the second time!

After signing management's declaration they return to work.

Strike action by Aberdeen engineers cuts off telex links to over one and a half thousand customers including oil companies in the North Sea.

FRI. 14 OCTOBER: More BT bussing involves engineers from as far afield as Hastings and Aldershot, who are moved into areas left empty by those shuttled into Central London.

Under union instructions certain locations are left un-picketed and out of London engineers are told to do work 'with the enthusiasm appropriate to the situation'.

Over 100 workers at the North West London switching centre occupy their canteen for two and a half hours at in protest at management's action in bussing other engineers in their building to break picket lines. They return to work after instructions from the union.

Engineers at Telecoms Tower, who have signed the 'good behaviour' declaration are threatened with dismissal after refusing to work with management scabs.

Engineers at Telecoms Tower, who have signed cause postponement of management's decisions on sackings.

Solidarity with the Telecom engineers

WITH THE 9 June election victory under her belt, Thatcher is moving to privatise public services and throw them to the profit sharks.

Hospital facilities, local government services, steel, rail, gas and even the coal industry are up for treatment.

British Telecom engineers have taken selective industrial action to oppose privatisation of the telecommunications network. They are being dragged through the courts, under Tebbit's anti-union laws for their boycott of the private company Mercury.

Solidarity from the whole labour movement would give a boost to the Telecom engineers and deliver Thatcher a bloody nose on privatisation and anti-union legislation.

A victory for the telecom workers would be a victory for every miner, rail, steel, gas and hospital worker and all of us who depend on public services and want to defend our unions.

MARCELLA FITZGERALD is the representative for the London North Central internal branch of the POEU and was suspended by BT management for industrial action on 10 October. She explains the issues.

The present industrial action of the POEU is a powerful signal to unite the union in a struggle against privatisation. Up to now the selective action has the full backing of the

and they will not compromise.

Their action is politically motivated and that's how we've got to see our response. How else can we fight for a public service against private profit without a political fightback?



Marcella Fitzgerald

membership, but the hostile acts of BT management, and the first serious legal threat to the unions Under the 1982 Employment Act, mean that a national trade union campaign must be launched.

The POEU leadership has to make an appeal for full industrial and financial backing. We are in the front line against the Tories' privatisation plans

This can cause demoralisation and isolation. It doesn't deal with the steps we will have to take if a court injunction is served against our 'politically motivated action', if union funds are seized or if individuals are dismissed or taken to court for not carrying out work demanded by manage-



Photo: JOHN HARRIS

ment. National strike action to defend the union will be necessary and now is the time to fight for it.

The Tory Party is shaken and doesn't appear so invincible, Labour is only 3 per cent behind in the polls, and NHS

cuts are meeting with sharp opposition.

Response

The POEU has the opportunity to drive a coach and horses through the Tories' industrial strategy.

But to do this, it has to demonstrate to its members, and to the movement as a whole, that it is prepared to use the full resources at its disposal. We can't beat the Tories with one hand tied behind our back.

POEU leader 'Stop the lock-out'

AT THE Post Office Engineering Union's conference earlier this year an executive with a left majority was elected, breaking a decades-long stranglehold by the right.

We asked DAVE WARD, a member of the new executive, for his views on the progress of the strike so far.

At a special conference of the POEU called to discuss the fight against privatisation in September a resolution called on the TUC to organise a fight against privatisation. What steps did Dave consider should be taken to lead that fight?

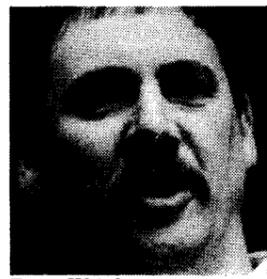
'The POEU fight is going to force the trade union movement to take action seriously' he says.

'They can't just stand back and applaud, other unions should organise support, both financial

and industrial, to roll back Tory privatisation plans.'

As we go to press Mercury is in the process of seeking to prevent the POEU's action against them under the 1982 Employment Act. How does Dave think the union can fight the legal offensive?

'Our belief is that the courts will rule against us. If they do we must be prepared to defend our jobs and industry by building a trade union fight across the board.



Dave Ward

'It has already been demonstrated by the Pentonville Five that action is the only way to win. Instead of talking with Tebbit we've got to fight to get our teeth into the TUC's verbal commitment to oppose the Tory anti-union laws.'

Dave believes that the present tactics of selective action can win the dispute

because 'in the end it would mean 35,000 union members out, supported by 100,000 financially — that could bring Telecoms to its knees'.

'The real problem is how we prevent a national lock-out, because to smash the POEU the BT board and government will be prepared to lock us out.'

Another problem the union is going to face is witch hunts aimed against the Broad Left. The Daily Mail led the way with attacks on two Broad Left supporters last week. How does Dave think we should deal with the problem?

'All witch hunts are double-edged', he argues. 'The members are seeing in practice how a left ex-

ecutive conducts its affairs openly and in full view of the members to involve them in the decision-making process.

'It shows the pathetic level of BT and the Tories when they have to involve the gutter press in a smear campaign. Last year the right wing in the POEU used the media to smear Terry Wilde and yet despite this Terry actually increased his votes for the NEC.'

'I have signed the Appeal against Political Vetting and Victimisation which was launched after the Cowley sackings. The whole trade union movement must come behind this and any future attacks on socialists at work or in the labour movement.'

IRELAND UNFREE

Benn's conference speech on Ireland End the Loyalist veto!

THE LABOUR PARTY conference in Brighton this month took the first serious discussion of Ireland for many years. One of the motions debated was Composite 16, which was moved by Tony Benn on behalf of Kensington CLP and which was seconded by Brent East CLP.

The motion read:

'Conference recognises that the bipartisan policies of successive governments which have supported partition of Ireland have failed.

'Conference agrees that the State of Northern Ireland was specifically established to ensure a permanent Unionist majority.

'Conference further notes that previous Labour policy has been anomalous in that while it supports Irish unity it also allows Loyalism a veto over such unity.

'Conference therefore believes that the Unionist veto on progress towards a united Ireland is itself undemocratic, represents the major stumbling block on progress towards that aim and cannot be supported by the Labour Party.'

Conference defeated the resolution by 4,865,000 votes to 913,000.

I'D LIKE to move Composite 16 which is on a single issue. If conference carries it we shall end the Loyalist veto.

The question of Northern Ireland is the most important single issue for the United Kingdom. It is our view that this resolution Composite 16 would involve conference in the most important single decision this week: firstly, because it goes right to the heart of Britain's relation to Ireland; secondly, because it is a clear vote

for or against bipartisanship.

If we pass it, even in opposition, it will transform the prospects for the situation there.

In Northern Ireland a war is in progress; street warfare; violence on both sides; heavy casualties including British troops; innocent people hurt; interrogation of prisoners; imprisonment without jury.

But we would make a great mistake if we thought the consequence of what was happening in Northern Ireland would not spread to Britain as well. For the war in Northern Ireland threatens civil liberties in Britain.

There are more people now than some years ago who realise that partition takes away our freedom too. Conference, there is no military solution possible.

Majority

It is a hopeless, bitter, endless conflict until justice is given to the Irish people.

Our problem is that the Labour Party is confused in what it says. We came out for reunification and then said we would endorse the veto. As a party we have abdicated our responsibilities and, as a result, our clear responsibility to Ireland.

I want to deal with the argument about the veto because it is sometimes said there is some democratic defence of it. Britain partitioned Ireland. And not only that but the veto is absolutely undemocratic, for while it lasts it prevents the people in the Irish Republic from and say about their future and it excludes the British people too. And there is good grounds for believing that a very large number, if not a majority, of the British people would like to see the British problem in Northern Ireland ended.

The veto blocks off all progress for the future.

For the Ulster Loyalist leaders use the veto to sustain their power. Why should they bother to give equal rights for the minority community? Why should they bother to talk to the Republicans when they know that whatever they do they can use the veto to bring in British soldiers to sustain their position?

For the veto is not all it seems. The veto is why the British Army is there. The veto is why the H Blocks are there. The veto is sustained by the strip searches, the Emergency Powers, the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

Dialogue

And I might add that the veto operates in Britain too — the veto on media discussion year after year. And when the likes of Kissinger gets a Nobel prize for shuttling in between Cairo and Jerusalem, Ken Livingstone is abused for opening the most important dialogue.

The Tories will not bring unity to Ireland because they fear a united Ireland would become neutral. Neither Reagan or Thatcher will allow neutral Ireland to intervene between their two countries. That is the reality.

I believe that the



British trade unions or many of them will vote against this resolution today, because they do not want the border raised lest it upsets some of the members that they have in the North. That is not a good enough reason.

If conference rejects Composite 16, it will en-

dorse government policy and partition. If Composite 16 is carried, it will not solve the problem, but it will remove the major road block.

It will make possible closer contact between the labour movement in the Republic and the North. It will gradually move us

from sectarian to class politics.

And it will bring closer the day when there will be socialist remedies to the one problem that still unites the Republic and the North, their common property despite their enmities — the injustice done to the Irish people over many centuries.

Militant expulsion in Gillingham?

THE right wing in Gillingham Labour Party have decided to use the NEC ruling banning the 'provision of facilities for Militant' to attack and demoralise the left in the local party.

In August the Gillingham GC voted by a large majority to enforce the ban on Militant. Seeing this as an attack on his democratic rights, Bob Herley, the only Militant supporter present, continued to sell the paper at

the end of the meeting.

In response to this, the right-wing dominated GC executive decided to recommend to the September GC that Bob be expelled. However, at the September GC meeting,

the motion to expel Bob was referred back to the executive.

Some GC delegates in the centre of the party seemed caught between fear of disobeying the NEC and the consequence to the local party that the fight over an expulsion would bring.

Despite the reference back of the motion to expel, there still is a very real danger that this expulsion — the first in the Labour Party for merely selling Militant — will go ahead.

The left in Gillingham party is organising a major campaign against the expulsion of socialists.

Wythenshawe manoeuvres

AT LABOUR PARTY conference Wythenshawe Constituency Labour Party was promised a fair and democratically recalled Annual General Meeting on the 4 November. Russel Tuck for the National Executive Committee emphasised that all delegates would be invited and allowed to attend.

Certainly the full

resources of the Labour Party apparatus seemed to have moved into action. Union branches all over Manchester have received letters inviting them to affiliate to Wythenshawe CLP and send delegates.

By Jude Woodward
Manchester Central CLP

The Manchester National Union of Railwaymen No.1 Branch received such a letter which wasn't taken up as none of their members lives in Wythenshawe — a fact that isn't surprising as the branch covers Central Manchester and Wythenshawe is far to the South.

The funny thing is that at least five branches which are already affiliated to Wythenshawe Party haven't been contacted. The last AGM was disallowed on the basis that one branch of USDAW, the shop workers' union, wasn't given the constitutional 28 days notice. By that criteria the 4 November AGM is already out of rule!

David Hughes, the National Agent, who is running the suspended constituency, has not made any attempt to get hold of the full list of affiliates from the officer of the district

party who has it. And there are reports that the electricians' union, the EETPU, have intervened to change the delegation to the CLP elected by the local union branch.

It is not clear whether the new affiliates and delegations will be accepted or whether the new AGM will take place on the basis of the February affiliations.

Wythenshawe delegates are not wrong in fearing that the 4 November AGM may turn out to be less than fair. They are organising to make sure that all delegates are informed.

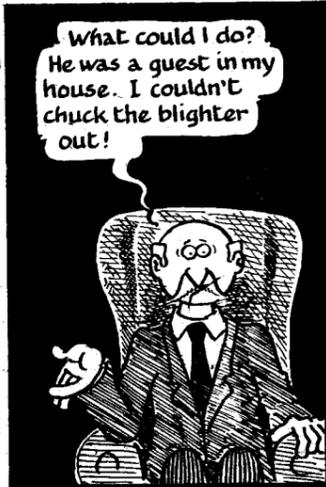
But Wythenshawe's best defence is the attention and courage of delegates gained at the Labour Party conference. That attention must not waver and CLPs and unions should ensure that they receive the full facts of the 4 November AGM.

The constituency is still planning to call a national conference whatever happens on the 4 November. Details will be decided on after the AGM.

● Reports and speakers can be obtained from Councillor Alf Home, Wythenshawe CLP Chair, 39 Mullacre Road, Benchill, Manchester 22.

a PIECE of the ACTION

by Cormac #29 10/83



Muhammad Idrish demo a great success

WELL OVER a thousand members of the National and Local Government Officers Association together with supporters of the Muhammad Idrish Defence Campaign marched in solidarity with the Bengali social worker last week in Birmingham.

Muhammad's trade union, NALGO, had called the national demonstration in support of his fight against deportation — the first time that a union has done this.

Many Labour Parties and union branches — including ASTMS, AUEW and NUPE — marched with contingents from all over the country. Clare Short MP, David Drain and Phil Holt — past presidents of NALGO — spoke on the platform with Muhammad.

A very interesting story came across. Muhammad is threatened with deportation because his marriage, which lasted for five years broke up. Over 250 deportations are carried out every month.

The Tories are determined that the working class must pay for the crisis of British capitalism. With members of the Asian communities especially vulnerable, they can be deported as well as forced

onto the dole queue.

They have long been harassed by the state and its police and administrative bodies — social security, health checks etc because of vicious racist legislation, some of it introduced by Labour governments. The illegal Immigration Information Unit keeps special tabs on black activists fearing that they might help to build a fightback.

The campaign still has a lot of work to do, so if you can help, affiliate your organisation or send a donation please contact: Barry Lovejoy, 30 Antrobus Road, Handsworth, Birmingham 21, (021-523 8923) or Graham Reid, 62 Bedminster Parade, Bristol 3, (0272 667933).

'Smethwick Three' fight frame up

IN JUNE this year, a group of black and Asian youth were talking on a side road in Smethwick, near Birmingham. A policeman approached and asked Amarjit to remove his car.

By Bob Smith

He asked 'Why? What have we done?' He was then asked to prove his ownership of the car.

When it came out that he was unemployed and the policeman saw his jewellery, Amarjit was subjected to vicious taunts and ridicule.

But he refused to be intimidated which enraged the policeman. He was then assaulted by the police and pushed into a panda car.

At Smethwick police station Amarjit was beaten by the same policeman and charged with threatening behaviour by his racist attacker.

Two friends who had witnessed the first police assault made a complaint at the police station the same evening. Surprise, surprise! Several days later they were charged with 'wilfully obstructing a police officer in the performance of his duty.'

The trial of the 'three' begins on 26 January next year at Oldbury Magistrates Court. It has been delayed by police illness — pity it isn't terminal.

A defence committee has been formed and needs support from the labour movement as well as the local community.

● Messages of support and donations to Smethwick Three, 101 Villa Road, Handsworth, Birmingham 19.



'One false move, lad, and you're nicked' — a vision of 1984 if the Police Bill becomes law?

Appeal turned down

LAST WEEK Muhammad was summoned to the High Court in London for his appeal for a judicial hearing.

Muhammad's claims that the Home Office Adjudicator's evidence was incredibly biased and a distortion of fact — his marriage was not a fraud — were ignored. He was recommended for deportation.

He has four weeks to appeal for another High Court hearing. After this his only legal recourse is to the Law Lords.

The Defence Campaign is convening an emergency meeting at the Shaheed Udam Singh Centre, 346 Soho Road, Handsworth, Birmingham 21 on Wednesday 19 October at 7.30pm.

All supporters and delegates are strongly urged to attend. We must build the strongest labour movement and community protests possible to block the deportation.

● Telephone Barry 021-523 8923 or Ahsan 021-551 1846 for further details, tasks and information on how you can help.



'YOU CAN cross Cecil Parkinson off the Queer list, sir.' When Jak, the cartoonist for the London Evening Standard came up with these fateful words he didn't expect a reaction.

But angry lesbians and gay men from the Labour

Campaign for Gay Rights and from Outrage! magazine occupied the newsroom on 10 October for ten minutes in protest.

This cartoon is only the latest in a long line of anti-gay, anti-Irish and anti-Labour filth to pour out from the Standard which has resulted in the GLC banning advertising with the paper.

In attacking this cartoon LCGR shows up the hypocrisy of 'Victorian values' for what they are.

The ruling class and their media know that the gay community is ill-equipped to defend itself and so constantly attacks homosexuals to divert attention from its own moral degeneration.

PAUL CANNING (Gay Young Socialists)

Kill the Police Bill

THE NATIONAL Campaign Against the Police Bill received a boost when on the last day of the Labour Party conference a motion was passed unanimously condemning the government's decision to reintroduce the Police and Criminal Evidence Bill.

The motion also committed the Labour Party to give its full support to a national campaign against the Bill, urged the Parliamentary Labour Party to oppose the Bill vigorously, and committed the next Labour government to immediately repeal it.

The latest rumours are that the Police Bill will be reintroduced in mid-November. The details of the new Bill are not known, but it is fairly certain that it will not differ in any great respect from the version which fell as a result of the calling of the general election.

By Chris Guthrie

That Bill contained new police powers to:

● Stop and search 'on reasonable suspicion' that you are carrying stolen goods, offensive weapons (eg a penknife or a bunch of keys) or equipment for

stealing.

● Set up road blocks and carry out random checks for up to seven days.

● Arrest you for any offence, however trivial (such as parking on yellow lines or littering) on certain grounds. For example, if the police believe you have given a false name or address.

● Detain you for up to four days without charging you if you're suspected of a 'serious arrestable offence'. You may have no right to see a solicitor for 36 hours or longer.

● Permit a police officer to carry out an intimate body search against your

will while you're in police custody.

● Obtain a warrant to search your house or workplace, even if you're not suspected of any offence.

As the Bill has already been discussed in parliament it is likely to have a speedy passage this time, taking perhaps six to ten weeks. That means we have only two or three months to kill this Bill.

It is because of this urgency that the National Campaign Against the Police Bill (NCAPB), formed at a conference in May, was resuscitated in August.

Fringe

The NCAPB organised a successful fringe meeting at the Party conference in Brighton which was addressed by Jo Richardson, Tony Banks, Alf Dubs and Paul Boateng. It is printing literature explaining the content of the Police

Bill and is encouraging the formation of local campaigns up and down the country.

A national conference is planned in London for Saturday 19 November and a demonstration from Brixton to Whitehall is planned.

The Labour Party conference decision will help in taking the campaign into the labour movement. But it should not be grounds for complacency. The debate on the Bill was squeezed onto a short amount of time on the last day, and many trade union delegates chose the debate as a time to have a break.

In addition, although the motion committed the Labour Party to supporting a campaign, the Labour Party is notorious for not campaigning on such issues. It is up to activists in the labour movement to take the issues into their unions and the local Labour Parties.

Cecil's victorian values

ONE THING can be said for the Tory Party. It really does believe in Victorian values.

What after all was the 'crime' for which Cecil Parkinson had to resign? It wasn't that he made love with Sara Keays or the other details of their relationship. No-one in the Tory leadership — not even the farcical John Selwyn Gummer — suggested he should resign for that. The crime was simply that it all became known publicly. Those really were the values of Victorian England.

We can't help being reminded of a piece Wilhelm Reich wrote entitled *What is, sexual chaos?*

● It's contracting a sexual liaison for life without any previous knowledge of the partner.

● It's 'sleeping' with a



Parkinson — whose values?

working girl because 'she's not worth more' while at the same time not asking for 'something like that' from a 'respectable girl'.

● It's the lewdness of a life of sordid prostitution, or the excitement caused by abstinence, over the 'wedding night'.

● It's making virile powers culminate in deflowering.

● It's mentally pawing



the image of a half naked woman up and down at fourteen and then, at twenty, entering the lists of the nationalists in favour of the 'purity and honour of women'.

● It's punishing the young for the offence of self-satisfaction and making the adolescents think that ejaculation causes them to lose spinal marrow.

● It's tolerating the pornography industry.

● It's exciting adolescents with erotic films: removing the

satisfaction, but refusing then natural love and satisfaction.

Reich was writing about Germany in the 1930's. But things really haven't changed much for the Conservative Party and *The Sun* have they?

Compiled by HILARY DRIVER. Send contributions to 'Male Order' Socialist Action, 328 Upper Stret, London N1 2XP to arrive not later than Thursday a week prior to publication.

WHY IMPERIALISM NEEDS THE BOMB

SINCE the new rise of CND a lively debate has taken place on the question: what is the origin of the new cold war? Against those who have argued that the arms race is about 'the conflict between the two super-powers', supporters of *Socialist Action* have argued that the breakdown of detente was fundamentally connected to a world-wide offensive by international imperialism, and in the first place by US imperialism.

In putting forward this argument, we have never believed the myths of the Stalinists and semi-Stalinists who think that everything in the Soviet Union is wonderful, or that the military defence policy of the Soviet Union can be supported by socialists.

But at the end of 1983, with the United States committing huge numbers of its troops abroad against the revolutions in Central America, in Lebanon, and in massive exercises in the Middle East, we believe that our argument has been borne out in practice.

It is the United States which is engaged in the escalation of the missile race — with cruise, Pershing, MX and the rest. It is the United States which is extending its field of military operations on a huge international scale in the attempt to break popular movements of rebellion the world over.

Against those who say that the US nuclear policy is 'insane', we have always argued that it has a deadly logic from the point of view of world capitalism.

In order to trace the connection between the arms race and imperialism, we have to look at two things. First, why did detente break down? Second, why in order to carry out its world wide military operations does the United States need nuclear superiority? How are nuclear weapons connected with the struggle in Central America or the Middle East?

By Paul Lawson

Without doubt, the breakdown of detente is connected to a huge political shift to the right inside the United States, which culminated in the election of Ronald Reagan as president in 1980, and was itself the product of deep social processes, particularly the onset of economic crisis, inside the United States itself.

Throughout the 1970s there was in the United States a political offensive by the radical right wing, which involved people influential in the present US government like Richard Perle, Jeane Kirkpatrick and Paul Nitze, as well as the various forces of the 'moral majority'. Their path to power was eased by the aftermath of the Vietnam war internationally.

A large section of US political opinion became convinced that a new offensive was taking place against American interests in the third world. The use of Cuban troops in Angola in 1976, the overthrow of the Ethiopian dictatorship, the fall of the Shah in Iran and the victorious revolution in Nicaragua, all amounted to a new challenge to US superiority and authority world wide.

The most direct response to the

new threat of the colonial revolution has been the creation of the Rapid Deployment Force, aimed at intervening with hundreds of thousands of troops within weeks anywhere in the world.

It has also involved a huge increase in US spending on conventional armaments. But this escalation has of necessity involved a stepping up of the US's attempts to establish overall nuclear superiority.

The reasons for this necessity was summed up neatly by Eugene Rostow, head of the US Arms Control Agency when he said: 'American nuclear superiority should permit us to use military force in defence of our interests with comparative freedom should it become necessary.'

In fact, in many instances where the United States has come close to using nuclear weapons have been in the colonial world — in Korea, Cuba, Vietnam — rather than directly against the Soviet Union itself.

Schematically we can say that US nuclear superiority serves four inter-related purposes:

1. It maintains a form of economic seige warfare against the Soviet Union and its allies. While the arms race can be good for business in the United States, in a planned economy like the Soviet Union it represents a permanent drain on resources.

The Soviet Union's economy is far weaker and less technologically developed than that of the United States. President Reagan has already openly boasted to the Soviet Union 'we will bust you'.

2. It forestalls the possibility of the use of Soviet conventional forces in Europe. The first use of nuclear weapons has been a key pillar of NATO strategy since the formation of the alliance in 1949. Since Soviet conventional forces have generally been much stronger in Europe than those of NATO, the US has always threatened the use of nuclear weapons against any use of Soviet conventional forces.

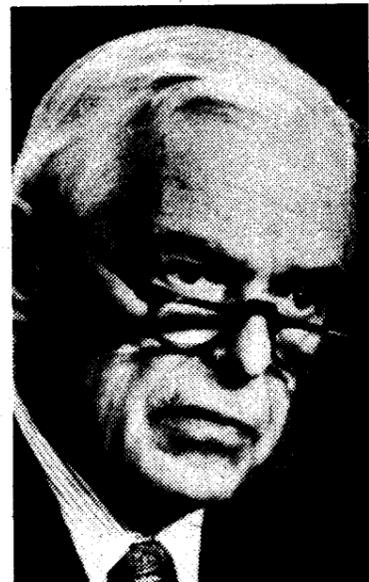
3. It threatens annihilation against any Soviet attempt to improve strategic position. Whereas the Soviet Union is surrounded by thousands of miles of US military encirclement from Norway to Japan via Turkey — the US has always refused to accept Soviet 'forward basing'.

The classic case is the Cuban missile crisis, where the United States brought the world to the brink of nuclear catastrophe over the Soviet decision to place intermediate nuclear missiles in Cuba. The prevention of Soviet 'forward basing' is dependent on overwhelming nuclear superiority.

4. US nuclear superiority enables it to use its conventional forces much more freely. Since the second world war the US has used its conventional forces against the colonial revolution on many occasions.

At each stage it is necessary to defend such operations against any potential threat — including the Soviet Union which itself possesses nuclear weapons. US imperialism is of necessity nuclear imperialism.

The fight against nuclear war must also be a fight against its causes — imperialist world exploitation. It must also be an alliance against the alliances of imperialism, such as NATO, which rely on nuclear weapons.



US negotiator Nitze

WHEN CRUISE missiles arrive in Europe in the coming weeks there will be an immediate Soviet response. One aspect may well be a walk out of the INF (Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces) discussions in Geneva. If that happens then Reagan and his allies will express deep regret. The event will be presented as a serious setback for the 'mutually beneficial arms control agreement' these talks are supposedly intended to secure.

But the outcome of previous talks, presents a different picture. Whilst several treaties have been negotiated since the late 50s, none of these have actually stemmed the arms race, let alone produced mutually agreed reductions.

Important measures of 'management' were agreed early '70s but things have got decisively worse. Three bilateral treaties signed in 1974 (The Threshold Test Ban Treaty, 1976 (The Peaceful Nuclear Expulsions Treaty) and 1979 (The SALT II Treaty) remain unratified by the US Senate. The last of these took seven years to negotiate.

The reason for this is straightforward. In the mid '70s the economic and political fortunes of US imperialism took a turn for the worse. The further collapse of colonial power in Africa and the final victory in Vietnam indicated a shift in the global balance of forces against US

What talk about in Geneva

interests. This was borne out by a rise in anti-imperialist struggles in the 'third' world. The response of the US was to reassert its military might.

By Mick Archer

Part of this was to strengthen US nuclear superiority through the deployment of new 'counterforce' nuclear missiles in Europe — Cruise and Pershing II — and the development of a new series of ICBMs — the MX missile system.

The INF talks and their counterpart START (Strategic Arms Reduction Talks) were to provide the diplomatic smokescreen for this new escalation. The approach was dubbed 'two track' by Reagan and his NATO allies. They would announce the decision to build these new missiles, whilst stating that neither systems would be deployed if concessions could be extracted from the Soviet Union in bilateral negotiations.

President Reagan's negotiating team reflects this approach. Edward Rowny, his chief delegate in the START talks helped shape NATO's 'flexible response' policy and opposed the US adopting a 'no first use position'. He resigned from the negotiating team in the SALT II talks because he felt they gave too much to the Soviets.

His counterpart in the INF talks, Paul Nitze, was also a critic of





they're
writing
out
Geneva



Soviet negotiator Kvitinsky

SALT II who argued that its proposals conferred 'guaranteed superiority' to the Soviets. Together they take their lead from Reagan's man in the Pentagon, the assistant secretary of defence Richard Perle, a keen advocate of the Reagan arms build up, who also opposed the SALT treaties.

The American purpose in Geneva is to produce a treaty which embodies US nuclear superiority. Exploiting its technological lead and stronger economic base it is proposing either a massive reduction in existing Soviet missiles or unilateral measures by the US which it will take the Soviets years to match and at great cost to other areas of its economy.

In the INF talks, which started in November 1981, this takes the form of counterposing existing Soviet SS20s to the planned deployment of Cruise and Pershing II. Interim measures offer to limit deployment to the extent that the USSR agrees to dismantle. Moreover, in the context of insisting on supposed parity in the European 'theatre' Reagan and his allies categorically refuse to include the French and British 'independent' forces in any discussions.

In two years of negotiations the Soviets have never even conceded the principle of equating the two systems. Consequently when Cruise is deployed the INF talks as presently constituted are doomed to collapse.

In the START negotiations, begun in July 1982, the approach is

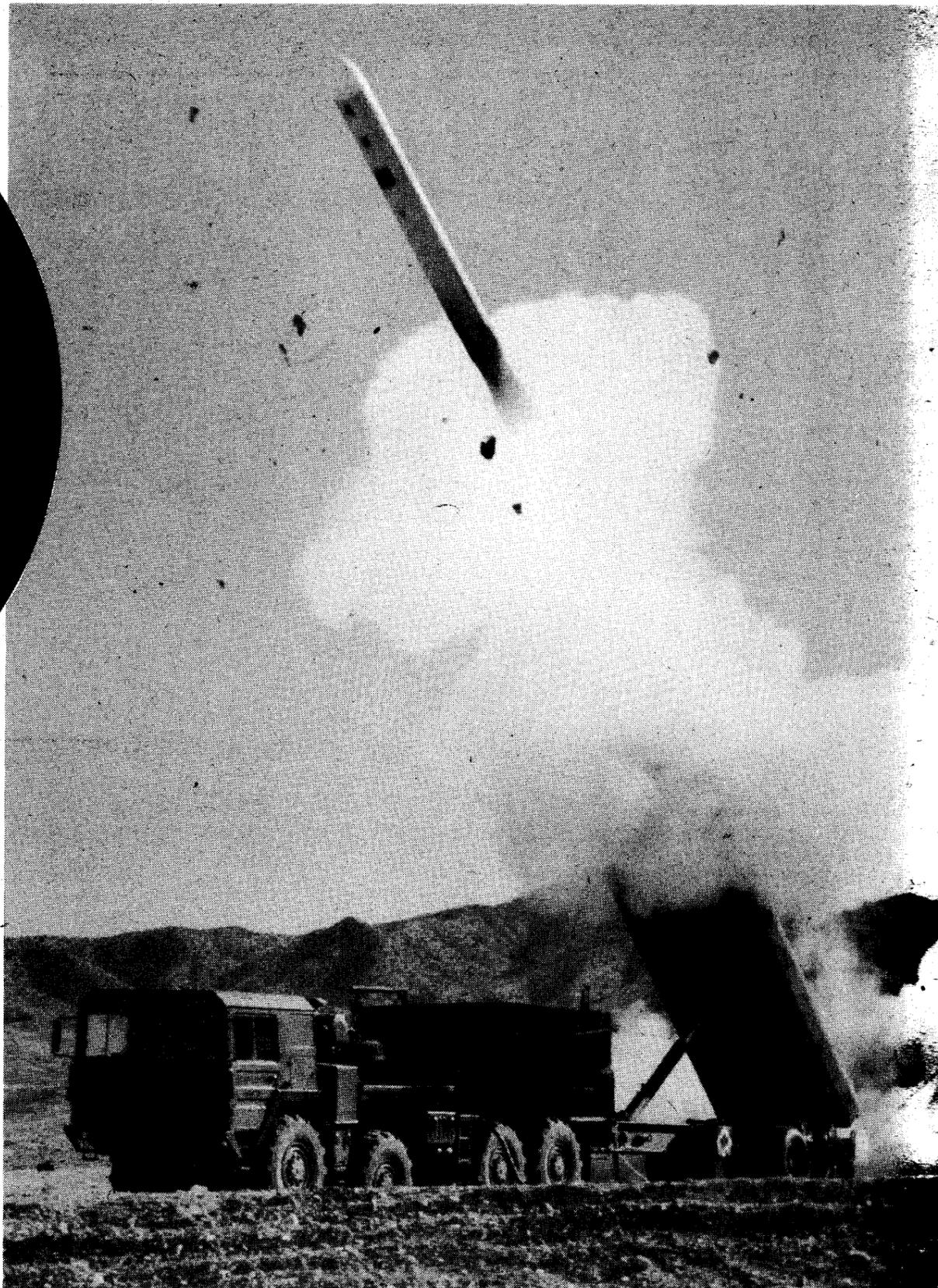
similar. The American proposals concentrate on agreeing ceilings on land-based ballistic forces which (surprise! surprise!) covers about 70% of the USSR's strategic missile force. It only effects about 25% of the US's, however, since the majority of their missiles are air breathing (bombers or air launched cruise missiles) or sea based.

Charades

What then will the fate of the Geneva talks be? One possibility is that the INF and START talks will be merged. This will prevent the public collapse of the INF negotiations and might provide some scope for permitted the limited involvement of Reagan's allies. All good stuff in allaying European fears and an endless source for initiatives aimed at derailing the European disarmament movement. Witness the ease with which last years committed unilateralists at Labour Party conference were able to dodge the issue of Polaris by suggesting that it should be put on the table at Geneva.

Meanwhile American imperialism will blow hot and cold at the same time. Fresh proposals displaying 'flexibility' will be made at Geneva while events in Central America or the downing of flight 007 will be used to justify nuclear rearmament.

Bilateral negotiations like those in Geneva merely mask the reality of imperialism's war drive. That is why socialists should lend no authority to such charades.



Lessons of history

'Nuclear Disarmament and the Labour Party' by Tony Southall (published by Scottish Labour CND)

IF MARX said that history repeats itself the first time as tragedy, the second time as farce, then in the 20th century it's often repeated itself the first time as tragedy, and the second time as even bigger tragedy. Tony Southall has done an excellent job in this little pamphlet in explaining how unilateralism was defeated in the Labour Party in the early 1960s, how the unilateralist edge of Labour's policies was blunted at the 1983 general election.

By implication he shows exactly how the Kinnock leadership of the Party could begin to ditch unilateral disarmament, despite its overwhelming re-endorsement at the last Labour conference.

Tony starts out by explaining the role of Labour in government — and a sorry story it is too. Labour's 1945-51 foreign secretary, Ernest Bevin supported the United States all the way in stoking up the cold war. Britain supported the US during the Korean war, to the extent of sending troops, and happily allowed Britain to become the forward base for the 'United States' nuclear arsenal.

In 1960 the Labour Party con-

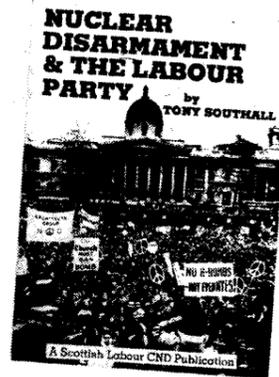
ference voted for unilateral nuclear disarmament. Immediately the right wing started a campaign against it — the Campaign for Democratic Socialism (secretary Bill Rodgers). Unilateral disarmament was defeated at the 1961 Labour Conference on the basis of a compromise worked out by Harold Wilson and Walter Padley of USDAW.

Reviewed by Phil Hearse

The parallels with some of the proposals being put forward today in the Labour Party are uncanny. The compromise amounted to 1) a 'no first use' declaration by NATO 2) support for a 'Central European nuclear free zone' (the 'Rapacki plan') and 3) rejection of an independent British deterrent.

Of course this compromise left two things open — the use of Britain by US nuclear bases and the existence of a 'non-independent' British-American deterrent. On the basis of this compromise, which gutted unilateralism of its real content, the Labour government of Harold Wilson elected in 1964 did precisely nothing about disarmament, and shed not one item of Britain's nuclear arsenal.

Tony's discussion of what happened to Labour's programme at the last election, and how unilateralism was fudged by Foot and Healey is par-



ticularly useful, as are his remarks on a campaigning strategy which can unite CND and Labour activists against cruise and Trident — and for consistent unilateral nuclear disarmament.

The pamphlet is a must for all CND activists interested in fighting alongside the labour movement and for the whole of Labour's unilateralist left wing.

Moreover, anyone worried about the course of the CND leadership, their relegation of unilateralist slogans to third place, should read this pamphlet. To fight the multilateralists it is necessary to know who your real friends are!

Copies of the Pamphlet can be obtained by writing to Scottish Labour CND, 420 Sauciehall St., Glasgow G2, enclosing 50p plus 16p postage and packing.

We don't want to freeze this winter

WITH THE Tory general election victory and the imminent arrival of cruise missiles, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament faces major decisions on future strategy. The main answer of the CND leadership has been to prioritise the demand for a nuclear 'Freeze'.

VALERIE COULTAS argues that the prioritisation of this demand opens the door to multilateralism and accepts a strategy of pressuring the negotiators in Geneva. Instead we should defend the basic aims of CND — unilateral nuclear disarmament by Britain and a complete rejection of all nuclear bombs, bases and alliances — irrespective of what Geneva negotiators achieve.

Bruce Kent and Joan Ruddock, respectively the president and chairperson of CND, have got a big job on their hands. They have to convince hundreds of thousands of CND supporters that the campaign's support is not going to be frittered away, as it was in the early 1960s.

The pages of *Sanity* and *Marxism Today* give a thorough picture of their response to this problem and the CND leadership's aim to 'open a new chapter in the CND story', as Joan Ruddock puts it.

According to Bruce Kent, the media during the general election completely backed the Tory accusation against CND that it was in favour of 'one sided disarmament'. He analyses that 'people have been made more fearful of possible aggression and they want to be defended'.

The Tories' propaganda about 'peace through strength' is capturing the hearts and minds of the public, he says. 'We in CND are seen as the all-

or-nothing people. This must change. Without the slightest loss of vision or principle we have surely to highlight disarmament measures which are immediately possible ...'

Joan Ruddock writes in a similar vein in the October issue of *Sanity*. Rejecting accusations of 'fudging' she believes that CND National Council is working 'within the current consensus of the movement by supporting the nuclear Freeze and including it as one of the demands of the 22 October demonstration.'

Joan says that she supports the 'freeze' demand in all three of its meanings:

- in its unilateral, unconditional British variety which is synonymous with no cruise, no Trident and no nuclear-armed Tornado (she does not mention whether this includes renouncing Polaris);
- in the form being fought for by the American peace movement where it is a call for a bilateral freeze between the 'super-powers' to prevent the deployment of cruise and Pershing;
- in the UN call for a freeze on nuclear weapons by all nuclear states.

'In my view support for such initiatives, as first steps, and as a contribution to multilateral nuclear disarmament, in no way weakens CND's position. CND has always accepted that nuclear disarmament between the super-powers could only come by agreement between them'. (emphasis in original).

Ian Davidson wondering 'Will Protest Survive?' in the September issue of *Marxism Today* concurs with this analysis. He chastises not only the Labour left but also the Labour right for wanting to fight the election on the issue of 'a completely nuclear free Britain (within five years)'.

He is worried about CND coming across as a Labour Party front and hence argues against a too close identification with the labour movement generally.

Neil Stewart, president of the National Union of Students, is the most 'realistic' and 'sophisticated' of them all. 'If CND is seen to give the Freeze a high profile then that will draw in everyone along the political spectrum except the Conservatives. And there are signs that some Conservatives would support it', he says in October's *Sanity*.

All these contributions promising a new chapter in fact offer nothing new at all. They repeat the error that was made by CND's leadership 20 years ago.

In 1960 the Scarborough



Photo: GM COOKSON

conference of the Labour Party voted by a narrow majority for the unilateralist resolution proposed by Frank Cousins on behalf of the Transport and General Workers Union. The Labour right wing immediately set up the 'Campaign for Democratic Socialism' to overturn this decision.

CND's base in the constituency parties was much weaker than it is today. Two thirds had voted against unilateralism. Only five MP's were prepared to carry out conference policy and vote against the Tories' defence estimates in 1961. They immediately had the Labour whip withdrawn.

Meanwhile Richard Crossman MP and Walter Padley of the shopworkers union USDAW cobbled together a fudge. They called for a 'Central European nuclear free zone', for a 'no-first-use declaration by NATO' and the 'rejection of the British independent deterrent. Leaders of CND backed the new line as a 'step along the road'.

real commitment to halt the arms race is progressive. But we are not in America. The job of CND is to place demands on the British government. Neither is it true that we have to accept a 'new consensus' because of Labour's defeat in the general election. None of the three major parties made the question of nuclear disarmament the key issue in the election and the Labour leadership tried to play down the issue of unilateralism as much as possible.

If Labour had fought an offensive campaign against the Tories, not only in the election but also against the Falklands war, then the credibility of such a policy would have been put to a real test. As it was the policy of the Labour Party, attacked publicly by Healey and Callaghan, was never put to a real test.

No, the sad reality is that the CND leaders are bowing before the Tory government's parliamentary majority in the same way as the TUC are bowing before Tebbit. They are devoting themselves to a 'realistic'

The sad reality is that the CND leaders are bowing before the Tories

Harold Wilson began to get the backing of the left as their candidate for the leadership of the party rather than the unilateralist Tony Greenwood. More and more unions began to drop the unilateralist position. It became clear that unilateralism would lose at the 1961 conference.

The unions swung behind Gaitskell. CND activists began to shun the Labour Party. Then the CND leadership produced its own statement entitled *Steps towards Peace* which made concessions to the multilateralists. So CND's first defeat was carried through by concessions on programme both within the Labour Party and by the CND leaders themselves.

There are major differences militating against such a repetition today. The movement is much larger. Unilateralism is supported much more generally in the trade unions. The movement has a wider international scope. Nevertheless the sense of *deja vu* is overpowering.

Why are the CND leaders arguing for the fudged slogan of the Freeze given the strong support for unilateralism? If the Freeze really means 'no cruise, no Trident' — then why not focus on these precise demands as CND, Scottish CND and the Greenham women have done so successfully in the past three years?

What is the obstacle to using these demands as a bridge to CND's ultimate goal — the scrapping of all nuclear weapons, bases and alliances by Britain unilaterally?

The dangerous irrelevance of the Freeze demand in Britain does not mean that we cannot support the American peace movement. In the USA the call to get Reagan to make a

strategy of building up broad anti-Tory alliance with those who have no interest in getting rid of all nuclear weapons like David Owen, David Steel and the right wing of the Labour Party.

All these figures support the demand for a Freeze as a cover for their fundamental support for the deployment of cruise and Pershing and the strengthening of the NATO alliance. And if the missiles arrive the Freeze could become a positively reactionary demand.

It's also why the CND leadership have found it necessary to attack those people like Youth CND and Labour CND who are the staunchest supporters of present CND policy of unilateralism.

The alternative exists. The trade union movement has declared itself against the cruise missiles. The West German trade union movement has just called a 'warning strike' of 1.5 million of its members. CND should devote its efforts to gaining similar forms of mass action from its real allies who so far have not been mobilised in the battle against the missiles.

No-one pretends that this is an easy job, but it is the *only* way to stop the missiles arriving. Neither will the issue go away. The European elections next May are the opportunity for a massive Western European-wide movement to demand that missiles in place be removed and those coming be stopped.

The events around 22-23 October will see millions of people marching against the missiles. Now is the time for CND to renew the campaign for its fundamental aims — not to bury them in a fruitless search for treacherous allies.

Build Oct. 22 Youth Contingent

YOUTH CND groups will be delighted to hear that there's to be a national contingent for youth and students on 22 October.

For years young people have formed the bulk of marchers on all the big disarmament demos, have been the most militant fighters for unilateralism, and have shown the way forward in organising action.

By agreeing to the contingent, the CND leadership has recognised the role of youth — enabling them to organise and make an impact on the march. YCND has always stood for No cruise, No Trident, Britain Out of NATO and Jobs Not Bombs — this should be stated loud and clear by the contingent.

For it to be a success, all YCND groups, LPYS branches and students unions must join it with banners. It's assembling in Block D, March 1.

However, this step forward by CND doesn't alter the fact that the leadership have deprived youth of the right to organise nationally and make their own decisions within the movement. London Region CND have passed an emergency resolution opposing these moves. And the initiators, Peckham CND, have expressed alarm at the implications of the decision and the way it was made.

To be discussed at December's annual conference similar emergency resolutions must be passed by 25 branches. To date only a handful have. With a strong profile for YCND on 22 October other groups will be encouraged to support the resolution, putting youth on the agenda where it should have been in the first place.

Emergency Resolution: 'Youth CND has the right to specialist section status, to hold their own national conference and to elect their own national committee. This conference deplores the decision of CND Executive Committee on 30 July 1983 to undermine the structure of Youth CND.'

'The change of status from being recognised as a specialist section of CND to being a sub-committee of National Council effectively means taking away the right of youth CND to have its own national structure.'

Conference, therefore instructs National Council to recognise YCND as a specialist section with its own National Committee.'

Women against cruise day of action

ON THE DAY that the Greenham women are taking President Reagan to court in the USA, peace camps are being set up at each of the 102 US bases in Britain.

Reagan is charged with maintaining the right to cruise missile war by the US Congress.

November a peace camp will be set up for the day at every US base in the country.

In addition to the day of action, Greenham women will be marching in a women's contingent directly behind CND banners on the longer of the two routes of the national demonstration at the Boathouse by the Serpentine in Hyde Park to discuss organising for the day of action.

● An additional £20,000 is needed towards US Court costs.

Please make donations payable to: Greenham Women Against Cruise, 344 South Lambeth Rd, London SW8 0JZ 01-720 1374.

Day of Action

- Contact your regional office for details:
- Manchester 061 445 0998
 - Scotland 041 423 1485
 - 041 632 0493
 - 0273 556 744
 - South East 0480 300 907
 - E Anglia 0232 553 392
 - N Ireland 0222 45381
 - Wales 06267 79232
 - South West 0524 751361
 - Lancaster 01 639 8561
 - London 0742 25079
 - Sheffield 0533 702585
 - Leicester 0532 740197

France

Socialist government opens door to racists

A FASCIST MAYOR elected in a small town west of Paris. Black people from Britain turned back at the ports.

Truly the Mauroy-Mitterrand government is an advertisement for socialism to the workers of Europe! But the French Socialist Party has not always advocated the deportation of a thousand 'illegal immigrants' as Prime Minister Mauroy does today.

In Mitterrand's 110 propositions, his unofficial personal manifesto, the President called for an end to discrimination and equal rights for immigrants — including the right to vote in local elections after five years residence. It is tragic that

if this small reform had been granted the fascists would have been overwhelmingly defeated in the Dreux by-election.

Although one French national in five has at least one foreign grand parent, racism has been as endemic there as it is in

Britain. The anti-semitism of the royalists and fascists of the thirties was put into practice by mass collaboration with the Nazi occupation during World War Two.

By Chris Bertram

During Algeria's war of liberation in the fifties dozens of Algerians were thrown into the Seine, others were found hanging in the woods around Paris.

Today the right wing 'anti-fascists' of yesterday, the Gaullist party, find themselves in alliance

with the fascist 'Front National' showing that for the ruling class, anti-fascism is a matter of tactics rather than principle.

It is not surprising that a government of the left should be attacked by the ruling class. Nor is it surprising that racism is one of the weapons used. But the Mauroy government does not fight that racism, it tries to accommodate it and thus makes it respectable.

Having declared itself for the expulsion of so many immigrant workers

the government then tries to fight facism in Dreux. But a lightning visit by ministerial whizz-kid Michel Rocard and the symbolic release of 1983 pigeons was not sufficient to convince the electorate of the error of its ways. Heartened by the refusal of a minority of right wing politicians to back the fascists the Socialist Party publicised their call for ... an abstention!

Racism and facism can't be fought by a government that seeks a 'national concensus' with the racists. The fascist victory was not only due to working class voters turning to the Front National.

Many workers stayed at home rather than vote for the Socialist and Communist parties whose austerity programmes do not defend their interests.

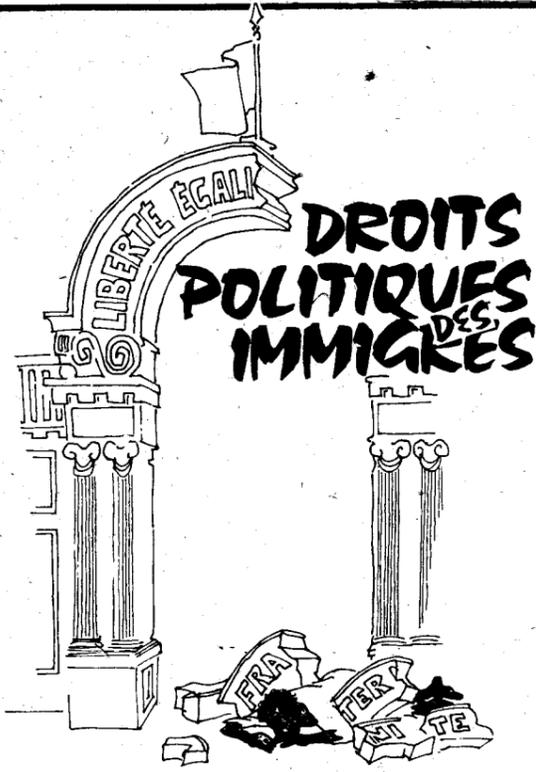
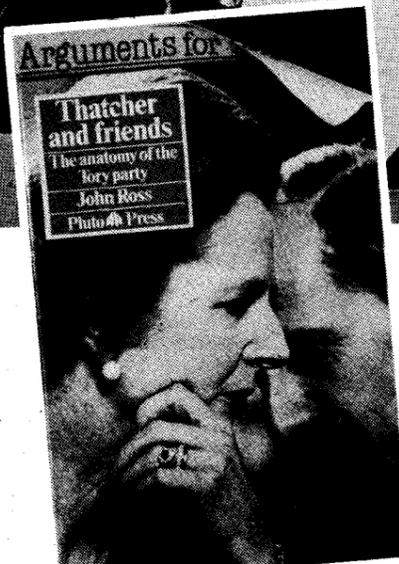


Photo: JOHN HARRIS



Anatomy of the Tory Party

THIS IS BY FAR the best book that has been published about electoral politics for a very long time, and for socialists who are genuinely trying to understand the political situation and how it is likely to develop, it offers an analysis of the trends in recent years in terms of the long term decline of the Conservative Party.

The statistical work that is reproduced here throws a very different light on what has happened over the last generation than the one which is peddled every day by the establishment psephologists who have degenerated in their role until they are little more than PR campaigners for the Alliance and for proportional representation.

Socialists will also find it very useful to have all the facts about the composition of the Tory Party by wealth, education and occupation, and their links with finance, business and land.

The book ends with a very clear account of the way in which the establishment sees the role of the Liberals and the Social Democratic Party as the reserve Tory Party, able and willing to take over

when the crisis comes and run the country for a while, until a re-furbished Tory party can recover sufficiently to resume its natural role as Britain's party of government.

This book should be carefully studied by all those who are now being subjected to the press barrage designed to persuade us that Labour is suffering a fatal decline, and can only recover if it abandons its whole position and tries to

re-appear as part of a bigger SDP and under its direction.

For the truth is that such an SDP is really little more than the political expression of the Tory wets, and the Liberal party will be destroyed by its association with it.

Alliance, and opening up a real home for those socialists who have been isolated from the mainstream of British politics by staying outside the Labour Party.

It is therefore not enough to abandon the witch hunt, important

The present explanations for Labour's defeat in terms of a change in the class structure are little more than an excuse for dropping the policies which we put before the electorate in June, when it is clear that our programme was in fact the ab-

Reviewed by Tony Benn

Indeed, the challenge we face is much more fundamental than that — for the object is to use the Alliance to destroy Labour in the guise of being anti-Tory, thus recreating the old Victorian competition between two capitalist parties so that the trade unions and socialism can be marginalised forever. Labour, for its part should also be planning a realignment of British politics but on a very different basis.

For as the right reorganises itself, so must the left, by drawing on the radicals who become disillusioned with the

though that is.

We have got to extend our links beyond the trade unions, the constituencies and the socialist societies who attended the 1918 conference and drew up our socialist constitution, to permit our association to extend to all those who represent the wide and varied interests of working people.

If the new Register was to be reconstituted in that way, with its disciplinary role abandoned, we could lay the foundations for a progressive and socialist alliance that would be politically unbeatable.

solute minimum that would have been necessary if we were to have made any progress.

John Ross has written a valuable book, in the excellent 'Arguments for Socialism' series which Pluto are publishing, and anyone who reads it will be able to draw some encouragement for the future.

Thatcher and Friends — The anatomy of the Tory Party by John Ross (Pluto Press, £2.50)

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DIARY

These listings are free for all major labour movement and campaign activities. Semi-display advertisements cost 5p per word and must be paid in advance. Send to: Diary, Socialist Action, 328 Upper Street, London N1 2XP to arrive not later than Thursday, one week prior to publication).

- **CND National Demonstration** London, 22 Oct, 11am, Victoria Embankment. For details of local transport phone CND national office 01-263-0977.
- **Week of Action on Namibia** Thur 27 Oct-Wed 2 Nov. Includes march and rally in London on 29 Oct: assemble 1.30pm Bressenden Gdns (opp Victoria Stn); benefit dance 29 Oct Kingston Town Hall with The Republic & Supercombo. Details of these & other events from NSC, PO Box 16, London NW5.
- **TUC Women's Action Day** 'A woman's place is in the union', 29 Oct. For details of events contact your union, TUC region or write

TUC, Congress Hse, Gt Russell St, London WC1, 01-636 4030.

- **Anti-Privatisation Newsletter** produced by Public Service Action. Fourth issue out now includes material on council house sales, failures by private contractors, and on privatisation of the NHS, British Rail, British Gas etc. 30p each from SCAT Publications, 27 Clerkenwell Close, London EC1, 01-253 3627.
- **Midland anti-racist conference**, Sat 29 Oct, 11-4pm, Digbeth Civic Hall, Birmingham. Organised by Birmingham Campaign Against Racism and Fascism, c/o Trades Council, 191 Corporation St. Speakers include Prem Singh, Avtar Johal, Muhammad Idrish and Clare Short MP.

The LEWIS DAVIES Memorial Lecture given by Bob Cryer (former Labour MP for Keighley) on 'US Foreign Policy and the Labour Party' Thur 27 Oct, 7.30pm, Clarendon Building, Teeside Poly Chair: Frank Cook MP

● **Labour Movement Conference on Ireland** — Peace through Democracy. Sat 26 Nov. Speakers include Tony Benn, Ken

Livingstone, and Clive Soley.

- **Hands off Central America** South London labour movement Rally 28 Oct, Lambeth Town Hall. Speakers include: Tony Benn, Alan Sapper, Salvador Moncada (FDR/FMLN) and reps from Nicaragua and Grenada. Further details/leaflets from Vauxhall CLP, 01-582 2955.
- **Southwark CND week of action**, 15-22 Oct. Many events (see above) including free films at the Ace cinema, Peckham High St from 6.30pm, Fri 21 Oct: Feeder march for national demo with float & steel band starts 9.30am on Camberwell Green on 22 Oct.
- **Marx and Feminism**. A talk by Selma James to commemorate the centenary of Marx's death. Mon 24 Oct, 7.30pm, North London Poly, Room 08, Ladbroke Hse, Highbury Grove N5. Wheelchair accessible. Further details: 01-837 7509.
- **Central America: Nobody's Backyard**. Programme of meetings organised by North London Central America Group, Tuesdays at 7.30pm, Hampden Community Centre, 150 Ossulston St, NW1. £5 for full course or £1 per meeting (£2/50p unwaged). 25 Oct 'Seeds of Revolution' film on Honduras; 1 Nov film 'Nicaragua — a

Dangerous Example?': 8 Nov Central America and the peace movement: 15 Nov Liberation Theology: Option for the poor: 22 Nov 'The First Casualty' & 'Ballots & Bullets': 29 Nov Viva Centro America! Further info Duncan Green 01-359 3976.

- **London Peace Day** organised by the GLC, Sat 22 Oct. In Jubilee Gdns starting 11am, music from Carol Grimes and the Crocodiles, Breakfast Band, Mainsqueeze, The Guest Stars, Teresa Trull & Barbara Higsbie, High Jinx and Jah Warrior. Plus New Variety from Cast, puppets and beer tent. All events free. Peace day concert at 8pm at The Ace, Town Hall Parade, Brixton with Edwin Starr, Geno Washington & the Mo Jo Kings, Super Karla. £4/£2 concession: box office 01-737 2886.
- **Norwich/Cambridge Troops Out Day School**, 5 November, Kings College, Cambridge. Registration 9.30am. Cost £1, pooled fare. Creche must be booked in advance. For details phone Cambridge 881113.
- **London Gay Young Socialists** meet every four weeks on Sundays at 6pm, Marchmont Community Centre, Marchmont St, WC1. Next meetings 20 Nov and 11 Dec. Further details from Martin 01-263 9484.
- **London Labour Campaign for Gay Rights** next meeting Sun 6 Nov, 6pm, Marchmont Community Centre, Marchmont St, WC1. Further details from Mike 01-659 2983 or Bob 01-341 0666.
- **Gay NUR group** just forming. For details of inaugural meeting write to Gay NUR c/o 119 Southwyck, Coldharbour Lane, London SW9.
- **Lesbians in the Labour Party** next national meeting Sat 26 Nov, 2pm, County Hall, London SE1. Creche available. Further details from Sarah Roelofs c/o Gays the Word bookshop, Marchmont St, London WC1.

and Workers Against Racism, plus MPs. Phone 01-274 3952 for details.

- **Hands off Namibia: Victory to SWAPO** public meeting and film Thur 20 Oct, 7.30pm, Holborn Library, Theobalds Rd, London WC1. Admission 50p. Organised by City of London Anti-Apartheid Group.
- **Solidarity with Nicaragua** public meeting 21 Oct, Transport Hse, Victoria St, Bristol. Speakers from Sandinista Defence Committees in Nicaragua, T&GWU plus Julian Newell (Bristol West LPYS) and Mark Thompson (Nicaraguan Solidarity Campaign).
- **The Future of the NHS & the prevention of ill-health** Socialist Health Association conference, Sat 5 Nov, 10am-5pm, Mary Ward Hall, 9 Tavistock Place, London WC1. Speakers include Neil Kinnock (Leader of LP); Rodney Bickerstaff (Gen Sec NUPE); Cyril Taylor (Pres SHA). Tickets £3/£1 unwaged. Order now as accommodation is limited from SHA, 195 Walworth Rd, London SE17.
- **Stop US intervention in Central America**. Public meeting on Nicaragua, 1 Nov, 7pm, Marlborough Rd School, Marlborough Rd, Roath, Cardiff. Speaker: Jeremy Corbyn MP. Organised by Solidarity with Latin American Group.
- **Benefit concert for CND** Sat 22 Oct, 7.30pm, St Martins-in-the-Fields, nr Trafalgar Sq. Raphael Wallfisch (cello) & the Mana Chamber Orchestra. £2.50; £2/£1.50 unwaged. Details and tickets from CND shop, 227 Seven Sisters Rd, London N4, 01-263 5673.
- **Sri Lankan Research & Information Group** will provide speakers on the current situation there for meetings. Write to 9 Grays Inn Buildings, London EC1.
- **Socialist Bookfair 1983** Covent Garden, London WC2. 4-5 November. Enquiries to Bookmarks, (SBF), 265, Seven Sisters



Chloride workers defy sack threats

To all Chloride employees on strike at Clifton Junction.

WE HAVE RUN OUT OF TIME

Tonight we have to offer you this stark alternative. Come back to work tomorrow morning or accept the fact that by staying away you will lose your job. The decision is for each one of you to make before 8 o'clock tomorrow morning. We are convinced that you will find the majority of your fellow workers will be with you when you come through the gates. Put aside any fears you might have about victimisation. The company will protect your interests and give you full support. All the car parks will be open. In addition there will be plenty of spaces available for parking inside the factory gates. We guarantee work for everyone who comes back. So come back at 8 am tomorrow and let's work together for a prosperous future for us all.

CHLORIDE
POWER STORAGE

ACTION BY WORKERS at the Chloride Batteries factory in Clifton, Manchester has escalated. Management attempted to force the strikers back to work by sending 560 workers dismissal notices unless they agreed to end their action last Wednesday.

The strikers' response was a mass picket of over 300 workers from the plant and a commitment to step up the action. The next day staff-side unions called a mass meeting and agreed to come out in support of the Transport and General Workers Union strikers from Monday. All the other plants in the Chloride group nationally will also be holding strike meetings to decide on support action.

JOHN SUMBLAND, the TGWU convenor, explains the origins of the dispute and the strikers plans. In the past few years management have thrown attack after attack at the work force — some 1500 job losses, including 150 forced redundancies, two wage freezes and productivity deals. The workforce has suffered it, selling mealbreaks for a pittance and hoping to save their jobs through accepting management's paltry offers.

But the fightback at Chloride was rekindled in November 1982 when we spent two weeks on the picket line over a pay offer. Following this successful strike, management tried to impose a wage freeze. After pressure from the unions, management agreed to negotiate, but all they offered was a self-financing productivity scheme, involving further job loss and austere minimum production rates.

The offer involved sacking canteen staff, putting the cleaning out to contract, the end of production of one product and the scrapping of our hard-fought for 'one-rate' system. This system protects the unskilled and weak from the trap of low pay and low pension.

When this ridiculous offer was rejected and management failed to respond, we came out on strike on 2 September. We've organised effective 24 hour pickets and delegations have gone out to many local workplaces looking for support. We are now starting to go further afield, looking to the national arena.

Management have consistently refused to negotiate and have applied their energies solely to breaking the strike and the resolve of our members. They have resorted to loaded secret ballots, half-page ads in the local papers (see above) and now they are using Tebbit's re-engagement laws to say we have all sacked ourselves. This last move is deliberately planned to cause nervousness in members' homes.

The real issue in this dispute is the survival of trade unionism. Management want to get rid of us altogether. This is an issue for the whole trade union movement. It is in this light that we appeal for the broadest possible support from the whole movement.

● **Messages and financial aid to: 6/153 Branch Dispute Fund, c/o R. Butcher, 8 Ethel Avenue, Pendlebury Salford, Lancs.**

- **Employment for women in London** GLC Women's Committee open meeting Wed 19 Oct, 7-9pm, County Hall, York Rd, SE1. Creche facilities and sign language interpretation available. Details 01-633 1038.
- **Nicaraguan community politics in action** Public meeting with two reps from the Sandinista Defence Cttees. Fri 14 Oct, 7pm, Camden Town Hall, Euston Rd. Organised by NSC 01-359 8982.
- **The Caribbean and Central America** Public meeting called by Brent South & East Labour Parties. Speakers: Jeremy Corbyn MP, James Dunkerley, Debbie Delange, Jenny Pearce and Billy Taylor. Thur 20 Oct, 7.30pm, Harlesden Methodist Church Hall, Tavistock Road, NW10.

International

A weekend of socialist debate and discussion

FACING 1984: THE SOCIALIST ALTERNATIVE

Saturday 29 October

- **British politics: facing 1984**
Andrew Gamble, Doreen Massey, John Ross, Barry Hindess
- **Rebuilding the Labour Party**
Ken Livingstone, Vladimir Derer, Jude Woodward
- **Democratising the unions**
Kate Holman, John Aitken EETPU Broad Left
- **Struggle for black rights**
Jenny Bourne, Unmesh Desai
- **Socialist economic policy and the AES**
John Harrison, Hilary Wainwright

Sunday 30 October

- **Economic strategy for European Labour**
Ernest Mandel, Stuart Holland MP, John Palmer
- **Socialist foreign policy**
Joy Hurcombe, Alan Freeman
- **Women and family policy**
Judith Arkwright, Mica Nava, Lynne Segal

Other sessions include: Devolution; Ireland.

● **Rally on Sunday, 3.30pm: Building socialism in the '80s**

Jeremy Corbyn MP, Ernest Mandel, Stephanie Grant

Sat 29 & Sun 30 October
Kingsway Princeton College, Sidmouth street, off Grays Inn Road, London WC1 (Kings Cross tube)

Just £5 for the whole weekend, or £4 if booked in advance. £2.50 for one day only. Send cheques/POs payable to 'International' c/o PO Box 50, London N1 2XP. Creche facilities available by prior request.

Oct. 22

Where will you be?

11 A.M. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22.
VICTORIA EMBANKMENT LONDON... BE THERE.

NO COURSE - NO TRIDENT - FREEZE THE ARMS RACE - NUCLEAR WEAPONS ARE NO DEFENCE

- **Race and Class special issue out now: 'British racism — the road to 1984'**. Includes articles by A. Sivanandan; Cecil Gutzmore; Lee Bridges and others. £2 from Institute of Race Relations, 247 Pentonville Rd, London N1 9NG. Cash with order.
- **Exhibition on plastic bullets** at Islington libraries: Archway 17-29 Oct; Essex Rd 31 Oct-12 Nov; Manor Gdns 14-26 Nov; Finsbury 28 Nov-10 Dec. Organised by Islington TOM with Islington Council.
- **Afia Begum will stay — no more deportations!** Rally Tue 25 Oct, House of Commons, 5.30pm. Sponsored by over 50 MPs. Speakers from Sari Squad Road, London N4 2DE. 01-802 6145.
- **History Workshop 17 Manchester 1983** Industrialisation and after. Manchester Polytechnic, All Saints, Manchester 15. 11-13 November. Registration and enquiries to: History Workshop 17, 47 Albany Road, Manchester 21. Full fee £7, Students and low wage £3.50, unemployed and OAPs free. Cheques payable to 'History Workshop 17'.
- **The Battle for Bermondsey** — Peter Tatchell talks about his new book and the future of the Labour Party. Hounslow Socialist Forum meeting, Sun 30 Oct, 7.15pm, George IV pub, 185 Chiswick High Road (Turnham Green tube)

Monktonhall miners hit back

IN A FIERY speech to Labour Party conference, examiner Denis Skinner, MP for Bolsover, warned that Thatcher is hell bent on revenge against the miners 'not just for 1972 and bringing down the government, but for the U-turn forced on her in 1981.'

He called on the labour movement to 'rediscover the spirit of 1972 when workers destroyed the Industrial Relations Act and the government'.

Fighting

This fighting message was echoed by miners' union president Arthur Scargill who appealed to the Labour Party to show the miners the same kind of support his union had always shown the party.

'If we do that' he said, 'we will not just defeat MacGregor and the Coal Board, we will help open the way for an early general election to get rid of this government'.

At the frontline are the striking miners of Monktonhall colliery in Scotland. Their clash with the Coal Board is a symbol of the NCB assault on the industry and the determined resistance of rank and file miners.

Last year, leaked documents from the Monopolies Commission

revealed Tory plans to decimate the industry.

The 'butchery' won't just affect individual pits. Whole coalfields will go as reduced output is concentrated in a limited number of 'super-pits', where new computerised systems squeeze more profits out of fewer miners.

This means almost total closure for the pits in South Wales, Scotland and the North East and the picking off of as many pits as possible in Lancashire, the Midlands, Yorkshire and Kent. The miners' union estimates a job loss of at least 70,000.

Support

The Labour Party conference unanimously approved a resolution of full support for the Monktonhall strikers, with chair Sam McCluskie summing up the mood of total solidarity with the quip 'Anyone against this one? There's a gallows outside!' A delegate conference of Scottish miners agreed

to the total one day shut down of Scottish pits on 17 October. But Monktonhall pickets outside this conference were angry that their leaders had only delivered a token strike.

The Monktonhall battle is a test case for every pit in Britain. Their militant stand will need to be echoed throughout the union if the fighting Brighton words of Skinner and Scargill are to become a reality.

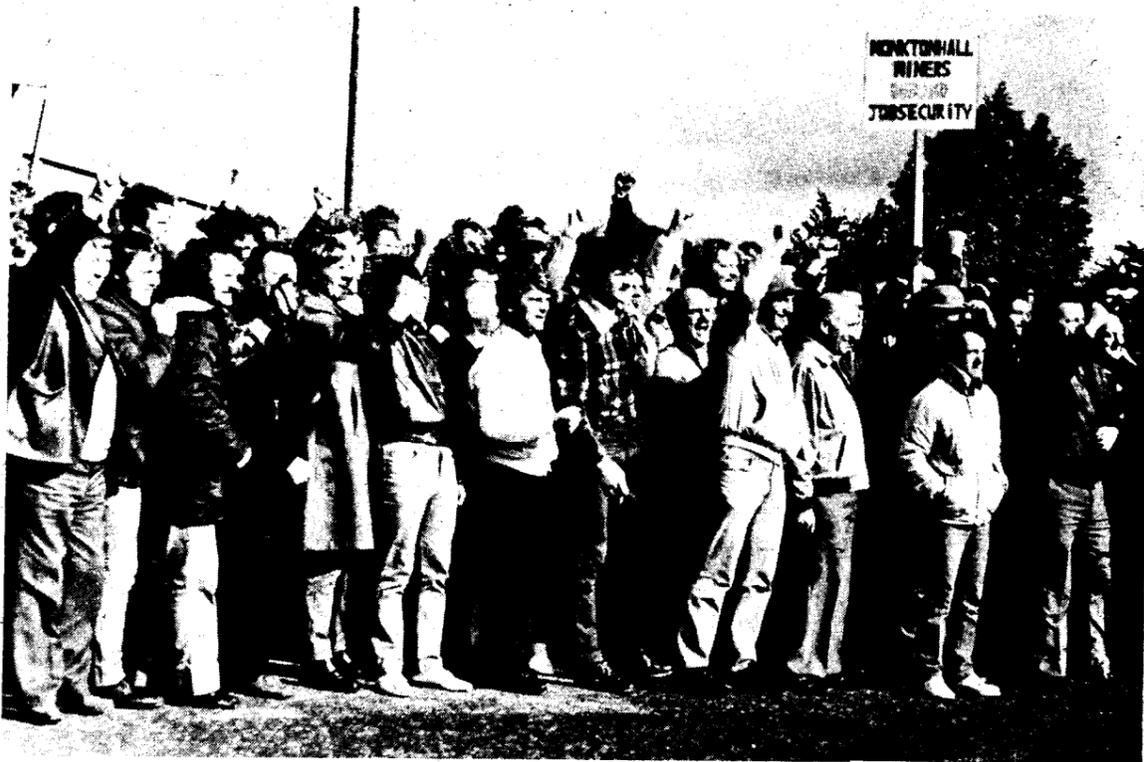
Viability

To drive this through, the NCB has changed the ground rules for determining pit viability. Profitability has replaced evidence of coal exhaustion or impossible geological conditions.

This is backed by investment starvation which threatens the ability of pits to produce good coal and overcome difficult geological conditions.

The new NCB chairperson, Ian MacGregor has tried these 'leaner but fitter' tactics with devastating effect in the steel industry.

Now, he is determined to smash the hard won ability of the NUM to veto



Monktonhall miners picketing

and control management plans by brushing aside well established consultation and negotiation procedures.

The events at Monktonhall offer a case study of this approach. The dispute began when, without negotiation, the Board suddenly stopped a £6 million development into a rich seam. This development is crucial to the future life of the pit.

Then 63 face workers were threatened with the sack for 'lack of effort' and a 'serious breach of contract' without reference to the NUM and despite their high output figures.

This bullying continued when, without consultation, the Board announced that every miner over 50 would be made redundant.

When the day shift

returned 5 minutes late from a meeting to discuss these 300 redundancies, they were locked out. By then the miners had had enough, they occupied the manager's office for two and a half hours and the strike began.

Four weeks into the action, the 1500 Monktonhall miners are campaigning for support from their union and the broader labour movement.

The NUM has made the strike official — the first time a local strike has been given national backing — and financial donations are flooding in from around the British coalfield. A special NUM national delegate conference will take place on 21 October to consider steps to oppose Tory attacks on jobs and the union.

11,028 and counting . . .

Jobs taken out of the coal industry, based on CLOSURES ANNOUNCED SINCE OCTOBER 1982

Pit or Works	Manpower	Mooregreen	
Britannia	409	Brynllyw	1,040
Tymawr/Lewis Merthyr	538	East Hetton	640
Blaengwrach	178	Wyndham Western	600
Highhouse	301	Shirebrook/Pleasley (merger)	200
Sorn	321	Lynemouth	300
Rineel	250	Cadeby (partial closure)	940
Bearpark	248	Wolstanton (partial closure)	300
Fishburn Coking Works	234	Desford	650
Goedely Coking Works	500	Cronlon	500
Elsecar	430	Monktonhall (partial closure)	300
Cardewan	1,100		

The increase since the last published list 3,870
 *The Coal Board's announcement of these intended closures partial closures is, of course, in some cases being contested. We emphasize that inclusion in this list does not in any way imply acceptance of closure.

MORE



Photo: GM COOKSON

The Shareholders and board of Metal Box faced a militant demonstration when they held an emergency general meeting at the Savoy Hotel on Friday 14 October.

The demonstrators, who were carrying a black coffin to represent the factories MB had closed in the UK, had travelled from Bromborough, the MB Merseyside factory to protest against MB's factory closures and its open support for apartheid in South Africa.

The Bromborough plant is due for closure at Christmas through lack of

investment. The redundancy notices were being handed out at the plant while the demonstration was going on.

Several shop stewards from the MB Combine went into the EGM, which was voting on a merger between MB South Africa and the South African conglomerate, Barlow Rand.

The stewards protested against the lack of investment and factory closures, MB's support for apartheid and Barlow Rand's racist reputation in labour relations.

Richard Lee, Combine Secretary, said later 'it was

like going into the lion's den'.

Denis Alpot, MB's £93,000 per annum chairperson, did not allay the stewards' fears, or the anger of the demonstrating workers.

To add insult to injury, they voted company executives a preferential share option. Such preferences have not been extended to the 10,000 MB-workers thrown on the dole since 1979.

For further information contact: KJ Wills, Chair TGWU 1/127, 22 Thomas House, Morning Lane, London E9.

Fleet Street electricians inter-union dispute

LATER THIS month, the TUC could expel the national print union, SOGAT '82. DEREK SPENCER, a branch committee member of the London Press branch of the EETPU explains the issues.

The first official approach by SOGAT '82, to take into membership EETPU members of the London Press branch, came in December 1982.

The EETPU general secretary said that his union was not prepared to transfer these members to any other print union. He denied any discussions with the National Graphical Association on the question of transfer.

This conflict between SOGAT '82 and the EETPU came before the TUC disputes committee on 23 August.

Prior to this, there had been an informal meeting between the general secretaries of the two unions, chaired by TUC general secretary, Len Murray.

A press statement was issued by Murray saying that he had been assured by SOGAT '82 that any EETPU members taken into SOGAT '82 would be excluded immediately and that they did not recognise any body called the Elec-

trical Electronic Press branch of SOGAT '82.

However the disputes committee found that SOGAT '82 had acted in breach of the TUC disputes principles and procedures and should forthwith exclude EETPU members, who had been taken into SOGAT '82.

They reported that it was in the best interests of the members concerned to rejoin the EETPU.

Sean Geraghty, a leading member of the London Press branch argues that there is sufficient reason to seek entry into another union with a more democratic structure — continuous opposition to branch policy by Chapple and the executive committee of the EETPU; the undemocratic set up of our union, like the appointment of officials, the ban on members of the Communist Party holding office, the power of veto of the EC over conference decisions.

Those of us opposing the transfer argue that this

is divisive and is a breach of the TUC Hull and Bridlington agreements against 'poaching'.

All members of unions have a duty to fight for full democratic rights and accountability of their leaders. To seek a way out of that struggle by joining another union would leave those active members remaining with an even harder task.

The Broad Left journal for electricians and plumbers, *Flashlight*, is firmly committed to a number of demands — the election of all officials; rejection of private health deals and support for the National Health Service; opposition to political bans; and annual conference which will have binding powers on the EC.

Flashlight also supports members in Fleet Street who remain in the union.

If other branches in other unions decide to cut and run, instead of staying to fight, because the political flavour of the leaders is not in tune with their own, then the trade union movement would end up as two opposing camps.

The SOGAT '82 executive committee will make a decision on this in the near future. If they fail to comply with the TUC instruction by the time the TUC meets at the end of the month, then action will be taken against them.

It is almost certain that this would mean expulsion from the TUC. To lose a major union's voice in the TUC at a time when the trade union movement is under Tory attack would weaken our ability to resist.

Throughout this bitter dispute, the London Press branch of the EETPU has attempted reconciliation of the Fleet Street electricians and told the EC that we will not allow victimisation.

A dangerous situation could arise if SOGAT '82 decide to exclude the electricians from membership and they refuse to rejoin the EETPU. This would threaten the closed shop agreements on Fleet Street.

There is only one solution to this problem and that is for all electricians in Fleet Street to unite and continue the struggle within the EETPU.

A Socialist ACTION



Brent may wipe the smile off Fowler's face!

Health cuts

Brent defies the Tories

BRENT Area Health Authority voted this week to continue to defy the government over the demand for health cuts totalling £250,000 per year. The North-West Thames Regional Health Authority is also demanding 110 redundancies and that 216 vacant posts remain unfilled. The Brent authority decided to continue to defy the demand for cuts, despite a letter from North-West Thames threatening the Brent authority with the sack.

Brent is one of at least seven health authorities refusing to implement the cuts. Others include Islington, Sheffield, Paddington and North Kensington, West Lambeth, Northumberland and Stockport.

On the same day as Brent's decision the High Court upheld the right of regional health authorities to sack members on borough authorities. There seems every likelihood that the government will now move to ensure the sacking of the rebels.

At last week's Tory Party conference Social Services secretary Norman Fowler reasserted Thatcher's line that there was no intention to destroy the health service.

But the truth is that Fowler is using a number of mechanisms to seriously undermine the structure and functioning of health service care. The govern-

ment is asking for a one per cent cut in money spent on the health service — or a 0.5 per cent decrease in real growth in the health service.

Reality

This sounds a trifling amount, but the figures hide the reality. Even the Tories accept that in order to stand still, the health service needs a 1.2 per cent per year real growth target. With an ageing population, and the demands of new technology, anything less will result in marked and steady deterioration of health care.

Even assuming a higher growth rate than that proposed by the government, health provision would remain appalling. The total waiting list is now 719,000 — a dreadful total of human misery, which of course the rich

can avoid through private health care. Junior hospital doctors work an average of 80 hours a week. And the pay of many in the health service remains extremely low.

Insult

To add insult to injury Fowler is now forcing health authorities to privatise virtually every non-medical aspect of the health service — an action which will cause massive upheaval in the health service, result in thousands of redundancies and, as privatisation of council services has shown, will eventually make things more expensive.

The defence of the health service cannot be left to health authority members alone. If they are to successfully defy the Tory onslaught, it means a huge labour movement campaign to support them, including industrial action by the health-workers.

Neil Kinnock's call for a Labour Party campaign to defy the cuts is a welcome opportunity to take the defence of the health service through the length and breadth of the movement.

MODERN TIMES

The Samaritans



If I get one more joker ringing up and saying they're Cecil Parkinson I'm going to scream!!!

Hospital cuts reprieve

LABOUR movement pressure has won the temporary reprieve of the Dreadnought Seamen's Hospital in south east London.

By Ben Armstrong
Woolwich CLP

Last week a demonstration called by the Greenwich Labour Party and supported by health service unions brought together 200 people to protest outside the meeting of the Green-

wich District health authority, which was discussing the closure of the hospital as part of a £7.4 million package of cuts demanded by the Tory government.

The Health Authority was forced to admit the demonstration into the room to watch their meeting. Under pressure the DHA voted to delay implementing the closure of the Dreadnought by seven votes to six. Much applause followed. A similar motion opposing

the temporary closure of St. Nicks Hospital, Plumstead was also carried by seven votes to four.

But the victory is only a temporary reprieve. The DHA meet again on Tuesday 8 November to reconsider their position.

If we are really going to fight the NHS cuts it means getting the Labour Party to organise more extra-parliamentary action like this to generalise working class opposition to the Tories.

Print union fights Tebbit

'TRADE UNION rights to support members of other trade unions in dispute have been undermined and threatened by the High Court.'

That's how assistant general secretary of the National Graphical Association Tony Dubbins, put it when he reported to the national council of the union on developments in the Stockport Messenger dispute.

Alan Royston, the Father of the Chapel explained what the dispute is about. 'The six NGA members, who complied with the instruction to withdraw labour from Messenger newspapers, are now in their fifteenth week of strike action.'

By John Cutts

The dispute surrounds the Messenger Newspaper Group's refusal to accept the union presence in their typesetting house at Bury and the printing plant at Warrington.

Before the Bury plant was set up, one of the directors signed a recognition agreement to employ NGA personnel.

Instead, he deliberately employed non-union and anti-union people in the Bury office. Mr Shah, the group chair, has openly stated that he always in-

tended to go non-union.

On Thursday 6 October, members of the National Union of Journalists refused to cross our picket lines. This action was taken in support of the NGA.

With the support of other unions the NGA has decided to step up its campaign by increasing the picketing outside the Stockport office at Wellington House.

This dispute must be backed by all trade unionists and socialists, not least those in the newspaper industry.

War

It is obvious that the newspaper proprietors see this as the opening battle in a war against the unions, backed by the Tories' anti-union law.

The object is to introduce new technology,

operated by low paid, non-skilled workers. They will smash the closed shop and smash strong union organisation which stand in the way of achieving this objective.

Jobless

Shah has employed young jobless workers, on a rumoured £70 a week, to do the jobs of the typesetters. The new technology is so simple that in a very short time anyone can learn to operate it.

Messenger management have made it clear that they intend to use Tebbit's law to the full.

They have already taken the NGA to court once and will no doubt be taking the NUJ there too.

As Tony Dubbins said in the NGA journal *Print*, 'We need to bring home to all members of the NGA, as well as all trade unionists, that the High Court has said that members of one union cannot, without breaking the law, assist members of another union who are in dispute.'

'Solidarity, one of the

cornerstones of our movement, is under attack and we must respond because the law says you must be a blackleg.'

The picketing is now being stepped up. There are mass pickets every Tuesday between 8.30am and 10pm. Help is welcomed.

The strikers, supported by NUJ members, are also stepping up the picketing of the company's other offices in Bury, Altringham and Sale. Shah, and Tebbit's laws must be defeated.

● Messages of support to Arthur Clarke, Graphic House, Creek Street, Stockport.

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For readers who take out a year's inland subscription we are offering a free copy of *Hard Times*, a new book in the 'Arguments for Socialism' series by Bob Sutcliffe. The book normally costs £2.50.

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