

Socialist Challenge

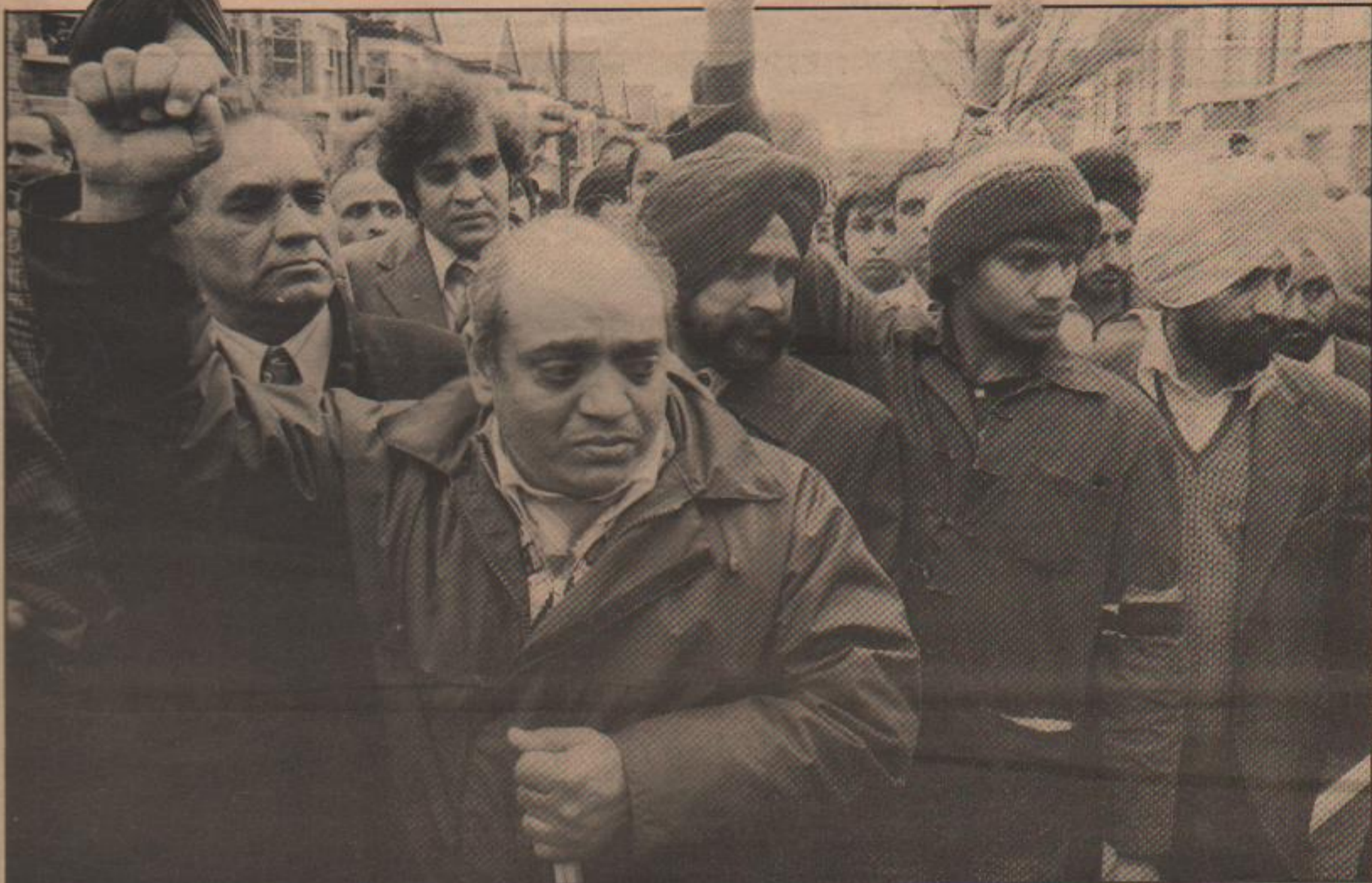
Whether it's Callaghan
or Thatcher,

**FIGHT
THEIR
TORY
POLICIES**



**RETURN A
LABOUR
GOV'T
BUT VOTE
SOCIALIST
UNITY**

SOUTHALL MOURNS



Saturday's demonstration passes the spot where Blair Peach was murdered

By Richard Carver

SOUTHALL mourned as if it had been one of its own who had died. And in a sense, of course, it was. All talk of outside agitators was overshadowed last Saturday as 10,000, mostly local Asians, marched in memory of Blair Peach, the anti-fascist murdered by police the previous

Monday.

The banner of the Southall Youth Movement placed his name alongside that of Gurdip Singh Chaggar, the young Asian murdered by racists in 1976.

A relatively small group of young Asians and white socialists met at the assembly point in the Dominion car park, but as the demonstration

moved off its numbers seemed to grow almost geometrically.

More people seemed to come from nowhere. In fact, they came from everywhere — from shops and houses and from the pavements.

The march started off tightly grouped in rows of six. It was silent as it passed through the empty streets, the stillness broken only by the feedback of

the police radios.

As it went on past the spot where Blair Peach was killed, into the Broadway, past the police station and to a final rally in Southall Park, the original stewarding plans went out the window. The demonstration swelled to cover the entire width of the road and the mood became increasingly militant.

The police maintained what they call a low profile — there were thousands of them. However, Blair Peach's murderers in the Special Patrol Group were kept hidden, their unmarked green and blue Transit vans lurking in the side streets.

The mounted police were kept out of sight too — though the evidence of their presence lay steaming in the road outside the police station.

The Southall Defence Committee has taken statements from most of those arrested last Monday, proving, contrary to press reports, that the vast majority were local Asian youth. But if the police had tried a similar repressive operation last Saturday it would have faced defeat, both politically and on the streets.

This enormous mobilisation of local sentiment seems to dwarf the efforts of individual political organisations. Nevertheless it is possible to make an assessment of the various

organisations aspiring to the leadership of the movement.

On one side the Southall Youth Movement and the Anti Nazi League emerge with credit. On the other Sydney Bidwell and the Labour Party only succeed in covering themselves with further ignominy with every move they make.

In contrast to last Monday Bidwell did attend Saturday's demonstration, but only after a stormy emergency meeting of the Ealing Community Relations Council the previous night. Asians had reminded Bidwell in none too friendly manner of his record in signing the Select Committee report on immigration. When the MP told one of them to 'Sit down, you arrogant sod' the meeting erupted angrily. So Bidwell can probably count himself lucky that he was allowed on the march.

Many voters this Thursday may compare Bidwell's own arrogant manner towards the 'ethnic vote' with the achievements of Tariq Ali's Socialist Unity campaign in putting itself at the service of the struggle.

The attitude of police and press in selecting Tariq as the movement's 'leader' betrays a characteristic concentration on convenient symbols rather than issues, but it also reflects a certain reality. The backbone of the Southall movement is the

youth and Tariq is the most prominent figure to give voice to their unyielding hostility to the police and fascists.

On polling day Asian voters face the same dilemma as others where Socialist Unity is standing — whether to vote for a socialist alternative or make certain of returning a Labour MP. In Southall, however, this will be weighed against the decline of the Labour Party's influence and the rise of independent black politics.

Southall is significant for Socialist Unity nationally in that it is the first instance of an election campaign which has moved beyond mere political propaganda and put itself at the disposal of a genuine mass movement.

That much can be seen simply from walking down the street with Tariq. He is stopped by passers-by, enthusiastically greeted in shops, and his advice consistently sought. Though many of these people will not vote for him he is nevertheless their candidate.

Socialist Unity has won its following by the fact that it alone has advanced both a clear political alternative to the Labour government and a set of militant, intransigent and eminently practical tactics.

But it is still only part of a larger movement whose for-

An urgent appeal

WITH maybe a handful of exceptions, the MPs who troop off to Westminster after the ballot papers have been counted will hope that we all forget about politics and leave it to them.

That a number of Labour candidates joined demonstrations and pickets in their constituencies during the election campaign can be taken not so much as an indication of their intentions as a vote-catching response to the resistance shown to the Tory policies of both main parties.

We have done our best to aid that resistance — by black people, opponents of the British troops in Ireland, the youth who are denied a vote, and many others.

It is gratifying when we receive a letter which says: 'I

wish the enclosed (£5) could be more. In any event, you are to be commended on the superb reporting of the events at Southall. No other paper even suggested the real extent of police brutality. They were too busy assigning guilt.'

We think we could have done better during the election campaign — with more resources. Financial contributions during the opening weeks of this quarter were abysmal. Last week, which brought in £229.80 was a lot healthier.

But even that brings the total so far this quarter — £551.55 — to barely half the sum we should have received by now to remain on target for the £2,500 we need by the end of June.

We wish that target were merely an added extra to our resources. Unfortunately it's

life or death for the paper. Modesty is not a virtue for socialists, so we'll say it bluntly: Tory policies will be that much easier for the next government to implement unless you give generously now to keep your paper alive.

Otherwise you'll be very sorry.

Our thanks this week to:

Anon	£10.00
Fred Leplat	50.00
Anon	10.00
UMIST supporter	3.30
R Ford	4.50
MJ Brett	50.00
A Mitchell	15.00
C Nash	26.00
Jo Hammond	6.00
Bus worker	50.00
Anon	5.00
TOTAL	£229.80
Cumulative total	£501.55

ONE OF ITS OWN

continued from page 2

tunes it cannot determine. So much of its propaganda has gone by the board. Sadly, for example, the turmoil of last week has pushed issues such as women's oppression right into the background. There is very little anyone can do about that.

One 'outside' issue has struck a chord, however. After Tariq had received an ecstatic reception for a speech on British imperialism after last Monday's events and once Socialist Unity's 'Troops Out' poster had gone up, the rumour began to spread that the IRA was coming to Southall to help out...

Workers give to Memorial Fund

ONE of the banners on Saturday's demonstration was from the East London Teachers Association, of which Blair Peach was president. East London teachers have plans for large delegations to attend Blair's funeral, with some schools possibly being totally closed.

Workers at Ford Langley too

have responded to the murder by collecting £300 for the Blair Peach Memorial Fund which has been set up to look after his dependents and to foster greater racial harmony and understanding.

The National Union of Public Employees discussed the Southall events at its London Area Committee last week. The

meeting called for the disbanding of the SPG and a public inquiry into the role of the police in Southall.

It also agreed to a large donation to the Blair Peach Memorial Fund, the amount to be determined when the resolution goes to the union's London Divisional Council.

NF stopped in West Brom...

By Trudi Bowen
Labour Party member, Wolves ANL

NOTHING in the area will move after four o'clock today. That was the West Bromwich police statement published in local newspapers before the National Front election rally which ended in vicious attacks against anti-fascists last Saturday.

But despite these strong words, over 1500 turned up throughout the day to protest against the NF meeting, and against the police occupation of an entire area of the town just so John Tyndall could speak.

Local and nearby anti-racist and anti-fascist committees, the Indian Workers' Association, the Community Relations Council and the Anti Nazi League all supported the picket.

Many of us turned up at noon, although the meeting

didn't begin until seven in the evening. The police said 200 could go in, if we queued. I only saw three genuine NF supporters in the queue.

When we were let in, in groups of twenty, we were searched by NF stewards. We were informed by police in advance that this was a normal security precaution which all political rallies were advised to adopt. But it was a bit disgusting to have a fascist searching us.

When we entered the room, the stewards tried to split us up, but as there were 200 of us we sat more or less where we wanted.

When the hall was filled, the speakers took their seats at the front. There was no indication it was a public meeting — no posters, union jacks, or any decorations. Just a school canteen.

When the chairperson opened the meeting, we all

booed. He tried to get control and we all started to chant, 'Nazi, Nazi'. We were told we'd be thrown out if we didn't keep quiet. We went on.

The chairperson then leapt to his chair and became very menacing. He yelled out, 'Keep still and behave yourself — and that means you' he added, to the stewards. Some took no notice and picked up chairs at the front and moved toward the meeting.

One of them said something I didn't hear, then the stewards literally dived for the meeting. It became really confused and frightening. There were chairs flying, bodies banging and lots of scuffling.

My friend and I lay huddled in the middle of the floor. So did the woman next to us. The police came in, and began to

clear the meeting. The NF threw out the television cameras.

A vicar in full clerical dress came up to us. He was bleeding badly on his head. He'd been hit by a chair. Others were injured as well. They had been knocked about too.

Finally we all managed to get out of the hall, and join up with the picket. Outside the day had been low key. There was one incident where mounted police charged the Birmingham ANL march as they came near the school. Dogs were present, but not used.

The most frightening thing about the day was how the NF showed no concern for preserving the 'law and order' they hold up so high. When we heckled, they just laid into us with chairs.

...and Plymouth...

By James Carroll
THE National Front suffered a major defeat last week when Anti Nazi League supporters prevented them from holding an election rally in Plymouth.

About 100 ANL supporters occupied the hall over an hour before the meeting, due to be addressed by NF chairperson John Tyndall. Hundreds of other anti-racists also gathered outside, forcing the 30 or so NF members who arrived to take refuge behind a wall.

When Tyndall arrived the

police asked those occupying the hall to leave. They refused. The police then said that they could not guarantee Tyndall's safety, and the meeting was called off.

Tyndall later attacked the police handling of the situation on TV, and Plymouth NF organiser Derek Merry warned that the NF would try to hold another rally in Plymouth before the election. But if they do, Devon and Cornwall anti-racists are ready and waiting for them.

...and Crawley

By Dave Ward
President, Crawley Trades Council

THERE was hardly a fascist or police officer in sight when more than 500 anti-racists occupied Queen's Square in the centre of Crawley last Friday to stop the National Front.

Council workers had refused to wire up amplification equipment when they found out that the Front had booked the bandstand in the square. The Clerk of the Council argued the NF's right to use the venue under the Representation of the People Act in the face of protests from local trade union

and anti-racist bodies.

Anti-racist pickets were allowed into an emergency management committee of the council called to discuss the NF and Labour councillors, who are in a majority, voted unanimously to stop the Front using the bandstand.

But the anti-racists, including some 100-150 Asians, thought it best to implement the decision themselves. They occupied the square and, with considerable support from passers-by, howled down the local NF candidate when he turned up, unaccompanied, to speak.

Unity in East London

FORCED to adopt a 'low profile' in Southall on Saturday, the police tried to make amends with a massive mobilisation for Sunday's East End anti-racist march through the constituencies where NF leaders Tyndall and Webster are standing.

Two days earlier they had invoked the Public Order Act to stop the march from going past the NF's headquarters in Great Eastern Street.

And the demonstration itself was accompanied by some 50 mounted cops at front and rear, a single and sometimes double file of police all along its length, and the now obligatory

helicopter above.

Only the riot shields were missing — kept in reserve, no doubt, along with the further numerous coachloads of police parked discreetly in adjoining streets. But the 1,200-strong demonstration, though militant, gave the cops no excuse to move in.

At one point a bust-up seemed on the cards when the police 'protection' mysteriously disappeared as the tail-end of the march passed Brick Lane, leaving the anti-racists face to face with a hysterical bunch of NF supporters and Nazi-saluting members of the British

Movement.

Local Socialist Unity candidate Ray Yarnes, who first put forward the idea of the march at a South-East TUC meeting three weeks ago, commented afterwards:

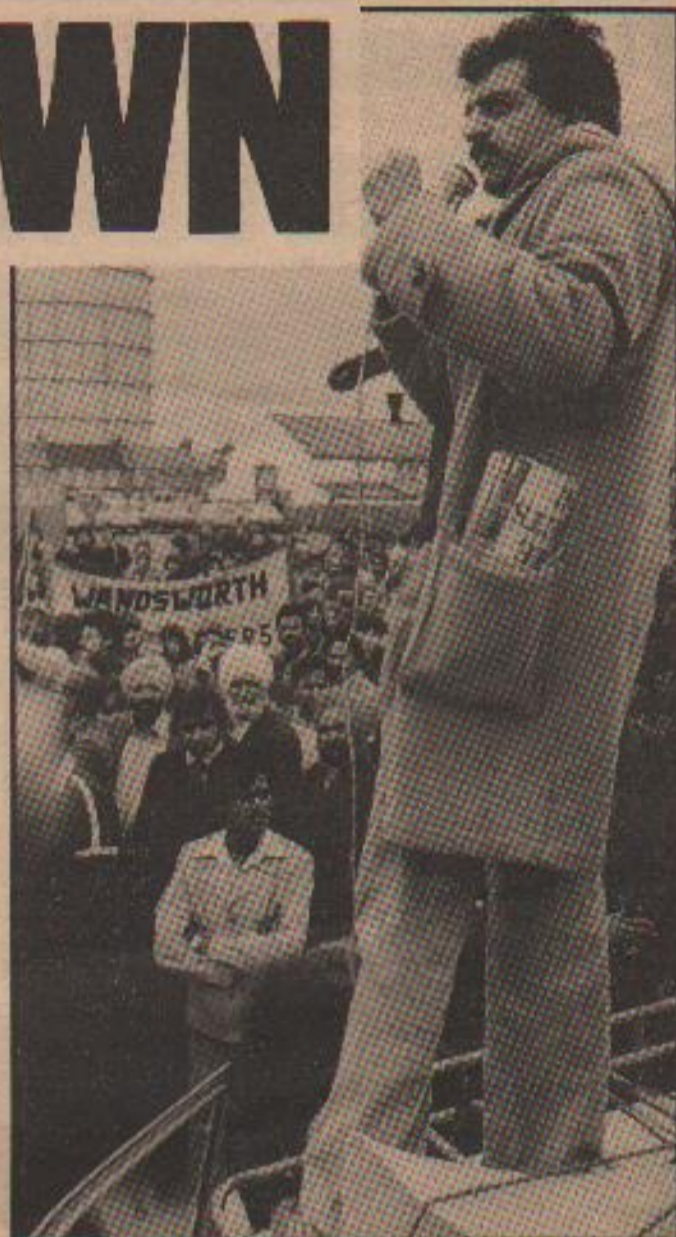
'The wide spread of support represented in the organisations which sponsored the march offers a real chance to overcome past divisions in the anti-racist movement and build a coordinated campaign to root out the fascists from this area.'

Thus a large Anti Nazi League contingent marched along with supporters of the Hackney and Tower Hamlets Defence Committee and Hack-

ney Committee Against Racism.

Also prominent were contingents organised by the Communist Party and Socialist Unity, while trade union participation was represented by the banners of Battersea & Wandsworth and Hackney trades councils, East London Teachers Association, and the NATKE strikers at the National Theatre.

Noticeable only by their absence however, were the local Labour Party candidates, whose stand against racism seems destined to remain confined to the comfortable benches of the House of Commons.



Socialist Unity candidate Tariq All addresses march



Women made up a sizeable part of the march

CRAWLEY TRADES COUNCIL
Greetings on May Day, the workers' day.
Keep the Iron Lady out of No 10
Support the Labour Left

YOU IN TOUCH IF YOU ENSURE WE MAKE OUR FUND DRIVE TARGET

OUR POLICIES

The message of black consciousness Get up, stand up — for your rights

BLACK council tenants pay, on average, the same rent as whites. No discrimination there, you may think.

Wrong. Out of every thousand white tenants only six have to live in shared accommodation. Yet among the same number of Afro-Caribbean tenants, 100 have to share, and for Asians the figure is 180.

In other words, blacks have to pay the same rents for worse accommodation — just one example of racism in Britain. Here's how it should be dealt with.

By Colin Talbot

Housing is only one area where black people suffer from racism. In the period 1974-1977 unemployment rose by 138 per cent. For black people it rose by 307 per cent, over twice the average. Among black youth the situation is even worse.

Housing, education, jobs. Black people are discriminated against across the board. Yet far from seeing this racist abuse of black people as a problem, the main political parties share a common view that blacks, 'immigrants', are a problem.

There are, of course, differences between the parties. Labour comes under pressure from the left, the anti-racist and black movements, so they include a few sops like promising to 'review' the *Sus* laws which allow the police to arrest blacks indiscriminately on 'suspicion'.

The Tories, on the other hand, place 'race relations' under the heading of 'The Rule of Law', and make numerous proposals for 'firm immigration control'.

In practice, however, these differences are slight. Both Labour and Tories want an end

to immigration, the differences are merely over a few thousand dependants, and 'commitments'.

Both parties support strengthening the police force.

It has been during the past five years of Labour government that detentions and deportations of black people have reached record levels and immigration rules have been repeatedly tightened, while physical intimidation has escalated.

The new Nazis of the National Front merely take the argument to its logical conclusion. If blacks are 'a problem' the best and final solution is to get rid of them.

When the whole establishment says that blacks are 'a problem', when thousands face unemployment, insecurity and unrest, it's hardly surprising that some will be attracted to the fascists' recipe for a holocaust.

The Front have the added attraction that they want to start repatriation now, by bombing, burning and bullying black people into leaving. In other words they offer action.

It is this that really sets the NF apart from the Tory

far right and other overtly racist politicians, and makes necessary a campaign of self-defence by anti-racists and blacks — to stop the NF through powerful mass actions.

The answer does not lie in calling for bans on fascist marches or meetings. When the NF was banned from marching in Ilford during the by-election last year, it was the labour movement, too, which was forbidden from demonstrating on the streets.

That fits in perfectly with Thatcher's call to deal with 'extremists of the left and right', leaving the defence of democratic rights at the mercy of the forces of law and order.

The growth of the Front over the past decade shows that racism has to be confronted by the whole working class movement, if all of us are not to pay a terrible price.

The sort of policies which would represent a real break with racism are not to be found in the manifestos of the main political parties. First and foremost is the need to end institutionalised racism — the attacks by the state on black people.

That means repealing the *Sus* and immigration laws and disbanding the Special Patrol Group, which murdered Kevin Gately in Red Lion Square and Blair Peach in Southall last week.

Secondly, racism has to be rooted out of social and economic life, not through toothless Race Relations Acts, but by extensive programmes of positive discrimination, or affirmative action, to secure

for black people homes, jobs, and better education.

It also means recognising the right of black people to their own culture and language.

In order to achieve these aims, and to defend ourselves against attacks from the state and the fascist goon squads, we need to build a massive movement.

The key to this is the self-activity of black people.

Only by standing up to fight for their rights will black people force the majority of the working people to recognise their rights and demands. That's why we support all developments of black consciousness, nationalism, and self-organisation.

Alongside the fight to build a black liberation movement goes the need to forge a broad anti-racist movement rooted in the organised workers movement. We fully support the Anti-Nazi League and all other anti-racist, anti-fascist organisations.

Finally, as the murders of black people and white anti-fascists have shown, we can expect the most brutal attacks from the uniformed thugs of the state and the goon squads of the fascists.

We support all moves by black people to defend themselves against these assaults, and demand labour movement support for them. Black self-defence and workers' self-defence need to be the order of the day.

Stand up and fight for your rights — by any means necessary!

And a workers' government?



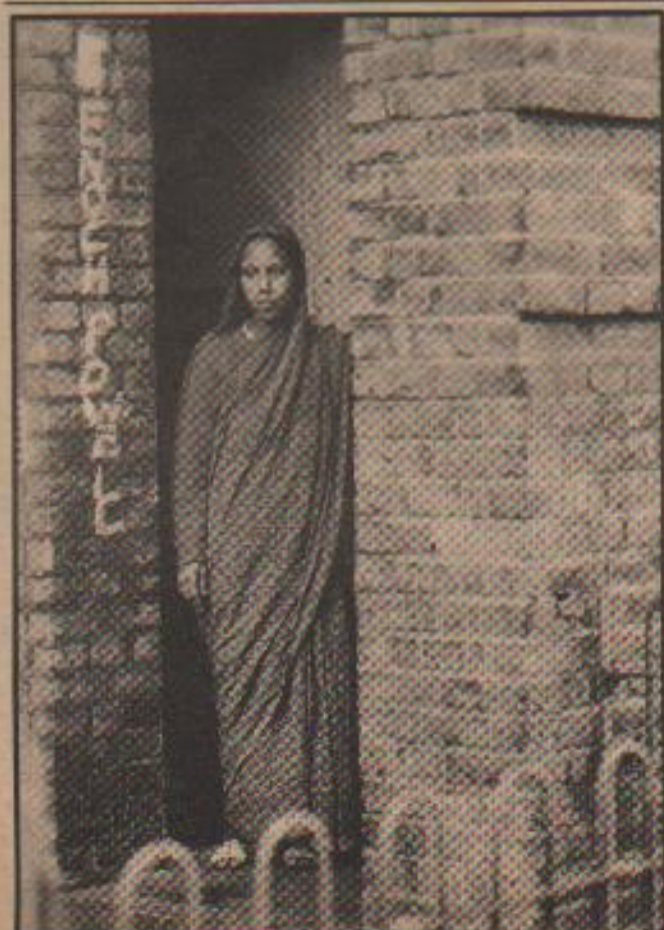
It would begin by vigorously campaigning for black rights, rejecting all ideas of integration or segregation, in favour of the right of black people to determine how they wish to lead their own lives.

Discrimination would be ended by ensuring black people their rightful place in all economic, social, and political institutions, through programmes of affirmative action and outlawing discrimination.

In recognising black people's right to self-determination, a workers' government would

abolish immigration laws, allow black people to congregate or disperse how they wish — putting a stop to notions of ghetto communities where black people choose to be together — and provide all necessary facilities for minority languages and culture.

Lastly, the black population would be encouraged to take any measures necessary to end racist violence, including forming militias based on democratic assemblies of the community.



How racism took root

By Geoffrey Sheridan

INTERVIEWING a police officer about the preparations for the NF's meeting in Plymouth last week, a reporter from Independent Radio News began by saying: 'You don't have an immigrant population here, so you don't have the same problem as in Southall.'

The idea that the 'problem' is black people and not racism is rooted in the days when Britain and the other European powers began to plunder most of the rest of the world, from the 15th century onwards.

It was slavery, involving the transportation of millions of Africans from their homelands to the colonies of the New World, which required the fullest elaboration of racist ideas to justify the uprooting of whole civilisations and the concentration camp conditions on the plantations.

Early in the 17th century, commerce and industry in Britain experienced a vast expansion based on the revenue from the trade in black human

merchandise and the products of their captured labour.

And it was the further development of capitalism which prompted the abolition of the slave trade. Between 1884 and 1898, most of Africa was acquired by the European nations in order to service their economies.

Cheap labour was needed on the spot to exploit the natural resources of the continent, which at the same time provided an outlet for the capital and excess production of the European economies. Imperialism was in its heyday.

Earl Grey politely expressed the attitude of British imperialism in Africa:

'Throughout this part of the British Dominions the coloured people are generally looked upon by the whites as an inferior race, whose interests ought to be systematically disregarded when they come into competition with our own, and who ought to be governed mainly with a view of the advantage of the superior race.'

For Earl Grey's class — the industrialists and financiers — racism registered on the profit side of their balance sheets. And the working class was persuaded that the oppression of black people and other 'minorities' was in their interests too.

Then as now it was the failures of the capitalist system which were used to foster racism.

In the 19th century it was the fear that immigrant workers, then mainly Jewish and Irish, would be used to cut wages or cause dilution in the skilled trades which led to anti-Irish riots in Liverpool and Birmingham.

In 1919, fears of unemployment by white sailors brought about riots against black sailors in Cardiff, and the imposition of quotas for blacks by the National Union of Seamen in the 1920s.

The Nazis in Germany perfected scapegoating to prepare their path to power, and then — because divide and

rule was in no way sufficient to deal with the capitalists' crisis — liquidated the organisations of the working class.

The National Front today uses the same ideas to violently oppose black people in Britain, many of whom were encouraged to come here in the '50s and '60s from the West Indies and the Indian sub-continent to fill low-paid jobs that white workers refused to do.

Their reason for coming is summarised in a very simple statement: 'We're here because you were there' — there, that is, wrenching the economies of vast tracts of the world to suit the interests of the imperialist heartlands.

The white sense of superiority that racism upholds began as a justification for barbarism.

After Southall last week, when 5,000 police physically transformed an Asian community into a colony to allow a handful of Nazis to make their threats, no one should doubt that racism can continue to justify any number of atrocities.

BOOST THE FIGHT AGAINST RACISM BY FUNDING YOUR PAPER

OUR POLICIES

Law and order

The truncheon under Labour

'THE purpose of security in its widest sense is to protect a way of life.' That statement could have come from the Labour or Tory manifestos, both of which call for strong police forces.

In fact it was made by an executive of the Chubb private security firm, which makes no secret of what it protects — capitalist property.

This election campaign, which has seen thousands of police moved about the country to counter those defending democratic rights, has given a foretaste of the 'way of life' we can expect if the law and order merchants have their way.

RIC SISSONS looks at how the state has been strengthened over the past five years, and how it can be confronted.

During the past five years of Labour government there have been important developments in the law as it affects the working class, and in the methods the state is employing to maintain order.

In the space of just 12 weeks after Harold Wilson took

office, he calmly presided over three major police-army occupations of Heathrow airport in a vain search for 'terrorists'.

The presence of troops on the streets of Belfast and Derry had been a common sight, and it was now becoming so in Britain.

The lessons and techniques from Ireland have not been lost on the police here.

Training in riot control and arms practice are now common. The plexi-glass riot shields are on hand for demonstrations.

But the most notable development has been the growing presence of the Special Patrol Group.

The SPG was set up in 1965 under a Labour government. This 200-strong London-based force of shock troops has inspired the formation of the Commando Squad in Lincolnshire, the Special Squad in Lancashire, the Special Services Squad in Bristol, and the Birmingham SPG.

The SPG's first victims were two young occupants of the Indian embassy. Heavily deployed in areas with large black communities, such as



Brixton and Hackney, their latest victim was Blair Peach.

The police have also been stepping up their surveillance capabilities through their national computer based in Hendon. Operational in 1974, more than £35m. has been spent to ensure that nearly four million people are on file, with fingerprints for over two

million.

There are an array of laws under which the police can harass people on the streets.

In 1975, 30,000 people were arrested on Sus. Half of them were black.

Two major new laws were introduced limiting democratic rights. The 1977 Criminal Law Act makes it easier to stop factory occupations and squatting.

The Prevention of Terrorism Act, passed by Parliament in one night in 1974 after the Birmingham bombings, allows the police to detain people for 48 hours without charging them and for a further five days with the approval of the Home Secretary.

By December 1978, 3,589 people had been detained under the PTA. Of these, only 24 were charged under the Act, and a further 160 excluded from the country.

Freedom of Information has been another victim of the Labour government, with the deportation of Agee and Hosenball — for which the government refused to give an explanation — and the ABC trial.

The growing liaison between different parts of the state apparatus was never clearer than in recent strikes.

During the FBU strike, for example, co-ordinating committees were set up nationally and regionally, with representatives of the Home Office, the police, the Army, and fire service officers. They were based in Territorial Army buildings and used police operation rooms.

The Labour government has done much to defend capitalist law and order, as Callaghan has been so anxious to explain. Attacks on basic working class rights can never have been more severe and calculated than at Grunwick.

The same brand of law and order has been at work on behalf of the Nazis of the National Front. A Labour Home Secretary gives the go-ahead for Southall to be turned into a police state to protect a bunch of racists, while the Public Order Act is used to divert a demonstration from the NF headquarters.

The lesson of the past five years is that the working class cannot rely on the legal system or a Labour government.

The bosses' 'way of life' can only be challenged by workers organising independently of the state. To do otherwise will ensure their laws and their order.



Ordering law our way

THE STATE has assumed greater legal powers and strengthened its repressive machinery over the past five years.

Given that the economic and social crisis in Western Europe is likely to worsen, the bosses want to be sure they can deal with the mass opposition that will develop.

In Chile, their law and order took a particularly bloody and repressive form. The British ruling class would not shrink from using the same methods if its parliamentary institutions and police cannot hold back workers' resistance.

The working class needs to oppose all moves to strengthen the state.

That means the abolition of the Official Secrets Act, the repeal of the Emergency Powers Act, the Criminal Law Act, and the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

These laws have all been used during the past five years of Labour government to block workers' struggles and limit their democratic rights.

The opposition by the black communities and anti-racist organisations to the Sus law, which is used to intimidate black people, provides a good example of the kind of organised resistance that is needed to confront police powers.

Actions such as pickets and demonstrations against the police need to have the full backing of the workers' movement, with the fullest exposure of their activities through such means as the inquiry carried out by Brixton trades council into police harassment of black people.

It is not only on the statute books that the hand of the police has been strengthened. As has been seen during recent

strikes, the level of co-ordination between the military, the government, and the police has never been higher.

All joint police-army manoeuvres and police training in military methods has to be opposed, as should the arming of the police and their acquisition of riot gear.

The Special Patrol Group should be disbanded at once. Local Labour councils should ban the SPG or their regional equivalents from the areas under their jurisdiction.

The Special Branch and all other intelligence and surveillance groups should cease to exist; their records and files examined and destroyed, along with the information stored in the police national computer.

Parallel to the police and army there have sprung up hundreds of private security firms. Today they muster

250,000 uniformed 'guards' in 10,000 armoured vehicles. Securicor alone boasts 1,000 dogs.

Elsewhere in Europe similar firms have frequently been used against strikers.

Any such development must be resolutely opposed in Britain. Their workers should be encouraged to join relevant unions and refuse to undertake any action against the interests of the working class.

Finally, full trade union and political rights should be encouraged in the armed forces. The Incitement to Disaffection and Mutiny Acts should be repealed.

A workers' government would encourage the arming, drilling, and training of the entire population. They would police and defend the country and replace the present capitalist police and armed forces.

East London Teachers Association mourning the death of BLAIR PEACH our ex-President

We have lost a man who was not only an anti-racist but a dedicated socialist who fought and worked on issues inside and outside the union.

He played an important role in a variety of campaigns: the William Tyndale school struggle; the campaign against sexual oppression; against racism and fascism.

He will be irreplaceable as a friend, a brother and a valuable comrade.

East London teachers will continue to be identified with the policies he helped to formulate, and with the development of a trade union branch conscious of its responsibilities in the class struggle, nationally and internationally.

SOCIALIST TEACHER mourns the death of BLAIR PEACH and calls for

- *Disbanding the SPG
- *Dropping all charges against the anti-racists
- *An independent public enquiry
- *A united fight against racism and fascism

WHAT'S LEFT

LONDON: 'Hands off Ireland'. Film tour, 'Prisoner of War' (Prisoners Aid Committee Film). Speakers: Tony Sheridan (RCG), Provisional Sinn Fein, other speakers invited. Monday, 14 May, 7.30pm, Anson Hall, Chilwell Road, NW2 (nearest tube Willesden Green). Adm 40p.

REVOLUTIONARY Communist Group Public Meeting: The Fight Against Racism. RCG speaker. Tuesday, 15 May, 7.30pm, Lower Hall, Lambeth Town Hall, Acre Lane, SW2 (nearest tube Brixton). Adm. 20p.

LUTTE Overview Fete and Conference 2-6 June. Coach leaving London 1 June direct to site near Paris. Return fare £30. Write to BM 9CT, London WC1V 6XX or tel 274 2851 for further details.

TOWER Hamleting Hackney public meeting 'After the election — what next?' Speaker: Bob Pennington. Wed 3 May, 7.30pm, Britannia pub, Mare Street.

DOROTHEA, West Germany, please send your surname and address, also of African friend. Urgent. We can't trace you. Reply to Socialist Challenge.

EACH TIME THE MEDIA MENTION 'BALANCE' SEND US A QUID!

OUR POLICIES

Pushing back the walls of hearth and home

By Penny Duggan

'WOMEN are conservative with a small "c" and Caring with a big one,' declared the *Daily Mirror* last Friday when it attempted in its first two pages to woo its women readers from Thatcher's clutches.

While Labour and Tory leaders pitch their appeal to women in terms of defending the family and reinforcing women's role within it, the women's liberation movement begins at the opposite pole:

How to extend women's choices and opportunities; and develop new kinds of relations between people based on mutual respect and genuine emotional ties.

But this goal can never be achieved as long as women's primary role in society is seen in relation to the family.

This view of women tied to the family is not confined to the capitalist countries. When the constitution of the Soviet Union was revised in 1977, the section which is meant to guarantee equal rights to women was amended to propose 'the gradual shortening of the work-day for women with small children'.

The Soviet leaders explained that this new provision was to improve the position of 'women as workers, mothers, childraisers, and housewives'.

It is a far cry from the policies of those who led the revolution in Russia in 1917. In fact, the programme adopted by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union two years later provides us with a valuable starting point to frame the policies needed to counter women's oppression and plot the course to our liberation.

It stated: 'The party's task at the present moment is primarily work in the realm of ideas and education so as to destroy utterly all traces of the former inequality or prejudices, particularly among backward strata of the proletariat and peasantry.'

'Not confining itself to formal equality of women, the party strives to liberate them from the material burdens of obsolete household work by replacing it by communal houses, public eating places, central laundries, nurseries, etc.'

Dismantling women's role in the family would be at the centre of the tasks of a workers' government, and as the

Bolshevik leaders correctly proposed, that means socialising the array of duties which women presently carry out in the home.

Large-scale material resources would be devoted to setting up: 24-hour child-care centres; low-cost, high-quality restaurants; collective laundry facilities; and house cleaning services organised on an industrial basis.

At the present time, all governments seek to regulate population size and maintain women's place in the family by exercising control over women's fertility.

Asserting women's right to choose whether or when to bear children means the free provision of contraceptives and abortion, and an end to forced sterilisation.

But if women are to make a genuinely free choice about motherhood, then all the pressures that presently define this as the fulfilment of women's only role will have to be countered with an extensive education and propaganda programme.

All the ways in which society now shapes women's role — such as the pin-ups in the media and advertising which project women as sex objects; the grooming of women in schools for domestic tasks and low-paid jobs — would be outlawed by a workers' government. So would all forms of discrimination against women at work and in social and political life.

In reinforcing the family, the state presently dictates the forms of sexual relationships and sexuality that are allowable. A workers' government would do no such thing. It would encourage people to decide their own sexuality, and campaign to end the prejudices against homosexual relationships.

Changing women's situation at work, where they are now almost entirely confined to low-paid, unskilled jobs, requires positive discrimination in favour of women advancing in male-dominated jobs, backed by affirmative action in education and training schemes.

Financial independence for women would be guaranteed by making jobs available for all, and full maintenance by the state of those who are not in paid employment.

Today, women cannot choose how they will lead their own lives when they fear violence from men, whether in the home, the street, or at work. This raises what is most fundamental about a socialist society and the struggle to achieve it.

For the large majority of people now, politics begins and ends with the ballot box. But the overturning of capitalism and the establishment of socialism depends on the mobilisation and self-organisation of all the exploited and oppressed.

That is why the women's movement, women's caucuses in the trade unions, the rape crisis centres, and the refuges for battered women are such important steps towards women's liberation.

It is the organisation of women on the housing estates, in workplaces, in all the organisations of socialist society that will expose and confront by all means necessary even the pettiest of restraints

Women's status - the law won't change it

MARGARET Thatcher told an audience in Glasgow on Thursday just what she thinks of women.

'I didn't get here by being some strident female. I do not like strident females. I like people who have ability, who do not run the feminist ticket too hard.'

With statements like that it is hard to see that she is running the feminist ticket at all.

By Jude Woodward

Thatcher has won considerable support because she is a woman.

Guardian journalist Jill Tweedie gave this view a real boost in her column when she argued the 'indisputable model' that a women prime minister would be for our daughters was far more important than Thatcher's policies.

Even Harold Wilson commented last week that if his wife voted Tory this time it would be because of Margaret Thatcher's sex.

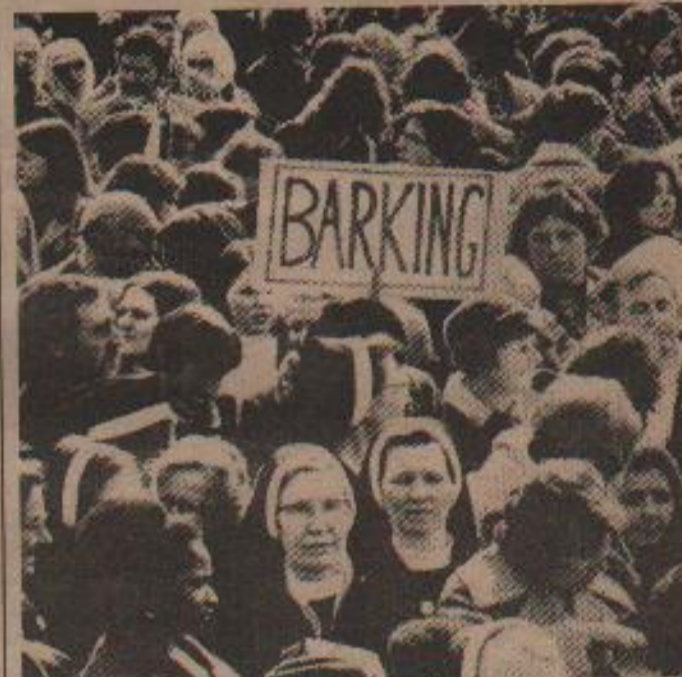
But Thatcher has been eager to play down her sex. 'I got here through ability,' she says, 'Women had opportunities long before women's lib.'

The conclusion? The reason that so few women make it, is that there are so few women with 'ability'.

In the same speech in Glasgow, she went on to extol the virtues of women as mothers. And for one who hasn't exactly been in the forefront of defending rights, she put a strong case for women to have 'the right to stay at home and take care of children if they want to.'

Equal rights legislation will help those 'able' women who can compete with men — the rest had better get on with playing their traditional role and enjoy it. There's no alternative, biologically.

Today more and more women are refusing to accept the myth that women are individually weak, stupid, incapable or inferior. They see the condition of women as a social question. A question of the role women perform and



SATURDAY saw an enormous rally of anti-abortion forces in Hyde Park, London. The reactionaries' mobilisation was doubtless helped by the press which had carried hysterical abortion stories throughout the preceding week.

The prospect of a Tory government will be cheering up the anti-abortion movement too.

the way they are seen.

Women have begun to organise together, through the women's movement, to challenge how the family and class society have forced us into centuries of submission, and to re-discover our history.

Although women have always borne children, historically their social role has not been completely defined by this. Nor undervalued because of it. The development of private property rapidly changed that because then some people accumulated wealth, while others had none. Class society threw up new forms of the family.

Patriarchal forms with men at the head, guaranteeing paternity to ensure property could be handed on to the new generation.

Women themselves — like cattle — became valuable objects for exchange, because they could produce new human beings with potential labour to be exploited.

Gradually women were deprived of any role in social production, more and more limited to their reproductive function.

The advent of capitalism, with its rigid division of labour, and nuclear family, finally assured women's imprisonment in the family.

Through struggle, women have won some changes in the

law.

But legal changes can't end women's oppression. This involves fundamental changes.

It calls for an independent self-organised women's movement to fight for women's needs. No one can win liberation on behalf of women.

At every level women need to organise — in women's groups and campaigns, in caucuses in the unions, and in organisations like the national women's aggregate, recently won at the National Union of Students' conference.

Women aren't the only oppressed group in society.

Class society and capitalism oppresses the working class as a whole.

In a society without classes the conditions for inequality would not exist.

So in fighting for such a socialist society, women share a common goal with all other forces fighting for the end of capitalism.

The old slogan still stands. There will be no revolution without a struggle for women's liberation, and women must organise together to ensure this struggle takes place.

But there will be no women's liberation without a struggle for socialism, so women have to add their support to ensure that this struggle for the liberation of all is carried forward too.



and prejudices that are an obstacle to the way women choose to live. The scale of mobilisation to overturn even the most intimate aspects of social relations is difficult to imagine.

But only by basing itself on such self-organisation can a workers' state guarantee it will not take the bureaucratic path of the existing post-capitalist societies. These leaders fear the challenge posed by the degree of self-activity needed to tackle women's oppression.

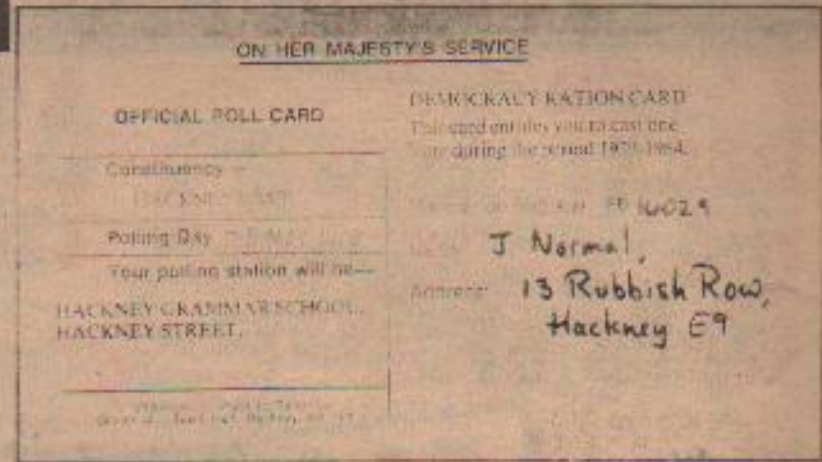


Photo: CHRIS DAVIES (Report)

WRITE US A LETTER — AND ENCLOSE A DONATION

Socialist Challenge

SOCIALISM & DEMOCRACY



'SOCIALISM' must be the most abused word in the history of British politics. What the Tories mean when they talk about 'the socialists' is a gang of bureaucrats who have spent the past five years attacking working class incomes and cutting back badly-needed social services. These 'socialists' are out to put British capitalism back on its feet by making sure that the bosses get the profits they want.

When Thatcher and the Tories say that this election is a matter of 'free enterprise versus socialism' for once they find themselves in agreement with Tony Benn and the Labour lefts (although Callaghan and his right-wing cronies are not so quick to agree).

Would that it were all that easy. Just imagine if a party existed today, fully supported by the trade union movement in this country dedicated to building a socialist society. Then the worst of our troubles would soon be over.

For one thing is sure. With a stretch of Tory Government and renewed economic crisis such a party would quickly convince the majority of working people of the need for a drastic overhaul of the present system. It could take office with the sort of real support (not just in Parliament but in the factories, schools, homes and streets) that socialism is built out of.

But the truth is rarely as pretty as anyone's propaganda. In reality socialists in this country are few in numbers, and even fewer are fighting for the victory of socialist ideas in this election. Far fewer yet again will enter the portals of Parliament — and no self-respecting and honest socialist would be able to show his or her face on the Government benches, whatever party wins.

It will be a long, tough haul before the fantasies of the Tories and the bosses' press about the 'threat' of socialism becomes a reality. An important part of this will be destroying once and for all the myths about 'socialism' and ensuring that every working man and woman at least understands what socialism really is.

We can start by saying quite certainly what socialism is **not**:

'Socialism' is **not** freezing workers' wages while prices rocket and the living standards of working people are cut;

'Socialism' is **not** about setting up 'nationalised' companies which are headed by the same sort of people as the old capitalist firms, exploit their workers in the same way, and carry on as if nothing had ever changed;

'Socialism' is **not** about passing nicely worded laws outlawing discrimination against oppressed people like women and blacks, and protecting the rights of workers, and then letting thugs in blue uniforms attack those who try to make sure that words become a reality.

'Socialism' is **not** about sending in an organised death and torture machine, employing the most modern technology adapted to the cruellest purposes, in order to preserve a 'settlement' that was imposed by force on the Irish people by the most blatant capitalist politicians 50 years ago;

'Socialism' is **not** about using the scarce economic resources of this country to manufacture machines and



weapons to prop up the bloodiest and most reactionary regimes elsewhere in the world;

'Socialism' is **not** jet-setting around the globe to try and save the bacon of every petty-tyrant just because they're good customers for British business;

In short, 'socialism' is **not** Jim Callaghan, Denis Healey, David Owen, Tony Benn and an assorted crowd of other lords, ladies and gentlemen sitting on their backsides in the Palace of Westminster trying to think up excuses for following the same policies as their Tory 'opponents'.

The real meaning of socialism can be summed up in one phrase: it means the mass of ordinary working men and women **taking power**, taking control of their own lives and all those things that determine them.

According to the Tories 'socialism' is a threat to democracy; and Shirley Williams and friends nod in sage agreement when faced with the real, rather revolutionary beast, and not a century-old ghost. But for these people 'democracy' occupies a rather narrow field: one square mile or so that contains Parliament, Downing Street and Whitehall, and another in the City of London.

For those of us not so privileged as to inhabit these corridors the rule of 'democracy' has an iron fist — that of the boss at work, the head at school, the police in the street (and the judges and prison warders afterwards). Did the workers at Dunlop in Speke get a vote to decide whether their multinational employer would smash their lives to bits in the pursuit of profit?

Did the workers at Grunwick vote that they wanted to have scab buses driven through their picket lines at top speed? Did the black community in Southall have a democratic say in deciding whether the Nazi purveyors of race-hatred could invade their community? And how would Blair Peach have voted if 'democracy' had ruled the policeman's truncheon?

'Socialism' would bring about, not a

democracy of the two square miles, but democracy over every inch of the country and for every one of its inhabitants.

In the factories, offices and shops, workers would have their own mass assemblies and freely-chosen committees in which the decisions about their work and livelihood would be taken on a democratic basis after free discussion based on full access to all the relevant information.

Democratic assemblies, free discussion, control by workers' representatives — that is what socialism would put in the place of closely-guarded business secrets, the victimisation of workers who speak their mind, and the tyranny of anonymous and self-selected boards of directors and bankers.

Similar mass assemblies in the local communities would extend that democracy: to those (men, women and young people) who carry out their social tasks in the home; to distinctive communities (like minority groups or nationalities) who have particular problems to sort out; and would take



up broader questions that affect people's lives away from work.

Already capitalist governments around the world recognise that local community self-help groups are cheaper and more efficient than government bureaucracies in dealing with social problems. They are, of course, only interested in this as a means of saving money and are afraid to see such bodies grow. But socialism would not be afraid. In place of bureaucracy, corruption and privileged pressure groups it would put a system that ensured everyone a voice and a vote in important decisions and was most interested and concerned about the least of its members.

This would arise by guaranteeing to all those who felt that their views or interests were not adequately represented in this system — whether minority currents of opinion or especially oppressed groups — basic rights to argue their case and to form their own special organisations to protect their interests and fight for them within the democratic framework.

On the basis of these democratic organisations of working people, regional and national assemblies of their representatives would meet to deal with the broader problems of the economy and society. Parliament and the Whitehall bureaucrats would pale in comparison with such genuinely democratic bodies, resting upon the support and enthusiasm of the working class and its organisations.

Under socialism no one would be a politician and everyone would be a politician, and no one would be a boss and everyone would be a boss. Because no one would have a monopoly to take decisions and run the lives of other people, but everyone would be able to make political decisions and run their own lives **collectively**.

Such a system would not be compatible with concentrating the powers of freedom and imprisonment

and life and death in the hands of a tiny, select group like the police, judges, and the army, as at present. Such groups would represent a constant threat to the new order.

They would inevitably be attracted to the 'old days' when democrats was kept in its place and they had a free hand, and provide a permanent ally for the big losers under socialism — the capitalists — who would be constantly plotting to get back their power and privileges by hook or by crook. The example of Chile shows only too clearly the terrible danger of overlooking this truth.

But such special machinery of repression would also be totally unnecessary under socialism. The existence of a just and democratic social order would massively reduce social discontent. Of course for some time there would still be problems, with those who had been most misled or most ground down under capitalism still acting in various anti-social ways (engaging in crime or using violence to get their own way or continuing to victimise those they were told were 'inferior' in the past).

But what would be needed would be a real effort to change these views and take the heat out of unnecessarily tense situations. Continual wrongdoers would have to be dealt with by forms of treatment which would recognise the wrongfulness of their behaviour and protect their victims but also leave every door open to their reform.

Who could best do this? The bright-eyed lads in blue with sirens screaming and truncheons flashing? Khaki-suited spacemen with fixed bayonets? Bewigged old men with their hearing-aids turned down? That's the way it's done now. But socialism would rely upon the more socially-conscious members of the local community who had grown up, worked and lived alongside the wrongdoers and could understand their actions as well as the need to change them.

Not only would a popular militia have all these advantages, but it would involve only a relatively small proportion of the people at any one time and could be run on a voluntary basis. This would free the immense numbers of blue and brown parasites that presently populate these islands to help build a better life for all, rather than defending the 'good life' for the few.

If the 'socialism' of those whom the Tories describe as 'the socialists' is a sham it is one that is outdone by the 'democracy' of the Tory 'democrats'. Their 'democracy' is for the rich, the powerful, the privileged — in short for the one per cent who don't need it. Socialism fights for the democracy of those whose only weapon is democratic unity and action, those who fought for and created democracy in this country in the first place, and whose struggle is the only thing keeping it alive today: **workers' democracy**.

The real revolutionary beast not the century-old ghost

INTERNATIONALISM — VITAL INGREDIENT FOR SOCIALISTS. GIVE GENEROUSLY

Socialist Challenge

ALL OF THEM PLAY THE SAME SOUR GAME

By Geoff Bell

THE ELECTION campaign began with a promise from the outgoing Labour government that it would raise the pay of the armed forces by 25 per cent. Margaret Thatcher's immediate response was to complain that it wasn't enough. She would give them more.

So here we are in 1979 and the leaders of the major political parties in Britain have a competition as to who can best reward the biggest wreckers of them all: the death-dealers, the bomb-droppers, the torturers.

This election campaign can be compared with others which have gone before. In 1964 there was the youthful radicalism of Harold Wilson, demanding 'Let's Go with Labour and Get Things Done' and holding out the promise of 'the white heat of the technological revolution'.

Idealism was all the rage then. And even ten years later we had Denis Healey promising to 'squeeze the rich until their pips squeak'. Only the naive probably believed him, but at least the promise was made.

This election campaign has seen nothing like that. Even the ritualistic pronouncements about the need for a fair society have been few and far between, and neither Callaghan nor Thatcher has pinned their colours to the banner of equality.

The Tories do not even have an election slogan, while Callaghan's 'Labour is the better way' reflects the cautious moderation, the plodding no-change conservatism of the party leadership.

And yet Britain today is more in need of change than ever. A few figures make the point.

Thus the number of full-time workers earning less than they would otherwise be entitled to in supplementary benefits increased from 130,000 in 1974 to 290,000 in 1976. The number living below the poverty line leapt from 260,000 to 890,000 in the same period. Today more than five million people continue to depend on supplementary benefits to survive.

But such statistics have not figured in the election campaign. Quite the reverse. Margaret Thatcher has screamed from the rooftops about the need to slash public expenditure, and Labour hasn't agreed why it is necessary to spend millions on providing jobs, on better hospitals, or on improved education facilities.

Its unwillingness to take up such issues is hardly surprising. After all, the Labour government itself has taken £8,000 million out of public spending since 1975.

So if the election campaigns of the major parties have been so uninspiring, it could have something to do with the fact that none of them has any real solutions to get us out of the present mess. They are arguing not so much about which party will improve things, but which will make them worse.

That's because they all agree about certain basic things. Higher pay for the death-dealers is just one of them.

The Labour, Tory and Liberal leaders all believe that wage rises should be severely limited, that the same shouldn't apply to profits, that public services should be restricted to a bare minimum, that the country should continue to spend billions of pounds a year on defence, that Britain should be in NATO and the Common Market, that British troops should stay in Ireland, that Scottish and Welsh people shouldn't exercise genuine control over decisions that affect them.

They equally share a consensus that non-white immigrants should be kept out of the country, that women should not have the right to free abortion, that more 'law and order' is necessary, that nuclear weapons and nuclear power stations are essential.

And they all seek to preserve the monarchy, the House of Lords, the sanctity of the family, parental control. The list is endless. But by now the Tory and Liberal leaders all work within the same framework, they all play the same game by the same rules.

Those rules are quite simple. Rule one is that the economy will operate on the basis of free enterprise.

Labour is supposed to oppose this system. So it talks instead about the 'mixed economy'. The 'mixed' bit means that some industries have been nationalised. But in fact these are run by the state so as to service the extraction of private profit.

Rule two is that those who own, control and manage the means of production, distribution and exchange must be afforded protection, which means restricting the rights of those who work for them.

A powerful apparatus based on force exists to back this up. Where necessary, police are used to break up picket lines, judges decree where those picket lines must be placed, and the army is brought in to do workers' jobs.

These basic rules don't just apply to the productive process. They can be seen at work in all areas of society. Take racism. Commonwealth immigrants were encouraged to come here after the war because the bosses needed them. Now they don't. So immigration controls are tightened up more and

more, and the rights of those here already are increasingly under attack.

The police riot in Southall on 23 April made that point only too brutally. But if these are the rules that the Tory, Labour and Liberal leaders play by, the game itself has become somewhat soured in recent years.

What's happened is that those who are supposed to be passive spectators have been spilling onto the pitch in larger and larger numbers.

After the Russian revolution the international working class was corralled back by a series of major defeats — in Germany, Spain, etc. — culminating in the Second World War. The socialist infection had been isolated, the world seemingly saved for capitalism.

Today the situation is rather different. Huge chunks of the world — Eastern Europe, China, Indochina, Cuba — have been taken out of the capitalist market. In other areas — southern Africa, Iran — imperialism is threatened with major reverses.

And in its heartlands — of which Britain is one — it has been unable to inflict the shattering defeats on the working class which it needs to make its profit-driven system effective again.

So the magic solutions wear even thinner. Who today could take seriously the slogan 'back to work with Labour'? Who would be prepared to believe a relapse of Heath's promise to 'cut prices at a stroke'?

General elections sum up this sickness. Voters are asked perhaps ten times in their lives to choose which politicians to distrust less. Never are they given a choice as to what kind of society they would like to live in.

They are not given that choice; but they can make it all the same. Not by complaining, by writing letters, or by voting every five years — but by organising together, working together, arguing together, fighting together, to insist that society is shaped in their interests.

So what happens on 3 May won't make much difference to the future. It matters that a Labour government should be returned because the working class is better placed to settle accounts with its leaders when they are in office. But the future will be decided by what happens afterwards.

The crucial factor will be the continuing struggle of working people to wrest control of society out of the hands of the small minority who presently profit from it and take the power themselves. And that is one definition, and by no means an inadequate one, of socialism.

ON THE A NEW S

THE main feature of the Labour government — at least in the eyes of the bosses — has been its inability to thoroughly demoralise the working class. If there is one thing that's crucial to the survival of capitalism, it is the need to keep up the rate of profit. Today, this requires massive attacks on the living standards of the working class. These can only succeed once the strength and self-confidence of the workers' organisations is mortally weakened.

The past year or so has seen a superficial stabilisation of British capitalism. True, there has been an upturn in the economy, but it's limited. The balance of payments is in the red, but only marginally.

Inflation is down to single figures, and the pound has stabilised. But this is almost entirely thanks to North Sea oil. No real overhaul of the economy has taken place to set Britain on a prosperous capitalist road.

The success notched up by Callaghan in holding down wages through various wage policies and through slashing public expenditure has boosted profits. In one year — between the beginning of 1976 and early 1977 — company profits rose by more than 50 per cent, and the next year they went up a further 10 per cent.

But this has not led to an upturn in investment in basic industry. (Indeed, the Engineering Employers' Federation has just reported that investment in engineering has declined in the past 12 months.) The actual rate of profit averages no more than five per cent as opposed to the order of 15 per cent in the 1950s and 1960s.

As a result we are now on the eve of an even more severe recession than that of 1974 to 1975. The very measures taken to alleviate the last crisis mean that the capitalists' room for manoeuvre will be even more restricted this time.

The last recession doubled official unemployment to over one and a half million, cut workers' living standards by 10 per cent and slashed public expenditure (primarily welfare services) by £8,000m. The question which Labour leaders and the Tories are now fighting over is what measures to

take to avert a further decline. To some extent, account. Already proposals have been put forward as that on output and more radical making wage contracts enforce dropped altogether at least.

But recent success in driving class in driving thereby snatching in living standards Thatcher's alternative. If Labour can't say, then the Tories

The lesson for the clear — whichever power on 3 May we are prepared to fight — living standards.

From crisis to revolution PUTTING THE ECONOMY ON THE ROAD TO SOCIALISM

By Brian Grogan

REFORMISTS of all stripes use the depth of the economic crisis as 'proof' that the country can't afford a decent standard of living for everyone. But this is a lie.

The scientific advances and modern technology which have produced the computer, automatic production, and the silicon chip could easily produce an immediate and continuous rise in the level of economic production, if only they could be freed from the restrictions of the profit-seeking capitalist system.

But in order to unleash this immense potential, and that of the mass of working people, it would be necessary to:

—Declare war on the rich and powerful and the means they use to exercise a stranglehold over the economy.

—Nationalise the banks and other big financial institutions, the big production and distribution (the 'commanding heights'), using workers' organisations and action to break the sabotage of the bosses and take control of the economy.

—Break up the army of bureaucrats and police who run the country on behalf of the bosses by electing a workers' government pledged to uphold the interests of the working class and to base itself upon democratic workers' councils capable of defending themselves against armed reaction.

But on 3 May the vast majority of politically-conscious working people will cast their votes for dyed-in-the-wool reformist supporters of the present system like Callaghan. Yet without the conscious support of these masses of people socialism would be inconceivable.

Experience of oppression and of struggle can change their minds: but it will not do so in an instant, overnight conversion. It will happen in bits and pieces, and will only develop into an understanding of the need for total,

radical change if conscious socialists are involved in those struggles to help put the bits and pieces together.

That is why the road to a workers' government must be paved by the fight of the working class for transitional demands — demands which meet the immediate questions which workers are grappling with but which throw the burden of the crisis onto the back of the capitalists, clearly challenging the capitalist rationale of the economy and the bosses' state.

Today there are nearly 1½ million officially admitted to be unemployed. This isn't because enough is produced to satisfy everyone's needs. For instance, in construction 200,000 building workers are unemployed and 100,000 ancillary workers are idle. But clearly there are not enough houses or hospitals, roads are in a complete state of disrepair, and youth have virtually no recreation centres.

Why are the unemployed not put to work to meet these basic needs? Because what could be produced cannot be sold at a price which will satisfy capitalism's desire for a rate of return on investment. A crash programme of public works, house-building and hospitals, roads are in a complete state of disrepair, and youth have virtually no recreation centres.

Similarly, a simple and effective demand to abolish unemployment is the immediate declaration of a 35-hour week across the board and an end to overtime working, with no loss of take-home pay. Those concerns which are unable to afford this should be nationalised. Immediate targets would be the motor industry — including components — and the construction industry.

A vital complement to this sort of action is the opening of the books of all the capitalist concerns to facilitate workers' control. The reason for this is very simple. Every historic example of a left-wing government (Chile under Allende or Portugal before November 1976) shows that radical socialist

measures in the economy will be met by economic sabotage from the bosses: investment strikes, flight of capital, creation of a black market.

Even such comparatively small measures as nationalisation of the steel industry by the Labour government in 1950-51 was met with such sabotage. Opening the books and the imposition of workers' control would nip such resistance in the bud.

This is the difference with the nationalisation we propose and that which occurs today. The economy is not determined by what happens in this or that individual firm, but by central economic decisions.

The banks are a vital lynch-pin of any economy. In the present state of the economic crisis in Britain, their role becomes even more decisive. Taking their direct role in company finances alone, banks provide the bulk of investment funds. The rest of the financial system also plays an immense role in industry. For example, they hold nearly half of company shares in Britain. Securing control of these is clearly vital for any economic plan.

One of the most blatant, but now happily ever-more threadbare, lies of the Labour government, the bosses and the Tories is that wages cause inflation. But the truth is that wages have continually had to chase after price rises. Moreover, wage rates of every Common Market country, bar Italy, are greater than Britain — but their inflation is less.

Many factors cause inflation. But what has laid the basis for the uncontrollable inflation of recent years has been the particular way in which capitalist governments have responded to the fall in the rate of profits. The typical crisis is a crisis of over-production. It is not that too much is being produced, but rather that more is being produced than can be sold at a price which guarantees an adequate profit.

So governments expand demand by massively increasing credit. This puts to

use some of the economic resources lying idle. But it also fuels inflation. Workers have no responsibility for this. The bosses should be forced to pay for inflation by tying wages to the rise in the cost of living. This is a partial solution which can be extended through forming workers' price committees to monitor price rises.

A government genuinely concerned with the defence of working class interests would control prices and give local price committees full authority to oversee and implement any price freezes. Moreover, basic necessities would be subsidised. Compare these measures with the Labour government's 'price commission'.

In order to finance this, a radical tax could be levied against the rich. Defence expenditure would be slashed. Workers have no interest in 'national defence'. Yet this is the only figure in Labour government projects will rise in social spending. Workers would find a much better defence against their real enemies — private capital — through a simple workers' militia and by organising international workers' solidarity. That's the kind of defence which defeated the US state in Cuba and Vietnam.

These measures would begin to undermine the whole capitalist logic of the economy. And to lead it out of chaos, a workers' government would need effective control of the 'commanding heights'. Nationalising a mere 200 top firms would do the trick: the credit system, essential industries, the biggest industrial monopolies and all big foreign capital.

A state monopoly on foreign trade could prevent capitalist sabotage and ensure control over the economy to serve the interests of the working class. That's how the government could begin to dictate to the remaining capitalist firms — quite the opposite to the place occupied by the nationalised sector today!

FIVE OF LUMP

the next recession. This time to make sure that the workers permanent and severe defeat. The Tories are proposing is a the methods of the 1930s. for massive increases in ment to force down living and the use of the law backed power of the state, to strength of the unions. and file would then find it take action to defend Hence the proposals on as opposed to mass e outlawing of basic ons by making so-called 'marketing' illegal, and the of the closed shop. an alternative is just of bosses' solution. He Thatcher's policies not to bring about a greater the 1930s but, more could lead to massive with the working class, d to the collapse of the in 1974. ders point to Heath's that working class worn down — but ching an agreement n bureaucrats of the Thatcher has been his warning into me of the original toned down (such the closed shop), proposals — like agreements legal by the courts — or the time being e of the working right through cent norm and some of the cuts have given a new lease on em, the bosses

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SOCIALIST CHALLENGE
TRADE UNION CONFERENCE
 on 'Alternatives to the Concordat' and 'Workers Plans',
 26 May, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WCI.
 Further details from TU Conference, SC, PO Box 50, London N1

Socialist Challenge

Socialist Challenge

THE NEED FOR A PARTY

A SUCCESSFUL socialist revolution needs a revolutionary party to preserve the lessons of the past as weapons for the future.

By Bob Pennington

The class struggle does not move ever onward and upward.

From 1917 until 1933 the German workers threatened to shake capitalism to its very foundations; in 1936 the workers and peasants stormed the citadels of Spanish capitalism; in 1956 Hungarian working people took to the barricades against their bureaucratic oppressors.

But when these revolutions were smashed the great movements they had inspired subsided. People who had fought, convinced that social change could be made by their own efforts, then lost heart. In their millions they turned back to their private lives.

The memories of emerging soviets, the confidence of workers control, evaporated under the heat of the new repression.

But the working class cannot afford to start each new revolution from the beginning.

Through its discussions, its literature, and its debates, the revolutionary party has to preserve not just the ideal of the socialist revolution — it has to act as the historical memory of the working class.

Essentially the role of the party is to go beyond the immediate and visible aspects of day-to-day existence. It has to develop an understanding of the fundamental forces at work in society in order to work out and act upon an overall strategy for revolution.

For instance, it has to start from the fact that every major economic, political and social event in late capitalism has increasingly international causes and effects.

This consideration certainly dominates the thinking of our rulers. They have a series of military alliances (such as NATO) and other mechanisms (such as the IMF, EEC, etc.)

which aim to stabilise the national capitalist regimes and contain the world-wide revolutionary process.

Grasping the international character of the class struggle necessarily means building an international party.

To begin the construction of a world party of revolution is a step towards taking power in a single country. Revolutionaries fighting their own ruling class need to be able to draw on the political experience and resources of their comrades in the International.

It is not enough simply to cheer on revolutions in other countries from the sidelines. Every practical political and organisational aid will be required to make sure that their revolution is successful.

In the same way, a revolutionary party educates its militants to grasp the real class nature of institutions — most are apparently neutral — most notably the capitalist state.

This lesson was first driven home to revolutionary Marxists by the events of the Paris Commune in 1871. The soviets

in 1905 Russia then showed what forms of rule the working class needed if it was to take power.

In Germany, Spain and Chile the fallacy of the parliamentary road was paid for with the blood of millions of working people.

The lessons of such events, which have shaped history and mirror future class battles, are not spontaneously understood by the majority of workers. After the boring and alienating grind of day-to-day existence in class society, when the possibilities for change seem remote or non-existent, most people do not dash home to study the Marxist classics.

It is only those who have been won to revolutionary Marxism, and see the potential for revolutionary change, who will carry out the tasks of preparation in periods of lull as well as upheaval. It is they who must prepare for the new struggles.

This does not mean that the revolutionary party is an elite group of remote individuals. The party is the university of the class struggle.

It aims to win every single worker and intellectual, male or female, black or white, to its ranks, with only one condition — that they are committed to the revolutionary overthrow of

capitalism. But it cannot develop a programme to realise its aim unless it can debate and discuss these matters — unless it is democratic.

The democratic centralism of the revolutionary party allows for the fullest discussion in its ranks on all major questions, leading up to a vote.

The whole organisation then applies the line adopted by majority vote, and so the party can collectively assess this experience and decide whether or not modifications or changes need to be made. Thus any minority can be confident that its views will be heard and — if vindicated in the light of experience — adopted by the party.

Needless to say, the party does not in any way attempt to substitute itself for the actions of the mass of working people. It rejects any notion of taking power on their behalf through a coup of some kind.

Instead it aims to build up support in the ranks of the working class and its allies on the basis of its policies, which stand or fall on whether they help the working class to take its own independent road to power.

A revolutionary party is the only organisation which can

bring together the strength of the working class, or women, or youth and of racial minorities and integrate their experience into its overall programme for the seizure of state power.

Socialist Challenge was launched by the International Marxist Group — the British section of the Fourth International — as part of a fight to win common agreement among revolutionaries on the needs and tasks of a united party.

It has won the formal



support of comrades in the International Socialist Alliance, but has found a ready response among many others who are fed up with the sectarianism of the far left.

The new area of great class battles that are opening up before the international working class make such a fight all the more important today.

ROLE OF SOCIALIST UNITY

By Aileen O'Callaghan

SOCIALIST Unity has been unique on the far left in using the special facilities provided by a general election to popularise a programme for taking forward the class struggle.

We will measure our impact not in terms of our vote [which will be small], but by the number of people we have launched on the road of independent working class action.

On those grounds SU's campaign bodes well not only for the future of the fight for socialism, but immediately for the prospect of building a unified, democratic revolutionary party in Britain affiliated to a mass revolutionary International.

What has unquestionably been proved is that standing candidates in the election was the first condition for an adequate intervention by revolutionaries. But in that sense, what Socialist Unity has achieved lies far short of what was possible.

Just suppose that the Socialist Workers Party had agreed to a joint slate. That this

united campaign had allowed the standing of 50 candidates [quite possible] and thus TV and radio time. Then imagine its broadcast in the wake of the murder of Blair Peach.

Instead of our normal audience of a few thousand, we could have explained to millions the reality of police violence, the lessons of state intervention against mass action, and begun a much-needed dialogue between the revolutionary left and almost all of Britain's two million black people.

Whether the next government is Tory or Labour, we are certain to see a further sharpening of the class struggle. At the same time there will be a polarisation within the working class between the entrenched bureaucracy and a developing class struggle opposition.

We go into these conflicts full of confidence, because revolutionary politics — tested out before the masses in the election period — have already helped to equip part of that opposition with the weapons to carry through that fight.

SOCIALIST CHALLENGE EVENTS

THE DEADLINE for this column is midday on the Saturday before publication.

NORTH WEST

WARRINGTON Socialist Challenge group meets regularly. Ring Manchester Socialist Challenge offices for details. 061-236 2352.

GREATER MANCHESTER Socialist Challenge School students who support the paper and would like to get involved in anti-fascist activity, please contact Chris (273 5947, day) or Steve (226 4267), evening, or write to Manchester SC Centre, 14 Piccadilly.

SALFORD Socialist Challenge supporters can be contacted at the Manchester Socialist Challenge Centre c/o 14 Piccadilly, Manchester with a view to forming a Salford SC group.

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

NORTH EAST

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

MIDDLESBROUGH Socialist Challenge sales, Saturday lunchtime near the lottery stand at Cleveland Centre.

Also available from Newshare in Lincrope Road.

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

SCOTLAND

For information about the paper or its supporters' activities throughout Scotland please contact Socialist Challenge Books, 54 Queen St, Glasgow. Open Wed, Thurs, Fri and Sat afternoons. Phone for alternative arrangement (221 7481). Wide range of Fourth International publications.

EDINBURGH Socialist Challenge supporters group meets regularly. Phone George at 031-346 0466 for details.

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

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

MIDLANDS

NOTTINGHAM Socialist Challenge meeting: 'After the election — what next?' Wed 9 May, 7.30pm, at International Community Centre (Room 39). Speaker: Rich Falser.

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

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

YORKSHIRE

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

DEWSBURY Socialist Challenge sales regularly on Saturday mornings in Westgate at the Nat Westminster Bank, 12.30-2.00pm.

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

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

YORK Socialist Challenge is on sale at the York Community Bookshop, 73 Walmgate or from sellers on Thursdays (12.30-1.45) at York

University, Vanbrugh College, Saturdays (11.30-3.30) at Conay Street.

SOUTH WEST

FOR INFORMATION on activities in the South West, write to Box 002, c/o Fulmarks, 110 Cheltenham Road, Bristol 6.

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

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

BATH Socialist Challenge sales every Saturday, 2-3.30pm, outside Macfisheries, Ring Bath, 20298 for further details.

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

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

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

SOUTH EAST

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

COLCHESTER Socialist Challenge supporters meet regularly. For details phone Steve on Wivenhoe 2945.

BRIGHTON SC forums fortnightly on Tuesdays. Contact Mickey on 805052 for details.

LONDON

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

PADDINGTON/N KENSINGTON election night social — 10pm till morning. Follow the results on TV with booze and food provided to sustain you through the night. At Basement Flat, 24 Powis Sq, W11.

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

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

PADDINGTON/N KENSINGTON supporters sell the paper every Saturday at news at junction Parabolic Rd/Vestbourne Park Rd, W11. Also at Ladbrooks Grove Tube, Thur 3 May, 7am and 5pm.

HACKNEY Socialist Challenge group meeting: 'Socialists and the Common Market elections', Thur 17 May, 7.30pm, Britannia pub, Mare St, E8.

BRENT supporters sell every Saturday, 2.30pm, at Kilburn Sq, Kilburn High Rd, London NW6.

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

BRENT Socialist Challenge open forums are held on the first Tuesday of every month at York Room, Anson Hall, Chichele Road, NW2, 7.30pm. Everyone welcome.

HARINGEY Paper sales at Finsbury Park and Seven Sisters tubes, Thurs evening, Muswell Hill and Crouch End Broadways, Saturday morning. Also available at Muswell Hill Bookshop, Muswell Hill Broadway, Vares newsagent, Middle Lane, N5, and Bookmarks, Finsbury Park.

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

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

HARROW Socialist Challenge supporters meet regularly. Details from Box 50, Londer N1 2XP.

WRITE US A LETTER — AND ENCLOSE A DONATION

OUR POLICIES

Labour's foreign policy Sheltering from the winds of change

IF YOU have read this far you are unlikely to be very impressed by the Tories' foreign policy promises of 'A strong Britain in a free world', or the Liberals' 'continued close relations with the United States', and least of all the National Front's frenzied rantings about the 'White Commonwealth'.

But what about the Labour Party? Might not something come of its radical phrases on foreign policy?

On this page we argue why that will not be so and suggest the sort of internationalist alternative that is needed.

By Richard Carver

CRUCIAL to Labour's foreign policy 'is the pursuit of peace, development and disarmament'. That is what the party's current manifesto says and Labour Party members can still be found to defend the proposition — though only with the most Jesuitical of arguments.

'Disarmament' presumably means the manifesto's continued adherence to NATO, the western military alliance. 'Peace' is very much a Pax Britannica, as the accompanying table shows — subduing the restless natives to ensure the stability of neo-colonial 'development'.

But the world in which Labour seeks this threefold aim is no longer what it was. The red which now creeps across the map is the colour of the colonial revolution, not the empire on which the sun never sets.

In its light-headed moments the party will even proudly claim responsibility for this state of affairs. Apart from the irony of any British government taking the credit for dismantling the empire, Labour's claim is simply false.

It was the Tories who initiated the most dramatic decolonisation — the famous

Strangely the Tories seem to have greater reserves of sang-froid and are less extravagant with the use of troops these days. But the Foreign Office under David Owen has seen a return to the age of gunboat diplomacy.

The 1977 Bermuda expedition is a good example. Two blacks were convicted of murder by the colony's all-white judiciary. The Governor was afraid of the population's reaction to the death penalty being carried out so he deferred to London. Owen told him to hang the blacks and let the troops worry

'winds of change' sweeping Africa. Where Labour was

SINCE 1945 Labour governments have sent troops into the following countries on counter-insurgency operations: Greece 1944-7, Palestine 1945-8, Vietnam 1945, Java 1945-6, Eritrea 1948-51, Malaya 1948-60, Malaysia 1962-6, Aden 1963-8, Cyprus 1963-present, Oman 1965-present, Ireland 1969-present. This list excludes open war

(Korea 1950-5), strike breaking at home or abroad (eight times under Labour since 1948), and the following 'internal security' operations: India, Belize (British Honduras — three times), Ghana, Singapore, Mauritius (twice), Das Island, Hong Kong, Bermuda (twice), and Anguilla (twice).

responsible for decolonisation its most obvious feature has been cruelty and violence.

In Greece British troops were used to crush a revolution, while Malaya and Aden became bywords for the most bestial excesses of imperialism.

In some cases Labour simply refused to decolonise. In Java in 1945 it used British troops, helped by Japanese prisoners of war, to crush the Indonesian nationalists and ended up handing the colony back to the Dutch.

It was British troops who occupied Saigon to enable the French to regain control in 1946 — and it was British troops who pacified Palestine in the late 1940s to prepare for the formation of the state of Israel.

about the consequences.

But why should a Labour Party which draws its support from the decent, humanitarian and peace-loving sections of society behave in this way?

Ernest Bevin, David Owen's predecessor in the 1945-51 government, gave part of the answer: "...if the British Empire fell the standard of life of our constituents would fall considerably."

And John Strachey, the Michael Foot of his day, a left-winger turned right, elaborated when he explained that by 'hook or by crook the development of primary production of all sorts must proceed... it was a matter of life and death for the country.'

What they meant by this was



Wilson with Portuguese social democrat Soares — the international counter-revolution.

that production of raw materials in the colonies was the way that British capitalism balanced its trade deficits.

Present policy over Zimbabwe shows all the same features — the Labour government makes a big show of being the decolonisers of Rhodesia, but they have been unwilling to do so except in circumstances which allow a smooth transition from which British business interests can prosper.

The very existence of the Labour Party is based upon the existence of empire. Ironically it was economic strength based on imperial expansion which

gave the British working class movement the power it needed to set up its own political party.

But that imperial heritage has also marked the consciousness of that party indelibly. Even early British Marxists such as H.M. Hyndman were so marked with the idea of their aristocratic position within the world workers' movement that they supported British colonialism in the Boer War.

No wonder then that anti-imperialism played no part in the formation of the Labour Party. From the First World War to Ireland to Zimbabwe Labour has fallen in line with imperialist thinking.

Even party conferences tend to reserve their verbal radicalism for matters of less direct importance to British capitalism, such as Latin America.

When revolutionary currents have emerged within the labour movement it has often been as a result of their intransigent stand on international issues — such as the Russian or Vietnamese revolutions.

To do so on each occasion required a total break with the foreign policies of the Labour Party. To consolidate revolutionaries in the leadership of the working class will require breaking the Labour Party as a whole.

The ABC of solidarity

COMPARE these two examples of how to fight unemployment:

1. The Party in country A fights for controls to protect the economy from imports from country B and so save jobs. The Party in country B does likewise with imports

from country A.

2. Workers in country C learn that their multinational employer based in country D is planning to shift its operations back home, making thousands redundant. They contact the workers at the multinational in D and organise a joint

campaign against all redundancies.

Both are real instances. The first refers to the 'alternative economic strategy' of the Communist Party and many left Labourites. The only question we can ask them is: can we count on your solidarity

for the campaign of Japanese workers against British imports?

The second example refers to Fiat. Trotskyist workers at SEAT, its partly-owned Spanish subsidiary, discovered the redundancy plans and, through the Fourth International, contacted their counterparts in Turin and organised a joint campaign among the mass of the workforce.

Or consider these alternative strategies for fighting the Common Market. Which is likely to be more effective?

1. Your Italian, Belgian and Spanish parties are in favour of the EEC and campaign for its enlargement; your French party favours the EEC but also defends 'French national interests' and is opposed to expanding the community; your British and Irish parties are against the EEC and campaign for their countries' withdrawal.

2. You mount a joint campaign in all EEC member and prospective member countries on a common international platform, which includes the destruction of the EEC and the establishment of a Socialist United States of Europe.

Again these are real instances and again the alternatives are

offered by the Communist Parties and the Fourth International.

The point of these examples is not to blow our own trumpet but to show how internationalism is not just an abstractly 'good thing' but the most practical road to socialism.

We should learn the lessons of the Labour Party discussed above. The reformism of the Labour Party flows not from any law which says that mass workers parties are bound to betray but from the circumstances in which it came into being — in other words the particular position of British imperialism.

Similarly the degeneration of the British and every other Communist Party was not the result of a sudden transnational coincidence but was intimately related to the counter-revolution in the Soviet Union.

And that counter-revolution itself had as its explicit ideology the rejection of internationalism — the policy of 'Socialism in One Country'. The socialist cause still suffers the tragic impact of such a policy — in the war in Indochina for example.

It is relatively simple to outline the sort of measures a workers' government in Britain

could take: material aid to liberation movements, state monopoly of foreign trade and links with Comecon, total embargo on the racist regimes of southern Africa, and so on.

Similarly we can argue, as we do elsewhere in this issue, that the indispensable instrument of socialist revolution is an international revolutionary party. But internationalism is reducible to neither a single organisation nor a putative future programme.

The real test for revolutionaries in Britain is how far here and now they organise solidarity with the liberation struggles of southern Africa or how far they too fall prey to that insinuating British imperialist ideology.

How far they fight on an international level against unemployment and austerity or how far they pose national solutions to these economic problems.

How far they campaign internationally against the EEC or how far they give in to tempting chauvinist answers.

These questions need practical answers. The ones we choose will in large measure determine the sort of socialism we are going to build.



Chinese troops in action — the impact of 'Socialism in One Country'

REACH INTO YOUR POCKET TO HELP MAKE ZIMBABWE AN ISSUE

OUR POLICIES

- 1800 Act of Union, passed in both the British and Irish parliaments, ends Irish 'home rule' and transfers all say on Irish affairs to Westminster. The Act is never voted on by the Irish people — and only bribing of MPs secures its passage through the Irish parliament. Catholics remained banned from political life.
- 1803: Attempted rebellion led by Robert Emmet. A total failure. Emmet is captured, tried and hanged.
- 1816: Legislation passed at Westminster allowing the seizure of the crops and livestock of Irish rural tenants for non-payment of rent.
- 1817: Famine.
- 1822: Famine.
- 1823: Under the leadership of Daniel O'Connell the Catholic Association is formed to press for the repeal of all anti-Catholic laws.
- 1825: Catholic Association is banned.
- 1829: Catholics finally permitted to stand for Parliament.
- 1834: O'Connell introduces a Bill in Parliament for the Repeal of the Union. Defeated in the House of Commons by 529 votes to 38.
- 1840: O'Connell and others establish the Repeal Association and organise a series of mass demonstrations to press for Home Rule.
- 1844: O'Connell and other leaders of the Repeal Association are jailed for 'conspiracy'.
- 1845: 200,000 people attend a meeting in Ireland demanding repeal of the union.
- 1845-6 Between October 1845 and January 1846, 30,000 oxen, bulls and cows, 30,000 sheep, and 100,000 pigs are exported from Ireland to England.
- 1846-8: Successive famines depopulate Ireland through starvation and emigration by something in the region of two-and-a-half million people.
- 1847: Crime and Outrages Act passed at Westminster. Several Irish counties put under semi-martial law.
- 1847: Leaders of the nationalist Young Ireland movement charged with sedition.
- 1847-58: A total of 12 Coercion Acts are passed, giving the government special powers, suspending a whole range of civil liberties such as habeas corpus, the right of association, and freedom of assembly.
- 1848: Young Ireland movement stage rebellion. It fails, and its leaders are executed.
- 1849-50: Over 36,000 tenants are evicted from their holdings.
- 1851: 221,000 emigrate from Ireland to the United States.
- 1858: The 'Brotherhood', later the Fenian Brotherhood, founded to press for the establishment of an Irish democratic republic.
- 1865: Coercion Act — habeas corpus suspended.
- 1867: Fenians stage rebellion — leaders condemned to death.
- 1870: Home Government Association formed to press by parliamentary means for Irish 'home rule'.
- 1872: General election sees 59 Home Rule MPs elected — a majority of Irish MPs.
- 1879: Irish Land League formed to press for tenant ownership.
- 1881: Irish Land League banned.
- 1881: A new coercion measure — the Peace Preservation Act — passed.
- 1881: Charles Parnell, leader of the Home Rule party, and Michael Davitt, leader of the Land League, are imprisoned.
- 1882: A further Coercion Act enacted.
- 1886: Liberal government under Gladstone introduces Home Rule Bill to give Ireland some measure of independence. Liberal Party splits, Tories back armed resistance by North-east Loyalists, the Bill is defeated in the House of Commons.
- 1886: Loyalist mobs launch a series of anti-Catholic riots; 32 die.
- 1887: 87 out of the 103 Irish MPs are returned on a Home Rule ticket.
- 1887: Crimes Act passed against the land agitation; 'temporary' legislation suspending normal rights is made permanent.
- 1891: Leaders of land agitation, the Plan of Campaign, are imprisoned.
- 1892: Home Rule Bill introduced, passed by the House of Commons, but overturned by the House of Lords.
- 1901: Coercion Act passed.
- 1902: Further Coercion Act passed to suppress mounting land agitation. Half of Ireland is now under semi-martial law.
- 1908: Sinn Fein formed.
- 1910: General election sees 83 Irish nationalists elected, holding the balance of power at Westminster.
- 1911: Legislation limiting to two years the power of the House of Lords to veto legislation is passed.
- 1912: Home Rule Bill introduced. It is passed in the House of Commons, defeated in the Lords, and thus due to become law in 1914.
- 1912: Loyalists in North-east Ireland form Ulster Volunteers to resist by force the granting of Irish home rule. They are supported by the Tories.
- 1913: Employers in Dublin lock-out members of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union. Over 100,000 are affected. The government jails the strike leader, Jim Larkin; in one incident the police attack a strikers' meeting, killing two of them. The strike ends in partial failure. Larkin blames the inactivity of the British TUC.
- 1914: Government of Ireland Act passed granting home rule to Ireland but allowing for the possible exclusion of Ulster and suspending implementation of the Act until the end of the war.



The execution of Robert Emmet, 1803



Famine in the 1840s

179 years of the union



Police baton charge against strikers in Dublin, 1913



British repression 1970s style

- 1916: Easter Rising in Dublin. Irish Republic is declared. The rising is put down within two weeks and the leaders are executed. They include leading revolutionary socialist James Connolly.
- 1918: General election. 73 out of 105 seats are won by Sinn Fein. Many Sinn Fein leaders remain in prison.
- 1919: In accordance with the election result the Sinn Fein MPs establish an Irish Parliament in Dublin and issue a declaration of independence.
- 1919: Hostilities break out between the Irish Republican Army and British forces.
- 1920: Government of Ireland Act passed at Westminster, partitioning Ireland and limiting the degree of Irish independence.
- 1920: North of Ireland Loyalists launch pogrom against Catholics; 62 die, over 200 are wounded.
- 1920: British launch full-scale assault on the Irish Republic; Republican suspects murdered, executed, and interned. 750 IRA members and civilians killed by the British between 1919 and 1921.
- 1921: Anglo-Irish Treaty ends hostilities. Partition is agreed, civil war in the South of Ireland sees the defeat of the Republicans.
- 1921: In association with the British government, the newly established North of Ireland government forms the 'B' Specials, an exclusively Protestant paramilitary force, to back up the Royal Ulster Constabulary.
- 1922: Special Powers Act introduced in the North of Ireland. This allows for internment without trial, closure of newspapers, execution without jury trial, and flogging. The powers are to run for one year only.
- 1922-24: Internment in North of Ireland.
- 1923: Special Powers Act renewed.
- 1924: Special Powers Act renewed.
- 1925: Special Powers Act renewed.
- 1926: Special Powers Act renewed.
- 1927: Special Powers Act renewed.
- 1928: Special Powers Act renewed and extended to cover the next five years.
- 1932: Unemployment march attacked by the police in Belfast, two demonstrators shot dead by police.
- 1933: Special Powers Act renewed and made permanent.
- 1935: Loyalists launch anti-Catholic pogrom. Nine Catholics die. When the events are raised in the House of Commons at Westminster discussion is ruled out of order.
- 1938-45: Internment re-introduced in the North of Ireland.
- 1956-61: Internment re-introduced in North of Ireland.
- 1968: Civil rights march in Derry banned by North of Ireland government. Marchers attacked by police. When the events are raised in the House of Commons discussion is ruled out of order.
- 1969: Civil rights march from Belfast to Derry organised by Peoples Democracy is attacked by Loyalists, including B-Specials and RUC.
- 1969: Anti-police riots in Derry. Labour government sends in troops to aid police.
- 1969: Loyalists, B-Specials and RUC launch attacks on Catholic areas in Belfast. Ten die, 150 Catholic homes burnt out.
- 1969: B-Specials disbanded, replaced by Ulster Defence Regiment.
- 1970: Three-day curfew imposed on Catholic Falls Road in Belfast. Four killed by British Army.
- 1971-75: Internment in the North of Ireland.
- 1971: Payment of Debts Act passed in North of Ireland parliament. Permits stoppage of state benefits at source for non-payment of rents and rates.
- 1972: British Army kill 14 unarmed anti-internment marchers during a demonstration in Derry.
- 1972: North of Ireland parliament abolished. Westminster assumes direct control.
- 1973: Emergency Provisions Act replaces Special Powers Act. Trial by jury for 'terrorist' offences is abolished.
- 1974: British (Labour) government announces the expansion of the police, the police reserves, and the Ulster Defence Regiment.
- 1974: Prevention of Terrorism Act passed to cover Britain. Allows for deportation without trial, arrest without a warrant, up to seven days imprisonment without access to a solicitor. Officially described as of a 'temporary' nature.
- 1974: Prevention of Terrorism Act extended to North of Ireland.
- 1975: Members of the Ulster Defence Regiment stop Miami Showband at a road block in Armagh. All are Catholic. UDR members kill three.
- 1975: Prevention of Terrorism Act renewed.
- 1976: Under-cover Special Air Services unit of British Army sent into South Armagh.
- 1976: Prison conditions for those convicted of 'terrorist' offences change with abolition of political status.
- 1976: Prevention of Terrorism Act renewed.
- 1977: British (Labour) government announces a further increase in police strength, new weapons for the police, and an increase in RUC activities.
- 1977: 13-year-old Catholic boy killed in Belfast by a plastic bullet fired by a British soldier.
- 1977: Prevention of Terrorism Act renewed.
- 1978: 'Terrorist' suspect dies in police custody in Belfast.
- 1978: Amnesty International finds Britain guilty of 'mis-treatment' of terrorist suspects.
- 1978: Prevention of Terrorism Act renewed.
- 1979: British (Labour) government increases North of Ireland representation at Westminster.
- 1979: Prevention of Terrorism Act renewed.

OUR POLICIES

179 years too long

THE OPPORTUNITIES for the politicians of the major parties to discuss the issue of Ireland came thick and fast during the election campaign.

By Geoff Bell

From inside Britain there was the constant heckling of Labour leaders, an editorial in the *London Evening News* saying that 'Ireland should be an issue', and a similar statement from Cardinal Hume, the head of the Catholic Church in England.

There was the United Troops Out/Sinn Fein march in Glasgow on 21 April and the attack on it by Orange forces, and there was the assassination by the Irish National Liberation Army of Airey Neave, the Tory spokesperson on the North of Ireland.

From outside Britain came the statement of Tip O'Neill, speaker of the American House of Representatives, that Ireland had been used as a 'political football' by the main British political parties. There was also the newspaper article by Governor Hugh Carey of New York which said: 'We should urge the British Government to develop and announce a strong plan for political and physical withdrawal from Northern Ireland.'

If political encouragement and financial incentives do not succeed in strengthening Britain's willingness to initiate moves towards peace, the US Congress should consider applying the same economic sanctions that are applied against Rhodesia, Russia and other nations for violations of human rights.'

In the North of Ireland itself the pressure came from a different source. In the week from 11 to 18 April, seven members of the British forces were killed and four others were wounded.

This is the highest fatality

and casualty rate the British forces have suffered since the current phase of the Irish national liberation struggle began.

The leading politicians did offer some response to these events. Tory candidate Robert Adley described Carey as 'a latter-day political Al Capone'.

Margaret Thatcher insisted that 'we have never used Ulster as a political football...the Labour Party didn't in Opposition and neither have we', and Labour's Education Secretary, Shirley Williams, described O'Neill's remarks as 'unfair'.

But apart from a 'personal' statement from Liberal deputy leader John Pardoe that Britain should consider a 'phased withdrawal' from the North of Ireland over a three year period, there was no attempt by any leading politician or party to raise Ireland as a vote-catcher, an election issue, or indeed to suggest any way out of the current crisis of British policy in Ireland.

Liberal leader David Steel put it most clearly when he insisted that the North of Ireland was 'one of the few issues on which there was no basic difference between the parties'. But if this states the consensus on Ireland, it does not explain why it operates.

Two other views expressed during the election campaign hint at the reason. One came from a senior Tory, Lord Hailsham. He declared:

'I would say to him (Tip O'Neill) and to Senator Kennedy that they should bear in mind that Britain is an independent country.'

A similar opinion came from the *Daily Star*, whose editorial announced: 'Americans dis-

guise the fact that they're talking claptrap by using long words. Well, here are two simple words of advice for them, delivered in true British fashion: **Belt up!**....'

'Whatever the rights and wrongs of Ulster — and the *Star* believes we are right to keep the troops there for the time being — one thing is certain: it's our business and we don't need ill-informed advice.'

Whether it is the sophisticated tone of Hailsham or the brash vulgarity of the *Daily Star*, the essential message is the same: the North of Ireland

is Britain, we'll deal with it in our way, and everybody else should shut up.

This is the classical attitude that colonisers, then imperialists have always adopted — an arrogant determination to run their colony as they see fit without interference from the outside world.

It is somehow legitimate for Britain to 'interfere in' the events of Iran (as David Owen did with his backing of the Shah) or the Soviet Union (as Britain does with its criticisms of 'human rights' there). But let anyone dare to mention what Britain is up to in the North of

Ireland and all hell breaks loose.

All the major parties are agreed that the North of Ireland will remain British. The fruits of that insistence are shown on the opposite page: government-backed 'coercion', 'special powers', the jailing of its opponents, the killing of those who fight back.

This not only speaks volumes about the nature of British rule in Ireland, but it also illustrates the level of resistance to that rule. Repression would not be needed unless there was a considerable resistance to repress.

Throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries the Irish people voted time and time again for the breaking of the link with Britain, for the right to rule themselves. And throughout that period Britain denied that right.

When resistance became wellnigh uncontrollable, a level of 'home rule' was granted. But the way in which it was granted did not conform to the wishes of the majority of the Irish people, but rather to the violence of the minority who insisted that Ireland should remain British or — if that wasn't possible — then part of it should.

Neither then nor since have the Irish people as a whole voted for the division of Ireland; at no time have they been allowed to.

That is why the 'Irish problem' remains. Until the people of all Ireland are given the right to decide together how that country will be run there will be those who will continue to fight for that right.

At times this may involve only a few hundred, at times it may involve thousands, and at times it will involve hundreds of thousands. Such is what has happened in the past, and such is what is happening now.

The right of a people to self-determination is a principle to which socialists have always sworn allegiance. But all too often, especially as far as Ireland goes, it has remained a 'principle' without application.

The application of it in Ireland today means the immediate ending of the British presence there — to be concrete, the immediate withdrawal of British troops.

There is no way the people of Ireland can decide their own future without interference while there are troops there who insist that the future lies with them.



What to do, what to do

ACCORDING to a number of opinion polls, a majority of the population in Britain want British troops out of Ireland.

Certainly most people are confused, perhaps unhappy about the whole business. They know that there is nothing to be proud of in what Britain has done and is doing in Ireland.

So far, so good. The difficulty arises with the classical British liberal response to the situation in Ireland. 'What to do? What to do?' is the scream of anguish.

This doesn't only apply to that most respected creature, 'the concerned individual'. Too often there is a similar response from those who more or less know what they should be doing.

After all, the prescription is not that difficult to dispense. It starts from the assumption that the major parties will not respond to a troops out sentiment unless that sentiment is organised, visible and active.

From that there follows an acceptance that it is best to look for support for 'troops out' in the labour movement.

This is because the labour movement not only has the strength and power to determine events, but also has a progressive tradition which means that the 'self-determination' basis of 'troops out' is likely to gain a more sympathetic hearing there than elsewhere.

But staffing what the process should be is not the same as seeing that process through. Unfortunately many organisations and many more individuals who believe in self-determination and troops out, and agree 'in principle' how a movement with those aims should be built, become strangely hesitant when it actually comes to it.

But the materials are already there. The United Troops Out Movement, which has been in existence for a couple of years, has over 40 branches in various towns and cities through Britain.

It has enjoyed a modest growth in the last year in terms of active members and probably a larger growth in terms of support. But it is still



minute compared to the task it needs to perform. It needs support, it needs money, but most of all it needs active members.

None can now deny that there is a real opportunity to make Ireland a major issue in British politics in the next year or two.

The best way of taking that opportunity is by accelerating the growth of the UTOM, an

organisation which has already established an open, non-sectarian reputation and one in which all who believe in troops out now and Irish self-determination are welcome.

One of the ways which it is hoped that the UTOM can be built, especially in the labour movement, is through the International Tribunal on Britain's Presence in Ireland. At its final hearing in early

summer, prominent judges and delegates from the labour, women's and student movements will pronounce judgement on the British presence in Ireland.

The International Tribunal can be contacted at 47 Wilham Street, London W11; the UTOM at 2a St Pauls Road, London N1. Don't be an anguished liberal, act now.

Get Together For Ireland

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Ends with Grand Ceilidh, Bar extension until midnight. Tickets £1.50

Proceeds: International Tribunal on Britain's Presence in Ireland

OUR POLICIES

Youth: a new explosive force

'ARE the young lions ready?' asked a 60-year-old Sikh woman before the fascists arrived in Southall the day Blair Peach was murdered. 'Yes,' the youth responded, 'we're ready for the battle'.

It's not surprising that Southall was the scene of a mass show of seething militancy amongst youth. For the youth of this West London borough have come to symbolise the emergence of a new factor in the political scene in Britain: an enormous explosion among young people.

By Dodie Wepler

It was in Southall that Asian youth rapidly organised themselves following the racist murder of Gurdip Chaggar in the summer of 1976. And the independent movement of youth that has appeared in this and other Asian communities has often been an open response to the passivity of the traditional leaders, in the wake of racist violence.

Literally thousands of youth have taken up the fight against the repression they face daily.

West Indian youth have been subjected to one of the most intense, systematic campaigns of harassment and violence undertaken against any community by the British state. The youth have responded in kind. They've been in the front lines in the political mobilisations, like during Ladywood by-election in 1977.

They have been at the receiving end of the new hardware used by the police lines at Lewisham; and in successive Notting Hill carnivals. And they have organised actions in defence of victims of the 'sus' laws, charges of conspiracy and other attacks by the state to demoralise and weaken the militancy of the West Indian population.

But perhaps the most dramatic indication that youth are on the move is the thousands of working class youth who have rallied behind Anti Nazi League banners and flocked to gigs organised by Rock Against Racism.

The discontent of the times is reflected in today's music — from reggae to punk to new wave — which heralds the new youth revolt.

And it is partly thanks to the growth of women's bands that young women are expressing a growing mood of discontent. Rock Against Sexism is out to focus both the anger women feel when they come up against sexism in their political activity, as well as the growing concern about problems of sexuality.

This is an issue which is finding its way into the columns of the music press as well as other youth publications.

While many of the themes which have sparked young women into activity are a testimony to the presence of a strong women's movement — a product of the youth radicalisation of the sixties — the new radicalisation has quite different roots.

Today's youth are not at all the product of a capitalist boom that the 'Children of '68' were. Young people today have been through nothing but endless dole queues, a deepening social crisis, and little prospect of improvement. Black youth, for instance, experienced an astonishing 800 per cent increase in unemployment figures between 1973 and 1976.

The crisis of British capitalism is the backdrop of the search by youth for radical solutions to the problems they confront. Capitalist society has little to offer.

The vision that hard work

and individual achievement in school will bring a rosy future recedes as it becomes evident that school can't train students for jobs that don't exist. When students recognise this, the hard fact that schools are used to discipline and repress the future workforce becomes even sharper.

The family, already straining under the crisis, finds it more difficult to take over where the schools have been unable to cope. And thanks to all the problems the individual family unit is forced to shoulder, youth are not ready to rush headlong into marriage at a time of such financial insecurity.

Not only the sanctity of the family, but all other tenets of bourgeois morality begin to crumble. Traditional political parties hold few attractions for young people condemned to unemployment and misery. Even the state doesn't seem legitimate. It's certainly not the neutral force in society that it's made out to be.

And so, with a new army of youth on the march — more working class in character and younger than in the 1960s — the question of leadership is posed.

The issues which youth are fighting around — for troops out of Ireland, for solidarity with the liberation struggles in Southern Africa, as well as on all the different anti-racist and anti-sexist themes — are a product of this situation.

Youth radicalisation is not being channelled through the traditional organisations of the working class. This has enormous potential weaknesses but one advantage is that youth are not held back by the intransigence of labour bureaucrats.

Revolutionaries have to win the political confidence of youth, for the 1930s showed that a mighty force may be unleashed to other ends if they don't.

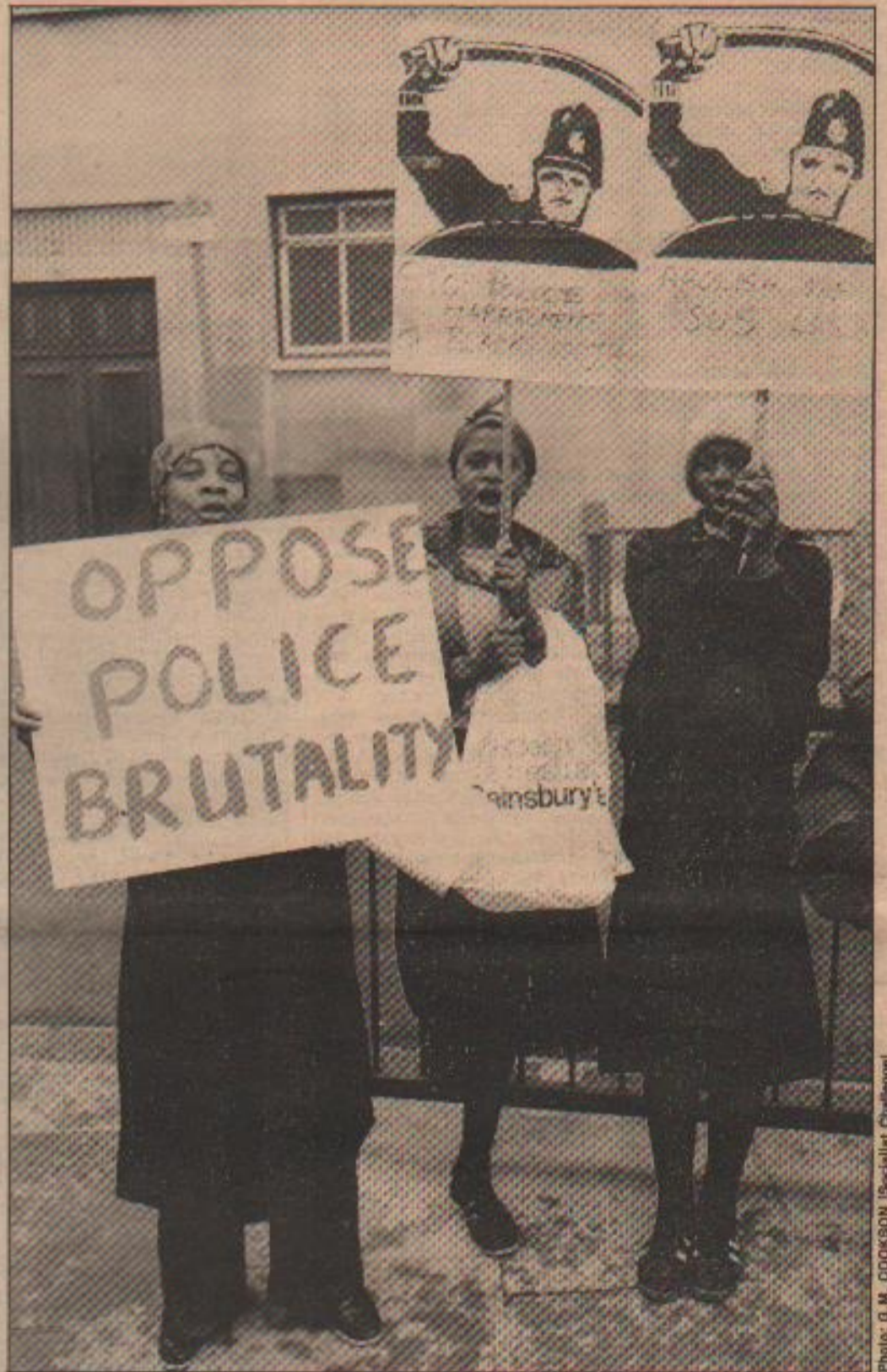


Photo: G. M. OOKKSON (Socialist Challenge)

Not 'citizens' at all

THE youth aren't even second-class citizens — they are not citizens at all.

By Jude Woodward

Dressed up in uniforms and marched off to school — to learn primarily how to work without answering back; to be punished without standing up for your rights; to learn how to be ripped off by a boss; or how to be a wife and mother; and to accept that's the way the world has to be.

The youth are oppressed. They have no legal or political rights. Stuck in the family, with no financial independence, parents call the tune.

Parents can decide whether youth can go out at night, what clothes they'll wear, even how

they'll have their hair done.

Parents — and schools — have the right to physically 'chastise' the young. In other words the right to beat and hit young people if they feel like it, and they do.

Youth, through the age of consent laws, are denied any control over their own sexuality. Young women can't get contraception and they face moral lectures if they get found out.

Young people have no rights to organise. If schools don't like it they can ban the National Union of School Students. If parents don't like it they can drag their sons and daughters out of meetings, youth clubs,

social events.

And schools and parents can often call in the police to help them.

The state has a whole battery of institutions and apparatuses specifically to deal with youth — juvenile courts, borstals, remand houses, probation officers and the police, to name a few.

And the youth can't vote until they are 18.

Youth can't leave home, drink, buy cigarettes — the list of dos, don'ts, musts and mustn'ts, is endless.

And when young people leave school and reach legal majority it doesn't stop.

School leavers face massive unemployment, and pittance from social security, with its special low rates for young people still living at home.

Those who do get jobs will be the lowest paid workers, with little union organisation.

If they get apprenticeships it will probably mean no union organisation at all, and money that it is a check to call pay.

For young women the situation is even worse, because on top of being young and oppressed they are being socialised as second class citizens.

Young women are trained to be wives and mothers, often denied the possibility of technical training in school. And from every news-stand there is a barrage of magazines and papers telling 'teenage girls' how to dress, behave, make up, so they can attract men.

It all works, and works well, in keeping young people in their

place, confining them to the prescribed role that bourgeois society defines for them.

The ruling class has two contradictory explanations for the inferior social position of the young: on the one hand they are weak and helpless, on the other violent and tough.

Working class youth are not seen as incapable of fending for themselves. They are a threat to the very fabric of society — violent, work-shy, hooligans who have to be policed and controlled.

Black youth are muggers, rapists and need extra special authority to be controlled — 'sus' laws and the like.

Either way around — weak and helpless or violent vandals — it ends up in the same place: the young have no rights. Parents, schools, the state are

the ones in control.

As socialists, our explanation is completely different.

We understand that the oppression of youth — as with other groups — flows from the nature of class society.

The concept of 'childhood' is a fairly recent innovation. In societies where extended families were a work unit, this notion of the weak and incapable child didn't exist.

True, the young were seen to be weaker, but they were not cut off from the society of adults because of it. They played a role in tending the crops or the sheep and were integrated fully into the productive life of the family.

Early industrial society began to bite into this. The young, even the very young, were an easy source of cheap

ALTERNATIVE POLICIES DON'T GROW ON TREES. DONATE NOW

OUR POLICIES

labour. Their lack of physical maturity meant they could not demand such high wages; their lack of mobility made them an easy target for exploitation.

The nineteenth century saw a period of the super-exploitation of the young.

Due to working class efforts, Factory Acts ensured that young people were taken out of this highly exploitative labour market.

Working class struggles won them rights to education, and the chance to experience their youth before having to sell their souls to the devils in top hats.

But the interests of the bosses were still there and had to be

served. State education rapidly was little more than the schooling of a passive labour force of the future.

Confined to the family and to schools, excluded from the direct process of production, youth are isolated from the rest of society, and denied any role except as passive children.

In the family and in schools, the youth are subordinated to two processes.

Firstly, because capitalism constantly discovers new technology, requiring a skilled labour force capable of employing new techniques, the youth have to be trained. This training is more than skills for

jobs. Schools prepare future workers to accept the division of labour which defines their role.

Secondly, the youth have to believe in our form of bourgeois democracy. They have to become citizens in capitalist society. But they have to be equally aware of the consequences if they don't.

Learning these things is not some natural process of understanding the world. It is a case of being forced into accepting a repressive world order. An order that divides women from men, black from white, yet tries to create a common national interest

based on the bosses' needs.

Understandably, the youth are resistant to this process and capitalism knows it, so it is backed up by highly authoritarian structures to make sure the youth go through the mill as planned.

When young people decide to fight back, their struggle is firmly anti-authoritarian.

Socialists support this reaction. It strikes against a fundamental aspect of bourgeois society.

We encourage and promote the independent self-organisation of youth. Independent of the state and its institutions;

self-organisation to promote the needs and demands of youth within the broader struggle of the whole working class against its oppressors.

We support the formation of a union in the schools to fight against petty rules, the cane and the belt, the restrictions on teaching methods, the discrimination against women in schools.

We support the organisation of SKAN groups to fight back against the National Front.

We support youth forming Rock Against Racism and Rock Against Sexism clubs to promote the culture of the

young, to fight for social and political facilities, to hit back against the oppressors.

At work, youth should organise within the unions to change the present leaders who have systematically ignored the interests of youth, who have allowed their wages to be no more than pittance, who have allowed the youth to be the first on the dole queues.

In every sphere we support and promote the organisation of young people in struggle. This is what we mean when we say that we support the building of an independent youth movement.

Our future in their hands

IN Iran, it was youth who carried the guns into the streets, and spurred on the masses with their fighting enthusiasm for the uprising. Today in the north of Ireland, British soldiers invading Catholic ghettos get most uneasy once school is out, because it's then that youth are on the streets, and prepared to fight back.

In every revolution that has taken place, youth have mounted the barricades, at the forefront of the workers' movement. The fight for their liberation as an oppressed group in society is part and parcel of the struggle for socialism — for a genuinely democratic society which ends all inequalities and injustices.

It's on this political basis that socialists support the organisation of youth — or women, or blacks. Support is not a moral question. As long as any part of society remains oppressed, the working class itself will not be liberated.

The revolutionary party aims to politically unite all the oppressed and exploited by winning them to a programme which champions their rights. The party is not just an added extra in the struggle for socialism — it's vital.

Youth have a special role in this — they can strengthen it enormously. The future of the party is in their hands; and in their dynamism and enthusiasm.

It's they who can guarantee the party will remain in touch with all the new and critical developments in the class struggle.

But even if everyone agreed that a party is essential, no one would be too quick to say it is an easy task to build one with mass influence in every section of society.

It's especially difficult in Britain, where revolutionaries have been divided for too long, often on secondary issues, and torn apart with sectarianism.

A mass party in Britain will be built through splits and fusions inside the existing working class organisations around the major political events on an international scale.

We want to win youth to this goal, but there are special ways to go about it.

In 1916 Lenin said: 'The middle-aged and the aged often don't know how to approach the youth. For the youth must of necessity advance to socialism in a different way, by other paths to their fathers (and mothers)... that is why we

must decidedly favour the organisational independence of Youth Leagues...

'For unless they have complete independence, the youth will be unable either to train good socialists from their midst or prepare themselves to lead socialism forward.'

Lenin was dead right. The very dynamic and explosive way youth radicalise calls for their independent organisation.

Moreover, youth are making up their minds about their lives, and about society in general. They are in the process of being formed as members of society.

Of course, they don't have the personal and social stability of adult revolutionaries. That's why they need to organise in a way which takes account of this.

It's for all these reasons that Socialist Challenge welcomes the appearance of the youth paper *Revolution*. It's the first step towards building a youth organisation based on a full programme for socialist revolution.

It's through building this kind of organisation that youth today will be best drawn towards our common aim of establishing a mass revolutionary party on an international scale.



The young will be seen and heard

By Redmond O'Neill

MILLIONS of youth all over Europe are beginning to see that capitalism offers them no future. But equally, large numbers turn away from the picture of socialism they see in Eastern Europe.

The youth revolt is deeply anti-authoritarian. Punk and

reggae fans march against the National Front because it stands for banning their music, deporting their friends, and militarising society.

The bureaucratic dictatorships of Eastern Europe stand for much the same when it comes to democratic rights. The bureaucracy regiments

society in order to exclude the working class and its allies from political power.

For these states, the youth revolt is a deadly threat — each new rising of the peoples in Eastern Europe has had the youth in its front ranks: from the students of Czechoslovakia to the young workers of Poland in 1976.

Today in Czechoslovakia new wave music means bands like The Plastic People, jailed because their music rejects the bureaucratic monopoly of power and culture.

In East Germany, Wolf Biermann was refused re-entry because his songs come out for workers' democracy. Socialists today have a job to explain that there are no equal signs between socialism and bureaucratic rule.

One of the first measures taken by the Bolshevik government after the Russian revolution in 1917 was to abolish corporal punishment in the schools. Along with this schools were placed under the control of the local community — the students and the teachers.

It was these laws — including laws on abortion reform, for democratic rights for gays, and so on — that were dismantled by the Stalinist regime. Youth have played a decisive role in all revolutions.

If that potential is to be realised today, we have to demonstrate that socialists stand for equal rights for

youth; for the extension of democratic rights; and for youth to play a full role in building a socialist society.

That means today championing the rights of youth: for a vote at 16; for the right to organise; for adequate social facilities under youth control; against state interference in sexual relations between youth — for the abolition of the age of consent; financial independence; and for the abolition of all forms of corporal punishment.

Law and order target

NONE of the traditional parties have anything to offer the youth.

The Conservative Party doesn't have a specific section on the needs of youth. But the Tories pin the blame for all the muggings, delinquency, and unrest on the youth.

The youth are one of the main targets of the Tories' repressive 'law and order' campaign.

Their manifesto promises 'in certain detention centres we will experiment with a tougher regime as a short, sharp shock

for young criminals'.

Labour doesn't offer much better. Their manifesto does mention youth.

It claims that the Youth Opportunities Programme 'guarantees every school-leaver either a job or a training place or employment experience.' But this will have a hollow ring to the thousands of youth on the dole queues.

And plans to extend education facilities while there are no jobs available will not be welcomed with open arms.



Socialist Challenge

DEFEND THE 'PUBLIC' FROM 'ORDER'

THE LEGEND is that the Public Order Act was passed in 1936 to restrict the activities of Oswald Mosley's fascists.

In the last week of the 1974-9 Labour government, however, it was employed to defend the fascists of the National Front, when an anti-fascist march last Sunday was banned from passing the NF's headquarters in Hackney, East London.

This was a fitting conclusion to the 'law and order' activities of that week.

The police murder of Blair Peach in Southall was followed by denunciations of the demonstrators by all the major parties.

Merlyn Rees turned aside the demands for a public enquiry into Blair's murder and

insisted that the activities of the police would be investigated by ... the police.

Thatcher's response to the events in Southall was a promise that she would back the re-introduction of the death penalty — although Blair's murderers need not fear the hangman's rope.

Massive police operations defended the NF in West Bromwich and implemented the Public Order Act against anti-fascists in East London.

Those who found themselves protesting against police activities were subjected to a campaign of harassment — Socialist Worker was witch-hunted in the Sun for describing Blair Peach's death as murder, and Southall Socialist Unity was questioned

by the police for a leaflet saying the same thing.

Whoever wins the election, all the signs are that such 'law and order' will be stepped up after 3 May.

The response of trade unionists, socialists and the communities under racist attack likewise needs to be stepped up. All such groups will be the targets of a new 'law and order' offensive.

Both Labour and Tories have made it clear that they intend to outlaw traditional union practices such as 'secondary' picketing; both have tried to equate the left — particularly Socialist Unity and the Socialist Workers Party — with the NF; the police murder of Blair Peach and the general 'strong

state' operation in Southall once more spells out the need for black self-defence.

Blair Peach's murder re-emphasised the need for a campaign in the working class movement to demand the disbanding of the SPG. There is also a need for a trade union enquiry into the events in Southall on 23 April.

Most importantly, the visible growth of state repression in the last couple of years, highlighted most clearly in the past two weeks, means that militants must once more put to the fore of their activities the defence of democratic rights.

The mass resistance shown in Southall is as good an example as any to follow.

We say... Put Labour back in the dock

SOCIALIST Challenge comes out a day early this week, so that the paper can be used on 3 May, the day of the general election.

This isn't because we think that the result of the election will make fundamental changes in everything that matters in the next five years. The form of the next government won't in itself determine whether the living standards of people rise or fall; whether the racists are finally driven from the streets; whether the young unemployed continue that way; whether troops are withdrawn from the North of Ireland; or whether women's limited abortion rights are further restricted.

These questions will be decided in the same way that we have seen events developing in Southall. What was crucial in the mass defiance was the lead given by all those who provided a militant and united answer to the racists in and out of uniform, in and out of the main political parties.

Of course the result of the general election will have an important bearing on whether working people will refuse to accept the vicious policies put forward by both the Tory and Labour leaders. A vote for Labour represents a class vote. It is the working class voting for the party it sees as its own, against the party of the bosses.

This doesn't mean that every vote cast will be in agreement with Labour's policies. In fact, a significant number of working class voters will abstain, demoralised victims of the government's measures.

Furthermore, it will be easier to fight for a socialist alternative to the left of Labour when this party is in office. When Labour forms the opposition, it poses the alternative.

It is that why we are for the return of a Labour government, it is also why we are voting for Socialist Unity where it is standing in safe Labour seats. During the election Socialist Unity has, in a modest way, begun to outline how that socialist alternative can be organised, and what policies it will be based on.

Socialist Unity has not been used as a narrow sectarian exercise. Nor has it been used to put over abstract propaganda with no relationship to the struggles presently going on.

Rather Socialist Unity has been used in the election to promote the type of unity shown in Southall, and to promote the type of united organisation that is vital on every issue that concerns the working class.

Socialist Unity has argued that it is possible for militants to work together and to fight back together. A vote for Socialist Unity is a vote for the policies that can bring this about.



Young Nazis greet anti-racists in East London last Sunday — police protection was there in plenty

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