

# Socialist Challenge

**Attack on unions, blacks, homeless ... everyone**

# FIGHT FOR ALL OUR RIGHTS

**THE TORIES** talk about a fair balance between rights and duties. They want to take away rights and impose duties. That was the message from Parliament this week.

That's why they jacked up pay for the police and army and deny a decent wage to teachers.

**Trade Unions.**

They aim to attack the rank and file strength of the labour movement by making picketing ineffective; breaking up the closed shop which safeguards working conditions and limiting trade union democracy by postal balloting.

**Black People.**

More black families will be permanently separated. Thousands of black people who want to come to Britain will be deprived of their rights as workers and citizens.

**Housing.**

Councils will be forced to sell off council houses to those that can afford them, depriving those who can't of a home.

**Taxes.**

To cushion the rich they want to invite asset strippers into the ship yards and aerospace factories and choke off money to our already inadequate social services.

The Tories don't want to carry out this attack on basic rights alone. They are looking for collaborators.

They won't have to look far. They are queuing up already.

Len Murray was first in line — a cosy three hour chat with Jim Prior before the new Employment minister had even changed the locks on his front door.

Next was Joe Gormley of the miners' union 'altering his stance' to make the best out of a bad job.

Already the union bosses



are trying to disunite the trade unions — the main fighting force the working class has.

The talks should be stopped immediately.

Tony Benn says he wants to build an opposition to the Tories. That's good. But it

has to be based outside Parliament as well as inside. In action not just in words. Like supporting the teachers and power workers.

What is needed is the unity of all those prepared to fight back against the Tory

government's policies. Unity between the working class and the oppressed, between public and private sector workers, between Labour Party and trade union activists.

Let's unite to defend basic rights.

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**International Rally AGAINST THE BOSSES' MARKET, FOR A SOCIALIST EUROPE**

Speakers: Leaders of the LCR/LO slate in France, Tariq Ali candidate in West London.

FRIDAY 1st JUNE, 7.30pm. Portchester Hall, Portchester Road, Paddington.



# EDITORIAL

Socialist Challenge, 328/9 Upper Street, London N1 2XQ.  
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## The Tory Queen's Speech

THE QUEEN'S SPEECH proved less of a spectacle than the Cup Final. Subtlety, rather than high drama, was Thatcher's emphasis. The promised moves towards strengthening inequality duly appeared — the cuts in direct taxation, council house sales, the attacks on comprehensive education — but any measures to curb union rights will be preceded by full and lengthy 'consultation' with the TUC leaders.

Thatcher's approach is hardly surprising. Despite the size of the Labour defeat, it is not just socialists who are wary of Thatcher. In their pre-election coverage, leader-writers in *The Economist* made it clear that they had little enthusiasm for the right-wing strategy threatened during the hustings by the wilder elements in the Tory ranks.

Such concern is not with the principle of union-bashing, but its tactics. This is why the Tory government is promising 'full consultation' with the union leaders before any legislation attacking the traditional rights of trade unionists is put on the statute book.

If the Tories did not know it before, their civil servants will have told them by now that their problem is not how to deal with the Moss Evanses of this world but how to give Evans something with which he can deal with his rank and file. The memory of the Ford and lorry drivers' strikes are still fresh — strikes which did not come from a conscious decision of the TGWU leadership to turn militant, but were a consequence of the membership's militancy.

In that context it would be madness for the Tories to declare immediate war on the trade union bureaucracy. From the experience of the Heath years the Tories know that no amount of legislation can succeed if the strength to oppose it stretches from union leaders to the rank and file.

Accordingly the tactics behind the Tories' union policy are not all that different from those practised by the Labour government. 'Agree or else', they say to the union leaders — but instead of threatening a Tory government, as Labour did, the Tories threaten legislation.

But already there was enough in the Queen's Speech to spell out what is really involved in such schemes. The attacks on the National Enterprise Board and the various schemes designed to stave off unemployment mean longer dole queues. The policies on comprehensive education and council houses involve a further cut in the 'social wage'; the nature of the tax cuts marks a further stage in making this most unequal society yet more unequal.

The truth is that the Tories are dedicated to engaging in class warfare, even if the Labour and trade union leaders shrink in horror from the phrase.

Ultimately a direct attack on union rights will arrive. It will arrive because the crisis of British and world capitalism necessitates significant cuts in the living standards of working people. The danger is that the Tories will make these attacks when and where they choose, in the most favourable climate, at their most favourable time. To be seen to be 'consulting' with the union leaders is one ingredient in developing the right climate.

Instead of talking to Thatcher and Prior, Len Murray and the TUC's time would be better spent in talking with the teachers and arranging how the TUC can assist their current wage struggle. If the TUC leaders prefer to talk to the Tories, they should bear one thing in mind: the only reason a hangman offers 'consultation' with a condemned prisoner is to ensure that the prisoner will walk to the gallows quietly.

# HOMENEWS

## Did you know they elected your leader last week?

By Steve Potter

IT WAS a sombre occasion.

Last week in a crowded room a proposition was put. Nobody spoke against it. Nobody voted against it. It was done. The leader of the eleven million strong British labour movement had just been elected unanimously.

As the meeting of the Parliamentary Labour Party began, Jim Callaghan was able to declare, without opposition: 'There is no vacancy. I think it is healthy for the Parliamentary Labour Party that it is known that there is no vacancy.'

The 267 Labour MPs who had been convened to agree with Callaghan had been elected by the sweat and votes of millions of workers. Yet the current rules of the Labour Party permit this tiny group to elect a leader of a movement which these millions created.

To add insult to injury the man they re-elected had led the movement to electoral disaster by pursuing the most right-wing social-democratic policies since MacDonald in the '30s.

It was unsurprising then that there would be widespread sympathy for the view advanced by Tony Benn the day after the 'election' took place.

After putting forward the need to build an opposition to the Tories in Parliament (see facing page), Benn went on to declare that the labour movement should examine: 'How to study and analyse the experiences of the last five

years, especially the relationship which existed between the Labour Government, the Parliamentary Party, the National Executive and the annual conference, so that we can apply the lessons learnt to the future work of the party.'

The proposal accords with that of many Labour Party activists whose strategy for socialism rests that of winning the labour movement to left policies. The guarantee of such policies being put into action is the simultaneous fight for accountability of the party structures to the members.

Chief among the demands for reform of the party are:

- The election of the leader of the party by the Labour Party conference instead of the current election by MPs.

- Election of the Cabinet or Shadow Cabinet.

- That the PLP, whether in government or opposition, be bound by the decisions of the Labour Party Conference.

- That MPs should be subject to automatic reselection.

Any such proposals are always greeted with shrieks of horror by the right wing of the party. These 'democrats' would go to any length to stop the thorough democratisation of their party.

Benn himself has fought against his local Bristol party adopting the policy of election of the leader by the whole party.

There are good reasons for the right's reaction. Such a radical package would be a

big step towards involving the working class far more directly in politics.

Of course the democratisation of the party would not solve the fundamental problem of how any left-wing government would be able to carry out its programme in the face of massive hostility from the ruling class and its state. The balance sheet of Chile is not part and parcel of the proposals to reform the Labour Party.

Neither, unfortunately, is there any common conception of how to fight for these measures immediately.

Benn in a speech in Birmingham before the leadership elections declared that there should be no personal recriminations as to the record of the last five years.

Decoded this means: 'I will not conduct a campaign throughout the labour movement to remove Callaghan and his supporters from their posts.'

Yet this is exactly what is needed. The main fight for everybody in the labour movement today is to build an opposition to the Tories. But the simultaneous fight to remove the right wing of the labour movement on the basis of their record of the last five years is indispensable if such an opposition is to be built.

At every turn Callaghan and his allies in the trade unions will attempt to block that opposition. However democratic the structure, sabotage by these leaders, like Scanlon's overturn

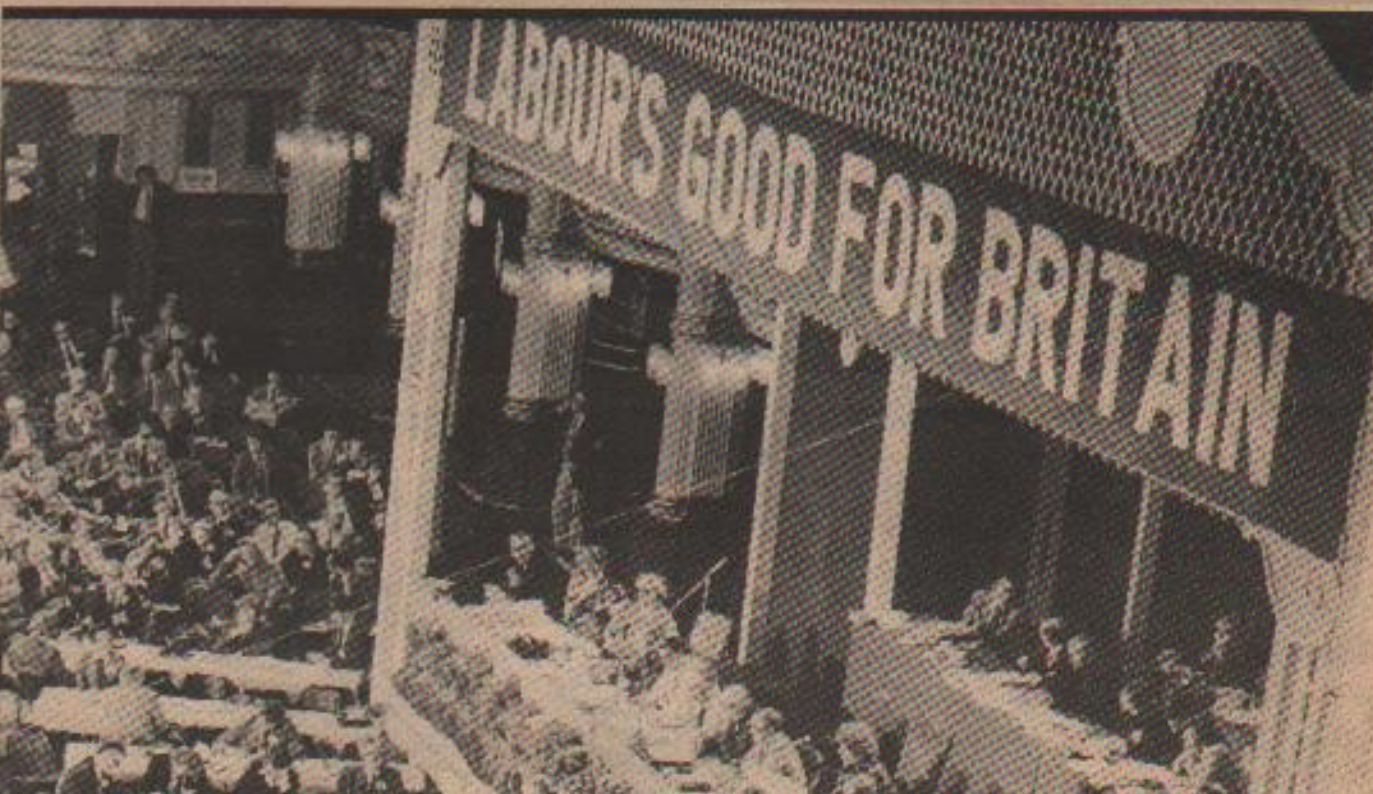
of AUEW policy at the 1977 TUC, will go on unless they are removed. They would rather see the Tories in power than find their own positions in the labour movement threatened by a mass fighting movement.

To build such a movement requires that the left organise from top to bottom inside both the Labour Party and, even more importantly, in the trade unions. These lefts who say that they want to see the Tories out and a new leadership for the labour movement should be put on the spot as to whether they will play a full part in leading such an opposition.

Otherwise we may find that once again the mirage of a left government replacing the Tories obscures the need for the fighting opposition that can transform the labour movement into a weapon for the working class.

Socialists and the Labour Party. Joint IMG/ISA school. Sunday 20 May, YWCA, Great Russell Street, London WC1. Under the auspices of the London World Affairs Group. Registration 1pm. £1 in advance for papers. Further details phone Mistle (Essex) 5141 (evenings).

(The school is part of a series organised for those who have signed, or are interested in signing, the appeal for revolutionary unity by the IMG/ISA).



## OUR POLICIES

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

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

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

- To begin to fight for the creation of a unified and democratic revolutionary socialist organisation which can, through an application of united front tactics, begin to be seen as an alternative by thousands of workers engaged in struggles. Such an organisation should be based on the understanding that:

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

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

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

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

**4** The Communist Parties in Europe are in crisis. Neither the 'Euro-communist' nor the pro-Moscow wings have any meaningful strategy for the overthrow of the capitalist state. New revolutionary socialist parties are more necessary than ever before. Conditions can only be built by rejecting sectarianism and winning minimal democracy not as a luxury but as a vital necessity. This means the right to organise factories and

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## BENN PLAYS LEFT CARD

TO NO-ONE'S great surprise, *The Economist* supported Margaret Thatcher and the Tories in the general election. But it was obviously a difficult decision, only reached at the end of a 4,000-word editorial the week before polling.

The problem was, 'a vote for Tory in 1979 could mean the election of a perfectly awful Labour government by 1984 — one far worse than the respectable alternative available today, a house-trained party gone rabid in the kennels of opposition'.

Could Tony Benn's return to the back benches, less than a week after Labour's defeat, let loose the mad dog *The Economist* fears?

By Clive Turnbull

Benn's 'left' credentials were gained in Labour's last period of opposition, when he:

\*marched with the UCS workers against Heath's lame duck policy;

\*addressed Institute for Workers Control conferences announcing that 'the crisis that we inherit when we come to power will be the occasion for fundamental change and not the excuse for postponing it';

\*promoted 'Labour's Programme for Britain' in 1973, which included the nationalisation of the top 25 companies, compulsory planning agreements, and industrial democracy.

Of course Wilson and

Callaghan never had the slightest intention of implementing such policies. Just as they rode roughshod over TUC and Labour Party conference decisions on the EEC referendum, Clay Cross, cuts in social spending, and many other issues.

But Benn remained in the government throughout all this, recognising his 'full collective responsibility for all decisions taken by the Cabinet since we came to power'. He even meekly accepted the sack as Minister for Industry after the gutting of his own Industry Bill.

Benn has identified himself not just with 'industrial democracy', but also with freedom of information,

abolition of the House of Lords, and reform of the Labour Party itself. Through his position on the Labour NEC he has appeared as the defender of party policy in government.

Yet on every issue it was Cabinet policy that took precedence over party policy. Benn never resigned.

Even when fellow Labour left Eric Heffer was sacked for opposing the EEC, Benn remained.

Three junior members of the government resigned rather than stomach increased parliamentary representation for the Ulster Unionists. Benn remained.

H Block, the Bennett report, Owen's support for the Shah of Iran, over 1½ million unemployed, social spending slashed... Benn remained.

Harold Wilson's resignation over increased prescription charges in 1951 seems ultra-left extremism by comparison.

Benn's statement declining nomination for the Shadow Cabinet called on Labour MPs to discuss 'how to mount a principled and effective opposition in Parliament to the policies and philosophy of the new government in so far as these policies harm the interests of the people whom Labour represents'.

It is not surprising that this has aroused cynicism even from some Labour MPs after the Labour government's record of 'harm to the interests of the people whom Labour represents'.

'Opposition in Parliament' didn't defeat the Tory government in 1974. It was the hundreds of thousands who struck and demonstrated against the Industrial Relations Act. The workers who occupied and fought for their jobs. The miners who battled against Heath's incomes policy.

It was the mass struggle of the working class that defeated the Tories.

The *Economist's* fear is not of a rabid Benn. He might foam at the mouth, but he doesn't bite. The fear is that Benn's left rhetoric might infect sections of the working class into taking such mass action again.

Benn has called for 'no personal recriminations about the past five years'.

But the Labour leadership wasn't elected to attack working class living standards. Callaghan and his supporters, including Cabinet member Tony Benn, have paved the way for Thatcher.

The next period will require a fight for an alternative leadership alongside the struggle for alternative policies.

### Riddle One

IF THERE is a consolation about the return of the Tories to government it is that at least we may be in for a few scandals. Leaving aside the current goings-on at the Old Bailey, the Tories have always produced the best scandals.

The one that immediately springs to mind is the Norma Levy scandal of May/June 1973. Prostitute Norma revealed that among her clients were two members of the Tory government, Lord Lambton and Lord Jellicoe.

These two worthy lords were immediately sacked from the government, but a still bigger scandal then threatened when Norma said that she had another client who was a much more senior Cabinet member.

Much persuasion must then have taken place, because the name of the 'third man' was never officially revealed, although anyone with an ear to the ground knew the name of the bouncer who had so besmirched the Tory environment.

### Riddle Two



AMONG the names missing from Thatcher's Cabinet is Geoffrey Rippon, MP for Hexham. In 1973 Rippon, then Minister for the Environment, was thought to be a likely successor to Heath if the latter failed to win the looming election.

But suddenly Rippon's star began to fade, and today he is safely far away as the leader of the Conservative Group in the European Parliament. But now even that sinecure is to go, for Rippon is not standing for Europe.

Why oh why has this one-time potential leader of the Tory Party now been finally relegated to Westminster's back-benches? And why oh why has the media not commented on this fall from grace? Do they know something you don't?

### Slow boat to China

ALWAYS willing to give a helping hand, *News from Nowhere* has a solution to the Tories' problem — what to do with Ted Heath. Our recommendation is that he should be appointed as British ambassador to China.

Ted is known to get on well with the Chinese bureaucracy, and the importance of a posting to that country is explained in a leaflet currently being circulated by the Workers Institute of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought.

The leaflet exclusively reveals: 'In 1977, the international dictatorship of the proletariat was established under the leadership of our party, the Communist Party of China, covertly, applying new forms of warfare, in particular electronic and satellite warfare.'

This is excellent news for us all, but more is to follow, for the leaflet reminds us that in 1977 'beloved Chairman Hua pointed out: "The international situation today is good, it is very good, not just good or fairly good".'

Of course, in 1977 there was a place called Cambodia and Vietnam was about to be 'taught a lesson'. Just like the British miners three years previously.

### Thatcher v Saatchi

AT the end of the 18th century a British general boasted of how he had 'arranged to increase the hostilities' between Orangemen and Irish nationalists.

A contemporary example of such a scheme could well surface soon, masterminded by none other than Saatchi and Saatchi. For the Tories advertising agency last week acquired a new client in the shape of Fianna Fail, the governing party in the South of Ireland.

For 30 years Fianna Fail have used the O'Kennedy-Brindly Irish-based agency. But that company has now been taken over by Saatchi and Saatchi, whose chairperson Kenneth Gill was quick to take up the Fianna Fail cause, describing the Irish economy as 'the fastest growing in Europe'.

Such remarks are unlikely to please Thatcher or make her attempts to attract investment into tottering British industry any easier. But Saatchi and Saatchi cannot be blamed: isn't healthy competition what Thatcher's revolution is all about?

### Hell Thatcher!

NATIONAL Front greets Tory victory! Not, in this instance, our own home grown Nazis but the French Front National. Jean-Marie Le Pen, the President of the FN, which tends to be rather more open about its fascist sympathies, made this declaration on the British election result:

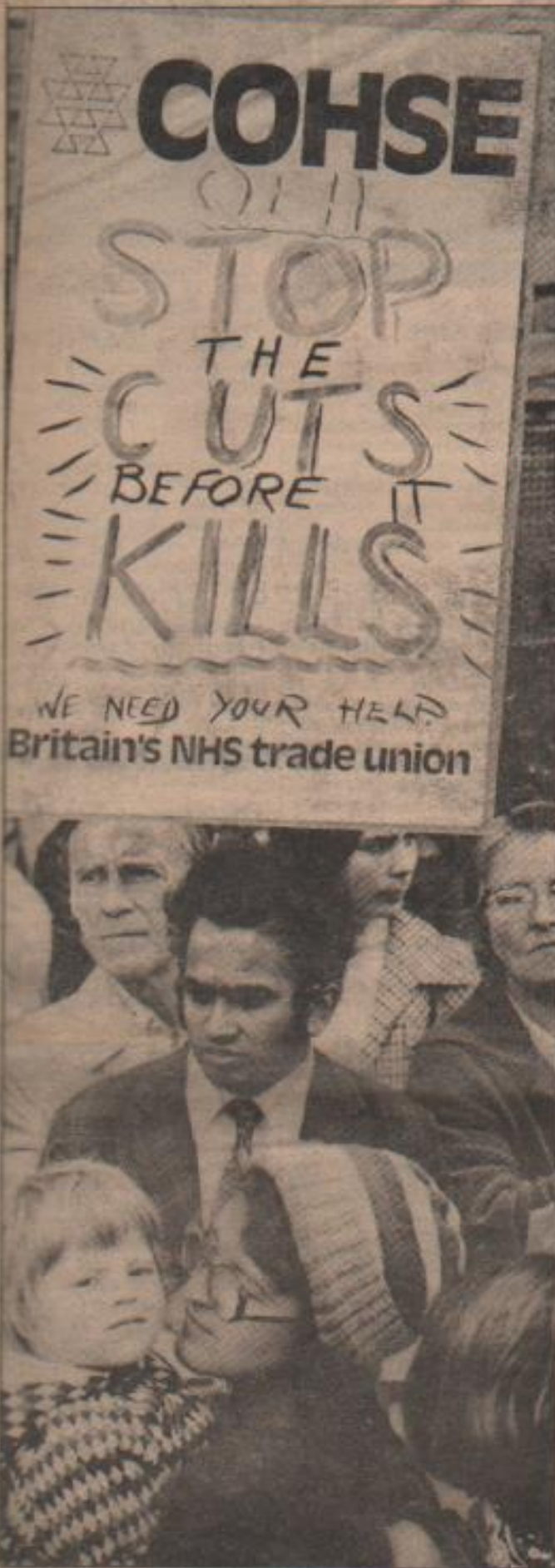
'With the success of the English Conservative Party and its leader, Mrs Thatcher, I greet the first success of the right in Europe for a long time, over pauperising socialism.'

'With a similar programme [an end to immigration, reduced taxes, an end to the trade union dictatorship, struggle against the Soviet Union, the relaunching of investment], the list of the national right will have a comparable success in the European elections.'

ALTERNATIVE POLICIES DON'T GROW ON

TREES. DONATE NOW





# As Thatcher unveils her plans Public sector first in firing line

THE PUBLIC sector unions, most of whose conferences meet over the next few weeks, are going to have to face some harsh facts about life under a Tory government.

Defending basic trade union rights in the public sector — particularly the right to strike and picket — will be vital if public service workers are to resist a Tory offensive against public and social services.

By Pat Sikorski

It was under Labour, during last winter's public sector strikes, that picketing came under attack.

It was under Labour that union leaders entered into discussions about the possibility of surrendering the right to strike in the public sector in return for empty promises of comparability.

It was under Labour that the rights of health workers to take industrial action were threatened by 'emergency services' codes.

But Labour didn't simply pave the way for a Tory offensive on basic union rights. It also did the spadework for them in slashing £8 billion off public spending, closing over 130 hospitals, throwing teachers, nurses and building workers on the dole. Thatcher will be aiming to push home the attack — hard.

Whilst the police and army will be spared no expense ('law and order' being a Tory priority), further cuts in jobs and services will be accompanied by outbursts against unemployed 'scroungers' and attacks on social services as 'luxuries we cannot afford'. Thatcher has made it quite clear that she will halt 'unnecessary waste'.

Whilst Thatcher will be going out of her way to talk with the General Council of the TUC before rushing into any confrontation in the private sector, cash limits will be steadily squeezing the public sector.

A determined and united response by public sector workers is vital. For it's when

public sector workers start taking action, exposing all the Tory clap-trap as a cover for cutting the welfare state to ribbons, that the Labour movement as a whole can be won to action.

During the winter we saw the tremendous potential of a public sector alliance, when one and a half million public sector workers struck on 22 January and maintained action for six weeks over their pay claim.

A similar alliance was a real possibility against the cuts when 80,000 marched in London in November 1976.

Nor are problems on pay solved by the comparability commission. Alan Fisher of NUPE sold this to his membership as the way to solve low pay and get a minimum wage without having to fight for it.

But comparability will achieve a few pounds at best for full-time workers, and this will be eaten up by the price increases that will come from Tory increases in VAT.

The lesson drawn out of the comparability commission must be that only a national minimum wage can end low pay, and that this will only be won by action. The main task is to prepare the unions for all-out action behind a claim which is drawn up by the members to meet the real problems they confront — which have nothing to do with comparability.

A resolution to NUPE conference demanding an £80 minimum wage, a 35-hour week, and a recall conference to decide what to do with any employers' offer shows the way to begin this.

But to fight the cash limits, whether for better pay or in defence of jobs and services, the union leadership's retreat on basic union rights must be halted.

Both the NUPE and CPSA conferences will consider resolutions opposing the Concordat. Fisher has declared the

Concordat dead, but the document was an agreement between the unions and government — it did not specify whether Labour or Tory.

Within three days of the Tories taking office, Len Murray was talking to Jim Prior about all the same issues contained in the Concordat — picketing, compulsory balloting, getting inflation down (wage cutting) ... in other words, 'the Concordat is dead, long live the Concordat'.

The only thing the Tories want to talk about is taking away our rights — the right of health workers to strike, the right to effective picketing, the right to decide whether to strike without outside interference.

One resolution at NUPE conference calls for the sacking of Fisher and chief local government negotiator Ron Keating for their role in the pay claim last winter.

Throwing out those union leaders who are willing to talk away basic union rights, whether they be national negotiators or branch secretaries, is still a fight that has to be waged.



THATCHER'S Minister of State for Social Security (Disabled), Reg Prentice, in an earlier role — defending the imprisonment of the Shrewsbury Two building workers in 1975.

## New alliance needed in student movement

By Pamela Holmes  
IMG student organiser

RHODES BOYSON has been given responsibility for further and higher education in Thatcher's government. This appointment should clear up any lingering doubts about what students can expect from the Tories.

Anyone who still needs convincing of Rhodes Boyson's right-wing credentials need only talk to students from Highbury Grove school in North London where he was headmaster of a particularly repressive regime.

The appointment of this reactionary, a founding member of the National Association for Freedom, makes it clear that the Tories mean to include students and the education system in their offensive against the working class. When Thatcher attacks teach-

ers, that 'honourable profession', we can hardly expect students to be exempted.

Unfortunately, the door to such an attack on student unions was opened under the Labour government.

Since 1974, the Broad Left leadership of the NUS has led the student movement in the direction of organisational and political concessions to central government. Their position on student union financing and autonomy, for example, opens the way to rigid government control of union development and activities by way of pseudo-public accountability and national negotiations on funding levels.

In this situation, the major question for students is how to defend their union because, despite the defeats since 1976 and the demobilisation of students under the Broad Left leadership, students retain their

organisation and know that it provides them with their only means to defend their interests.

The main line of divide is between those who support the present direction of the NUS and those who oppose it; between those who say 'Yes, we'll share responsibility for the capitalist crisis, we'll help you camouflage and administer cuts in public spending' and those who seek to defend the gains of the working class.

At the NUS conference at Easter an open letter, signed by members of the Broad Left and the Union of Liberal Students, was circulated. It called for a new alliance, 'embracing all those on the left active in the student movement who are arguing and fighting for fundamental and radical change in society'.

We agree but we say that such an alliance must be firmly based on mass action, rejecting

any attempt to make workers and students pay for the present crisis, on the need to unite with the labour movement and other sections of society in the fight against the Tories and for an open and democratic education system.

It is on this basis that we will be participating in the conference that has been called to discuss a new alliance and we hope it will see the birth of a socialist alliance that will unite students against the attacks of Rhodes Boyson and his cohorts in the Tory government.

\*National SSA meeting, Saturday 19 May, 11am, Birmingham Poly Students Union, 9 Westbourne Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham.

\*Conference on the new alliance, 26-27 May, Polytechnic of Central London.

## ASLEF buries claim

By P.M. Grant  
ASLEF, Paddington branch

LAST year the rail union ASLEF attracted the wrath of Fleet Street by staging a couple of one-day strikes in pursuit of a responsibility allowance of 10 per cent for all footplate grades. Now that demand has been buried by the union leadership.

Instead both ASLEF and the National Union of Railwaymen (NUR) have accepted the railway staff national tribunal's decision. In accepting these findings the national executive committee of ASLEF has overturned the hard fought policy of 'no classification' of footplate grades.

The responsibility payment will only be paid to drivers of the main line trains.

Nor are the new wage rates anything to shout about.

Drivers' assistants will be paid only £50, shunting drivers, £71.70, and drivers £74.20.

The union leaders justified the dropping of the original claim on the grounds that a rail dispute would damage Labour's election chances. The prospect of a Tory government was used to argue that railworkers would be worse off if they didn't settle before an election.

Now railworkers have the worst of all worlds — lousy rates of pay, and a Tory government which could well chop up the railways even more.

The only good to come out of the whole business is the increasing disillusionment with the union leaders now being felt by the membership. The necessity of a rank and file fightback is more obvious than ever.

**SEND US A CHEQUE TODAY HELP BUILD THE LEFT IN THE UNIONS.**



# HOME NEWS

## Sale of the Century

# Tory con on council housing

SALES of council houses, already introduced by Tory-led councils, will be further encouraged by the new government, which is likely to put financial pressure on all councils to carry out this measure.

The Tories no doubt believe these plans were a vote winner. But their offer means soaring rents for remaining tenants, and even less hope of a home for those on the waiting lists.

By Jeff Richards and Geoffrey Sheridan

The offer sounds attractive. Why pay rent forever with nothing to show for it, and a town hall bureaucrat telling you what colour to paint your front door?

Much better, say the Tories, to give tenants the chance to buy at discounts of from 33 to 50 per cent. That way, they claim, ratepayers and taxpayers will save too as subsidies are cut.

But sales will make things worse for those who can't afford to buy. The best homes will be those that sell — this means the houses with gardens, which cost less to maintain and where the rents have long since covered the cost of building.

This will put up the rents on newer properties, where tenants will have to meet more of the costs themselves. Interest payments to money-lenders on the money borrowed to build a new house or flat can easily come to over £30 a week.

Councils will be left with the poorest properties and council housing will be stigmatised as 'welfare housing'.

With the best properties sold off, there will not even be the hope of a transfer.

The supposed savings could be an illusion too, when tax relief on mortgages is taken into account. And many buyers would find themselves saddled with bigger expenses than they expected, when the cost of doing their own repairs is taken into account.

The Tory sales scheme is a device to set council tenants against each other, pitting those who want and can afford to buy against the rest, and against those in need: the million households on the waiting lists, the three million households in sub-standard housing, and the record 50,000 families a year becoming homeless.

If the Tories did win votes on this issue, it was because the Labour leadership could offer no alternative except more of the same: rising rents, increasing debts to financiers, and bureaucratic town-hall management.

The number of council houses started last year — only 68,000 in England — was the lowest since the war. Existing houses are decaying into slums at a faster rate than they are being repaired.

Yet the outgoing Labour government sliced housing spending by 19 per cent in its term of office — more than any other item of public spending.

And its housing Green Paper suggested that new investment in housing would fall by a further third up to 1986.

Meanwhile the financiers and money-lenders continue to collect £2,000 million and more each year in interest on the money borrowed to build council housing in the past.

At the same time there are over 300,000 building workers out of a job, land lies idle in the

inner cities, and the brick makers have enough unused bricks stockpiled to build tens of thousands of homes.

The Tories' plans for cuts in government spending will undoubtedly trim council house building even further, and the axing of direct works departments — already pursued by Tory councils — will further lengthen the dole queues.

If the banks and finance houses were taken over and the outstanding debt cancelled, money could be made available for a crash programme of housing to let at cheap rents.

With public ownership of the land and the building industry under workers control, we could soon solve the 'housing problem' which is in fact a problem of rent, interest and profit.

And those who still want to own their own homes could do so, without being in debt all their lives to building societies.

But the local elections, ushering in Labour councils in many areas, has set the scene for confrontation between local and central government.

North-east Derbyshire council, which includes Clay Cross, imposed a ban on council house sales within hours of Labour gaining control. The new Labour leader of Tameside council declared that any applications on his desk to buy a council house would be refused.

The Tory government intends to introduce a Housing Bill which, according to their election promise, will give all council tenants the legal right to buy their home, and is likely to back this up by cutting housing subsidies to councils that decline to oblige.

In short, the Tories will not be stopped without collective resistance.

It was the councillors of Clay Cross during the last Tory administration who showed the possibility of resisting the fiat of government when they refused to implement rent increases and mobilised the support of working people for their position.

With directly-employed building workers in the firing line, Labour councillors would have little difficulty in winning support among their own employees for a fightback against the Tories.

But Labour councils cannot be depended on to initiate a struggle against the wholesale disposal of council homes.

Their performance under the Labour government — of implementing cuts, opposing the council workers' pay claim, and hiking up rates — has accustomed them to the tune piped from Westminster and the City.

So the labour movement and community organisations should waste no time in starting the fightback on the housing front, and within that socialist answers to the Tories' policies will need to be spelt out.



HOUSING in Wonderland. Not satisfied with selling off existing council houses, the Tory-controlled Greater London Council has built some 350 homes for sale on the Ferry Lane estate in Tottenham — and most have remained empty for up to two years.

That's why they've been occupied by Housing Action, which is

demanding the empty homes be made available to those on the housing waiting list, and all sales be stopped immediately.

The houses are on sale for £19,750 upwards, which means an income of at least £6,400 a year to purchase them on a mortgage, and even then the GLC loses well over £10,000 on each house it sells.

## Class rule in the schools

By Denny Fitzpatrick

THE TORIES are pledged to cuts in education of at least £280m, the greater part of which will no doubt be through school closures — a policy initiated by the Labour government which will involve the axing of thousands of jobs in the schools.

Labour's rationale was the fall in school population, but the Tories are not so crude. They recognise that the demand for small community schools can serve a particular function in deprived areas.

Provided the Tories can restore the direct grant and independent schools, and repeal the 1976 Act which requires local education authorities to submit plans for comprehensives, they will be able to protect the privileged classes.

The principal way they will

take on teachers and parents will be on questions of standards, testing, and results.

Hence the pledges of Mark Carlisle, the Education Secretary, to end mixed ability teaching and to introduce a parents' charter — a convenient way of covering for the real reasons why school students fail in the present system.

It will also provide the pretext for closing schools.

The Tories' target for the axe will be unpopular schools in disadvantaged areas with poor exam results, while a strait-jacket will be imposed on the type of education schools can offer, with the emphasis on traditional values.

The campaigns that have been launched against school closure, involving thousands of teachers, parents, and school students, have begun to come

to terms with the issue of who and what education is for.

The battle to maintain local schools is the first step towards controlling what goes on in the schools.

Many parents who have joined the local struggles against closure have been critical of the failure of their own children at school.

Yet it is apparent that if government policies go through — if a school is closed, staff are transferred, redeployed, or made redundant, and curricula cut while class sizes remain unchanged — then education cannot be in their interests.

The conference of the All London Campaign Against School Closure, to be held on Saturday 19 May, will examine the alternative to closure and include discussion on schools and their communities, and what is happening to education.

It is being held at the Tate and Drama Centre, Princeton Street, off Red Lion Square, London WC1, beginning at noon.

The first national conference on school closure is scheduled for October, and it is hoped to obtain wide sponsorship from the labour movement.

If we are to advance the interests of the community and not the Treasury, socialists will need to make demands on finance a central part of the fight for alternatives in education.

That means demands such as: an end to the cash limit system; protection of social expenditure through automatic increases to keep pace with inflation; an end to loan repayments; and nationalisation of the education supply industry and the banks.



## WHAT'S LEFT

SOUTH London labour movement conference on Ireland. Sat 19 May, Goldsmith's College, Lewisham Way, SE14. Speakers include Michael Farrell (People's Democracy) Workshops, discussions.

BROADSIDE THEATRE, a London-based touring group requires 1, a second administrator (graphic design skills an advantage); 2, a versatile female performer (includes singing). Both full-time long-term career limited. Write giving full details of experience, skills, politics, approach to theatre and reasons for wanting to work with Broadside to: 58 Holborn House, Holborn Place, London WC1. For further details phone 01-473 2501.

MENSTRUAL regulation and abortion facilities — a working party to prepare info on menstrual regulation, well woman clinics, day care abortion units, abortion law. All willing hands welcome. Tues 22 May, 7pm, NAC office, 374 Grays Inn Road, London WC1. 288 1055.

INSTITUTE of Race Relations public meetings. Sturt Hall or Campaign Against Racism in the Media 'Open Door' TV programme, 7 June, 8.30pm. Steven Rose on 'Mrs Thatcher and human nature: do our genes make us Conservative?'. 20 June, 8.30pm, IRR, 247/249 Pentonville Road, London N1.

MALE socialist wants share flat in London. East End preferred. Phone 470 2581 (day) for Nail.

WOMEN Against Racism and Fascism national meeting. Sat 3 June, Methodist Church, Lancaster Rd, nearest tube Ladbroke Grove, 10am-5pm. Open to all women active against racism and fascism.

SHEFFIELD showing of Prisoner of War, Prisoners Aid Committee Film. Speakers: Provisional Sinn Féin, Revolutionary Communist Group. Weds 23 May, 7.30pm, Room 743, Sheffield Polytechnic, Ford St.

FORD UK Workers Group (Combine) benefit disco, plus live entertainment from musically talented Ford workers. Sat 19 May, 7.30pm, Roebuck Pub, Tottenham Court Rd, London WC1. All welcome.

NORTH WEST regional Socialist Feminist Conference on Education. Bolton Institute of Technology, Deane Rd, Bolton. Sat 19 May from 11 to 4.30pm. 50p unwaged, 75p waged.

REACH INTO YOUR POCKET TO HELP FIGHT BACK



# HOME NEWS

## Tory Parliament to attack abortion rights

By Sarah Roelofs

THE ODDS are that by the middle of June this year a Private Member's Bill — or even a government one — aimed at lowering the upper limit for abortions will have had its first reading in Parliament.

Since the legal wrangles of last year the National Abortion Campaign has suspected that a major attempt to further restrict women's control over their own fertility was being planned.

A lowering of the time limit was an obvious choice and sure enough the election campaign saw late abortion stories splashed in full shock horror technicolor throughout the media.

On closer, more serious examination the stories lose credibility and ironically show why the time limit should not be reduced (see box). But the propaganda having been made, the statements followed:

\* Professor Richard Beard (Obstetrics, St Mary's Hospital, London) proposed that Parliament should seriously consider whether the present 28 week limit should be reduced to 24;

\* David Steel (who introduced the 1967 Abortion Act) said that he expected and would support such a move;

\* Mrs Scarisbrick (anti-abortion LIFE's administrator) hoped the limit would be reduced to 20 weeks;

\* Diane Munday (of the British

Pregnancy Advisory Service, a supporter of abortion rights) said that she would be 'happy' to see the limit reduced to 24 weeks.

By this time the euphemistically termed 'women's vote' had become a last minute election issue. Subsequently, the first woman Prime Minister was elected with one of the most right-wing and, according to voting records, anti-abortionist parliaments for years.

Tory rhetoric promised a series of attacks on basic democratic rights. Divide and rule tactics will mean that the areas picked out for special attention will be those where the working class is ideologically weak. In that context women's rights fit the bill.

Against this sombre background the National Abortion Campaign will be holding its conference on 9 June.

**Socialist Challenge** supporters will be arguing for the conference to initiate a 'no lowering of the time limit — defend the 1967 Act' campaign with the aim of getting the maximum number of people participating in mass action to defend the limited gains for abortion rights. Already the British Medical Association has

defended the 28 week limit.

The obvious climax for activity would be a demonstration in the autumn to coincide with the second reading in Parliament of the expected restrictive legislation.

Last year the Women's TUC agreed to organise a demonstration in the event of any restriction being introduced — a stand later supported by the TUC.

The Labour Party's conference has twice supported a woman's right to choose.

Few women ever undertake an abortion lightly, let alone a late abortion. Indeed, late abortions are often necessary because of extensive delays in the NHS referral procedures.

Accordingly one of the main defences against upper time limit restrictions will be NAC's campaign for mandatory provision and extension of abortion facilities.

NAC is fighting for day care (out-patient) abortion clinics to be set up in every area. Menstrual aspiration, an extremely safe and early abortion technique recently legalised but ignored by the media and the NHS, should be an integral part of such clinics.

Abortion rights promise to

be one of the first targets of the Tories. Defence of those rights should therefore be one of the first campaigns taken up.

\*NAC conference, Manchester, 9/10 June. Details from NAC, 374 Gray's Inn Rd, London WC1.

**THE ELECTION 'horror stories' were selective and dishonest:**

\*The first focused on a late abortion at Wanstead Hospital. Wanstead is in a local health authority with the smallest percentage of NHS abortions in the London area.

In 1975 patients at the hospital were 'subjected to long delays in receiving appointments, hostility from nursing staff and the final possibility of refusal of a termination when it was too late to seek the operation elsewhere' (Abortion Rights Tribunal, 1977, NAC and NCCL).

\*The Barnsley story concerned the case of the woman with German measles and the foetus allegedly 'alive' after the abortion. But, if the woman concerned was in contact with German measles after 15 weeks of pregnancy, why did she have to wait another two months for the operation?

## Defend free speech on Ireland

PAT Arrowsmith, the Independent Socialist candidate for Cardiff South-East in the general election, is due to appear in court in Cardiff on 21 May.

Pat faces charges arising out of her two arrests during the election campaign.

On 14 April she was arrested in a shopping precinct during a street meeting and charged with 'obstructing the highway', 'insulting language likely to cause a breach of the peace', and 'obstructing a police officer in the course of his duty'.

Pat was talking about British policy in Ireland at the time.

On 2 May the second arrest took place. Pat was picketing an Army Recruitment Office in Cardiff when she was charged with obstruction.

The two arrests have aroused considerable concern in the labour movement. Signatures on a petition calling for the charges to be dropped include the Communist Party and Plaid Cymru candidates in Cardiff South-East, the secretary of the Cardiff Trades Council, and

Gordon McLennan, general secretary of the CP.

Nor is Pat's arrest an isolated incident. During the election campaign a number of those who heckled Callaghan on Ireland were arrested; others were physically attacked by Labour Party stewards.

Accordingly, the issue of 'free speech on Ireland' requires a dual defence — against state attacks and against those in the labour movement who also deny the freedom to speak out on British policy in Ireland.

As to the Arrowsmith case, the first stage in the defence campaign is a demonstration in Cardiff on 19 May. This will leave Sophia Gardens, Cathedral Road, at 2.15pm.



'I CONSIDER there is only one correct sentence for someone who not only deliberately breaks the law but encourages others to do so.' Magistrate Roderick Romain's comments on the case of London squatter Piers Corbyn leave little to the imagination; try to rehouse yourself and we'll rehouse you at Her Majesty's pleasure.

Corbyn was found guilty of resisting the mass eviction of squatters in Huntley Street. He has been bailed until this Thursday for reports. Piers would appreciate it if as many friends as possible could turn up at Marylebone Magistrates Court on 17 May for his sentencing.

**PIERS IS INNOCENT O.K.**



## No nukes explosion hits Torness

By Paul Atkin and Paul Hubert

AS THE last occupiers left the site of the planned Torness atomic plant in Scotland last week, one of the construction workers flushed his anti-nuke badge from a passing land-rover.

Five thousand people from as far away as Brighton and Exeter, as diverse as the SNP, Hands off our Wild Life, and the Anti Nazi League, had that weekend put the anti-nuke movement on the map in Britain.

The atmosphere was like a rock festival — ageing hippies

on the loose — which made a welcome change from marching down Oxford Street chanting at bemused tourists.

But the weekend also revealed the weaknesses of this potentially huge movement. On the evening of Saturday 5 May, massive meetings took place to plan for the occupation on Sunday.

Some wanted to remove the fence around the site completely, and argued for sabotaging equipment as though it were a matter of principle. Others said this constituted 'violence' and was morally rather than tactically wrong.

For those of us who held neither position, the most disturbing thing was that some of the anarchists unilaterally decided to sabotage equipment in the compound — not holding themselves accountable to either the Torness Alliance or the majority of the occupation.

There is no means of

overcoming divisions in the movement over tactics without democratic decision-making.

Also disturbing was the jeering which met a proposal by some SWP members to send contingents to leaflet Dunbar and join the Edinburgh May Day march.

The Scottish NUM and TUC are opposed to Torness being built and want a moratorium on new nuclear stations. When Labour was in government this was used to justify a strategy of lobbying Benn in the Department of Energy.

With Tory David Howell in office that approach is looking less valid to many. But that an orientation to the Labour movement is valid is shown by the plan drawn up by Vickers and Parsons workers to save jobs — by working on alternative energy sources.

Use of direct action must be linked to mobilising that latent support in the labour movement.

## Scargill meets his match

By Helen Singer and Val Jones

BIRMINGHAM's May Day rally on 7 May started off as a fine example of traditional male politics, with speakers including pin-up defender Arthur Scargill but not a single woman. It didn't end that way.

On the Women's Liberation stall we had prepared a pin-up poster (taken from Socialist Challenge) of our May Day

playmate Arthur full frontal, with a graffiti board for comments.

When Scargill sent down one of his lackeys to deal with us, he explained in the course of a heated argument that the Yorkshire miners were ignorant and had to be bribed with pin-ups to read their paper!

And when Scargill himself

was challenged, he responded with undisguised contempt: 'I'm really pleased about the poster, now I'll be able to pull all the birds'.

As Scargill began to speak at the rally, at least 50 women stood up and began to chant: 'Scargill is a sexist, he divides the working class, women hold up half the sky, we're not just

tits and arse.'

Others marched to and fro in front of the platform with a big placard reading 'Scargill supports the exploitation of women'.

We were amazed by the amount of support we won. As a result the organisers were forced to allow us a speaker, Tricia Davies. She explained:

'Pin-ups are part of the way in which capitalism exploits the working class. They are the most visible part of the sexism which alienates so many women from socialist politics.'

'We want to build a united socialism. The way to do that is not to keep quiet about things that divide us but to find a way to talk about them. We want socialism, not sexism.'

IF YOU HATE THE TORIES, DONATE TO THE PAPER



# HOME NEWS

## The Tories and immigration

# How far dare they go?

IT MAY HURT, but it's for your own good — that is how the Tories have been trying to justify their proposals for tighter immigration controls to black people in Britain.

By Rich Palsler

Pre-election advertisements in 14 black newspapers claimed that because of white fears over immigration, 'Conservative policy is to encourage harmonious relations by relieving this fear'.

The argument in itself is phoney. If the problem is the racism of whites, then you can hardly fight that by capitulating to it with more controls on black immigration. The problem is not immigration but racism.

But coming from a party which jumped as one to defend Thatcher's statements on 'swamping', and was happy to allow Enoch Powell to stay in its ranks despite his racist outbursts, this argument is pure hypocrisy.

Further controls on immigration will just fuel racism — aiding the Tories' preparations for an offensive against the labour movement by further dividing it.

But just how far they can go along this road without unleashing a monster they cannot control is another matter.

At the very minimum the Tories will end the 'concession' made by Labour in 1974 which allowed husbands and male fiancés into Britain. The entry

of parents, grandparents and children over 18 will be cut.

There will also be increased harassment of black people as the hunt for 'illegal immigrants' is stepped up.

No doubt Edward Heath would like black people to 'turn the other cheek' to these attacks on their democratic rights, since it is all in the interests of better race relations.

A new Nationality Act, also promised in the Tory manifesto, is certain to be introduced. This would probably have the same effect as Labour's previous Green Paper proposals — allowing Britain, like the other EEC countries, to base its immigration laws on citizenship.

Roughly speaking, citizens of the UK and colonies who are regarded under the present immigration laws as 'patrial' (largely white) would become British citizens, whilst non-patrials (largely black) would become 'British-overseas citizens'.

According to Tory spokesperson Willie Whitelaw, this would also 'remove some of the possible sources of future immigration'.

A new Nationality Act would, moreover, be a step in a far more important project — moving towards the EEC system of migrant labour with



none of the civil and democratic rights of British citizens.

Finally, there is another door left open by the Tory manifesto commitments — 'help for those immigrants who genuinely wish to leave this country'. If limiting black immigration prevents worsening race relations, why not reduce the number of black people in Britain and gain still better race relations?

The Tories insist that there is no question of forced repatriation. But once help is being given to those who want

to leave, why not a little encouragement? Why not cuts in tax relief for dependants, a change in the state system of social security?

Certainly 'encouragement' of this type would be needed to achieve any substantial reduction in the black population. The number of individuals receiving assistance under the present immigration laws has never gone beyond 250 a year between 1972 and 1976.

But if that gives the Tory Party a bigger racist card to play, it also ups the stakes considerably. It will not take

long for the fascists to see that 'encouragement' to black people to leave can take the form of more assaults and more bricks through windows.

And after Southall there can be no doubt that the black community is equally capable of mounting a fierce resistance.

Conservative Central Office told us that they did not envisage any new measures to aid black people leaving the country. Tightening the existing controls and preparing a new Nationality Act will be their first step — beyond that they will be cautious.

## Appeal to fight discrimination

From Birmingham Action Committee Against Racism in Clubs

THERE have been continuous reports of racist colour bars in Birmingham nightclubs.

The latest and most blatant example is that of Polyanna's, which has been served with a discrimination order under the Race Relations Act.

The management response has been to defend its quota system. This activity is sometimes disguised in the form of a no hats or turbans rule.

The Action Committee exists to mount the broadest possible campaign in the labour movement to combat racism in the clubs. We call upon all organisations and individuals opposed to racism to sponsor and support this campaign.

Sponsors of the Action Committee so far include (in a personal capacity):

Moss Evans [General Secretary, TGWU]; Arthur Scargill [Yorkshire NUM]; Trevor Phillips [President, National Union of Students]; Tony Benn MP; Stuart Hall [Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, Birmingham University]; Reverend David Jennings [AFFOR]; Maurice Ludmer [President, Birmingham Trades Council, editor of Searchlight]; Martin Brooks [Secretary, Birmingham Labour Party]; Councillor Brian Bird; David Spilsbury [Birmingham NUT Executive].

## Fighting back

WITH the election of a Tory government the Campaign Against the Immigration Laws (CAIL) has moved into top gear.

Up until now it has concentrated on modest activities such as producing a newsletter which seeks to provide anti-racist bodies around the country with news and information vital in fighting the racist immigration controls.

Now it is trying to help build a link between these organisations by co-ordinating a picket on 30 June of each of the detention centres for 'illegal immigrants' — prisoners of race.

By strengthening the links between those already active on the issue, CAIL aims to prepare the ground for the kind of broad-based national campaign which will be vital if the new proposals coming from the Tories are to be defeated.

The campaign will be approaching black and anti-racist organisations with the aim of getting joint sponsorship for a conference along these lines.

Socialist Challenge urges supporters to win your union branch and ANL to affiliate to CAIL, and contact the campaign about organising a picket at the nearest detention centre to your town. Write to CAIL, Box 133, Rising Free, 182 Upper Street, London N1.

## Behind Whitelaw's smile

THE TORIES campaigned on law and order and tighter immigration controls. Labour said they would repeal the 'sus' laws, and that immigration controls were already adequate.

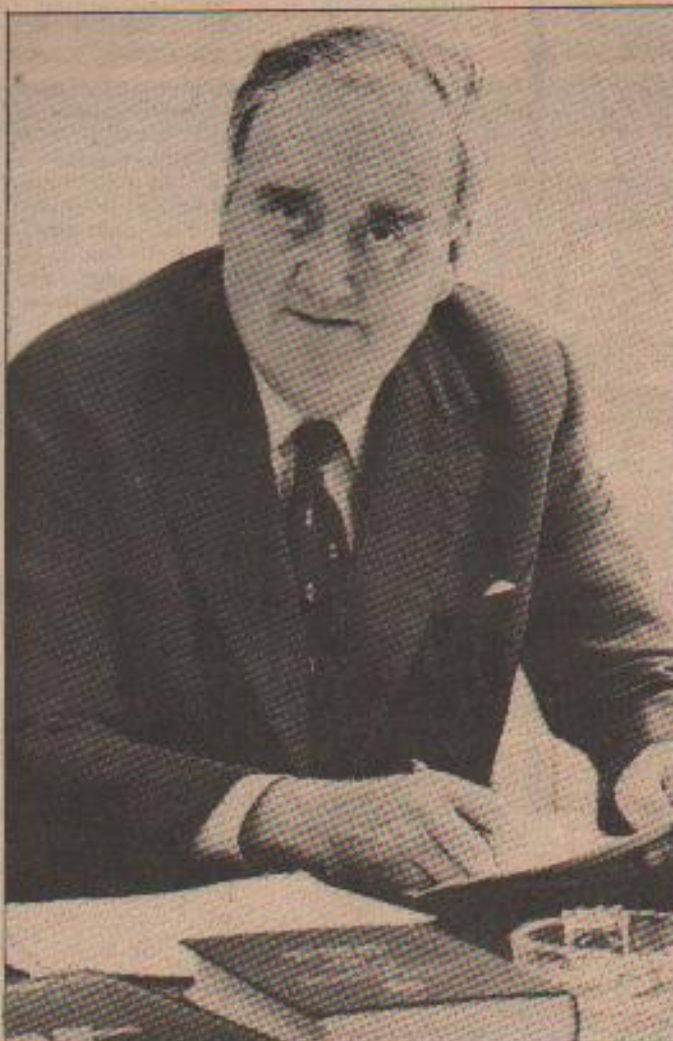
It doesn't need a professor in politics to reason that most black people voted Labour to keep the Tories out.

Not that the Tories haven't tried to win the votes of black people. Leading those attempts has been Willie Whitelaw — the Minister with chief responsibility on matters of law and order, race and immigration.

It was Willie Whitelaw who helped to launch, and warmly supported, the Federation of Conservative Students' 'campaign against racism' in 1977.

It was Willie Whitelaw who warmly encouraged Tory participation in the Joint Committee Against Racism — a dismal failure to present a moderate alternative to the ANL.

Ever since it dawned on them that black voters form over 8 per cent of the electorate in 61 urban constituencies, the Tories have been trying to face both ways at once: for an end to all immigration to get the racist vote, humanely anti-racist to woo the black vote.



Facing both ways at once is always a little difficult. So whilst Willie Whitelaw has

faced one way, Thatcher has redressed the balance in the opposite direction.

After Whitelaw's 1976 speech to the Tory Party conference confirming Tory commitments to the dependants of people who had settled in Britain before 1973, a Conservative policy document stated that immigration had to be reduced further.

When negotiations were under way to involve the Tory Party in the Joint Committee Against Racism, Thatcher tried to stop a Tory nomination for joint chairpersonship, only to be over-ruled by the party. She met this by publicly announcing that she intended to pursue tighter immigration controls.

Given Whitelaw's history, and the fact that he is backed in the Home Office by Timothy Raison and Leon Brittan (both associated with the liberal Bow Group), it would be tempting to think that these divisions will continue to divide the Cabinet.

But more recent developments indicate otherwise. Whitehall has fully backed up Thatcher's statements on 'swamping', and the Tories' determination to tighten immigration controls is there for all to see in their election manifesto.

The new Home Secretary may have a smiling face, but behind him stands Maggie Thatcher.



Organisations backing the committee include: Birmingham Campaign Against Racism and Fascism; T&GWU 5/909 branch, NUPE Birmingham General Hospital branch; Birmingham Area NUS; Birmingham University Students Union; Birmingham ANL.

Further information from: Birmingham Action Committee Against Racism in Clubs, c/o Labour Club, Bristol Street, Birmingham.

BOOST THE FIGHT AGAINST RACISM BY FUNDING YOUR PAPER





THE DEBATE on the way forward under the Tories has opened with a bang. Tony Benn's refusal to join the Shadow Cabinet has concentrated attention on the whole direction of the labour movement in the next five years.

Last week we outlined our views.

This week we invite Tony Chater of the Morning Star to contribute.

Despite our differences with the Communist Party and with other contributors to this column, we believe that the widest possible range of opinions in the labour movement should be debated on the pages of Socialist Challenge at this decisive time.

## Star Editor on the Tories

By Tony Chater, Editor, Morning Star

A TWIN-TASK now faces the labour and progressive movement following the election — to combat the Tory attacks on living standards and democratic rights, and at the same time, to create the conditions for the election of a Labour government of a new type, committed to the policies of the left.

This will involve struggle over a wide spectrum of issues with the mobilisation of millions. In this way, a broad democratic alliance needs to be built up, with the organised labour movement as both the kernel and the leading force.

Naturally, this will involve an intensification of the battle of ideas. This ideological battle needs to be rooted in the people's daily struggles. For it is in the course of struggle on the immediate issues that people can be won to understand the need for more far-reaching changes opening the road to socialism.

In this sense, the struggle which must be developed cannot be restricted to a defensive struggle against the Tory attacks, vital as that is. The movement needs to go over to the offensive to win commitment from a future Labour government to fundamental changes in policy, and where necessary, changes in its leading personnel.

Central to this is the need to learn the lessons of the past five years. It is the policies of the right-wing Labour leaders which created the conditions for the defeat of the Labour government on 3 May.

In this, the social contract played a major part. Right from the very beginning the Morning Star and the Communist Party characterised the social contract as a con-trick — a device for imposing wage restraint in return for vague promises of progressive government measures.

In reality, although under the impact of the mass movement certain progressive measures, for example, the repeal of the Tory Industrial Relations Act, were carried through, most of the promises came to nought.

In the main, government policies simply aggravated unemployment and failed to open up a solution to the crisis in the interests of the working people.

To have done this would have meant bringing about a fundamental shift in the balance of wealth and power in favour of the working class, and at the expense of big business.

But right-wing policies were based on class collaboration. This was the essence of the social contract. All that has to be changed. Progress has been made in this direction. A feature of the recent period has been the acceptance of policies at Labour Party, TUC, and trade union conferences more in line with the policies advocated by the left.

But the right-wing Labour leaders have persistently refused to carry out conference decisions. This raises the whole question of democracy in the labour movement — whether it concerns conference decisions, the re-selection of MPs, the election of the leader or whatever.

Important here also is the question of bans and proscriptions. In particular, it would greatly strengthen the left's fight if trade unions were able to send any of their members without discrimination to Labour Party conferences and other bodies, so long as they paid the political levy. This particular ban is fundamentally undemocratic. It imposes limits on the rights of trade unions when it comes to selecting their delegates. Only the right wing benefits from this.

The return of the Tories is a setback for the working people of Britain. But it is not a reason for defeatism. The forces exist which can throw back the Tory onslaught and win a Labour government of a new type.

The issue is to mobilise those forces over the whole range of issues — jobs, wages, the 35-hour week, prices, the defence of the unions, women's rights, opposition to racism, defence and expansion of the social services, for public ownership, and so on and so on.

The struggle may not be easy. It was not easy against the Heath government. But it was victorious then. And it can be victorious again — well before 1984, and at a higher political level.

BEFORE the general election, Tom Jackson claimed a Thatcher administration would be 'the most extremist and reactionary government since the war'.

For once the right-wing leader of the Post Office workers was right.

But to fight an enemy effectively you have to understand it. Why is this Tory government the most dangerous that the working class has faced for decades?

By John Ross

The vast scale of the Tory battle plan is dictated by the state of British and international capitalism. The world economy is moving into a new recession following the limited recovery of 1976-78.

The much vaunted prize of North Sea oil can actually make the situation of the British economy worse. Without an attack on the working class to drive up the rate of profit, the influx of oil revenues can infect Britain with the 'Dutch disease' of soaring exchange rates, high levels of imports and collapse of production levels.

So Thatcher cannot just maintain the status quo but has to rob the working class of most of the gains made since 1945. That's why this Tory administration is an authentically reactionary government.

But haven't both Labour and Tory governments since the '60s tried to carry out such policies? After all, the last government's incomes policy drove down real wages by no less than 12.5 per cent between 1975-1977.

What makes the Thatcher government original is not what she intends to do, but how she intends to do it.

Sir Keith Joseph's famous 'Centre for Policy Studies' drew some definite conclusions both from the defeat of Heath's government and from the successes of Wilson and Callaghan in 1975-77.

Joseph and Thatcher concluded that Heath made a disastrous mistake in openly assaulting the working class without even the most basic preliminary preparation.

Heath refused to meet the TUC for the first year and a half of his government. He introduced the openly anti-trade union Industrial Relations Act. He even refused to give a way out to the ultra-right wing electricians' union boss Chapple in the power workers' strike of 1970.

Heath never tried to politically undermine the inevitable resistance to these policies — a resistance founded on ideas of maintaining the welfare

state, of full employment and therefore existing nationalisations, of a 'liberal' legal system, and a foreign policy based on detente.

As a result a mighty defensive reaction swamped Heath. Even sections of the trade union bureaucrats such as Scanlon, convinced that the Tories were threatening the very existence of the organisations on which they were based and under huge pressure from their membership, made gestures of defiance and on occasions left the door ajar for militants to mobilise mass action.

Without breaking from its reformist ideas, without a clear socialist perspective, the working class, committed to defence of its post-war gains, smashed Heath.

If this was the conclusion from the Heath experience what did the Tory pundits glean from the Labour government which followed it?

Wilson immediately scrapped Heath's war machine. The Industrial Relations Act was repealed. The Employment Protection Act and the Industry Act were offered to the working class as olive branches. Yet in the years to come Wilson and Callaghan were to mark up a series of successes in attacking the working class.

At the root of these victories was a complete reversal of Heath's attitude to the trade union bureaucracy. Where Heath attacked the Labour leaders Callaghan brought the union bosses into the very seat of government.

Consultation was the guiding theme at every stage. The details of the first round of incomes policy in 1975 were proposed by Jack Jones, then leader of the transport workers.

The chief weapon and common starting point were labourist politics centred on appeals of 'national interest above class interest', to weakening of classes rather than class conflict, opposition to what they termed 'violence and extremism' and the final argument of 'the sovereignty of

## The most da Who is



Parliament'.

Where such stirring battle cries had no effect the trade union leaders did the government's dirty work by such organisational sabotage as the threatened expulsion of the toolmakers from the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers.

Apart from its defeats in the winter of 1978/9 at the hands of the Fords workers and lorry drivers, Wilson and Callaghan led the most successful right wing governments in Britain since the war. They made the capitalist core of Labour reformism directly serve the ruling class.

Thatcher aims to repeat the experience. That's why the description of her as an 'ideological politician' is accurate.

Of course, certain political weapons used by Wilson and Callaghan — anti-Toryism, 'the unity of the labour



★ Morning Star

HERE'S A PROMISE. WE'LL FIGHT FOR A SOCIALIST ALTERNATIVE AND KEEP



# Dangerous Tory government since the war Margaret Thatcher?



movement', or the idealisation of the post-1945 welfare state — are not open to her.

But Thatcher calculates that these are the most fragile parts of Labourist politics and ideology.

This assessment was based on the rapidity with which Callaghan ignored Labour's traditional hostility towards coalition when the need arose to form the Lib-Lab pact. Equally significant was the fact the Labour left accepted the pact with scarcely a rumble.

Likewise it was the party based on the myth of the 'caring' Beveridge state which was to move to make cutbacks in social services beside which Barber's 1973 economies paled in comparison.

Thatcher calculates that those parts of Labour's ideas which are resistant to Tory use can be confronted by claiming continuity with the record of the last Labour government.

So, far from shunning the trade union bureaucracy, Thatcher has no difference with Prior in wanting to involve them as closely as possible with her government.

Where Heath refused even to meet the TUC, within the first three days of his ministry Prior has already had lengthy conversations with Len Murray — the first of many this summer.

While these talks are to some extent a cosmetic device, Thatcher is nonetheless convinced that she has a genuine identity of interest with the trade union bureaucrats — a view shared by such important mouthpieces of ruling class opinion as the *Economist* magazine.

Chief planks of Tory policy on secret ballots, attacks on picketing and strikers are similar to those used by the right wing inside the engineers' and electricians' unions. Other areas such as the closed shop could be easily

negotiated to find mutually agreeable formulas.

The initial Tory aim is to boost the building of a powerful right wing, not to seek immediate confrontation with the whole union bureaucracy.

Apart from her own election victory, the sweeping gains made by the right wing of the AUEW must rank as the most important gain for the Tory Party of recent times.

In some areas the going will not be so smooth. Tory attacks on the public sector will be so savage that even the trade union leaders such as Alan Fisher of the National Union of Public Employees may have no choice but to resort to left-sounding phrases to keep abreast with the response of his members.

But Thatcher knows that the TUC refused to come to the aid of the Fire Brigades Union, NUPE or other public sector unions and instead collaborated

with Callaghan. She aims to promote the same process.

The coming years will see the strongest ever Tory bid for close collaboration with the trade union bureaucracy on economic and union issues.

Those who will first receive the brunt of the offensive will be those traditionally ignored or attacked by the union leaders; low-paid women workers, youth and blacks. An attempt will be made to isolate and then pick off the most militant and active trade unionists.

But these are only the means. The eventual aim for the ruling class must be to significantly raise the rate of profit. That can only be achieved by defeating the strongest of all sections of the working class — those in the industrial unions.

Thatcher knows that the Tories could not win a head-on confrontation with a powerful union such as the National Union of Mineworkers. But she aims to change that situation with her policy of 'divide and rule'.

**The power of even the strongest group of workers does not lie in their industrial muscle alone. It lies in their ability to unite the rest of the working class behind them in struggle.**

Heath could not use force to defeat the miners in 1972 or 1974 because they enjoyed the support of the overwhelming majority of the working class. When the five dockers were imprisoned under the Industrial Relations Act in 1972 even the TUC was forced by mass pressure to threaten a general strike.

These workers were seen as fighting not only for their own interests but for those of the whole working class. The miners were acting against a hated government. The dockers against a hated law.

This sort of unity Thatcher fears most of all. Her policy is to anticipate it by using political methods to keep the working class divided. Racism, attacks on abortion, 'law and order' campaigns will be grist to this mill. New tactics such as referendums may be used in extremes.

This Tory strategy is a real challenge to activists in the labour movement. That movement has a long record of solidarity and unity in trade union and economic struggles, but is weak in the political field.

It has succumbed to its leadership in failing to end Britain's imperialist role. Women's rights for many a year were

abandoned. In too many industries it remains sectoralised. It has been lulled by the tune of 'parliamentary sovereignty and the rule of law'.

Thatcher aims to use this political weakness to firstly disunite and secondly boost the right in the unions and in society as a whole.

Thatcher and her government can be defeated. The working class in this country is enormously strong — economically, socially and organisationally. Thatcher can make any number of deals with the trade union leaders and still be defeated by mass struggles.

Once again the outcome of British politics in the next five years will be decided by the fight in the trade unions. The central goal of socialists must be to build up a powerful left wing based on class struggle policies against the Tories.

Those policies must take account of Thatcher's strategy.

Defence of trade union rights and democracy, opposition to wage controls and defence of living standards, defence of the public sector and campaigning for the right to work will remain the most central of issues in the coming months.

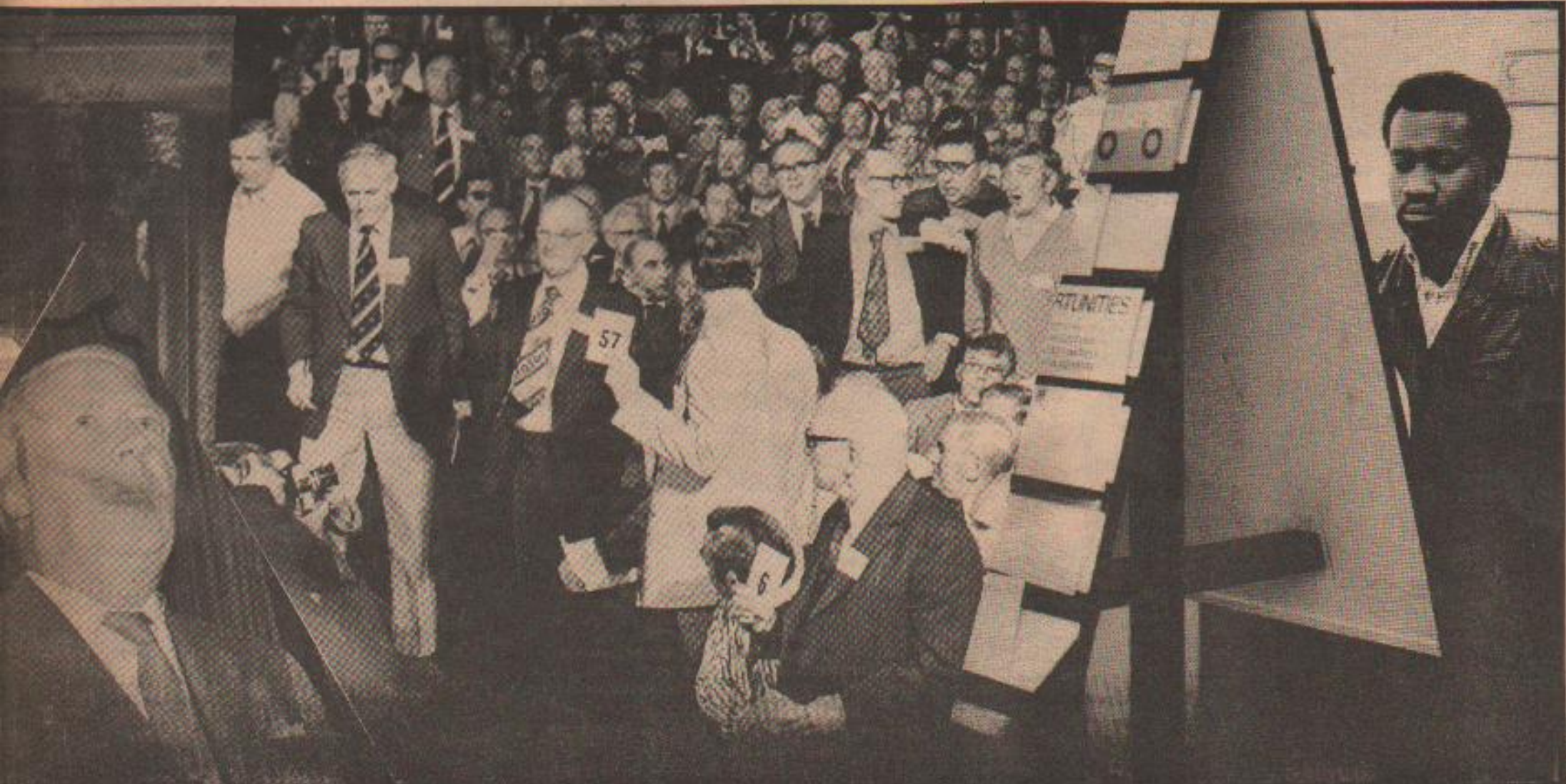
Fighting for these policies means building committees for the defence of trade unions, coordinating the fight against the cuts and organising solidarity for all workers in struggle.

But increasingly the workers movement will have to fight on every political question. The struggle against racism, against the oppression of women, for the rights of young people, on international issues, and in defence of almost every single social and democratic right will be needed.

Building organisations such as the National Abortion Campaign, the United Troops Out Movement, and committees against racism is an integral part of the fight for a class struggle left wing.

The working class in Britain has more than enough organisational power to smash the Tories. If it uses this struggle to also develop its whole range of political understanding it will open up the door to liberation from all the human oppression Thatcher represents. It will begin to create the path to socialism.

**This is the real challenge facing us in the next years. Thatcher's is one of the most dangerous of all Tory governments. If the working class takes up the challenge it could also be the last.**



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



# IRELAND

## Thatcher's Irish Ministers The Military Men

THE BRITISH ARMY will welcome Thatcher's appointments to the Northern Ireland Office. The Army and the gentlemen concerned are old friends.

By Geoff Bell

The role of the British Army in the North of Ireland became most obvious in the streets of Derry on 30 January 1972. The occasion was Bloody Sunday, when members of the Parachute Regiment shot 14 unarmed demonstrators dead in cold blood.

At the time the deaths in Derry were interpreted by many as a product of the 'selective repression' theories of Brigadier Frank Kitson, the counter-insurgency expert then high up in the Army command in Belfast.

Just six weeks after Bloody Sunday, Philip Goodhart MP stood up in the House of Commons and proclaimed:

'In his admirable book *Low Intensity Operations* Brigadier Frank Kitson has underlined some... problems and has called for a great effort...

'I am delighted that Brigadier Kitson should at this moment be in a responsible role in Belfast. This is very much a case of the right man being in the right job at the right time.'

Last week Goodhart was appointed by Thatcher as a junior Minister at the Northern Ireland Office. As the only one of the appointees who has spoken at any length about the North of Ireland, his utterings can perhaps give us a clue about the type of policies the Tories will try to implement in Ireland.

A former member of the Parachute Regiment, Goodhart has always interested himself in military affairs. His first appointment after being elected to the Commons in 1957 was as a private parliamentary secretary to the War Office.

It was not long before he was addressing himself to the problems of the British Army — in particular, the fall-off in recruitment.

In November 1960 Goodhart argued that 'a small colonial disturbance would, I think, have a stimulating effect, oddly enough, on recruitment'.

When such 'colonial disturbances' started to break out, he was only too keen to welcome them and perform the usual whitewashing job of British politicians.

In November 1966 Goodhart informed the Commons that 'relations between British servicemen and civilians overseas have been remarkably good, in the face of great provocation, in a number of extremely difficult areas — Palestine, Kenya, Cyprus and other parts of the Middle East'.

But it was when the British Army went onto the streets of the North of Ireland in August 1969 that Goodhart really came into his own.

In those early months the Army was being portrayed as the saviour of the entire citizenry of the North of Ireland, the good guys who were there to be friends to everyone.

Goodhart wasn't so sure. In October 1969 he noted that all the poor soldiers had to defend themselves with was CS gas.

He demanded to know from the Minister for Defence:

'What plans he has for issuing additional anti-riot equipment for the soldiers carrying out internal security duties in the North of Ireland.'

That set the tone for the next ten years. In December 1969 Goodhart paid what he called 'a very special tribute' to the B Specials of the Ulster Special Constabulary.

In 1974 he called for the introduction of identity cards in the North of Ireland and Great Britain, and repeated the demand two years later.

At the same time he demanded that the Ulster Defence Regiment be put on a full-time basis. He added that if there might not be enough willing to serve, 'unemployment is a great recruiting sergeant'.

Goodhart's attitude can be summed up by a statement he made in June 1975: 'A UK military presence in Northern Ireland will be needed for a long time. I deplore the rumours of premature withdrawal of the Army from Northern Ireland.'

Apart from Goodhart, the only other Tory allocated to the

North of Ireland who has some previous knowledge of the area is Humphrey Atkins' second-in-command, Michael Alison.

Like Goodhart, Old Etonian Alison has a military background. A former officer in the Coldstream Guards, Alison is a member of the Guards Club in London, an exclusive drinking den for the military establishment.

During his time in Parliament, Alison has gone out of his way to endorse the views of the most extreme Loyalist MPs. In a debate on the Prevention of Terrorism Act in November 1975 he said:

'The note from the House tonight is the will to combat that kind of criminal gang (the IRA). I believe that the will has been sounded in the speeches of the hon. Member for Antrim North (Paisley) and the right hon. Member for Down South (Powell)... the will to combat criminal gangsterism is present.'

Alison has been the chief spokesperson for the Tories on the PTA on a number of occasions. In November 1975 he demanded an increase in its powers, and in January 1976 he called for increased penalties under the Act.

The new Northern Ireland Secretary, Humphrey Atkins,

has no such experience. As Tory Chief Whip he did not, by tradition, make speeches in Parliament.

Nevertheless Atkins too has an armed forces background. His first post in government was in the Ministry of Defence, where from 1959 to 1962 he was Secretary to the Civil Lord of the Admiralty.

Atkins was even educated at a naval college, and his attachment to the forces was most notably acknowledged in 1965-7 when he was secretary of the Conservative Parliamentary Defence Committee.

Interestingly, Atkins succeeded in that post by Philip Goodhart, who went on to become the committee's chairperson.

Such is the military background of the chief members of the Tory administration in the North of Ireland. The team is made up by Hugh Rossi (whose only qualification seems to be that he is a Catholic), former Rowntree director Giles Shaw, and Old Etonian Lord Elton (a former Army major).

With rumours sweeping the North of Ireland about the possible re-introduction of internment, another 'military solution' appears to be on the cards.

# SOLIDARITY NEWS

## INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNAL

INVITATIONS are now being extended for delegates to the International Tribunal on Britain's Presence in Ireland.

The tribunal will have its final hearing on 7/8 July at the Conway Hall, London. The delegates will make up a jury which will adjudicate on various aspects of British presence in Ireland.

The final hearing follows a preliminary one in January of this year at which three judges — Etienne Bloch, a judge of civil causes (France), Ron Knowles, national officer of the NUJ and editor of the Journalist, and Philip Flynn, Deputy General Secretary of the Irish Local Government and Public Services Union — ruled that the tribunal organisers had made out a sufficient case for a full hearing.

The tribunal will bear evidence on a variety of matters concerning Britain's presence in Ireland, including British attitudes to civil liberties, crimes against women, and the economic consequences. Delegates are invited from Labour parties, trade union branches, trades councils, and the women's and student movements. A letter inviting delegates for the tribunal is now available from the International Tribunal at 47 Wilshaw St, London W11. Entrance will be £2 a delegate.

LABOUR MOVEMENT CONFERENCES

A NUMBER of regional labour movement conferences on Ireland are being planned. The most immediate are ones in Oxford and South London.

The Oxford conference is sponsored by the Oxford branch of the National Union

of Journalists and by Oxford Trades Council. Speakers include Brendan Gallagher, Tom Litterick, an ex-soldier, and — to discuss media censorship — a number of prominent journalists, including the editor of *An Phoblacht/Republican News*.

The conference is open to all trade unionists and admission is 50p. It is being held at Buxton Hall, Walton Street, on Saturday 19 May, starting 10am.

The South London conference is also on 19 May and speakers there will include Michael Farrell of Peoples Democracy. The conference is sponsored by Lambeth Trades Council and is being held at Goldsmith's College, Lewisham Way, SE14.

## MEDIA PAMPHLET

LAST week's review of *The British Media and Ireland*, published by Information on Ireland, omitted to mention that it was produced by the Campaign for Free Speech on Ireland. The review also got the postal district wrong: the excellent pamphlet is available from 1 North End Road, London W14, price 50p plus 15p p&p.

## ANTI-IRISH RACISM DEMO

A UNIQUE demonstration is scheduled for London on 16 June. It will seek to combine anti-racist and Irish solidarity struggles under the general theme of anti-racism/anti-racism against the Irish.

The demonstration has already attracted the support of East London United Troops Out Movement and branches of the Anti Nazi League. Provisional arrangements are for the demonstration to proceed from Speakers Corner. More details later.



WE'RE MAKING IRELAND AN ISSUE. GIVE GENEROUSLY



# Iranian women — saying no to the veil

THIS SATURDAY, 19 May, there is a national demonstration from Trafalgar Square to the Iranian Embassy in solidarity with the Iranian Women's Movement. Assemble at 2pm.

FARIDEH, a member of the Iranian Women's Solidarity Group which is organising the march, has just returned from Iran. She told *Socialist Challenge* about the current state of the women's movement there and the importance of this Saturday's demo.

KHOMEINI still has the check to pay lip service to the equality of women. But at the same time his other statements are quite against women, like the statement he made about the veil which, by the way, he had to more or less retract.

That was the only issue on which the clergy and Khomeini had to retract. This was after the demonstrations following International Women's Day.

In radio and television discrimination is very explicit. In the first two or three days after the insurrection, women were appearing as normal announcers. After that they were told that they should wear a scarf — a sort of modified veil — and a lot of them disagreed.

One prominent case is of a woman who was in charge of a children's programme. There was an interview with her in an issue of *Kargar*, the paper of the SWP (Iranian Trotskyists).

She said that when she came on two days after the insurrection, when Ghozbeh was the head of television, he called her into his office and told her to put a scarf round her head. She refused and he couldn't stop her going on the air then. But eventually they told her that they didn't want her services.

In her interview she said there was a woman there who was a close follower of the Shah. When a lot of radio and television workers had gone on strike she had carried on working.

Now that Ghozbeh came along she put on a great big scarf and she's still doing her job. This is a typical case of how the old reactionaries can be used by the new regime.

The left-wing parties generally support women's demands for equal rights. In their programmes they all talk about wanting equal rights and also the abolition of the discriminatory laws. I don't think the parties have got that much specific programme.

The party which is bringing up the question of women much more is the SWP, but that's because they've got women quite prominent among them. But they're a very small minority so I don't know how effective they are.

The groups which bring it out far more clearly are the unions or societies of women, for example the women lawyers' union, which has been taking up the question of women's position in law, especially with the constitution coming up.

They are very much discriminated against by strict, Islamic puritanical attitudes. For example they can't practise



as judges and even as lawyers they are finding it difficult. But they have written many articles and open letters of protest demanding that the Ministry of Justice should reverse its policy of discriminating against women.

Then there's the National Women's Alliance which in the short term might have a better chance, because although in their programme they emphasise very much the position of proletarian women they have a

very wide platform. They include all the other professional women and so on.

I don't think their ideology is so homogeneous — there are some quite left-wing women but there are also some quite bourgeois women. But the thing is that they have a better possibility of activity because they can work more openly.

Their major programme is to increase the awareness of women by bringing out publications and organising

literacy classes.

There's the Committee for the Defence of Women's Rights but the women who are involved in that are mainly from the SWP and their operation is very limited. They haven't got a paper.

There is an unemployed women's group. I don't know how much their activities are or how coherent and organised it is, but quite a few women were involved in the demonstration and occupation of the Ministry

of Justice by the unemployed. There was a statement put out by the unemployed women's group demanding equality in the economy in general: equal pay, better facilities and so on.

A SUCCESSFUL conference on Women in Iran was held last Saturday in the City University, London. First Farsi-speaking women and then English-speaking women discussed papers on the Iranian women's movement.

Another item on the conference agenda was the way in which the British women's movement could assist their Iranian sisters. A speaker outlined the plans for a women's delegation to go to Iran and the demonstration this Saturday in solidarity with the Iranian women's movement.

This Saturday's demonstration is basically against all discrimination against women and the pressures on women from the religious sector. I think it's important that people here realise what is going on in Iran. We don't want to wake up one day and find a totally reactionary regime consolidated in power.

At the moment the regime is still not solid, still not formed, and a lot of different forces are in confrontation with each other. And so there is the chance for solidarity from British women in particular and the British left in general to show Iranian women that they're not alone in their fight.

## PR offensive on South African unions

By John Blair

THE South African government has finally unveiled the report of the Wiehahn Commission of Inquiry into labour legislation. 'The government has launched a new dispensation in the labour history of South Africa', according to the minister responsible, S.P. Botha.

Rumours of the report's content have been circulating for more than a year. As widely predicted, it includes a

recommendation that job reservation legislation be abolished and that black trade unions be allowed to be 'registered'. To date these have had a twilight existence, not being recognised in law but nonetheless not being illegal.

Job reservation now covers only 1 per cent of workers anyway. For the most important way of preventing blacks ascending the job scale is the closed shop agreements made by white unions. The commission would allow these to remain.

In certain key industries, mines and buildings, separate legislation limits blacks doing certain jobs.

'Migrant' workers — 2 million out of 7 million black workers and two thirds of Soweto's workforce for instance — will not be allowed to join registered unions.

Registration will be entirely at the whim of government which will certainly maintain tight control over the bodies allowed on to the roll.

What then is the purpose of the proposals? There are three main factors.



1. The increasingly skilled and settled nature of a significant section of South Africa's black labour force, especially that in manufacturing industry. Industry is acutely aware of the power of such workers and hopes to use the registered unions to incorporate them more effectively than has been possible through the present discredited works council arrangements.

2. The political means so far devised to date for incorporat-

ing blacks — Bantustan governments, Urban Bantu Councils etc — have failed to establish a credible class of black collaborators. Could the elevation of at least a minority of skilled black workers in the job and income scale be the means to establish that 'stable black middle class'?

3. Some sections of industry will be happy to see a partial development of black unions as a counter to the strength of whites. The defeat in March of a strike by white miners who

tried to arrest a minor breakdown of job reservation was significant — the more so because, instead of intervening on the side of the whites, government stood on the sidelines and allowed their defeat.

However politically important it may be, white privilege has always been an economically extravagant item for industry.

Lucy Mvubelo of the National Union of Clothing Workers who has been one of the government's most prominent propagandists of collaboration said: 'We are jubilant at this development. We feel our dream has come true.' (No doubt of a big increase in her salary and influence).

Fortunately there can be as much hope that South Africa's black workers will react in quite the opposite fashion, by seeing the proposals as a springboard for advancing fundamental democratic demands of the class.

\* For an end to all job reservation agreements and all forms of workplace discrimination!

\* For absolute freedom of organisation — trade union and political!

## IN BRIEF

### Bahro meeting

THERE is an impressive line-up of speakers for a public meeting in London this Friday on the work of the imprisoned East German Marxist Rudolf Bahro.

At the meeting will be Tariq Ali, editor of *Socialist Challenge*, David Fernbach, who translated Bahro's *The Alternative in Eastern Europe*, Chris Harman of the Socialist Workers Party, Monty Johnstone of the Communist Party, and Istvan Meszaros, author of *Marx's Theory of Alienation*. The meeting starts at 7.30 at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1. Admission 50p.

The following day at the Club Room in Conway Hall there will be an all-day conference starting at 10.30 on the present state of the Bahro defence campaign and its future activities. All are welcome. Both events are organised by the Rudolf Bahro Defence Committee.

### Intercontinental Press

A MAJOR statement on Iran from the United Secretariat of the Fourth International was the main feature of last week's *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor* (Vol 17, No 17). A new issue is also out, featuring an interview with a South African black consciousness leader.

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



## Tariq Ali—a revolutionary candidate

TARIQ ALI will be standing in the European Parliament elections on 7 June as the candidate of the International Marxist Group, British section of the Fourth International, in the West London constituency.

The Fourth International is mounting a revolutionary campaign in all nine EEC countries where the elections are being held. Its main slogan can be summarised as 'Against the capitalist EEC — for a

Socialist United States of Europe'.

Strict election laws have made it impossible to stand candidates in every country. But apart from Ali's candidature, the FI is running complete slates in Belgium and Luxembourg.

In France the Fourth International's section, the LCR, is putting forward a joint slate with another revolutionary organisation, Lutte Ouv-

rière [Workers' Struggle]. Forty-one of its 81 candidates are women, and the slate will be headed by Arlette Laguiller [LO] and Alain Krivine [LCR].

A major event in the FI's campaign will be a conference of worker militants in Antwerp on 2-3 June.

It is possible to sow the seeds of an alternative workers' Europe to the EEC in struggles already taking place today —

for instance, in steel or the motor industry.

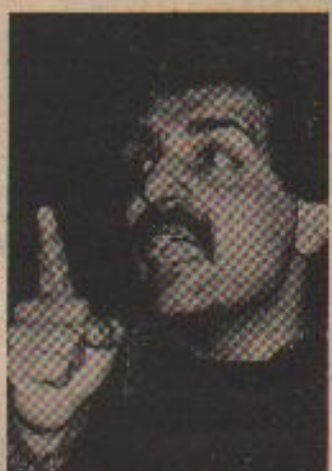
The Antwerp conference will discuss how such struggles can be coordinated across Europe, and the kind of common demands — such as the 35-hour week without loss of pay — which can help to unify them.

Another important theme of the FI's campaign will be the struggle against racism and colonialism. Tariq Ali's candi-

dature will in particular be used to highlight the demands of immigrant workers for full rights as workers and citizens.

The contrast between the supposedly 'democratic' nature of the EEC and the actual repression it sanctions will be taken up with special reference to the war in Ireland.

For further details of all these initiatives write to: IMG, PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.



## CPs have no solution Is there an alternative to the EEC?

THERE WILL be much talk in the Common Market elections about a 'Europe of the workers' from the leaders of the social-democratic and Communist parties.

But it was the leading light of the social-democrats, Helmut Schmidt, who cooked up the present proposals for strengthening the institutions of capitalist Europe (most notable hallmark: seven million unemployed).

As for the Communist parties, almost every one has a different solution. The only thing they have in common is a refusal to fight for the international interests of the working class.

By Anna Libera

For all their supposed 'Eurocommunism', the attitudes taken toward the elections by the various Communist parties show the full extent of their adaptation to the interests of their own national bourgeoisies.

The argument that broke out last August between the Spanish and French CPs regarding Spain's entry into the Common Market was only the tip of the iceberg of differences between these two parties.

Faced with the French CP's chauvinist campaign in South-western France against Spain's entry into the EEC, the leaders of the Spanish CP — who view this entry as the cornerstone of Spain's development — denounced French CP leader Marchais's 'parochial patriotism' and accused him of 'stirring up reactionary demons among the backward farmers'.

The French CP self-righteously responded with a paragraph in *L'Humanité* explaining that 'each party had the right to freely determine its own positions'.

In fact, the positions of the various Communist parties go beyond merely being discordant.

In July 1978, Marchais wrote in the Gaullist magazine *Appel*: 'It is clear that for our part we categorically refuse to be tied to any sort of mini-international or to subordinate our national demands to some Europe-wide party.'

'Despite our deep solidarity with the struggles and

aspirations of the European workers, and with the struggle of the Communists of the Nine, we are too conscious of the national interest to act in this manner.'

'I should point out that this is not something new in our attitude. The French Communist deputies who have been members of the European Parliament since 1973, and who for organisational reasons belong to a European Communist group, have always stated that their sole function in the assembly itself was defence of the French national interest.'

In contrast, Giancarlo Pajetta, the Italian CP's shadow minister of foreign affairs, states:

'What is needed is an organisation that can really act — one that would be based on a transfer of power agreed to by the governments and parliaments of the member states and could therefore take up the crucial problems that the member states cannot deal with on their own.'

'The people of the member states will be reassured about this multinational power if it is based on firm democratic control directly exercised by the European Parliament with much wider powers than it has at present.'

These differing positions reflect the national conditions that are specific to each country, to which the CP's class-collaborationist policies are adapted.

This means that the Spanish



and Italian CPs, which espouse the interests of the big monopolies of their countries and are trying to establish a policy of national union with the representatives of those monopolies, are dyed-in-the-wool 'Europeans'.

Since the beginning of the 1960s the Italian CP has followed a pro-European policy as the framework for the 'Italian road to socialism'. This 'road' requires maintaining the international status quo, and one of the existing realities that must be taken into account is European consolidation.

Moreover, the deepening of the 'Italian road' that came with the 'historic compromise' proposal and the effort to establish a national union with the Christian Democracy — the party of the Italian monopolies — confirmed and amplified the Italian CP's European policy.

The CP stands not only for the enlarging of the Common Market and the election of the European Parliament by universal suffrage, but also favours a transfer of powers from the national parliaments

to this Europe-wide institution. And the CP goes even further, accepting the framework of military alliances in Europe — NATO in particular.

The leaders of the Italian CP are leaving no room for misunderstanding regarding their objective in the consolidation of Europe.

Pajetta brought this to mind last September at a public conference in Turin: 'I do not think that the socialist transformation of Europe is on the agenda.'

Just as the Italian CP has

opted for austerity and national union to save Italian capitalism, it is lining up behind the consolidation of Europe as an indispensable complement to this salvage operation.

The French CP has taken up a very different banner — defence of the 'French nation'. Here the CP has sunk to unparalleled depths of chauvinism.

Its policy is spreading nationalist poison in the working class, stimulating divisions and opening the way to racism. We are already seeing Communist mayors coming out in favour of limiting the number of immigrant workers in their towns.

This position fulfils several objectives for the CP.

It can use its chauvinist campaign to hide its acceptance of capitalism and of the capitalist (non-enlarged) Common Market, and thus its inability to provide any perspective for the workers who are being buffeted by the economic crisis.

The CP also uses this campaign to bolster its policy of deepening the split with the SP (a 'European' and even a 'German' party par excellence) and to clear the way for establishing a 'Union of the People of France', thus returning to the Gaullists' camp with a defence of the 'French nation'.

Thus the CP press no longer speaks of trusts or monopolies; instead it uses the German word *konzern*. And when it has to refer to a capitalist, the only names it can think of are Krupp or von Thyssen!

A report to the CP's September 1978 Central Committee meeting explained that Germany wanted to use the EEC to win what it couldn't get through the war!

But this chauvinist, nationalist outburst cannot paper over the contradictions in the CP's policy. The CP organises demonstrations against Spain's entry into the EEC but in no way does it oppose the capitalist Common Market as such.

It leads a battle against increased European integration in the name of defending national capital — and therefore the national exploiters!

Any campaign against the Common Market that is not accompanied by a radical campaign against capitalism, for the concrete international solidarity of the workers, for international economic planning, and for the Socialist United States of Europe can only take the reactionary character of the French CP's policy.

INVEST IN THE FUTURE. FUND YOUR PAPER



# INTERNATIONAL

## Tories consider Zimbabwe policy

# Where is Rhodesia anyway?

By Richard Carver

BEFORE the election Francis Pym was only vaguely aware that the Labour government's policy on Zimbabwe was also that of the United States, or so Godfrey Hodgson reported in the *New Statesman*.

If this is to be believed (and it sounds very plausible) it is a good reason for Margaret Thatcher's appointment of Lord Carrington to the Foreign Office.

He at least, with his extensive South African and Rhodesian business interests, will be in possession of such vital pieces of information as where the countries in question are and the fact that the Anglo-American settlement proposals in Zimbabwe are also Anglo-American.

So if Carrington leads the British government into direct conflict with its American ally over southern Africa it will at least be consciously. But will he?

A lot of mystification and plain slander surrounds the issue of British policy on Zimbabwe. The Anglo-American proposals launched by Foreign Secretary David Owen and American UN Ambassador Andrew Young in September 1977 differ only slightly from the 'internal settlement' of the present Rhodesian regime.

In essence they are the same: police, armed forces, judiciary

and the entire settler state machinery would remain in power with only the political forms changed. Even those political forms are not so different: 28 reserved white seats under the internal settlement, 20 under the Owen-Young plan.

The cause of the disagreement is simple: should the settlement include the Patriotic Front led by Joshua Nkomo and Robert Mugabe? In the imperialist camp residual racist objections are put aside because it is recognised that a settlement can only be stable — and therefore profitable — if the majority black party is involved.

Ian Smith is prepared to take the psychologically important step of allowing a black prime minister — but only on condition that he can sell this to his white settler supporters. But white farming interests, which still form the social base of the Smith regime, are intransigently opposed to any deal with the Patriotic Front.

The Tory dilemma is that every instinct tells them to back Smith while their political sense tells them that the Owen-Young plan is in imperialism's best interests.

The appointment of Carrington is significant because his own personal experience and interests in southern Africa will tend to make him perfectly attuned to imperialism's needs. He is a cool operator who is



IAN Smith with the former Foreign Secretary, David Owen, who backed the Anglo-American proposals for Zimbabwe. But they're not so different from the 'internal settlement'.

unlikely to let solidarity with his 'kith and kin' override his duty to his class.

Unless Carrington and Thatcher want to preside over the early disintegration of the Commonwealth they will not veto probable United Nations economic sanctions imposed on South Africa over Namibia. And they will not move to recognise the Smith regime before the August Commonwealth conference. They are mindful not just of future

economic interests in Zimbabwe but of present ones in black African countries like Nigeria too.

The extent to which this policy changes is likely to depend on the advances made by the racist right wing in the US Congress and Senate. This group, led by people like Jesse Helms and Sam Hayakawa, have opposed the Anglo-American plan all along and have gained ground over the question of recognition of the

Rhodesian elections.

Their views correspond closely with mainstream Tory thought and if they inflict a serious defeat on the Carter administration Britain and the United States could move forward in step towards a compromise with Smith.

If this scenario proves wrong — and it is not predicted with great confidence — both British and US administrations face the prospect of a domestic political crisis over Zimbabwe.

Recognition of the racist regime could open up enormous opposition among the black and labour movements, unprecedented on an international issue since Vietnam. To avoid such a crisis Thatcher and Carrington will have to risk the taunts of the loony right inside their own party.

Either way Zimbabwe's Rhodesian problem has come home where it belongs.

# Murder hunts Italian style

By Richard Carver

NEXT time you are about to buy a Marxist book, beware. Next time you are invited to give a series of lectures in Paris (unlikely though that may be), refuse. For these are the most

concrete pieces of evidence offered by the Italian state against Professor Antonio Negri and 32 others arrested in connection with the killing of Christian Democrat leader Aldo Moro by the Red Brigades.

It would be over-generous to describe the mish-mash of political smear and personal slander as 'circumstantial'. The prosecution has produced nothing linking the accused to Moro's killers.

Sensing that the state is on weak ground, the press has made up for it with speculation. For example, it claimed that Negri, who it alleges to be the Red Brigades' chief political strategist, made the final ransom call to Moro's family before the killing.

Negri immediately demanded a voice test. That was not forthcoming, but the television did broadcast the telephone voice and Negri's — inadvertently demonstrating that the two were completely different.

Like all good fiction this case also has its 'French connection'. Negri was teaching in Paris at the time of the Moro kidnap. The kidnap is alleged to have been planned from Paris. QED. Negri planned the kidnap.

The public prosecutor has described books found in the possession of the accused as 'key evidence'. Challenged on whether it might not be going too far to use books as evidence of criminal intent, one prosecutor explained that since these were Marxist works it was impossible to separate theory and practice!

Political frame-ups in Italy are nothing new. Many people have drawn the obvious comparison with the well-known case of Pietro Valpreda, an anarchist held for years charged with a bombing

actually carried out by fascists.

But this time there are a number of new aspects. Most obviously the use of books as evidence is a far-reaching and quite conscious attack on intellectual freedom.

The charges against the 33 reflect a similar disregard for democratic rights. Only nine of the accused face charges of 'involvement in armed struggle' but all of them are allegedly involved in 'subversive associations' — in other words, organisations of the far left.

The particular target is former members of Potere Operaio, an organisation which dissolved in 1973 and of which Toni Negri is a leader. One of the reasons for the Paris investigation was the presence there of three former Potere Operaio members.

But perhaps most sinister is the fact that the prime mover in the prosecution has been the Communist Party (PCI). The party has supported government 'law and order' moves in the past and even proposed the 1975 amendment to the penal code under which the present charges are made.

But this time the PCI is even more directly involved. The public prosecutor, Calogero, is a PCI member and the party paper, *L'Unita*, has joined in the hysterical press campaign.

There has been help from France too, where the Communist Party daily remarked that Negri's teaching course in Paris 'gave him an excellent cover' — without mentioning that the course was organised by party member Louis Althusser who should

presumably be slung in jail as an accomplice.

The PCI's intentions are transparent. In the run-up to next month's general election it wants to make sure of its credentials as a defender of the status quo. At the same time it will give the lie to those on the right wing of the governing Christian Democrats who describe the Red Brigades as 'second-generation' PCI supporters.

The arrests have not, however, received total approval inside the party. Intellectuals in particular are disturbed at the round-up of virtually the entire teaching staff at the Faculty of Political Science in Padua, where Negri is a professor. Professor Cacciari, a PCI deputy in the outgoing parliament, has made an especially strong denunciation of the arrests, pointing out the impossibility, with his political views, of Negri heading an underground guerilla group.

Cacciari is right. Apart from the improbability of a

'terrorist' leader advertising his politics on every bookstall in the country, Negri's views simply do not correspond to those of the Red Brigades. Negri the theorist of 'autonomy' and mass action has little in common with isolated armed grouplets — something he has repeatedly pointed out in his remarks on the Moro kidnapping.

If the Italian thought police are suddenly so interested in his books they must know this. Presumably they just don't care.

\* The Italy 79 Committee, which is organising solidarity with those arrested, can be contacted at Box 135, Rising Free, 182 Upper Street, London N1. Statements of support from individuals, student unions and academic institutions should be sent to that address. We think that solidarity messages from the Communist Party of Great Britain and individual CP branches would be particularly appropriate.



RED Brigades defendants on trial in Milan when Moro was kidnapped.

## Argentinian disappearance

THE Argentinian authorities have reportedly detained a member of the Commission of Relatives of the Disappeared. Telma Dorothy Jara de Cabezas was herself 'disappeared' shortly after leaving the hospital where her husband is being treated for lung cancer.

A total of 15,000 is estimated to have disappeared in Argentina since the military coup of 1976. Conventional methods of finding out the

whereabouts of friends and relatives have failed.

Instead there has been a silent demonstration outside the presidential palace every Thursday by the 'Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo'. Telma Dorothy Jara de Cabezas, whose own mother is one of the disappeared, was one of that weekly group of demonstrators.

The authorities have denied detaining her.

INTERNATIONALISM — VITAL INGREDIENT GIVE GENEROUSLY



# LETTERS

## SCLV — where's your support?

WE have followed with interest the attitude and treatment by your paper of the Socialist Campaign for a Labour Victory over the last few months. The SCLV was set up last July to help organise the left to campaign for a massive Labour vote, but fought for against the record of the Labour government and on the basis of socialist policies and methods of work.

Socialist Challenge has expressed support for the SCLV, and two of its supporters were elected to the 16-person Steering Committee. Unfortunately, your paper's support has been little in evidence.

The worst level of treatment the SCLV has received in your paper appeared in the article by Martin Meteyard (26 April). The article did a disservice to the SCLV, containing inaccuracies and weak generalisations where it was not politically wrong and sectarian.

Firstly, Meteyard criticises the six model leaflets the SCLV produced for use by sympathetic CLPs and candidates. Apparently the policies are OK, but the leaflets don't say 'how we're going to get them'.

The Troops Out of Ireland leaflet is singled out for not mentioning UTOM. What are we to make of this? The leaflets were drafted by groups established by the Steering Committee. They were printed in the February and March issues of the SCLV paper Socialist Organiser. Socialist Challenge was free to criticise the leaflets and Steering Committee members could amend them. But no objections came.

To slam the Ireland leaflet for not mentioning UTOM is infantile. UTOM exists to organise for policies. The SCLV leaflet contains those policies. That is what counts. Due to anti-imperialist work in the Labour Party at least five CLPs are putting out propaganda in the election for troops out.

Meteyard then criticises SCLV for the heinous crime of calling on people to join the Labour Party to fight for our policies — one of the ways to achieve them he ignores. 'What this means in practice is trying to channel all struggles and campaigns into the bureaucratic structures of the Labour Party instead of fighting to turn the party outwards towards them.' But you've got to be in the LP to turn it outwards.

Precisely by drawing militants into the party we can explode the bureaucratic structures and confront the pro-capitalist policies and leadership of Callaghan. Meteyard accepts these bureaucratic structures as given and unchangeable. On Ireland, the best way to defeat



Mason's torture policies is to turn the heat of the movement outside the LP on him inside the LP.

Another way SCLV has fought for its policies and to turn the LP outwards has been to campaign for active support for specific movements fighting special oppression and fascism. Socialist Organiser and SCLV statements have promoted the Anti Nazi League, Campaign Against the Immigration Laws, Women's Aid, the Gay Liberation movement, UTOM, ICAR, and separate organisations of blacks and women have been defended inside the LP.

A third piece of nonsense is when Meteyard tells us that the majority of militants who have fought the Labour government's attacks are not members of the LP. True, on issues like Ireland, anti-racism, abortion rights individual LP members have not been mobilised in sufficient numbers.

But on the fightback against wage restraint or spending cuts the movement has been overwhelmingly trade unionists. Seven million of these workers are LP members through affiliation. They constitute the backbone of its support, finance and membership.

It is a crazy diversion for Socialist Unity to cut itself off from the fight in Islington North CLP and the long battle for democracy, so near to success. Similarly, to divert energies from the campaign in the adjacent Hornsey constituency where SCLV sponsor Ted Knight is fighting a key marginal is equally ridiculous.

Would not a victory in Hornsey for policies you support advance the votes for each SU candidate? Also, would not this immeasurably strengthen the fight for unifying the left around policies of class struggle and sharpen the conflict between the current leadership and Labour's working class supporters?

Finally, does not the example of Hackney North itself show what can be achieved by patient socialist activity in what was once a right-wing CLP?

We appeal to Socialist Challenge and supporters to come off the fence and show clearly in practice and press coverage your declared support for SCLV as have hundreds of other socialist militants. MIKE DAVIS, KEITH VENESS, GEOFF BENDER, FRANK HANSEN, Cdr. RON HEISLER, PETE ROWLANDS (SCLV Steering Committee, in personal capacity)

### Need for serious debate

BOTH Workers' Action and the SCLV welcome serious political criticism. However, Martin Meteyard's article on the SCLV (26 April) relies more on insinuation and distortion than honest argument.

Comrade Meteyard attacks the SCLV for not saying how its demands are to be met. He accuses us of trying to channel 'all struggles and campaigns into the bureaucratic structures of the Labour Party'.

The evidence for this? The only thing comrade Meteyard mentions is the fact that the SCLV leaflet on Ireland does not mention the United Troops Out Movement. This is just confused.

The SCLV is a propaganda campaign focused on the election and using it to get a socialist alternative to Callaghan over to a much wider audience than we could reach normally. Of course we use contact with Labour voters to try to involve them on the issues we are raising. But mentioning UTOM in a leaflet does not do this.

Most workers have never heard of UTOM, not least because it shares the IMG's reluctance to take its campaign into the official labour movement. And they will not be interested unless you can convince them politically of Britain's role in Ireland.

That does not mean we do not actively work on the Irish question apart from our election leaflets. The SCLV led a contingent on the recent IRSP Easter Commemoration march

in Kilburn, and helped build the UTOM march in Glasgow.

It is comrade Meteyard who is routinist, not the SCLV. He does not understand that the election allows the left to be a bit more ambitious than the usual round of campaign building. And he does not understand the significance of having 'Troops Out' put over as part of the Labour campaign, giving the demand more authority and a wider audience than it would have coming from the IMG, or Workers' Action for that matter.

It is not just on Ireland that the SCLV has tried to turn the Labour Party outwards. Apart from the work we did in support of the Ford, lorry drivers', NUPE and CPSA strikes, we have played a leading role in the fight against racism and fascism.

Having proved to himself that the SCLV does not support struggles against the Labour leadership, comrade Meteyard quotes Ernie Roberts' statement that the way our demands will be met is through Parliament and the local authority, and tries to pass that off as the position of the SCLV. This is not so much confused as plain dishonest.

If, in scouring the last issue of Socialist Organiser to find something to use against the SCLV, Meteyard had stopped at the front page, he would have found in large type the statement that, 'The fight won't finish with the election. The power to run society does not lie in Parliament, but with the ownership of industry and the organisation of the army, police and state bureaucracy.' The SCLV seeks to work with anyone who supports its platform and to convince them on the issues where we differ.

Comrade Meteyard further confuses the issue by saying that the SCLV 'ends up backing Roy Mason against troops out campaigner Brendan Gallagher in Barnsley'. Again he makes no attempt to deal with our arguments.

In fact we decided not to call for a vote for Gallagher because we think the best way to fight Labour's record on Ireland does not lie in standing candidates against Labour, thus

cutting yourself off from many militants who are prepared to listen to the political arguments on Ireland. We think the SCLV provides a better way of fighting, not against Gallagher, but for everything he is standing for.

Comrade Meteyard's article is not just politically unserious, it is hypocritical. For the IMG is supposed to support the SCLV. If it is so dreadful, then they bear the responsibility along with everyone else.

But in fact the IMG have done nothing to build the SCLV apart from distribute a few copies of its paper. This contrasts with their attitude to bodies such as the ANL, where the IMG does not just (correctly) build it, but tags along behind every bourgeois-democratic prejudice of the leadership.

What conclusion can revolutionaries in the Labour Party draw from this snide attack from the 'non-sectarian' IMG than that the IMG's incessant calls for 'unity' mean unity in the abstract, back-stabbing in practice?

Finally, the SCLV has tried to take advantage of the opportunities given to socialists by the elections. The task now is to build on the gains that have been made. The IMG are welcome to co-operate in doing so. And serious political debate can only aid that process. But comrade Meteyard's article will not help either the SCLV or the IMG in doing that.

GORDON BREWER (Workers' Action Editorial Board)

THE LENGTH of letters printed will usually be kept down to 400 words in order to encourage as wide a range of contributions as possible. All letters may be cut at the Editor's discretion. Unsigned letters will not normally be published, although we will withhold real names from publication on request.

# SOCIALIST CHALLENGE EVENTS

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 4287, 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 Newsfairs in Linthorpe Road.

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

## SCOTLAND

For information about the paper or its supporters' activities throughout Scotland please contact Socialist Challenge Books, 64 Queen St, Glasgow. Open Wed, Thurs, Fri and Sat afternoons. Phone for alternative arrangement (221 7481). Wide range of Fourth International publications.

EDINBURGH Socialist Challenge supporters group meets regularly. Phone George at 031-348 0466 for details.

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

HAMILTON supporters sell Socialist Challenge every Saturday in the Hamilton shopping centre, 1-5pm. For details of local activities contact John Ford, 563 Eviol Crescent, Hamilton.

## MIDLANDS

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 5 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 Elms 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 Coney 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 Oz Shop, 44 Union St, Ryde.

BATH Socialist Challenge sales every Saturday, 2-3.30pm, outside Macsheries, 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 (Brunel Centre).

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

## SOUTH EAST

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

COLCHESTER Socialist Challenge supporters meet regularly. For details phone Steve on Wivenhoe 2940.

BRIGHTON SC forums fortnightly on Tuesdays. Contact Micky on 085062 for details.

## LONDON

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

WALTHAMSTOW readers can buy Socialist Challenge regularly from Sheridan's Newsagents, 88 Hoe St, E17.

Hemel Hempstead supporters meet regularly on Sunday evenings. For details phone Mick on Hemel Hempstead 41007. Also paper sales Saturday mornings in Times Square.

SOCIALIST CHALLENGE benefit pop with bands, disco, food and drink, Sat 2 June, 8pm till late. City Poly Students Union, 102 Fairholt House, Whitechapel High St. (Aldgate East tube/263 bus). Adm. E1.

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

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

LEYTON readers can buy Socialist Challenge from Patel's Newsagents, 328 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; Vasee newsagent, Middle Lane, N8; 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 Sarnbury's.

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

WRITE US A LETTER — AND ENCLOSE A DONATION



# UNDER REVIEW

## 'The Warriors' Regroupment leader shot at unity meeting

ACCORDING to the pre-publicity, 'The Warriors' promises all sorts of anarchy, revolution, and blood-letting.

So much so that Leeds city council has already banned it.

By Geoff Bell

For a time *The Warriors*, now on general release, does indeed promise to be the ultimate disaster movie for the bourgeoisie with the unclean lumpen gangs of New York threatening to take over the whole city from the rich, the powerful, and the cops.

All the themes dear to the

hearts of Socialist Challenge readers are there at the start — the prospect of unity between the previously warring gangs; black, white, brown, and yellow uniting to fight the establishment.

But such prospects quickly diminish when the leading regrouper is shot at the unity

meeting. From then on it's downhill all the way.

The ultimate let down is when members of the gang of the film's title finally come face to face with the rich trendies.

The Warriors had previously fought their way through opposition gangs, enthusiastically engaged in self-defence against the cops, and 'wasted' — that is killed — any opponents who dared challenge them.

But then the rich trendies face the gang in a subway train and the gang lift not a finger against them.

The truth is that the movie is not concerned with youthful revolution. It has no message or political overtones. What it's really about is a good old-fashioned Western with subway trains instead of horses.

In that context the plot is familiar. The 'goodies' are unjustly accused of murder. They fight their way back to their home territory against various tribes of 'Indians', and the gang leader falls for the 'saloon girl with the heart of gold'.



There is a final showdown in which the chief baddie draws first but the hero outdraws him with a knife and injures him in the gun-hand.

Then it's off to the sunset and the rolling shoreline.

Corny.

The only explanation as to why the film has aroused such hostility is that it is all a clever publicity exercise by the film's makers. Certainly, the much criticised violence is straight out of Tom and Jerry —

repetitive and just not serious.

Indeed the whole film is just not serious. Good escapist entertainment maybe, but a fantasy. And because the fantasy is obvious the theme of coming disorder is well and truly 'wasted'.



NATIONALISE  
ALL THE CLUBS,  
THAT'S MY  
SOLUTION.....

## Sport - new opium of the masses?

By Ric Sissons

THE publication of *Sport — A Prison of Measured Time* in paperback will make this trail-blazing work more widely accessible. Its essays, mainly by French revolutionary Jean-Marie Brohm, represent the first attempt to examine sport from a Marxist standpoint.

The British left has been particularly backward on the subject. Glance at the sports coverage of the *Morning Star*, *Newsline*, or *Socialist Worker*. It differs little from that of the bourgeois press.

In papers such as *Socialist Challenge*, sport has been given very little space, yet football, fishing, or darts are as much part of working class life under capitalism as the cinema or theatre.

Brohm shows that it was no coincidence that sport emerged in an organised and structured

form with imperialism. The masses had to be controlled outside the factory, but with none of the disorder and riots that had often accompanied sporting events in the preceding decades.

Thus within 30 years, leagues, referees, crossbars, whistles, and organised clubs all became the norm in football. Sport imbued discipline and respect for authority.

Within late capitalism, sport has been adapted to meet the needs of big business and the state. Every event has its sponsors. Stadiums are plastered with hoardings. Profits can be made from sports equipment.

Most importantly, sport reflects and transmits the dominant capitalist ideology. Violence is accepted and encouraged. Women occupy a secondary role. The superstar ethos is all pervasive.

If a few working people can reach the 'top' via football, snooker, or tennis then why

can't you, your children or the person working next to you?

The significance of the arguments in this collection of essays cannot be underestimated, but a structured case is missing.

Two omissions stand out. There is very little discussion of women and other oppressed groups within sport, and while stressing that 'sport must be smashed like the state machine', Brohm fails to qualify this remark in any way.

Will all sport cease under socialism? That seems unlikely and unnecessary. But what would be the form of sport or leisure?

The book is so far a unique contribution to a discussion on sport. You would be well advised to read it before the Olympics next year.

*'Sport — A Prison of Measured Time'* is published by Ink Links at £2.95 pbk. It is available from The Other Bookshop, 328 Upper St, London N1. Add 10% if ordering by mail.

## Left youth are right

By Redmond O'Neill

THE attention that the national Revolution rally received from the press was a rare exception to the silence with which Fleet Street traditionally greets the activities of the revolutionary left.

In the run-up to the 5 May rally, two venues were cancelled as a result of the noisy cacophony of forebodings in papers like the Sun. Even the *Financial Times* considered the event worth a mention.

The tone of the coverage was summed up in the Sun's front page article: 'A thousand schoolchildren are expected to mass at an astonishing Marxist rally.'

Underlying this approach was the same combination of paternalism and fear that has marked press reactions to the schools magazines of the Anti Nazi League and the National Union of School Students.

Paternalism to play on the worries of those who fear indoctrination of 'their kids'; and fear as expressed in the Tory manifesto pledge to 'experiment with a tougher regime as a short, sharp shock for young criminals' and to lower the age of criminal responsibility to below the present level of ten.

That this kind of witch-hunt can be effective was shown by the cancellations of venues for the rally and the way the press has been able in the past to mobilise parents against NUSS activities in schools.

The emphasis that Richard Gott, features editor of the *Guardian*, gave to his report was different. The harassment Revolution received prior to the rally was sympathetically and accurately reported. The message of his article, however, was that the generation of youth who hit the headlines with the Sex Pistols, Punk, and the ANL are, after all, a harmless crowd, looking over their shoulders to the '60s.

'There are times when the left

seems to be more of a cultural than a political phenomenon,' Gott wrote after attending the rally. 'It is often more about lifestyles and language in the here and now than about utopian schemes for the hereafter.'

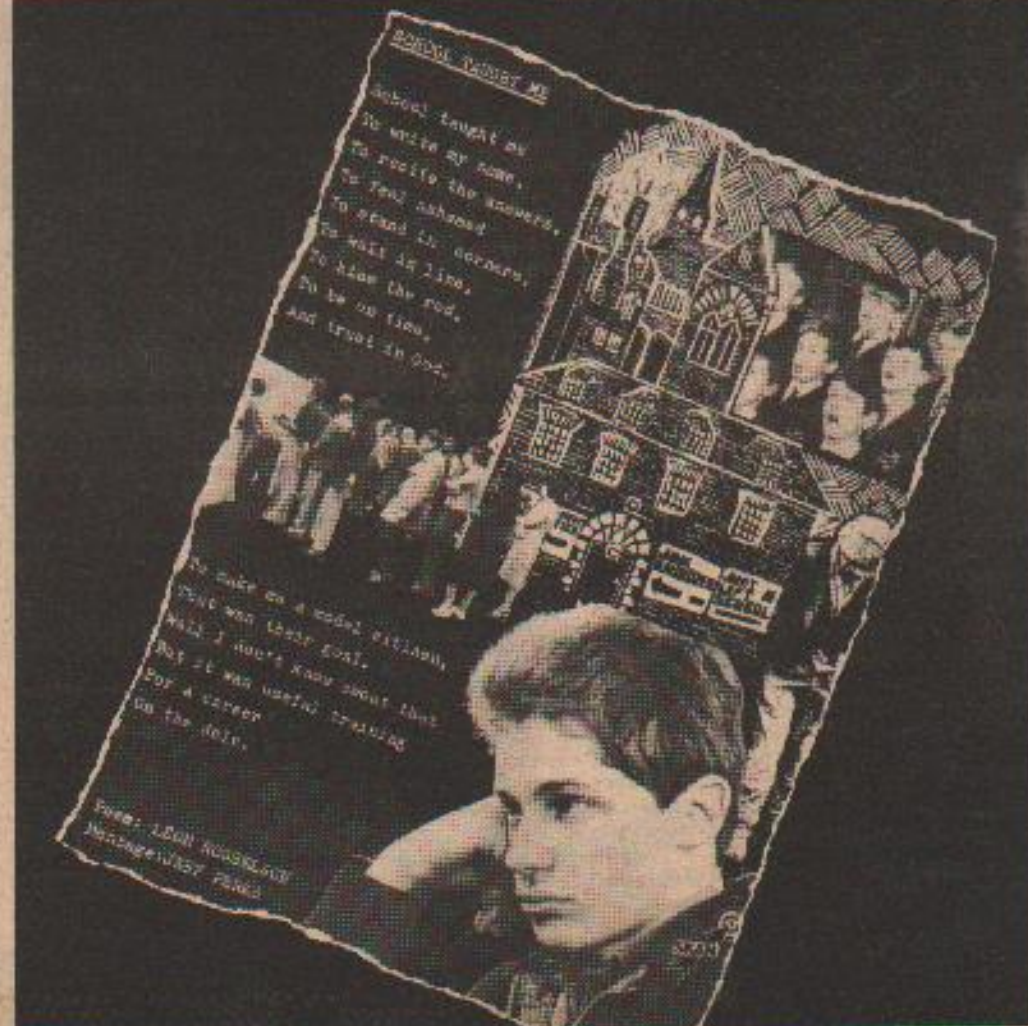
The kernel of truth in this statement is, of course, that the lifestyles of the '60s aren't possible for youth today — and nor are the utopian schemes of flower power, peace and love.

What punk expressed was a new generation turning to politics through culture, not a new wave of politicians turned cabaret artists.

When Pat Watkins, a youth from Cardiff, explained at the rally that he didn't join the army because he thought Ireland should be free, his message was clear: 'We're more in common with the Catholic youth down the Falls Road than we have with the government that keeps them down.'

That is the politics of Revolution youth. It is real and it is socialist because life on the dole is here to stay.

The Revolution rally expressed a first step of those wish to organise to eradicate it. That is the nightmare of the Sun. We aim to make their nightmare a reality.





# Socialist Challenge

## Why we'll be there....



By Carl Brecker  
Hounslow Hospital Occupation Committee

WHEN we were fighting the closure of Hounslow Hospital, one of the arguments used to justify Labour's cutbacks was that our services were just being transferred to a larger hospital.

We knew better — that the number of hospital beds was falling whilst waiting lists grew. For all Maggie Thatcher's talk

about only cutting 'unnecessary waste', jobs and services are under threat.

Participating in *Fightback*, which has tried to link up the grass roots in the hospitals with the labour movement outside, we have seen that every defensive action throws up a challenge — not just to defend existing services but to meet the real need for health care.

I very much want to learn from the Lucas people, because they have tried to meet the same challenge — not only defending jobs, but doing so through a plan for products for which there is a real need.

Even the most minimal control over facilities which we have experienced when carrying out work-ins and occupations has shown us the huge potential of socialist planning and control by workers and consumers.

If we can draw those threads of a socialist alternative out of the struggles we are engaged in, the will strengthen the fightback against Thatcher 'remendously'.



By Carole Regan  
Vice-President, East London NUT

MAGGIE Thatcher's attempt to use moral blackmail to get us to call off our action has made a lot of teachers even more determined to stick out for our pay claim.

Who are the Tories to talk about children's educational needs when they are intent on cutting public spending?

I don't think we are doing enough to win our claim — the selective strike action proposed by our union leaders is hopeless.

We need all-out national action involving the whole membership.

Nor do I think a percentage rise is what's needed. An across the board sum would better unite our ranks — particularly as most women will otherwise lose out heavily because they

are on lower paid grades.

But we are not afraid of asking for active support from the rest of the labour movement, because inflation has cut our real wages just like those of all other workers.

Len Murray has already had talks with the Tories, even though we know that Thatcher only wants to talk us into giving up the hard won right to picket and a closed shop.

Instead he should be organising support for those trade unionists who are using those hard won rights to defend living standards.

We need a fighting unity of the labour movement to defeat the Tory government, not labour movement unity based on negotiating away our rights.

That's what I want to discuss at the Socialist Challenge trade union conference — how to achieve it.

# Come to the

## Socialist Challenge TRADE UNION DAY CONFERENCE

### UNITE TO FIGHT THE TORIES — DEFEND BASIC RIGHTS

A NEW THREAT now faces trade unionists — a Tory government. No government by a party financed and supported by big business is going to do us any favours.

But if the Tory government is a new enemy to fight, the problems we will face have not changed.

There is a crisis of profit — a crisis sending firms bankrupt and creating mass unemployment, a crisis which demands that workers take wage cuts in order to restore profits, a crisis which requires that new technology cut jobs instead of the working week.

A socialist response to the crisis remains as urgent as it was before the election, and that's why Socialist Challenge has organised a conference for trade unionists on 26 May — to discuss how to fight the Tories and the socialist alternative we need.

Speakers include (in personal capacity):

Pat Hickey, TGWU Deputy Senior Steward Rover Solihull; Carl Brecker, Hounslow Hospital Occupation Committee; Denny Fitzpatrick, All London Campaign Against School Closures; Lucas Aerospace speaker on 'Workers Plans and Workers Control'.

Saturday 26 May, 11am-5pm.

Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1  
Registration £1.

Creche, food, stalls

### FIGHT FOR SOCIALIST POLICIES — WORKERS PLANS AND WORKERS CONTROL

## OUR FUND DRIVE

OUR cartoon series by Cormac, entitled 'Bad Taste', has won a financial response from our readership. This week Charlie van Gelderen sent us a £20 donation from his first retirement pension payment.

'I am not generally an ardent admirer of "Bad Taste", which I usually find appropriate to its title', he writes. 'But this week the message has struck home.'

The gauntlet has been thrown down. We now await a £21 donation from someone who is an ardent admirer of 'Bad Taste'.

Another reader, John May of Swindon, has decided to attempt the impossible to aid us. He is going on a sponsored dry-out — no alcohol for a month. You can sponsor him per day or a lump sum for a month — just contact us.

Good news this may be, but there is still far too little coming

in to keep your paper going. Let the return of a Tory government strengthen our resolve — and double the donations to Socialist Challenge next week.

Meanwhile thanks to this week's contributors:

John Strauther (in memory of Blair Peach)	£10.00
Harry Wicks	£10.00
SC election book	5.68
R. O'Connor	2.00
B. Freeson	3.70
B'ham IMG teachers	10.00
P. Hubert	25.00
Coventry/Leamington SC	8.74
Ed Mahood (Canada)	10.00
O.J. Elliott	2.00
Brighton SU supporters	8.50
A. Agnew	5.00
M.B.	15.00
Hackney supporter	10.00
Cup Final wager	3.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>128.62</b>
<b>Cumulative Total</b>	<b>837.84</b>

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Multi-reader institutions: double individual rate  
Special election domestic offer: £2 for 3 months

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I enclose a donation for the Fighting Fund of.....

Cheques, POs and Money Orders should be made payable to 'Socialist Challenge'. Complete and return to: Socialist Challenge, 328/9 Upper Street, London N1.