

## THE BUDGET AND THE TORY CUTS

by ANDREW HORNUNG

SLASHING jobs and services and cutting back on house building — that's the heart of the Tories' Budget plan. The cuts and 'cash limits' assault that Healey started will be stepped up by Howe.

The Tories have already issued instructions freezing job appointments in the civil service. The three-month 'no recruitment' order is designed to cut 22,000 jobs by 'natural wastage'. Meanwhile, the police force will be built up and recruitment stimulated by a big wage rise for these official scabs.

The same sense of priorities is revealed in the Tories' pay plans. Generals, judges and top state bosses will get 30% pay rises, while teachers and London underground workers weren't offered half that amount.

Conservative-controlled Chester County Council could be a model of Thatcher's hatchet-work. The education department there is planning to close up to 50 schools and sack 547 teachers. A NALGO union official revealed that a secret document prepared by the county director of education also planned 'savings' by dismissing 200 manual workers and 114 clerical and administrative staff.

There'll be no 'savings' for most people. For instance, the government will slash millions off British Rail's allowance. The result is simply that fares will shoot up. The present estimates are that commuter fares will rise 25% soon.

Thatcher's philosophy is that a cut in taxation — which won't amount to much for the average worker and won't amount to anything for pensioners, students and the unemployed — will put money into our pockets. Then we will be free to choose what goods and services we want! If the trains and city transport services are cut, we can choose... what? taxis? a new car? If hospital services are cut, we can choose... a private hospital or clinic? If schools are closed, we can choose... Eton for Sam and Roedean for Samantha?

The rich can choose caviar, we can choose crumbs.

Labour's attack on social services and jobs should have unleashed a furious counter-attack by the working class. The trade union officials could have organised resistance to this onslaught, but they hardly lifted a finger. Labour councils that could have led the fight-back against 'cash limits' merely passed on the problem to the rates and rent payers, telling them to foot the bill.

Waiting for the leaders of the Labour Movement to lead us into battle to defend our standards of living makes no sense. The Labour Movement rank and file, the tenants' organisations and claimants will have to strengthen their organisations and at the same time demand a leadership that will answer the Tories blow for blow.

★ Save jobs, cut hours with no loss of pay.

★ No cuts, but defend and extend social services to meet working class needs

★ No rent and rate rises

# RESIST OR BE ROBBED



Rhodesia:  
no  
recognition!

by GEOFF BENDER

ON TUESDAY May 29th, Bishop Abel Muzorewa was sworn in as the first black prime minister of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia by the country's first black president, Josiah Gumede. Yet far from being a triumph for black majority rule as Muzorewa would doubtless like to believe, this new government is actually a tattered figleaf to cover the nakedness of white supremacy.

In Muzorewa's cabinet, five 'whites only' seats are chosen by white representatives only. Among the five are hard-line racist Pieter Van Der Byl as Minister for Transport, Power and Posts, and former premier Ian Smith as Minister without Portfolio. Muzorewa has himself taken control of the white-led armed forces and police — though who will be controlling whom seems to be in some doubt.

Lord Chitnis of the Parliamentary Human Rights Group reported massive intimidation during the so-called majority rule election. At one place, a white farmer and tea plantation owner, drunk and fingering a Mauser, told Chitnis that as soon as he had finished patrol he would be returning home to make sure 'his Kaffirs' had voted. That was typical.

International recognition must be high on Muzorewa's list of priorities. Though the Americans are showing a great reluctance to get involved in backing this government, Muzorewa must be gratified with the response of Britain's new Tory administration.

Unelected Foreign Secretary Lord Carrington has obvious sympathies with elections Rhodesian-style, sympathies greatly aided by the directorship he only recently gave up at Rio Tinto Zinc. RTZ have substantial mining interests in the country. Carrington has already sent a permanent envoy to Salisbury. This is clearly the first step towards recognition.

Even the new Tory Government, like the Americans, are cautious about committing themselves to Muzorewa too quickly. They fear the instability of his government, the angry reactions of black African nations, and the influence of the USSR in Africa. They want to split the Patriotic Front and bring at least a part of its leadership into the government.

But the prospects of this are clearly remote: and without it the war will continue to intensify.

As the Tory government moves towards recognition of the Muzorewa government there will certainly be discussions of military aid. British trade unionists and Labour Party activists must be prepared to fight against recognition of the Muzorewa regime, and to prevent arms sales and shipments to the Muzorewa military.

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SEPARATE SUPPLEMENT: Labour councils and the cuts.

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What next for Socialist Campaign?

WITH THE passing of the election, the Steering Committee of the Socialist Campaign for a Labour Victory has been amalgamated with the Socialist Organiser Editorial Board.

At its meeting on 2nd June the committee discussed the July issue of Socialist Organiser and then went on to take some organisational decisions.

It reaffirmed that Socialist Organiser would urge Labour activists to make Ireland their priority issue for Conference resolutions this year.

It decided to support the United Troops Out Movement mobilisation for the August 12th demonstration in favour of British withdrawal from Ireland.

It decided that future issues of Socialist Organiser would carry a register of local Socialist Organiser groups, and decided to ask for an affiliation fee of £2 from each local group.

Bi-monthly meetings of

delegates from SO groups together with the Socialist Organiser EB will discuss the policy and content of the paper and the campaign. The first of these meetings will be on July 14th.

The meeting decided to launch a campaign for new sponsors.

The committee also discussed the Labour Coordinating Committee. In the last Socialist Organiser we published a trenchant piece on the manifesto proposals of the LCC by Christopher Hird, the deputy editor of the New Statesman, and we shall be continuing this debate.

However, despite the sharp differences which exist between the supporters of Socialist Organiser and the policies of the LCC, we seek the fullest unity in action where possible.

To this end, the editorial

board of Socialist Organiser is writing to the Launch Committee of the LCC with the following requests and proposals:

- 1) what activities do the LCC plan that we can participate/assist in?
2) details of the conference the LCC is planning for October;
3) joint local forums of Socialist Organiser/SCLV supporters and supporters of the LCC, to discuss cooperation and policies for the Labour left.
Whilst having clear differences on policy, we are in favour of having a forum for the left to discuss and work out differences, and therefore call on Socialist Organiser's supporters and readers to join the LCC.
Membership is through a £2 subscription to the LCC's paper Labour Activist (£1 for students and OAFs). For details write to the Organising Secretary, Labour Coordinating Committee, 9 Poland St, London W1.

LOCAL GROUPS

- BASINGSTOKE: Alasdair Jamison, 75 Freemantle Close.
BATH: Dick Withecombe, 21 Melcombe Court, Oldfield Park.
BIRMINGHAM: Simon Temple, 40 Landgate Rd, Handsworth, 21.
BRISTOL: T. Mercer, 19b Cotham Rd, Cotham.
BURY: Sue Arnall, 353 Rochdale Old Rd.
CARDIFF: Martin Barclay, 21 Dogo St, Canton.
COVENTRY: Ann Duggan, 35 Culworth Court, Foleshill Rd, Foleshill.
EDINBURGH: John Wilde, c/o Box 10, 45 Niddry St.
LEICESTER: Stan Crooke, 1 Florence St.
LIVERPOOL: Bas Hardy, 8 Pearson St, 15.
LONDON: Brent: Pete Firmin, 49

- In the next SO we will be printing a fuller & revised list. Send details of your local SO group to 5 Stamford Hill, London N16.
Blenheim Gdns, NW2 (452 9779).
Hackney: Colin Thompson, 103 Osbaldeston Rd, N16 (806 7179).
Islington Central: Jenny Morris, 56B Grosvenor Ave, N5 (359 7079) or Paul Barker, 91 Petherton Rd, N5.
Islington North: Keith Veness, Flat C, 155 Green Lanes, N16 (359 7055), or James Ryan, 41 Ellington St, N7 (607 5268).
South London: Geoff Ben-

- der, 60 Loughborough Rd, (733 8953).
West London: Pete Rowlands, 1 Westbourne Ave, W3 (992 1633).
MANCHESTER: Pete Keenlyside, 142 Gretney Walk, Moss Side, 16.
NEWCASTLE: Steve Grinter, 51 Croyden Rd, Arthurs Hill.
NORTHAMPTON: Ross Catlin, 81 Byron St.
NOTTINGHAM: Ivan Wels, c/o 8 Vickers St.
OXFORD: M. Picken, 28b Southfield Rd.
SHEFFIELD: Ros Makin, 35 Melrose Rd, 3.
STOKE: Phil Johnson, 172a Hanley Rd, Sneyd Green.
SWINDON: E. Waller, 73 Avenue Rd.
WALLASEY: Lol Duffy, 11 Buchanan Rd.

COMING EVENTS

SATURDAY 9 JUNE. 'The Orange Order are holding a national march through Coventry... this march is deliberately aimed at insulting Coventry's large Catholic Irish population, for it is through their areas that the Orange Order intend to march and put forward their racist (yes, racist) ideas'. Counter-demonstration supported by UTOM and Birmingham ANL assembles 11am at Cox St, off Pool Meadow.

SATURDAY 9 JUNE. Protest against the exclusion order under the Prevention of Terrorism Act on Jimmy Scanlon. Assemble 2pm at Kennington Park [Camberwell New Road entrance]. Also: picket of Brixton jail, 6.30-7.30, Friday evening, 8th.

SATURDAY-SUN: 9-10 JUNE. National Abortion Campaign conference, discussing plans to counter the probable Tory moves to roll back the 1967 Abortion Act. In Nottingham. Details from 01-278 0153.

SATURDAY 9 JUNE. Women Against Racism & Fascism national meeting. 10 to 5 at Methodist Church Hall, Lancaster Rd, London [nearest tube, Ladbroke Grove].

WEDNESDAY 13 JUNE. Funeral procession for Blair Peach, killed by the police while opposing fascism in Southall. No banners. 2pm, from Phoenix School, Bow Rd, E3, to East London Cemetery, Grange Rd, E13. Collection sheets for the Blair Peach Memorial Fund and petition forms for a public inquiry can be got from Phil Cronan, c/o Langdon Park School, Byron St, London E14.

There will be a meeting called by the 'Rank and File' teachers' group after the funeral, at 5.30pm at the Euston Tavern (opp. St Pancras Sta.), on the campaign to see that Blair Peach's killers are prosecuted.

SATURDAY 16 JUNE. March against state racism and the Irish connection, organised by E. London UTOM and local anti-racist groups. The Republican people in the North of Ireland, when they see or read about the fight being carried out by immigrant groups here against state harassment, identify that fight with their own struggle. Increasingly, militants among the Black and Asian communities here make the 'Irish connection'. Racism... is a legacy of imperialism, when people from Africa, Asia and Ireland were necessarily portrayed as inferior, so that it was alright to steal their countries'. Assemble 2pm, Speakers' Corner.

SATURDAY 16 JUNE. Pollyannas is a club in the centre of Birmingham. The Commission for Racial Equality found that its owners - Genture Restaurants - and manager J Weston Edwards operated an illegal colour-bar 'quota'. Since then, the management have publicly defied the non-discrimination order, and further complaints have flooded in. The Birmingham Action Committee Against Racism in Clubs has been picketing Pollyannas regularly for over two months, and is approaching unions so that deliveries and services may be disrupted. It is also appealing for support for a national picket on 16th June: Assemble Chamberlain Sq., Birmingham, at 9pm. On Friday evening, 15th, there is a social to raise money for the defence of ten people already arrested while picketing. At the LSD Club, Lozells, Handsworth, Birmingham.

SATURDAY 16 JUNE. Conference on Labour and the Crisis of Local Government Finance and Services. 10am to 5pm, Hampstead Town Hall. Registration £1.

THURSDAY 21 JUNE. Campaign Against the Immigration Laws public meeting. 7.30pm Conway Hall.

SATURDAY 23 JUNE. 'Defend our Unions' conference, sponsored by Acton Works London Transport AUEW shop stewards' committee and several other trade union bodies. The conference will deal with four

major areas of the Tory attack: picketing and the right to strike; recognition and the closed shop; redundancy and the cuts; rank and file organisation'. At New Century Hall, Manchester. Credentials for TU delegates £1 from 265a Seven Sisters Rd, London N4.

FRIDAY 22 JUNE-SUNDAY 1 JULY. Gay Pride Week: dozens of events, including a film festival from 23 June to 29 June at the Scala Cinema, Tottenham St, W1, and a Grand Carnival on Saturday 30 June (assemble 1pm, Temple Place, Temple Embankment, EC4). For details see the Gay Pride Week programme, or phone Gay Switchboard, 01-837 7324.

FRIDAY-SUNDAY 29 JUNE-1 JULY. Anti-fascist school organised by Oxford ANL. Speakers from many organisations plus films, socials, poetry and the Roots of Racism show. Registration £2.50, un-waged £1.50, from Oxford ANL, PO Box 16, Oxford OX1 2JE [tel: 0865 52000].

SATURDAY 30 JUNE. Demonstration: Hands off Zimbabwe, no recognition of Muzorewa's government. Assemble 2.30pm, Smithfield Market, London.

SUNDAY 12 AUGUST. Tenth anniversary of British troops being sent onto the streets of Northern Ireland. The United Troops Out Movement is organising a Troops Out contingent on a march called by the August 12th Demonstration Organising Committee. The Committee itself demands that the Government 'commit itself to a policy of withdrawal from Ireland'. Organising Committee: c/o Steven Dawe, Youth Office, National Liberal Club, 1 Whitehall Place, SW1.

SUNDAY 2 SEPTEMBER. Brixton Carnival against Racism. Organising committee meets Tuesday June 12, June 26, July 10, July 24, August 7, August 21, at 7.30pm, Lambeth Town Hall.

GAYS COME OUT

Read about OUR case for fair treatment in: ADOPTION \*CUSTODY \*HOUSING \*EDUCATION \*EMPLOYMENT and \*LAW ENFORCEMENT. Write to us, SHRG, 60(D) Broughton St, EDINBURGH EH1.

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WHAT WE ARE FIGHTING FOR

- \* No more wage curbs! No more strike-breaking by Labour!
Wage rises should at the very least keep up with price increases. The same should go for state benefits, grants and pensions.
\* Start improving the social services rather than cutting them. Stop cutting jobs in the public sector.
\* End unemployment. Cut hours not jobs - share the work with no loss of pay. Start now with a 35-hour week and an end to overtime.
\* All firms threatening closure should be nationalised under workers' control.
\* Make the bosses pay, not the working class! Millions for hospitals, not a penny for 'defence'! Nationalise the banks and financial institutions without compensation. End the interest burden on council housing and other public services.
\* Freeze rents and rates.
\* Scrap all immigration controls. Race is not a problem; racism is. The labour movement must mobilise to drive the fascists off the streets.
Purge racists from positions in the labour movement. Organise full support for black self-defence.
\* The capitalist police are an enemy of the working class. Support all demands to weaken them as the bosses' striking force: dissolution of special squads (SPG, Special Branch, MI5, etc.), public accountability, etc.

- \* Free abortion and contraception on demand. Women's equal right to work, and full equality for women.
\* The Irish people - as a whole - should have the right to determine their own future. Get the British troops out now! Repeal the Prevention of Terrorism Act. Political status for Irish republican prisoners as a matter of urgency.
\* The black working people of South Africa and Zimbabwe should get full support from the British labour movement for their strikes, struggles, and armed combat against the white supremacist regimes. South African goods and services should be blacked.
\* It is essential to achieve the fullest democracy in the labour movement. Automatic re-selection of MPs during each parliament, and the election by annual conference of party leaders. Annual election of all trade union officials, who should be paid the average for the trade.
\* The chaos, waste, human suitering and misery of capitalism now - in Britain and throughout the world - show the urgent need to establish rational, democratic, human control over the economy, to make the decisive sectors of industry social property, under workers' control.
The strength of the labour movement lies in the rank and file. Our perspective must be working class action to raze the capitalist system down to its foundations, and to put a working class socialist system in its place - rather than having our representatives run the system and waiting for the crumbs from the table of the bankers and bosses.

CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS

From paper to practice

*LABOUR Party democracy and the accountability of the leadership and Parliamentary Party are issues being raised as Party activists pick up the pieces from the election defeat. Socialist Organiser spoke to VLADIMIR DERER, Secretary of the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy (CLPD), to find out what issues the CLPD will be asking parties to put before Labour's conference this year.*

ONE OF the most urgent tasks is to make some sort of critical appraisal of the government's record. Unfortunately resolutions to this year's conference may not be able to do this in the time available. Parties should demand that the NEC initiate discussions on why the defeat occurred and what policies should be pursued in future.

Whatever policies are decided, the most important thing will be to make sure they are put into practice by the Parliamentary Labour Party.

We are putting some proposals to help to ensure the implementation of conference decisions.

*On Re-selection:* we are suggesting a constitutional amendment which would make it obligatory to re-select. Experience of the last two years shows that the NEC can't be relied on to implement resolutions re-mitted. It is not clear whether this debate will be allowed, although the NEC has the power to instruct the Conference Arrangements Committee to place it on the agenda.

*On the leadership:* when it was raised last year, the question was academic — a question of which method Jim Callaghan would be

selected as leader. The election places the debate in a new light. The question will not just be how but who.

The NEC proposal which would establish the position of Leader of the Party elected by the PLP could mean the election of the former Chancellor whose policies were thrown out by last year's conference. It would put a constitutional imprimatur on the status quo.

*On the Manifesto:* we are asking parties to submit constitutional amendments that this should be drawn up by the NEC rather than (as at present) by the NEC and Parliamentary Committee, which allowed Callaghan to throw out NEC proposals he didn't like such as abolition of the House of Lords. Alternatively this can be posed as a general administration resolution, to ensure the issue is debated.

*The Three Year Rule:* Parties are trying to change this by a proposal that where more than ten CLPs or affiliated organisations raise an issue it should be debated whether or not it has been discussed in previous years.

We are also demanding that resolutions ruled out of order be published in the printed agenda, and a special conference session should decide whether they are taken. Another reform will seek to ensure union block votes are cast in accord with the wishes of their delegation, and to establish the right of a delegation to challenge mis-cast votes. There has been a long history of this in the AUEW, not just last year's reselection vote.

*★ Details of the proposed CLPD resolutions and amendments are available from CLPD, 10 Park Drive, London NW11 7SH.*

Beating the pressure to conform

GLC councillor KEN LIVINGSTONE spoke to Socialist Organiser about the tasks of Labour's militant left wing

CALLAGHAN is preparing to lead the Labour Party in a way that will allow the Tories to govern, by trying to stop any real opposition. He will try, in the same way Gaitskell did in the '50s, to keep 'opposition' inside Parliament.

**Will Labour's 'left wing' NEC lead a fight?**

Almost by definition an extra-parliamentary opposition isn't going to be run by the Labour Party's National Executive.

They're full-time union officials and MPs. Much of the real opposition will be spontaneous action by trade unionists against what the Tories are trying to do.

The right wing in the Labour Party is trying to regain control on the councils. This means that Labour Groups are taking an attitude of complicity to the Tories' cuts. On councils like Islington and Haringey, in London, left-wingers have been booted out of leading positions in the councils to pave the way for this.

But the left in the Labour Party is much more sophisticated than it was six years ago, having gone through the experience of a Labour Government. It is aware of how useless most of the Parliamentary Labour Party is, and won't be as easily swayed by rhetoric.

Groups like Socialist Organiser need to exist to provide information in the labour movement and build links. It's the MPs and

leaders who have all those links now.

**The union leaders supported the last government's policies. What can be done to change that?**

In the unions it should be much easier to organise around issues day to day, but what happens depends on two things. Firstly, how clearly the union leaders are seen as carrying out the Tories' policies. Secondly, on how quickly events bring forward new leaders. At the moment there is a clapped out 'old guard' in both the political and industrial wings of the labour movement.

What we have to do is use what positions and influence we have in the movement aggressively and stick out when everyone else is giving in.

The shift to the left in the Labour Party and unions that took place under the Heath government was a response to the way that government tried to push its policies through. Now the Tories have learnt and will try and moderate their approach by avoiding cuts in the most sensitive areas. This is to make life easier for Callaghan. They don't want genuine socialists leading an opposition to them.

**Why did no Labour MP oppose Callaghan's reselection as leader?**

In a situation like that, sitting in a room with a couple of hundred other people who won't 'rock the boat', standing against the tide would seem outrageous and bring venomous personal attacks. Obviously that's a reflection on the people who won't stand against the tide. Challenges to Labour leaders are very rare.

There is a tremendous pressure to conform in

the labour movement.

At the end of the day it's only the forces that will really press to the left and who are prepared to make a stand that can draw in others behind a fight.

There will be debates in Parliament when we'll see the Labour leaders going along with the Tories. That is when we'll be able to see who's genuinely on the left.

**Benn is the only likely left wing successor to Callaghan, but he does not seem very 'genuine'.**

All the time Benn made it obvious he disagreed but

his argument was that for 'the sake of party unity' he should not do anything. That's not an argument but it does mean he's not in the position of being seen as a complete cynic who was right wing in office and now shifting left.

Until he's actually leading the Labour Party, people won't know whether he will withstand all the pressures. Obviously he should have left the last government and campaigned against it, but at the moment there's no other force on the left that is as large as the support he will get. It's a route we'll have to go through.



Clay Cross: 'we have to stick out when everyone else is giving in'

MOTHERS AND CHILDREN: WHO CARES?

IN RECENT years a number of feminist novels have shown women in the mothering role and attempting at the same time to take account of their own individuality.

The heroines of these stories have had to turn their backs firmly on the role of mother to achieve self-fulfilment and freedom. Most women who are mothers cannot do this.

They battle on, fulfilling (nearly always inadequately) the role of houseperson, mother to at least two children, home economists and accountant, laundress, dress-maker and mender, cook, decorator, temporary home help to relatives and friends, confidante to numerous members of the community, play-leader to its children, and — on top of all this — a job of some description. Add the woman's efforts to be herself and lover to her partner, to come up to the image the ads have created for her, and you have a recipe for disaster and failure.

How then is today's mother going to chisel out a position for herself? Has the women's movement precipitated mothers headlong into a life-style that is neither right for them nor of their choosing?

Just under half of all mothers work, most of necessity. However, the mothers of three million children under five do not go out to work. Al-

though some are constrained by the lack of childminding facilities, I strongly suspect that the majority actually choose to be at home with their children and make many financial sacrifices to do just that. Society as it is does not help them in this decision.

Mothering is a 'no status' occupation — if indeed it is seen as an occupation at all. Family lives are very isolated by the material features of our environment and the social features of the nuclear family. In most cases having only one bread-winner in the family makes hard going.

And of course with the role of mother goes the job of 'sole' or 'senior' houseperson. This job has hours of approximately 6am to 11pm — much the same as the job of mother, which also has its night shifts in the early years.

What is being done to change these conditions and revalue the job of mother?

Clearly increased child benefit ought to be part of the demands of the women's movement. This would run side by side with continued demands for satisfactory day-care for all children whose mothers choose to work. And there must be more part-time jobs for men and women, or a reduced work week with no loss of pay.

It is a crime that, out of the total of 850,000 women work-

ing less than 30 hours a week, 678,000 are considered part-time: usually with less status, less chance of promotion, fewer fringer benefits, shorter holidays and minimal security. Job-sharing with no loss of pay and a £60 minimum wage would have a dramatic effect on the position of part-time workers.

But for the mother with a job, mothering must be compressed into that small part of her life which is between work

wards the restructuring of the working week and the working part of our lives, we must also demand state benefit and a number of days paid leave from employers for time off to care for sick children.

The parliamentarians pay lip service to the preservation of the family, whilst allowing contracts of employment, or a lack of them, to destroy the emotional security and interdependence that the family promotes so well and for which

to working parents is to take time off without pay, and there is a limit to this. It is nearly always the mother who takes this leave, further reducing her chances of maintaining any kind of job equality with men. For the working single parent, it is of course a disastrous situation: he or she may be able to make up income through social security, but more likely will not be quite below scale and may not be off work long enough to make this exercise in any way worthwhile.

A survey completed in 1976 showed that a fifth of working women suffered a loss of earnings through children's illness. There are no statistics which show the loss of jobs to women through children's illness, but many women are told that they need not return to their job when they take this necessary time off, and many simply find that it is best to give notice themselves if their child has a prolonged illness.

Or sometimes mothers find themselves leaving small children ill and unattended at home whilst they go to work to hold down the essential job. Many keep older siblings off school to look after the smaller ones. Accidents happen but they never seem to receive the publicity which they merit.

Many children struggle on at school, spending many

hours in the sick room whilst working mothers are traced to take them home, only to return to school the next day no better and downright miserable because mothers know that in the long run it will be worse for their children if they lose their jobs.

Many mothers are not happy with having to do this. They shut their eyes to what they are having to do to their children and the children of others whom their ill children infect. But what are the alternatives?

Several campaigns in the women's movement, and the Child Poverty Action Group, have started to press for the rights of parents to take time off for their children, and for the maintenance of income through state benefits while they are doing so. They have drawn a blank with government ministers.

Yet it is these very politicians who hypocritically profess their concern for the institution of the family and its stability, whilst totally failing to take any real measures to support the caring role of the individuals within it. The mothering role is central to the majority of women, and its frustration by the ups-and-downs of the capitalist economy familiar to them. The women's movement should address itself strongly to this area of women's oppression.

**DINAH MORLEY, a Hackney councillor and mother of three children, argues that state benefits for working parents, to cover time off to care for sick children, should be a central campaign for feminists and socialists.**

and housework, and which has contain any other interest she may have. Is this what mothers want? How can the burden be shared reasonably with other adults in the family? How does the husband or partner in the family share the roles of houseperson and mother satisfactorily once his wife/partner begins to share the role of breadwinner?

Both Sweden and Germany have gone some way to recognising that these roles are shared by allowing either parent time off work with pay when parenting demands it — i.e. in times of child illness and in the post-natal period.

Whilst we must work to-

there is as yet no satisfactory substitute. When the children need a parent to be at home to look after them during periods of illness, the employer gives people very few rights to be parents. Professional workers come out a little better than others as they often have a clause about compassionate leave in their contract, and perhaps two or three days off per year with pay if their children are sick.

However, does compassionate leave cover a parent for two consecutive bouts of whooping cough? Three days off per year is totally unrealistic.

The only alternative offered

# Scotland: dangers of diversion and division

**BRYNLEY Heaven**, in his letter in the May 50, complains about 'know-nothing politicians' who ignore 'specifically Scottish or Welsh questions' on the grounds that these areas get as much economic aid as any other region.

Unfortunately, the comrade has ripped this point in the 50 Election Special out of its context in order to make his point. In fact the article argues, in agreement with comrade Heaven, that current regional policies are restricted to 'mitigating the least acceptable effects of the problems experienced by the less favoured parts of the unplanned economy'.

There is, however, complete disagreement between comrade Heaven's solution to the problem and that put forward in the Election Special article. The article stated, correctly in my view, that the reason why regions like Scotland and Wales suffer particularly from depression and unemployment is that they are unprofitable areas to invest in: "The only way round

this is to attack the profit system".

Comrade Heaven, on the other hand, believes that the answer lies, in Scotland and Wales at least, in 'bringing government closer to the people', i.e. regional policy should be left in the hands of regional assemblies — who are bound to make a better job of it than Westminster. He brushes aside the objection that this 'just ignores the existence of classes in society' by claiming that the majority of the labour movement back him up.

But in Wales an overwhelming majority of the working class rejected devolution. To be sure, many people voted no for all sorts of backward reasons, one of them being fear of the Welsh language, but there was also the grain of a realisation that an Assembly in Cardiff would not substantially change their lives.

In Scotland a majority of the working class does support devolution, and that is a verdict we must accept. But we can still re-assert that an Edinburgh Assembly will

be more of a diversion than a rallying point, thus forewarning and forearming the working class against the internal divisions that will probably grow because of the referendum result.

In the short term the SNP has suffered a blow and Labour has assumed the tartan mantle, but unless the divisive tendencies in the movement are actively fought the nationalists will eventually reap the rewards.

As socialists we accept the majority decision of the Scottish working class, but we must not hide (as comrade Heaven does) behind illusions that majority has in the powers and functions of a Scottish Assembly. We must fight these illusions in the same way that we fight illusions in the Westminster Parliament. Re-shuffling responsibility for Scottish regional policy will not help those on the dole. The only way forward is to attack the profit system.

Martin Barclay

# Immigration controls: a practical answer?

IN THE last *Socialist Organisation*, Ann Dummett argued that we should be calling for non-racist immigration controls. 'Either a completely open door... or freedom of entry from the Commonwealth', she thinks is impractical.

But how does Ms Dummett define practical? She says, "No change in immigration control can happen except through Parliament. MPs are the people who have got to initiate any effective change". Thus her idea of what is practical is what can catch the ear of parliamentarians, and her idea of strategy is lowering your sights till they coincide with the whites of an MP's eyes.

We do not accept that. As revolutionary socialists, we see the working class as the force to initiate change, and our politics are determined by what will best mobilise the working class to fight its oppression and exploitation. The question Ann Dummett should ask herself is, would the call for non-racist immigration controls further the struggle to break workers from racism. (I was about to write, 'from racism and chauvinism' — but clear-

ly Ann Dummett has given up on the second of these. One can hardly have non-chauvinist immigration controls).

The answer is provided — at least the key to it — by an observation Ms Dummett makes herself. She bemoans the fact that the issues of race and immigration have become confused. Now bemoan it as she may, she must take this confusion as a starting point.

Suppose Ann Dummett meets a worker who says, "I'm no racist, but you do need immigration controls". What does she say? We can only assume she says, "I'm glad you're no racist. I hope you'll support this campaign to keep people out of Britain for reasons other than race".

Precisely because the issues of race and immigration are confused, we ought to be prepared for the fact that support for immigration controls means racism, even if it is combined with the plea, "I'm no racist". Thus we would reply, "Why do you want immigration controls? Apart from anything else, there are more people leaving Britain than coming in". The response to this is

very likely to be, "Yes, but it's the whites who are leaving..." At least at that point we can get down to talking about racism and forget the numbers game.

Or the reply might be: "That may be so, but there are still too many people". Then we can discuss the real origins and solutions to the problems he or she thought we cause or made worse by "too many people".

How would Ann Dummett's approach be a better 'strategy' for enlightening this worker? Of course, as Ann Dummett's work focuses on the question of race, she might feel she had got somewhere; if it focused on the question of unemployment she would realise that she had got nowhere.

Ann Dummett's idea of strategy is a drawing-room one — both because it does not relate to the working class, and because it does not take as its point of departure the struggles or ideological confusions of the working class. Its point of departure is the supposed reasonableness of MPs.

Andrew Hornung

# Strasbourg and Westminster

UNFORTUNATELY Socialist Organiser has not given much coverage to the European Assembly elections. Indeed, SO has been in danger of reflecting the general attitude in the Labour Party to these elections: ignore them and hope they will be over quickly.

Usually SO supporters criticise the majority in the Labour Party for focusing too much on elections rather than mass action. Now the firmest believers in the 'parliamentary road to socialism' have suddenly turned round and become anti-electoralists — and for no other reason than that it is an international election. Many Labour Party branches and activists are refusing to do anything for the EEC poll.

The reasons given will not stand up. EEC or no EEC, economic and political affairs are inescapably international. Any chance, however limited, to extend political action beyond national limits should be welcomed.

We should work to elect Labour Euro-MPs — and then demand that those MPs speak out in the Assembly as repres-

entatives of the common interests of workers throughout Europe, not as representatives of Britain. If even a tiny group of militant socialist MPs did that, they would be making better use of parliament as a forum for socialist agitation than could ever be possible in a national parliament.

If our Euro-MPs will not act as socialist internationalists, we should at least demand that they act as democrats and press for the EEC Assembly to have sovereignty over the EEC Commission and the Council of Ministers. The arguments against this in Labour's Euro-manifesto are disgusting in their pig-headed chauvinism.

"The basis of democratic control", says the Manifesto, "must continue to be vested firmly in the right of the European peoples to govern themselves, as far as possible, through their own national Parliaments". But isn't international democratic control — to the extent that it can be won — obviously a higher form (and one more suited to the close international connections

of the modern economy) than the largely mythical sovereignty of national parliaments? Since the Manifesto does not propose to abolish the EEC Commission and Council of Ministers, why does it not favour parliamentary accountability for these bodies?

Westminster has no advantages over the EEC Assembly as regards democracy. On the contrary: the EEC Assembly is mostly elected by a more democratic system (proportional representation) and has no unelected upper house. Democrats should be positively in favour of the EEC Assembly taking powers away from Westminster.

To be sure, the EEC needs to be replaced by a United Socialist Europe, embracing eastern Europe as well as the west, and based not on formal parliamentary democracy but on real workers' democracy and workers' control. But the fight for that United Socialist Europe can never be advanced by nationalist conservatism.

Martin Thomas

# JOHN O'MAHONY reports on the case of Peter Grimes — and raises some questions about police surveillance and interference in the Irish community and the labour movement.

"AT THE bottom of my bed there is a spare razor, razor blade, toothbrush, toothpaste, towel, flannel, and a change of underwear. It's got so bad that I have to sleep with a bag ready so that when they come in the morning I get into my clothes and go with them".

The people who 'come in the morning' are the Special Branch and the Anti Terrorist Squad. Peter Grimes, former British organiser for the Irish Republican Socialist Party (IRSP) until he left that organisation for reasons of health last February, can't remember whether it is seven or eight times that he has been taken into police custody in the last 3½ years, to be held under the Prevention of Terrorism Act for periods of up to seven days.



Architect of the PTA: Roy Jenkins, then Labour Home Secretary

Two weeks ago he was released from Paddington Green station after his solicitor had applied for a writ of habeas corpus on the grounds that his mental health might be at risk. The police had been demanding information from him about the killing of Airey Neave. Grimes denies all knowledge of the affair; but by the time he was released he was, so he told the *Observer*, "so frightened I was prepared to write anything, confess to anything, name anybody, just so they would give me a period of peace". It had been his third detention in two months.

Despite seven or eight arrests, Grimes has only been charged once. At the end of 1977 he got three months under Section 11 of the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) for 'withholding information'.

After talking at length to Peter Grimes about his experiences with the police and about his political activities and beliefs, it seems to me that not only has he been harassed to the brink of a nervous breakdown by police using the special provisions of Roy Jenkins' 1974 PTA, but also the police have re-

peatedly attempted to blackmail and intimidate him into becoming an informer. The case has many parallels to that of Kenneth Lennon, who was found dead in a ditch in 1974 after being blackmailed by the police into being first an informer and then a provocateur. The difference is that Peter Grimes has repeatedly blown the whistle on the police.

A dark, slightly-built Mullingar (Co. Westmeath) man of 32, Grimes, who works as a gardener, has lived in Britain since he was 10 years old. During five years in the British Army in the '60s he saw service against guerrillas in Aden and in Borneo, and in putting down the Maoist riots in Hong Kong in 1967.

Moved into Northern Ireland with the first British soldiers when Jim Callaghan sent troops onto the streets in 1969, he was based for some weeks in Palace Barracks, Hollywood, Co. Down. After Aden and Borneo, he may have had less faith than many people then had in the peacekeeping mission of the British Army. He bought himself out of the Army in 1969 for £250.

He became politicised in the squatting movement organised by Ron Bailey and others in the East End in the early '70s, and "received a political education of sorts". He was influenced by the Marxist classics (except Trotsky, whose work he hopes to catch up on) and by Mao and Guevara.

He is also a Catholic who believes in Jesus Christ, though he has not practised his religion for years. He had always felt himself to be Irish, keeping in touch with his hometown — and eventually he joined Clann na hEireann, the British offshoot of the Official Republican Movement. When in 1975 a section of the Officials formed the IRSP, he helped start a British support group, eventually holding the position of National Organiser in Britain.

Peter Grimes' political views now are a not too well integrated mixture of socialist republicanism, the sort of grass-roots community politics he learned in the East End, and quasi-Maoist rationalisations for the Irish Republican practice of organising private armies. He respects the military role of the Provisionals but has 'very little respect' for Sinn Fein (the Provisionals in politics). A Provo Ireland would be a capitalist Ireland. He wants a 32 County workers' republic.

He believes armed struggle is a last resort, and it has come to that in Northern Ireland. He supported the Officials (and now the IRSP) because he thinks they are the only people who have tried to bring Protestant and Catholic communities in Northern Ireland together.

What effect on the communities' relations does the Provisional IRA (and the Irish National Liberation Army [INLA]) have? He does not see any direct relation-

# PREVENTION Sowing and

ship. It is a parallel phenomenon to the communal conflict, concerned essentially with the problem of the British presence.

The Provisionals are a people's militia, unlike the police and Army who serve the bourgeoisie. There is a need for a people's militia. Division in Northern Ireland is the result of sectarian indoctrination by the British Government, the Orange Order, and 'the Freemasons', dividing to rule. He believes that perhaps the creation of local action committees in the streets of the Protestant and Catholic ghettos could lead to unity in Northern Ireland.

He says he is motivated in politics by hatred — of the treatment meted out by the capitalist system to his family and other such people. He speaks bitterly of the beggars in Dublin streets, tells of the sight of a ten year old boy with no shoes pushing a heavy cart up a hill in Dublin, of houses without running water and electricity — amidst the 'real mineral wealth' of Ireland, exploited by Irish capitalists and 'the multi-nationals'.

He talks of his dealings with the police as if he has it all off pat. But the facts of the number of his arrests are a matter of record.

Grimes' political organisation, the IRSP, took off essentially from dissatisfaction with the Official Republican Movement's failure to provide the necessary physical protection for the Northern Ireland Catholics against the British Army and the Orange murder squads. The split in 1975 was quickly followed by a blood feud in which a number of people died. An organisation called the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA) came into existence. Formal connection with the IRSP is denied, but the INLA is generally and probably rightly understood to be the IRSP what the Provisional IRA is to Provisional Sinn Fein.

It is the INLA that has claimed responsibility for killing Airey Neave.

It might seem then that Peter Grimes, given his views and associations, might well be involved in the Neave killing and is anyway

'fair game hunting Neave'.

Not so. The IRSP is whatever exists, the INLA is the result of propaganda in the case of its IRSP is an official organisation strictly within the bounds of socialist law. But are supporters cause of the action as aux those who police claim with Grimes to know 'intelligence'.

Not accord experience ional IRA These have ly of people tical 'form' connection in Britain. on why the such diffi police.

And certa Neave would have otherw selves to with Grimes ing political

An army work of the iring ope

# Frost over Northern Ireland

DAVID Frost's *Global Village* is an attempt to bring personalised, confrontational political debate to large television audiences. Part instruction and part entertainment. Most of the programmes have had more of the beargarden about them than the usual highly-structured and ever-so-stiff current affairs discussions.

But if Frost's populism is obvious and apparently more daring than those staid old studio discussions, the material that gets onto the air is no less carefully sifted and angled.

A bit-part in Frost's studio audience gave me the chance to see this at first hand.

The programme on 15th May in Northern Ireland. Broad authority instructed pre-recorded view with Irish leader Ruari was cut out also on order IBA. The exc four MPs app programme when they jo O Bradaigh's to be include all was not as Contradict smooth medi plained to the ience before gramme, as personal con no Troops Ou

# PREVENTION OF TERRORISM ACT Casting dragnets Leaping informers



## I was 'Prisoner A'

"WHEN I was taken to Paddington Green on Friday 18th, I was given the initial 'A'. I was referred to as 'prisoner A' all the time, even on the doctor's forms".

Margaret Crowley was held for five days under the Prevention of Terrorism Act, at London's Paddington Green police station. She is a member of the IRSP's London support group. The purpose of the arrests was described by IRSP spokesmen as 'low level intelligence gathering'. Over a third of their London supporters have been arrested or visited at work in the last three weeks.

Margaret Crowley described how the police admitted they had her phone tapped. When she was arrested, the first thing they said was 'You were

talking to Peter Murphy'. They described a phone conversation she had had earlier in the day.

They tried to pressure a statement out of her. 'I have a three year old daughter whom I'd just collected from nursery school. She was in hysterics...'

Crowley herself had only just come out of hospital. 'When I was arrested I had a temperature of 101°, but the police doctor thought I was well enough to be detained'.

'The police gave the impression that they wouldn't release me unless I made a statement... They asked me to make statements about the movements of nine people — some of whom I didn't know at all and some I scarcely knew. I refused'.

## It's not illegal... but

FOUR OR five plain clothes police were drinking in the Irish Centre in Mount Pleasant, Liverpool, on Monday May 28th. Outside, Colin Maguire and Alf Cottrell were collecting money for the IRSP's prisoner fund.

Just after midnight Maguire and Cottrell were arrested as they were having a meal in a cafe. They were held under the Prevention of Terrorism Act until 4 o'clock on Wednesday afternoon. Neither of them was charged.

Colin Maguire was warned by the police that if they 'caught him collecting again', they would charge him with collecting money for an illegal organisation. The IRSP is not illegal and never has been.

Both Maguire and Cottrell were questioned about their political views, not any specific event. Maguire says he was asked if he was a member of the SWP or WRP, whether he was a member of the Anti Nazi League, what his solicitor's political views were, whether

he'd been influenced by left wing teachers when he was at school...

Alf Cottrell, who is a registered disabled person, was interrogated twice, photographed and fingerprinted. His flat was searched while he was held.

Cottrell lives with his elderly father, who was alone on Tuesday 29th when three special branch officers broke into the flat. They kept him in a bedroom while they ransacked the place, taking posters off the walls, and eventually removing a list of ANL supporters.

Alf Cottrell's father was put under sedation and kept in bed by a doctor after that. He was still under sedation the next Saturday.

Colin Maguire says he was told not to talk to any left wing papers about his arrest. The police also got him to sign a statement saying he had received no ill-treatment while he was being held.

NIK BARSTOW

## MAKE IRELAND AN ISSUE AT LABOUR CONFERENCE

Socialist Organiser urges Labour activists to push resolutions on the following lines for the Party conference this year:

"Conference recognises that the root of the problem in Ireland is the undemocratic partition of Ireland, with built-in Loyalist dominance and continued British rule in the Northern state."

"Conference calls upon the NEC and the future Labour Government to return to the

policies of Labour's 1921 special conference on Ireland by:

"1) recognising that Ireland is one country which should be united, free of British rule in any part;

"2) pledging immediate removal of British troops from Northern Ireland."

"and to press for immediate repeal of the Prevention of Terrorism Act"



Peter Grimes [left] resisted police pressure to turn informer — but Kenneth Lennon didn't



are in. Give us a few names and addresses, and point us in the right direction, and we'll help you out'. He refused, then and the other times — unlike Kenneth Lennon.

What we know about Kenneth Lennon is based on a statement made to the NCCL by Lennon, a few days before he was found dead in a ditch, early in 1974. Lennon claimed to have been terrorised and blackmailed by the Special Branch to act as an informer for them inside Provisional Sinn Fein. Then, threatening to expose him as an informer, they coerced him into acting as a provocateur who egged on young Irishmen to commit robberies for arms. His cover was finally blown. When he was charged with conspiracy to effect an escape from Winson Green prison in Birmingham, the police had to stand up in court and plead for him. (It seems they also privately told the judge and court officials). The 18 year old boy on trial with this provocateur nevertheless got three years.

Released and on his own, Lennon felt himself a threatened man. According to his statement to the NCCL it was by the Special Branch that he felt threatened. And whoever finally pulled the trigger on Lennon, there is no doubt that the Special Branch killed him.

a long and well-publicised history of special attention from the police — long before the Neave killing.

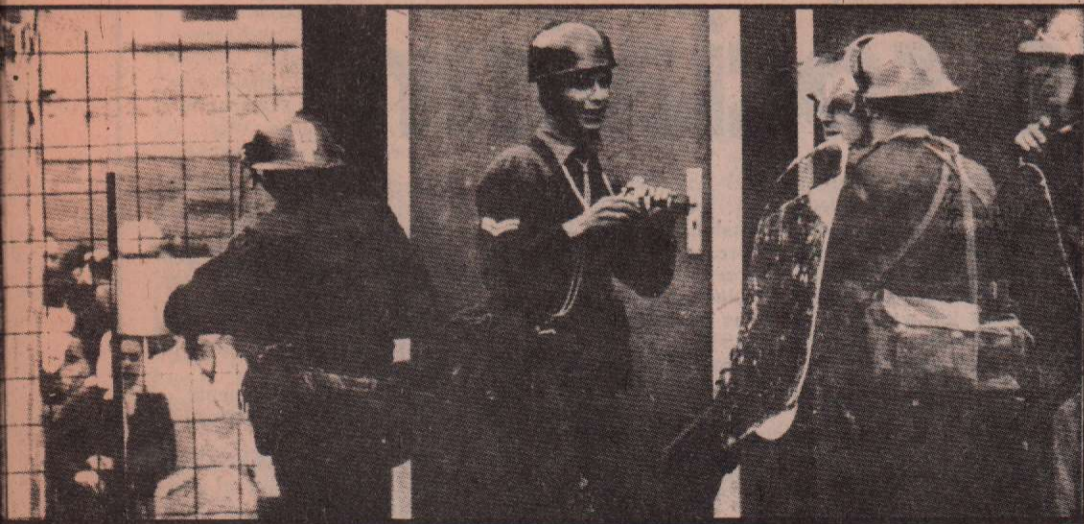
Some of Grimes' experiences in police custody support a different and more plausible explanation as to what the police have been trying to achieve with him, both before and after Neave's death.

Repeated attempts have been made to terrorise and bully him into acting as an informer. They have threatened that if he didn't act as their informer, they would see to it that he was branded publicly as an informer. 'They said they wouldn't have to do anything to me. The people that I was dealing with would see that I was done anyway'.

This has been a common feature of the arrests. 'The last time I was in Paddington Green police station, four

weeks ago, a police commander said that he was going to release me. He said: 'I'll give you two weeks to get me the address of the bomb factory [used in the Neave killing]'. Grimes was told not to worry: they could get him a new job, flat and identity. It had been done before. He says he reported this to the National Council for Civil Liberties and to the IRSP.

The first arrest was 3½ years ago. The police took him and a Woolworths toy pistol belonging to a nephew to Bethnal Green police station. The theme was struck early: he was offered a bribe to inform on the IRSP support group in this country. Three months later, he was arrested after the Guildford pub explosion: 'Come on, wake up to yourself, you can make a few bob out of this stupid game you



photographer in Northern Ireland. Along with the overt army goes a range of undercover and intelligence-gatherings, backed up by the police.

mmme shown was on North-So [on Independent-casting Authority] it was And an inter- O Bradaigh completely, s from the use was that hearing on the had walked out and film of interview was d. But again it seemed. on no. 1: The a person ex- studio aud- the pro- divulging a dence, that viewpoint

had been invited because it was not a significant strand of opinion. Then Frostie's first salvo on the air was to unveil Yorkshire TV's poll showing a large public majority for troop withdrawal, no doubt for a variety of dubious motives. [Incidentally, what happened to the detailed poll of Northern Ireland opinion we were told about before the programme started?]

Then, from the Hamburg studio, O Bradaigh's face loomed up on the massive monitor screen before the programme started. The Official Unionists duly walked out. The Westminster MPs [Stan Orme and Kevin McNamara for Labour] affected not to

notice until they had had their moment of glory on the air.

Yorkshire TV had deliberately hoodwinked participants until the last minute, then had accepted the IBA veto on O Bradaigh as they had earlier accepted the IBA instruction to pre-record this 'live' programme.

Then after the programme, David Frost announced to the massed ranks of invitees in the audience, which included a phalanx of the loyalist paramilitary in various guises, that Ruari O Bradaigh could not be featured because he was too awful/dangerous to contemplate.

This manipulation com-

plemented Frost's mood-stimulating comments of "most encouraging" on inane appeals for mutual friendliness, balanced with pointed demands to O Bradaigh for explanations for violence — demands conspicuously not directed, even in the mildest form, at the Loyalist and Westminster politicians.

The inability of the 'British' section of the studio audience to react to the proceedings was perhaps a reasonably accurate reflection of the state of public debate on Ireland... thanks to programmes and non-programmes such as this.

BRYNLEY HEAVEN

## ORANGE THUGS ATTACK MANCHESTER MEETING

BETWEEN fifty and eighty National Front and Ulster Defence Association supporters attacked a 'Hands Off Ireland' meeting in Manchester on May 31st.

Even before this attack, the meeting, which included a speaker from Sinn Fein, was under threat. Originally the Lesser Free Trade Hall had been booked (and paid for), but Manchester Council's recreational services department withdrew their permission.

The meeting was then shifted to the Houldsworth

Hall.

When the fascists and their Orange allies attacked, they were armed with steel bars, rocks and paraffin lamps picked up from nearby roadworks, but they were driven off with only two of the meeting's stewards slightly injured.

Then the police, who had been called by the hall caretakers, stepped in. They forced the meeting's stewards to open the front gates to the hall, which had been locked to keep the fascists out. As a film show started,

the police let the fascists back into the hall for a second go. The attackers were again driven off, and the meeting was able to continue uninterrupted after that.

This, like previous attacks on Irish meetings in Manchester, shows the need for organised defence for such meetings. And for Labour Party members, another important issue to take up is why the Labour-controlled City Council let its officers try to sabotage the meeting by denying a meeting hall.

JOHN DOUGLAS

# AN ECONOMIC POLICY FOR LABOUR'S LEFT

In an article written for the London magazine *Time Out* before the general election, CIARAN DRIVER and JOHN HARRISON argued that a strong movement — likely to come out on top if Labour won

the election — was gathering behind the 1974 Manifesto's ideas. Though not fully socialist, those policies would open up great chances for socialist advance. Here we reprint the part of Ciaran

Driver's and John Harrison's article dealing with Labour's policies, plus a different view from COLIN FOSTER. John Harrison is the author of 'Marxist Economics for Socialists' [Pluto].

## 1. Half-way to socialism

By February of this year, registered unemployment had risen to 1,452,000, with an estimated further one million desiring work but ineligible for benefit (including many married women). And this despite four years of wage restraint under the Social Contract. (When Phase 1 of the Social Contract was agreed in July '75, the registered unemployed numbered only 791,000.) By 1976, the *Economist* could confidently state that 'British manufacturing industry has the lowest labour costs in the EEC'. For the low-paid, including most of Britain's nine million women workers, this meant conditions of real poverty (43.2% of full-time women workers earned less than £40 a week in '76).

Wage controls were supposedly introduced as an alternative to cuts in public spending, yet, as the *New Statesman* recently noted, total public expenditure for the fiscal year '77-'78 'was £7 billion less than Labour originally promised. Instead of the promised 13% growth in the four years after Heath there was no growth at all.'

### INROADS

Yet in their 1974 election manifestos, Labour promised a programme more radical than any since 1945. If successfully implemented, it would have made major inroads into private control over economic activity and achieved a significant redistribution of income and wealth. Indeed the party committed itself to 'bring about a fundamental and irreversible shift in the balance of power and wealth in favour of working people and their families.'

These original proposals included the nationalisation of a significant proportion of manufacturing industry by the newly created National Enterprise Board. The NEB was to take a controlling interest in 20 to 25 of the 100 top manufacturing companies, accounting for half of the employees of those 100. In contrast to previous nationalisations, the companies taken over were to be profitable ones. Public investment would be pumped into these firms in order to stimulate technical innovation and productivity. Faced by such high-powered competition, the theory went, the remaining manufacturers would have to get into gear and invest.

Other major firms were to be subject to Planning Agreements — quotas for investment, employment and so on to be agreed between private firms and the government. Such firms would be required to meet certain government objectives (say, the creation of jobs on

Merseyside) but the details of precisely how the objects were to be met would be left to the firms to decide.

The freedom of shareholders and management to control their companies' operations was to be further restricted by compulsory worker participation. All major firms were to establish a Main Policy Board, half the places on which 'would be available for workers' representatives, elected through the recognised trade union machinery' (Labour's Programme for Britain 1976).

The now infamous Social Contract was originally offered as a further method of trade union participation, this at the national level. In exchange for voluntary wage restraint (unlike the Tories, Labour traditionally avoid the statutory method, preferring to let the TUC discipline its members), the TUC would have a major say in determining social priorities and allocating public expenditure.

Such proposals didn't constitute socialism, but they were a commitment to reduce significantly the control of private firms over economic activity. As such it was an anti-capitalist programme, and violently opposed by the CBI.

Some redistributive measures were carried out in the early months of Labour's rule. The Housing Finance Act was abolished, a rent freeze instituted and pensions raised. But by the Autumn of 1974, as the world recession set in, and the mass working class mobilisation which had brought Labour to power dissolved, this emphasis was reversed. Redistribution towards lower income groups gave way to redistribution away from them towards profits and investments. And the conception of state intervention in industry shifted from reducing the control of private firms to a meeker attempt to influence their decisions.

### SHIFTS

These two strategy shifts are, of course, related. Once the project of curtailing the power of firms is abandoned, distributional politics must be geared to firms' needs if they are to be persuaded to invest. And in the present context of low profitability and stagnant sales that means a redistribution to profits and a push on the export front. As Healy put it: 'Firms will only expand and invest if they can see scope for making profits'

This new emphasis on persuasion rather than control brought Labour's objectives into line with the Tories; both were now concerned to create an economic climate in firms which would significantly step up their

level of investment. They differed only as to the degree of state intervention required to create such a

climate. This remains the position today.

Having changed course, Labour effectively abandoned the original notion of planning agreements, used the NEB only to bail out and rationalise bankrupt companies and watered down the industrial democracy proposals. But despite this turnabout, despite the largest recorded cut in real wages in UK history and significantly reduced social service provision, UK industry has not been regenerated. Although profits have risen by almost 50% since the summer of '76, they are still less than half of the mid-'60s level.



Birds Eye, Kirkby: Labour's 1974 policy challenged the right of private firms to shift investment as they wished.

And investment has not risen in line with profits; manufacturing investment is running at only a third of the 1961 level.

As expected, Labour '79 manifesto is far less radical than its predecessor. The vagueness of its pledges to expand the NEB and institute 'back-up statutory powers' to secure planning agreements were rightly greeted as a Callaghan victory over the party's left-wing. The word 'compulsory' for instance was deliberately excluded from the discussion of planning agreements. And the 'Concordat' struck between the very unmilitant leaders of the TUC and the Government in February 'strongly recommends' wage restraint, the prevention of unofficial strikes, industrial action only 'in the last resort' for public service workers, and restrictions on picketing.

### SEVERE

Add on Healy's commitment to restrict government borrowing (ie additional cuts in state spending), and the total Callaghan package suggests an intensification of recent policies. The effects on jobs and living standards would be nothing like as severe as those resulting from a Tory victory, but they would nevertheless be serious if left unchallenged.

But will they be? If Labour is returned, the Callaghan strategy could come in for

some heavy opposition — opposition which would obviously have far less influence in a Tory-dominated parliament. The broad commitments of the '74 Manifesto are still cherished by Benn and the Tribunites within the Parliamentary Labour Party, and in the party at large by the supporters of *Tribune*, *Labour Activist*, *Socialist Organiser* and the *Militant*, who together control a significant number of constituencies. The leaders of the TUC and every major union are similarly committed.

More importantly, in the face of predicted economic deterioration in the '80s, the implementation of further anti-working class measures will be difficult. As this winter's breakdown in incomes policy has shown, the TUC leadership cannot dam forever the mounting opposition of its members to the PLP's current policies.

The result, if Labour wins, could be a confrontation between that party's left and its current leadership. The ensuing erection of the '74 Manifesto's halfway house between a fully market economy and a centrally planned one wouldn't conjure away the problems of UK industry — only an economy based on social utility instead of profitability could manage that. But the emergence of a popularly-supported left alternative would open up immense opportunities to build a genuinely socialist edifice.

## 2. Mass action or 'state socialism'

Ciaran Driver and John Harrison argue that Labour's 1974 policies were 'an anti-capitalist programme', though not fully socialist; they represented a 'halfway house between a fully market economy and a centrally planned one'.

Thus those policies could be the basis for a powerful movement for 'a popularly-supported left alternative'. Ciaran Driver and John Harrison saw a Labour victory in the election as opening up big chances in that direction. But in the discussion over new policies following Labour's defeat, their article still stands as an appeal for organising the left behind 'the broad commitments of the '74 Manifesto'.

I would argue that a 'halfway house' between capitalism and a socialist state is impossible. The fact that the 1974 policies aimed at such a 'halfway house' made their failure inevitable. Our task now should not be to rally the left round the 1974 policies once again, but to build a really fighting left wing round a clearly revolutionary socialist programme.

Ciaran Driver and John Harrison, after describing Labour's 1974 policy as 'anti-capitalist', write: 'By the Autumn of '74, as the world recession set in, and the mass working class mobilis-

ation which had brought Labour to power dissolved, this emphasis was reversed'.

In fact strike activity did not decisively turn down until the summer of 1975, when much of the left was demoralised by defeat in the futile battle it had waged for the nationalist cause in the Common Market referendum and the Labour Government imposed the £6 limit. And the downturn was not a spontaneous process: it was actively engineered by the Labour government.

In 1974, as Driver and Harrison point out, the Labour government did re-

peal the Housing Finance Act, freeze rents and raise pensions. Those measures represented the concessions agreed by Britain's ruling circles in view of the tumultuous working class militancy of 1972-4; they were after all approved by a Parliament where Labour was in a minority. At the same time the government kept the Shrewsbury pickets in jail, retained the National Industrial Relations Court for some months, and continued the Tories' Phase 3 pay policy.

What of the policies that made some Tories scream about 'Marxism on the

march'? Benn's 'Work Programme of the Department of Industry' (June 1974) and White Paper on 'The Regeneration of British Industry' (August 1974) proposed:

- Nationalisation of the aircraft and shipbuilding industries.

- Planning agreements.
- The National Enterprise Board.

- Workers' participation and some measure of compulsory disclosure of business information.

Disclosure of information was limited by the clause



Chile 1973: soon the workers with pikes, hoping for a parliamentary road to socialism, were mowed down by the army's machine guns

except where disclosure could seriously prejudice the companies' commercial interests'. The workers' participation plans, put into practice in British Leyland, have proved to be just a means of co-opting trade union representatives into plans for speed-up and job-cutting.

The nationalisations — with 'prompt and fair compensation' promised, of course — were more welcome than otherwise to the capitalists in the ailing aircraft and shipbuilding industries.

As for the rest, Benn's plans certainly promised more state control over industry. But in modern capitalism the state already has a very large influence on industry. The 'fully market economy' which Driver and Harrison speak of was already a thing of the past long before 1974.

The state organises the supply of labour power and the provision of transport and communications. It is the direct capitalist employer in many industries. It actively intervenes in the concentration, centralisation and restructuring of capital. It tries to manage and alleviate the crises of capitalism, providing vital safe markets for many industries. And it provides the legal framework for capitalist economic life.

**STATE**

Thus the modern state is a form of oppression specific to and inseparable from capitalism. Its leading personnel, its hierarchies and its structures all reflect that.

Capitalists still can and do differ among themselves about how far the state should extend its functions of economic regulation. Thus most bosses denounced Benn, while a few (like Don Ryder, chairman of Reed International) approved his plans. But the dispute was not about socialism.

At best, the 1974 policies confused socialism with state capitalism. (And not a very radical programme of state capitalism, at that: for the 'planning agreements' were a *right wing*, less radical, alternative to nationalisation.) They looked to the state (guided by well-meaning politicians) to secure progress towards socialism.

For that reason, the 1974 policies were not genuinely anti-capitalist, even if they had been pushed through. And for that reason, they were not pushed through, but became mostly mere fictions. For a strategy of achieving socialism through the existing state is always bound by what is possible within that state. Seeing capitalism through its crisis — at the workers' expense — inevitably took precedence over the schemes for reform.

Driver and Harrison could reply that the state is not absolutely united, and that social changes are possible short of a complete socialist revolution. That is true. A government more left wing than Wilson's, and under greater working class pressure, might have carried out some serious state-capitalist policies, including policies bringing real reforms for the working class.

The Allende government did that in Chile. But we know what the result was. If, at a time of social and political crisis, the capitalist class is forced to tolerate a left government, then it will prepare its forces to strike back as soon as it can. When 'half-measures' are pushed

**AN ECONOMIC POLICY FOR LABOUR'S LEFT**

through, then more than ever a bold, well-organised revolutionary left wing is needed which will prepare to fight the capitalist backlash and go forward to the complete overthrow of the present system.

Socialists do have to fight for demands short of our complete programme. But those demands find their meaning in the developing mobilisation and consciousness of the working class, not in a perspective of gradually reforming capitalism through the existing state. Our agitation for limited demands must always be linked to propaganda for the more advanced demands which can become agitational to the extent that the struggle develops round the first limited demands.

The great workers' struggles of 1972-4 were focused on limited trade union demands, with the political horizon arching above them being that of Labour's 1974 policies. Thus, instead of workers seeing a way forward to overthrow the state which their struggles had resisted and replace it with a workers' republic, there was a division between industrial and political struggle.

The industrial struggles crippled the Tories, but then the political follow-up was left to Wilson and company in Parliament. And even if the government's intentions had been much better than in fact they were, they would have been impotent in the face of the power of capitalist interests in the economy and in the permanent state apparatus. Only through mass action can the labour movement counter that capitalist power; but the labour movement, apart from a small revolutionary wing, had no political programme of mass action.

**MISERY**

That is the lesson of the cycle of struggle which went from the great battles of 1972-4 to the misery of Labour's wage-curling, job-cutting policies of 1975-9.

Ciaran Driver and John Harrison point to a left alliance stretching from Benn to *Socialist Organiser*. But on many issues, the most important dividing-line in politics — the class battle-line — runs right through the middle of that 'alliance'.

In every particular battle, socialists must seek the broadest possible united front in the labour movement. But we also need to organise a left wing which will side reliably with the working class in every battle, and know how to press forwards toward victory in the next battle too. Otherwise the labour movement is fated to repeat the experience of 1972-5 — a glorious victory followed by creeping defeat — or, eventually, as the stakes get higher, the experience of Chile — partial victories accompanied by creeping demobilisation, leading to disaster.

by KEITH BIRCH ['Gay Left' and Islington North CLP]

THIS SUMMER sees the tenth anniversary of the Stonewall riot in New York which is often described as the birth of the Gay Liberation Movement when gay people fought back against police raids. It will be celebrated in many parts of the world with demonstrations, and in London by a Gay Pride Week at the end of June.

However, with the election of the most reactionary Tory government since the war, gay socialists may have little to celebrate. We need to assess the gains that have been made and to build a basis on which these advances can be defended in the face of economic and moral reaction.

Gay men and women still do not have basic civil rights in many areas. The 1967 Act gave only limited legality to male homosexual acts. It keeps the age of consent at 21 and does not apply to Scotland and Northern Ireland. We still face harassment from the police, and courts have taken children away from lesbian mothers who are seen as 'unfit' to be parents. People have been sacked from their jobs for being gay, with as yet no success at industrial tribunals for unfair dismissal, while it is often difficult to get union backing to fight such victimisation.

Under the Labour government, the hope for some kind of limited reforms remained alive, though only with difficulty. The government sold out on the issue of extending the 1967 Act to Northern Ireland, in exchange for the tacit parliamentary support of moral bigots such as Ian Paisley with his 'Save Ulster from Sodomy' campaign. Meanwhile the Labour leadership offered little opposition to the Bills aimed at restricting women's rights to abortion.

What can we expect from the Tories? Of course, worse — but it would be wrong to say that immediate disaster will befall us such as a repressive change in the law. What we will more likely experience is a slower, piecemeal attack on our liberties and a strengthening of the morally reactionary climate that has been growing in past years with the general move to the right.

Attacks experienced by gay people at the hands of local police forces such as in Manchester under the authoritarian Anderton, and Brighton where gay clubs have been closed, may grow and spread with the demands

**Why gays are organising**



for morality, law and order. Gays in London have suffered attacks from the Special Patrol Group in their spare moments from harassing the black communities and demonstrators. The limited funding that some gay self-help groups and law centres have had may disappear.

Our independence and rights as gays will be restricted in both the economic and civil liberties aspects while the strength of a morally reactionary ideology will grow.

What then are the tasks that face us as gay socialists in both the gay movement itself and as socialists? At the present time it is difficult to talk about a gay movement as a coherent force. There exist a number of disparate groups ranging from the Campaign for Homosexual Equality, the Gay Activists Alliance through to gay union caucuses and self-help groups such as Switchboards and Icebreakers; while many lesbians focus their activities in the Women's Movement.

It is important for gay socialists to be involved and help build these autonomous groupings, to take up specific issues affecting gay people which can win the support of a broad alliance of gays such as was done with the defence of Gay News after the Mary Whitehouse prosecution, while also making links with the socialist movement on these issues. The autonomous movement gives us an arena to put forward our ideas and activities to a wide audience of gay people which it would be difficult to reach otherwise.

Our work in the socialist movement and trade unions

comes from our commitment as socialists and of course we need to participate in the broad struggle against the economic and social policies of the Tory government, against unemployment, social service cuts and so on. However, we must be aware of a danger which is already apparent in some socialist groups, of a return to a narrow, economist analysis and struggle in the period ahead, a sense that other aspects of our lives and forms of struggle can be jettisoned for the 'real' conflict. We need to defend the importance of those areas of struggle around sexual politics and the 'personal' which may get brushed aside in the rush to the point of production.

The fight for socialism has to be carried forward on a broad front and all aspects of our lives are at issue. Unity and growth in our struggles can only come about through a recognition of the specific forms of oppression that



The Stonewall Inn was a bar for homosexual men in Christopher Street, Greenwich Village, New York. Like many other small bars, it was regularly raided by police using alleged abuses of the liquor laws as an excuse for harassment. On Friday 27 June 1969 the bar was raided, but against all precedent the customers fought back. Police reinforcements were called and a three day riot ensued. Gay people took to the streets. That, symbolically at least, was the beginning of the modern gay movement in the USA. In Britain, the London Gay Liberation Front was founded in 1970 after two English students, both gay, had witnessed the commemorative Christopher Street Gay Pride March in June 1970.

**Gay rights: time to move for conference**

by IAN DUNN

THE article 'Labour Must Support Gay Rights' (S.O. March 1979) has attracted considerable attention. In the meantime there have been developments.

The issue is currently being raised at Scottish Trades Councils. On 27th March, the Edinburgh and District Trades Council passed a policy motion in line with the call in *Socialist Organiser*. In full it reads: "This Trades Council is opposed to discrimination against homosexual men and women."

"It is particularly concerned about the failure of either the law or the trade union movement to secure equal rights in employment. Employees' private lives are no business of their employer and homosexuality should not justify either dismissal or denial of promotion. Job security would remove a primary cause of

blackmail, and openness about sexuality [rather than deceit] will foster better relations among working people.

"Discrimination at work is part of a wider pattern of discrimination against gay people in society as a whole. This Trades Council therefore calls for amendment to the Sexual Offences Act, for an end to discrimination in the provision of goods and services, and, in such areas as health, housing, education and social work, for the provision of services which are appropriate to the needs of gay people.

"This Trades Council recognises the right of gay people to organise and to affirm their stance publicly. It believes that the non-homosexual majority has a responsibility to ensure that gay people are free from discrimination and harassment and it recognises that there is a need for widespread education to dispel the myths that surround homosexuality."

The motion was proposed by

NALGO Lothian Region delegate Richard Kerley (also a member of Edinburgh Central CLP). It was strongly supported by the delegate from NUM (Monktonhall) and was passed by a very substantial majority. The same motion is being taken to Glasgow Trades Council this summer, and the secretaries of Stirling and Kirkcaldy Trades Councils have been informed of Edinburgh's policy on gay rights. Similar motions could be passed at any Trades Councils in England and Wales which do not yet have a policy in support of gay rights.

The next step must be for a motion to be passed at the 1979 Labour Party Conference. The Secretary of the Labour Campaign for Gay Rights, John Gallacher, is contacting campaign activists in York, Oxford, and Coventry to secure their commitment in taking an adapted form of the Edinburgh motion to their June CLP meetings. Time is now short and the European Elections have been allowed to

disrupt normal Labour Party branch meetings until after 7th June.

Despite this, the support of comrades is essential if the Labour Party is to adopt an unequivocal stand on Gay Rights. The case of Jeff Dudgeon, who has taken the UK Government to the Strasbourg Court because of the state of the law and police harassment in the north of Ireland, has been denied by the Northern Ireland Office.

The Government, far from acting on their own Civil Rights Commission's call for law reform, now say that all homosexual acts should continue to be outlawed there because 'public' opinion demands it. This position was taken in the last months of the Labour Government and was a direct result of the miserable dealing with the Ulster Unionists who want, it seems, to 'Save Ulster from Sodomy'.

These are added reasons why we must start with this year's Labour Party conference.

## Fascists suspected in synagogue attack

£100,000 damage was caused to a synagogue in Princes Road, Liverpool 8, in the early hours of May 31st. Fourteen sacred scrolls were stolen and an unsuccessful attempt was made to set fire to the building.

Earlier that evening the Anti Nazi League had found out that the fascist British Movement were meeting in a city centre pub and followed their movements.

First the fascists tried to attack black youngsters as they came out of a club — as they had done two weeks before. This time ANL supporters were able to help stop the attack.

The fascists then moved on to flyposting. Late into the evening they were sticking up 'Hitler was right' posters, until they were stopped. The British Movement were forced to slink off... but did they come back for another go?

The British Movement is a more openly anti-semitic fascist group than the National Front: it has no qualms about linking itself with Hitlerism. It is planning a march in London on June 23rd, and anti-fascists should organise to prevent it from succeeding.

KEVIN FEINTUCK

"MEASURES will be introduced to amend the law on nationality and to make changes in the control of immigration".

That is all we heard about Tory policy on immigration from the Queen's Speech on 15th May. To know more about what the Tories intend to do, we only have to read the speech made by William Whitelaw to the Conservative Central Council Annual Meeting in Leicester on 7th April 1978. Whitelaw is now the Home Secretary and is therefore responsible for policy on immigration.

■ ■ 'We shall introduce a new British Nationality Act'

This will probably be based on the Labour Government's 'Green Paper', which was in turn based on a Tory document. Both documents propose creating a status of 'British Overseas Citizens' (BOC) who won't be able to enter Britain. Most of them can't anyway. But what rights will those BOCs already here have? The Green Paper isn't very clear. We'll have to wait for the Bill to know the worst.

■ ■ 'We shall not continue the practice of allowing permanent settlement for those who came here for a temporary stay'

Those who complete four years in permit-free employment or who managed to get their permits renewed can ask to be allowed to settle here perman-

## Immigration: what the Tories will do

ently, but won't be able to any more.

■ ■ 'We shall restrict the entry of parents, grandparents, and children over 18 to those who can prove urgent compassionate grounds'

Even now, 'sponsors' have to satisfy the authorities that they will look after their parents and grandparents so that they won't have to claim social security, and it is extremely difficult to bring in children over 18.

By 'compassionate grounds' the Tories mean that these aged relatives must have no-one in their own country to turn to, and must be impoverished even by the standards of that country. A more racist and vindictive measure it is difficult to imagine.

■ ■ 'We shall for the future discontinue the concession introduced in 1974 to husbands and male fiancés'

No more immigration officials in the wardrobe to check if the marriage is genuine: they won't let husbands and fiancés in at all.

■ ■ 'We shall severely re-

strict conditions under which anyone from overseas can come and work here'

In last four years permits for unskilled workers have been cut to almost zero. The Tories want to cut permits for other workers and permit-free employment to the same degree. Such efforts to bar so few temporary workers!

■ ■ 'We shall introduce a register for eligible wives and children from the Indian subcontinent'

This is the only measure not designed to actually cut immigration, but rather to 'allay fears'. Whitelaw's logic is that if people know that not many more black immigrants are likely to enter Britain then they won't be so worried. Experience has shown that pandering to racist feeling doesn't 'allay fears', but whets appetites for tougher measures.

■ ■ 'We shall then introduce a quota across the board to control entry'

A quota of United Kingdom Passport Holders, that is. A few hundred more UK Passport Holder heads of households will

be able to enter Britain from India, because the previous quota from East Africa was not being filled.

■ ■ 'We shall intensify counter-measures against illegal immigration and overstaying, and help those immigrants who genuinely wish to leave this country'

How will the police intensify they already intense counter-measures? Will they stop Asians in underground stations and ask to see their passport? That's what the French police do to Algerians. Will the Tories introduce the 'internal controls' recommended by the Select Committee last year? How do they intend to persuade immigrants that they 'genuinely wish to leave this country'?

The Tories need new legislation to change the Nationality Act and to draw up a register of dependents. All the other proposals can be introduced simply by changing the rules, and don't even have to go before Parliament. MPs have 40 days to challenge these rules. If they do, the Tories would of course win the vote, but we can't

let the measures go through without any opposition at all.

Unless the opposition to these proposals is far greater than the opposition to the 1971 Immigration Bill and previous immigration legislation, the Tories will be encouraged to go even further. And without a powerful movement against racist controls, what confidence can we have that a future Labour government will repeal Tory legislation? We haven't forgotten that a Labour Home Secretary allowed virginity tests, till he was found out, and insisted on maintaining all the other degrading practices.

The Campaign Against the Immigration Laws was set up to fight the 1971 Act and racist proposals such as the Tories'. CAIL works to inform the anti-racist and labour movement about the harsh reality of immigration control, and to coordinate opposition to it.

★ This article also appears in the newsletter of CAIL, who can be contacted at Box 133, 182 Upper St, London N1. CAIL will send speakers and welcome affiliations (organisations £5, individuals £1). CAIL are also helping to organise pickets from 2pm on 7 July at 18 prisons where immigrants are detained — to include Pentonville, Holloway, Armley (Leeds), Winson Green, Birmingham, and Cardiff Jail.

## BLACK WOMEN DENOUNCE BRUTALITY

THE FIRST national demonstration organised by black women attracted 2,000 marchers in London on Sunday 3rd June. Protesting against state brutality, the organisers (who included the Asian women's movement AWAZ and other black women's groups) won national support from the Indian Workers' Association (GB), and, to a far smaller extent, from British socialist and feminist groups.

Demonstrators were stunned to hear at the end of the march that Jagmohan Joshi, General Secretary of the IWA(GB), had died after being taken ill on his way to join the demonstration.

The events in Southall leading the death of anti-racist Blair Peach were fore-

most in the minds of many speakers. In particular women from Southall underlined that they were subjected to sexual as well as racial abuse and harassment by the police on that day. But this was only a concentrated version of the treatment they have come to expect day in and day out.

Martha Osamor from the United Black Women's Action Group described how the combination of sexual and racial discrimination has led to the extreme isolation of black women, whether they are faced with the impossibility of uniting with their families because of the Immigration Acts or whether they must fight the courts and police in defence of their kids, picked up on 'sus' and

other charges. But black women are beginning to organise together to fight their oppression.

Other speakers demanded the scrapping of the Immigration Act and the dissolution of Blair Peach's killers, the Special Patrol Group. Three hundred and fifty people face charges arising out of the events in Southall; a defence committee has been set up to raise money and to coordinate tactics in court.

Meanwhile the 'Independent' Police Complaints Board has announced that our protests are unnecessary. In a report welcomed by the Police Federation, the Home Office financed Board explained that they had investigated 13,079 complains in their first year of operation,



and that in only 15 cases did they recommend disciplinary action against the police officers involved. So it's clear that we have nothing to complain about, isn't it? For example, the police's

own Complaints Investigation Bureau is looking very carefully into the death of Blair Peach — so carefully, in fact, that they will not be reporting their findings for at least two months, and the

Director of Public Prosecutions will do nothing until then.

By which time, no doubt, they hope everyone will have forgotten all about it.

JAMES RYAN

## Hackney: keep the schools open

TO ANY community the loss of a school is more than just the loss of a few teachers. Other jobs are lost — caretakers', dinner helpers'. Facilities for youth centres are also lost. So any attempt by local education authorities, whether Labour or Tory, to close schools must be looked at with care.

In Hackney the Inner London Education Authority is proposing to close five of the borough's fourteen secondary schools. The rationalisation for such a drastic 'reorganisation' is that the secondary school population is falling.

The ILEA has calculated that the school population will fall by about 45% between now and 1986 in the secondary sector. The figures are under dispute. The

Area Health Authority thinks that the population will rise by the mid-1980s, and Hackney Borough Council also disputes the figures. However, the figures do show a tendency for the secondary school population to fall, and while a dispute about projected figures is important it is not the central political question.

The ILEA realising that it could not get away with just issuing orders to close schools, decided to go in for a two stage consultation process. Having learnt from their previous attempts to close schools in London (like Lavender Hill in Wandsworth and Robert Montefiore in Tower Hamlets), they drew up a borough-wide plan for 'secondary reorganisation' in Hackney. The plan

— BY JON DUVEEN —  
sec. Hackney Schools Stay OK campaign

was produced in mid-February and comments had to be made on it by May. The document outlined four options for secondary education in Hackney. Two of the options it dismissed straight away, and the choice basically lay between keeping all schools open or closing and amalgamating some schools.

Very quickly a campaign was begun by some parents, teachers and trade unionists to extend this consultation period so that the community could have time to produce its own plan for education (not just secondary education, but all education, since it was obvious that the ILEA had no plan for education

in Hackney). The 'Hackney Schools Stay OK' Campaign argued that with falling numbers there was a clear opportunity to improve education in Hackney. By keeping all the schools, and all the workers in the schools, the size of classes could be drastically reduced to the Labour Party's target of 25, and possibly to 15.

Retaining all the staff would allow a full range of options to be made available to all the students. In addition the space created in the schools by falling numbers could be used to create nurseries for under-5s, or to extend the adult literacy programme. The opportunities are almost endless:

increasing facilities for 'English as a foreign language', providing cultural centres for local ethnic groups...

The campaign drew up a document and submitted it to the ILEA. The move to extend the consultation period was supported by the submissions from Hackney Borough Council and from Hackney North and Stoke Newington CLP. The Hackney Trades Council and many trade union, tenant and community groups support the 'Hackney Schools Stay OK' Campaign.

The result is that education is beginning to be discussed and thought about by large sectors of Hackney's population. It has become an openly political issue.

What was the response of the ILEA? Every meeting

they organised called for an extension of the consultation period. Most organisations in Hackney backed this call. ILEA said NO. At the end of May it produced detailed plans for closing and amalgamating five of Hackney's secondary schools.

However, the 'Hackney Schools Stay OK' Campaign is still winning new supporters, and will continue to demand that all schools in Hackney stay open. There is now a second consultation period which we intend to use to organise a clear response from the community which ILEA cannot ignore.

★ Contact: Hackney Schools Stay OK, Box 15, 136 Kingsland High Rd, London E5; All London Campaign against School Closures, 68 Chalton St, London NW1.